

## 7. THE OCCUPATION

After the Armistice on November 11, the Allied troops stayed in place and were then ordered to move forward through the areas the Germans had occupied. Arrangements were made with the German authorities for the orderly entrance into Germany, which began on December 1, 1918. Charlot's battery was sent into that country as part of the occupying forces and made its way southeast through Lorraine and Alsace to Strasburg and then to the French zone in the Palatine. Charlot wrote in his "Historique de la 15<sup>e</sup> B<sup>tt</sup> du V/101":

Elle se rend ensuite par étapes dans la région de Mayence, traverse la frontière le 24 Décembre, rentre en Palatinat le 4 Janvier et fait l'occupation dans la région de Mayence à partir du 14 Janvier 1919.

'The unit then moves by stages into the region of Mainz, crosses the border December 24, enters the Palatine January 4, and serves in the Occupation in the region of Mainz from January 14 [*sic*], 1919.'

The border Charlot mentions was the one established after the war of 1870, when Alsace and Lorraine were ceded to Germany (Interview November 12, 1970): "We crossed, in fact, from Alsace, which had become French, but was, of course, part of Germany before, into Germany proper." Charlot kept a postcard of "Le 1<sup>er</sup> village où nous avons couché après le passage de la frontière 24 Décembre 1918" 'The first village where we slept after crossing the border December 24, 1918.' Printed on the postcard is its German name, *Linhofen*; next to it has been hand-stamped the French name *Liocourt*. The village is about fourteen or fifteen miles south of Metz. As I reconstruct the troop movement, they proceeded to Strasburg and then followed the Rhine northeast to Mainz and then about twenty-three miles southeast to Jugenheim (regularly misspelled Jugendheim by Charlot), whence Charlot wrote his mother on January 8 (Charlot's dating "14 Janvier" seems to be an error). A funny story can probably be placed on this trip. While touring Strasburg, Charlot and his friends visited a neighborhood called La Petite France 'Little France' in their guidebooks; they were shocked, offended, and amused to find it was the red-light district.

Charlot was looking forward to taking up again his artistic activities and his wide-ranging reading. Lists of items to take with him into the Occupation, undated but probably made while on leave in Paris, contain materials for living, war, study, and art making:

cantine

costume bleu

chemises.

caleçons.

chaussette.

cravates.

foulard.

polo.

sucre.

livre Claudel  
    St<sup>e</sup> Hildegarde  
    Jammes.  
    artillerie.  
    Dictionnaire  
gilet peau.  
couverture.  
gants.  
2 calots.  
2 culottes ordinaires  
chaussures 28.50. 2 paires leggings cuir  
sabre.  
casque.  
revolver.  
boîte aquarelle—pinceaux. papier.

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valise paille

costume noir  
linge chemises. caleçons cravates . chaussettes  
assiette 1850  
dessin.  
Livres—Jammes.  
    Bloy.  
    Laforge.?   
    Tristan l’Hermite  
    etc.  
    Dürer  
imperméable.

mess-kit

blue suit  
shirts.  
underpants.  
socks.  
ties.  
scarf.  
polo-necked jersey.  
sugar.  
books Claudel  
    Saint Hildegarde

Jammes.  
artillery.  
Dictionary  
undershirt.  
blanket.  
gloves.  
two caps.  
two ordinary trousers  
shoes 28.50. two pairs of leather leggings  
saber.  
helmet.  
revolver.  
box of watercolors—brushes. paper.

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straw valise

black suit  
linen shirts. underpants ties . socks  
1850 plate  
drawings.  
Books—Jammes.  
Bloy.  
Laforgue?  
Tristan l’Hermitte  
etc.  
Dürer  
raincoat.

Probably in Strasburg, Charlot bought larger art paper and a larger notebook than he had been able to use during the war; he probably bought watercolors as well. His first two paintings burst over their large sheets with a renewed energy and stylistic innovation, the first examples of Charlot’s exploration of new artistic directions during the Occupation. *Arbre*,<sup>1</sup> dated December 30, 1918, shows a thin, leafless tree blasted by winter, but the colors are vivid and vital. Charlot returns to his freest prewar watercolor techniques: a light pencil outline provides the merest suggestion for the brush, which applies the washes in unusually broad strokes of unmixed colors. Charlot’s skillful hand makes the strokes on the trunk and branches both calligraphic and descriptive. In contrast, the gray sky is suggested by a few irregular strokes tangled in the lowest branches and by odd vertical, separated strokes across a low horizon line indicated a little to each side of the trunk. Similar vertical strokes arranged in bands of color continue to the base of the graceful trunk. The difference in degree of descriptiveness between tree and background creates an impression of focus on the tree; but the brushiness of both creates an intensely painterly quality that recalls the *tâchistes* and even the Fauves. Bold strokes and strong colors express

Charlot's joy in returning to his vocation. *Chaise*,<sup>2</sup> dated January 1, 1919, is even bolder, with broader strokes and more arbitrary, even Fauve or Expressionistic colors. Charlot's unerased pencil lines project the lines of the chair beyond the edges of the paper; indeed the chair pokes itself out aggressively towards the viewer. *Arbre* and *Chaise* reveal Charlot's postwar impulse to explore and innovate; the unusual outlines in the unfinished sketches of a profile and of a standing man on the verso of *Arbre* are the first indications that Charlot was ready to push this stylistic innovation into different genres.

The troops were exhilarated by their victory, relieved to be alive, amazed by the countryside left undisturbed by the war, and excited by the rumors they were hearing about German women. Charlot was probably exceptional in looking forward also to studying a region famous for its art. His poem of December 28, 1919, *Or me voici dedans cette bonne Lorraine*, provides an onomatopoeic description of the horse-drawn artillery train making its way through the valleys and woods of Lorraine, the soldiers' feet in their stirrups and their reins in their fists. Their heavy guns descend the slopes like dead monsters, but they will be splattered with glory at the frontier posts when the sword will spring from its scabbard. They move step by step, town by town, through the rain, the snow, and the ochre mud towards Germany:

vers ce pays intact aux chairs blanches, nous Francs;  
Nos vierges sont violées, nos petits morts au baigne,  
nos frères pourris, nos doigts durs, nos cœurs souffrants.  
  
'Towards that intact land of white flesh, we Franks;  
Our virgins have been violated, our children dead in prison;  
our brothers decayed in death, our fingers hard, our hearts suffering.'

Charlot was expressing a widely-shared mixture of emotions that can be documented in other sources.<sup>3</sup> The soldiers were filled with resentment that the war had been fought on French soil, leaving Germany almost undamaged physically. They were angry about the atrocities that had been committed by the Germans in France and especially Belgium and about their many comrades who had been killed (Greenhalgh 2014: 371). They were feeling also the victor's lust for the women of the conquered, an emotion that was probably nourished by reports from the first groups of Allies to enter Germany. The Occupation would be a time of great artistic development for Charlot and also one of personal growth and failing.

## 7.1. THE ARMY

The army was Charlot's most immediate context during the Occupation, and his experiences as an officer and the attitudes he shared with the other soldiers remained important for him throughout his life. Charlot was a member of the Moroccan Division, initially of the 35<sup>th</sup> battery, 276<sup>e</sup> RAC [Régiment d'Artillerie de Campagne 'Regiment of Campaign Artillery']. Writing on a group photograph of the battery—taken in Germany probably in middle to late 1919—he has identified several people, three of whom appear in other documents: Captain Thibareng, Lieutenant Travès, Charlot's immediate superior, and Bihain, Charlot's orderly.<sup>4</sup> Charlot remembered:

we were always on the go, and I was always on the go on horseback, and the one thing that was permanent with me was my horse. That's what I remember the most. We went all the way from Ludwigshafen to Köln, to the Belgian frontier and so on, on horseback. And then I had also the really very big responsibility with my men. For a while I had a whole series of people under me. They were rather difficult people, mostly Arabs. (Interview November 18, 1970)

The war ended; our horse-drawn batteries patrolled the Rhineland from Ludwigshafen to Köln. (Morse 1983: 2)

And I stayed for two years with my troops, my units, along the Rhine. We started in Ludwigshafen on the south, and we worked our way, on horseback mostly, up to Cologne, or Köln, in the north. (Interview November 12, 1970)

The itinerary of Charlot's unit cannot be reconstructed fully, but several of its billets are known from the loci and dates Charlot noted on some of his artworks and poems and from his two surviving letters. I provide the earliest and latest dates available, which are not necessarily those of his arrival and departure. As stated above, Charlot was first stationed at Jugenheim (available dates: January 8–12, 1919) about twenty-three miles southeast of Mainz. He visited or stayed at Massenheim (January 21, 1919), approximately five and a half miles west and slightly north of Mainz.<sup>5</sup> He then moved south about sixty kilometers down the Rhine from Mainz into the Mannheim area. On the west side of the Rhine across from Mannheim, is Ludwigshafen, which Charlot visited. Charlot was stationed in the village of Maudach (February 2–March 24, 1919), a little over a mile south of Ludwigshafen. While there, from February 25 to March 15, he commuted to Germersheim, about twenty-five kilometers south of Ludwigshafen, to attend an unspecified course. He then moved to another village, Rheingönheim (possibly March 28–August 31, 1919), which is a little over a mile south of Mannheim. During that time, he stayed or visited in Nordenstadt (July 22–27, 1919), about three and a half miles east of Wiesbaden. He certainly lived in the village of Eppstein (September 3, 1919; probably from August into middle or late September), about twenty kilometers northeast of Mainz. From there he was sent on a military mission to the military camp at Souges (September 18–24, 1919; more precisely, at Saint Médard-en-Jalles), near Bordeaux on the Atlantic coast. This mission probably lasted into early October. As will be seen below, he used this distance from his regular duties to reflect on his life situation in his poems and to complete several drawings. From Souges, he was transferred to another military camp at Bitche (October 9–November 17, 1919), which had a large artillery training ground; the French government took advantage of the Occupation, which was financed by the Germans, to train its troops. Bitche is about 55 kilometers west and slightly south of Landau and had been German territory since 1872. Charlot was then transferred to the village of Annweiler (November 20, 1919), about forty-five kilometers northeast of Bitche across the German border and about fifteen kilometers west of Landau-in-der-Pfalz. The small city of Landau, about forty kilometers southwest of Ludwigshafen, was a military headquarters for the French, and Charlot lived there from late 1919 (earliest date, December 1, 1919) until his demobilization in May 1920.

Charlot and his unit would have stayed in barracks when those were available; he was photographed several times on horseback at some military installation. The members of the Moroccan Division were divided into small groups when stationed in villages and were billeted in German homes. As opposed to the British, who commandeered hotels and other public accommodations, French officers preferred living with German families. From the village where he was stationed, Charlot would travel to the nearest city to sightsee, visit museums, and make purchases, like books and sketchpads.<sup>6</sup> A Mainz–Jugenheim train schedule has survived in Charlot’s hand. Charlot also made a longer personal trip to Colmar to see the Isenheimer Altar of Matthias Grünewald (1455–80—1528). Charlot’s visit to Cologne in the British zone to see paintings by Stefan Lochner (1400–1451) may also have been private, although his statements connect the visit to the movements of the Occupation troops. Finally, Charlot was on leave in Paris in April 1919 and from late December 1919 to early January 1920.<sup>7</sup> He may also have made short visits to Paris.<sup>8</sup>

Charlot’s success as an officer was reflected in his rise in rank. On December 23, 1918, he was made “M. de L. à Titre Définitif” ‘regular Maréchal des Logis,’ a petty officer (“Jean Charlot’s Date List”). On June 10, 1919, Charlot was promoted from aspirant to Sous-lieutenant d’artillerie à Titre temporaire ‘Temporary or Provisional Second Lieutenant of Artillery’ retroactive to May 15.<sup>9</sup> Charlot was also appointed the commanding officer of the village in which his unit was stationed, a position for which his knowledge of the German language would have been an asset. He would in fact take the opportunity to improve his German, making vocabulary lists and glosses in the German books he was reading. On September 1, 1919, he wrote to his mother a description of his work in which he is clearly being supported by his friends and superior officers:

Je suis aux environs de Ludwigshafen, toujours. Je viens d’arriver—J’ai pas mal d’hommes de chevaux et de voitures, le tout en bien mauvais état, à prendre en consigne. Beaucoup d’arabes—des fantassins. J’aurai du travail pour mettre tout au point—Mais quelle montée en grade ! et je suis commandant du village où l’on cantonne !—Trop d’honneurs—Au réel une corvée assez désagréable mais qui ne peut que me donner de l’expérience dans ce métier d’officier bien délicat à mon âge. Les camarades m’ont accompagné jusqu’ici en auto. Le capitaine m’a complimenté pour la façon dont je m’occupais de la batterie. Il est vrai que j’ai fourni un gros effort, surtout n’y étant pas porté naturellement.

‘I am in the environs of Ludwigshafen, still. I just arrived—I have quite a few men, horses, and vehicles, all in very bad state, to take under my command. Lots of Arabs—foot soldiers. I will have a lot of work to bring everything up to regulation—But what a rise in grade! And I’m the commandant of the village in which we’re billeted! Too many honors—In reality, a pretty disagreeable duty, but one that can only give me experience in this profession of officer, very awkward at my age. My comrades accompanied me here by car. The captain complimented me on the way I handled the battery. It’s true that I made a great effort, especially not being inclined to it naturally.’

Among other tasks, Charlot seems to have handled the officers' mess. His *Ludwigshafen Notebook* is full of accounts for food and especially wine, noting the amounts owed by the different members. Perhaps he was able to put his prewar experience in accounting to good use.

Moreover, in September 1919, Charlot was entrusted with the difficult mission of disbanding a unit, in which duty he replaced a first lieutenant: "Voici du nouveau. Je suis détaché provisoirement au commandement d'une section de munition qui va rentrer en France pour être dissoute" 'Here's some news. I'm detached provisionally to the command of a section of munitions that will return to France to be disbanded.'<sup>10</sup> Charlot kept his copy of the orders:

Division Marocaine  
Artillerie  
No 7041 A.D.M. [Artillerie de la Division Marocaine]

Le Sous-Lieutenant CHARLOT du 8/II2e R.A.L. [Régiment d'Artillerie Lourde] est détaché au P.A.D.M. (I<sup>o</sup> S.M.I.), [parc d'artillerie de la Division marocaine (première section de munitions d'infanterie)] pour procéder à la dissolution de cette unité, en remplacement du Lieutenant LAPORTE détaché au Service automobile par la note N<sup>o</sup> 6250/P du 28 Août de la VIII<sup>o</sup> ARMÉE.

Le Sous-Lieutenant CHARLOT devra rejoindre son corps aux Armées après la liquidation.

Aux Armées 3 Septembre 1919

Le Général Daugan Commandant la DIVISION MAROCAINE.

Moroccan Division

Artillery

Number 7041 Artillery of the Moroccan Division

The Sub-Lieutenant CHARLOT of the Eighth Army II2e Regiment of Heavy Artillery is detached to the Artillery Park of the Moroccan Division (first section of infantry munitions) to proceed to the dissolution of this unit, replacing Lieutenant LAPORTE detached to the automobile service...

The Sub-Lieutenant CHARLOT must rejoin his corps at the Armies after the liquidation.

At the Armies, September 3, 1919

General Daugan, Commander of the Moroccan Division.'

To complete the mission, Charlot traveled to the military camp at Souges outside of Bordeaux, where he stayed at least until the end of the month. Two poems dated in November 1919 seem to relate to this mission: *Seigneur voici la grande mésaventure* (November 11) and *Maître voici la serpe de la sérénité* (November 17). The note on the latter indicates that the poem was started at Souges and finished at Bitche and was related to the mission:

chef de la S.M.A.<sup>11</sup> Souges près Bordeaux

Bitche Lorraine

head of S.M.A. Souges near Bordeaux

Bitche, Lorraine

The reference to sand in the same poem indicates that he was on the coast. *Seigneur voici la grande mésaventure* states that he is going to pass an examination that might result in his losing his rank; he puts all in God's hands. In the second poem, all is going well, and he is enjoying a feeling of peace in God's presence as he watches the sunset from the beach. Although giving all the credit to God, he is assured of his rank, "chef de la S.M.A.," and writes with humor: "Vous m'avez élu chef d'Arabes et de hongres" 'You have chosen me to be the chief of Arabs and geldings.' Charlot's experience of success as an officer increased his sense of self-confidence, which had been diminished by his failures as a manager of his family's business. In his letter to his mother of September 1, 1919, he signs:

B Baisers

Charlot

P.S. : Je ne sais pas pourquoi j'ai signé comme ça, C'est idiot.

'Big kisses

Charlot

P.S.: I don't know why I signed like that, It's stupid.'

However, he signs his second letter the same way. Charlot's image of himself as a Christian knight is the positive counterpart of his more usual negative self-images: in this period, the clumsy, out-of-place rustic Gros-Jean, the Wandering Jew, and probably the Prodigal Son, discussed below.<sup>12</sup> In sum, apart from Charlot's complaints about the low moral atmosphere of the army, discussed below, he seems to have been happy in the army and the Occupation, and his success as an officer added to his self-confidence.

Charlot found military life in the Occupation exciting and expressed its glamor and mixed emotions in his poem of July 1919 about the horse artillery *en déplacement* 'in movement to a new station':

Au pas de nos chevaux, aux vaux Rhénans, au tôt  
matin, au trot de nos juments sages et zanes,  
nous éclosions hors cette grande guerre insane,  
trinquillants fers et cuirs sous vaux et sous coteaux.

ces chairs qu'injurièrent la masse et le couteau  
et ces cœurs sont plus nus qu'au corps chaste Suzanne;  
Combien pourrissent depuis ces jours de Sézanne  
et le reste, la mort le prendra tard ou tôt.

or devant qu'elle soit là pour entiers nous prendre



nous cheminons au fil des mois et des calandres  
par ces vallons vineux, par ces bourgs chauds et forts,

boueux, mais la rose à l'oreille et pipe en bouche,  
vers ces filles neuves, verseuses de vin d'or  
dont les chairs blanches, au bruit des bottes, se couchent.

At the walking pace of our horses, along the Rhine vales, at early  
morning, at the trot of our wise and dark-haired mares,  
we emerge from this great insane war,  
clanking metals and leathers under vales and slopes.

These bodies of flesh that the mass formations and the knife injured  
and these hearts are more nude than Susannah chaste of body;  
How many rot since those days at Sézanne,  
and the rest, death will take them sooner or later.

But before it's here to take us altogether,  
we advance along the months and the larks  
through these vine-filled valleys, through these burgs hot and strong

muddy, but a rose behind our ear and a pipe in our mouth,  
towards these new girls, pourers of golden wine  
whose white flesh, at the sound of boots, takes to bed.

The Rhineland is exceedingly rich materially, historically, and culturally. The war had touched the area very little; Charlot refers to “ces riches rives palatines” ‘these rich Palatine riverbanks.’<sup>13</sup> In general, the population had had access to the many nearby farms during the war and looked well-fed and healthy. In the early Occupation, the French government, anxious to win over the population to possible annexation, exempted the region from the Allied food blockade, and despite various difficulties, the Occupiers successfully maintained the food supplies. Moreover, most of the population was happy to have the war end and welcomed the occupying armies as supports for order against large postwar disruptions in German society, like the rightist, Bolshevik, and Spartacist uprisings and the consequent opposing reactions. In the Rhineland as in other occupied areas, the first year was marked generally by a friendly, even festive spirit.

Tensions are, however, inevitable during an Occupation, from small harassments to governmental opposition. Germans and some Allies felt the French were lording it over the Germans and thus creating difficulties (Tuohy 1931: 84–101). Foch had ordered the Allied soldiers to make a smart impression (Edmonds 1987: 24), but Charlot was letting his Moroccans indulge themselves by marching into villages clinching their battle knife in their teeth. The German central government and many local authorities adopted a policy of delays, quiet challenges, and passive resistance. Outbreaks of violence

occurred, usually small, but culminating in an uprising during which several Germans were killed and wounded by Moroccan troops of a unit other than Charlot's.<sup>14</sup>

A more basic source of tension was the French desire for material guarantees of security against future German aggression. The military led by Foch argued forcefully for territorial gains, buffer zones, disarmament, and so on. However, the French government encountered strong opposition from its British and American allies and ultimately abandoned its material demands, accepting in their place a tripartite pact assuring France of allied support in case of a German attack. The Treaty of Versailles, signed on June 28, 1919, was a compromise that failed to placate Germany or to protect France. The Americans then reneged on their promises to France by rejecting the Treaty of Versailles in November 1919 and again in March 1920, and the British began treating the tripartite agreement as moot. France, which had suffered the most from the war, had now lost the most in the peace.

A major material guarantee sought by France was the establishment of a buffer zone between itself and Germany. One possibility was to separate the Rhineland from Germany in order to establish an independent state that could serve as such a buffer or even be united with France.<sup>15</sup> The government and much of the French population based their hopes for union on the fact that the region was largely Roman Catholic and had been briefly joined to France under Napoleon before being connected to the German Confederation in 1815. The Rhinelanders, the French felt, had never been happy under Prussia and had a long history of close relations with France. As early as December 1918, the French government and military authorities had supported movements and conducted an intensive educational and cultural campaign—including schooling at all levels, lectures, exhibitions, and theatre—to attach the Rhinelanders intellectually and emotionally to France.<sup>16</sup> At Versailles, France's proposals for the Rhineland were rejected in favor of an extended Occupation with staggered withdrawals of the Occupation troops.

The French intentions had been made public in 1917 (King 1960: 12 f.), and the Germans were prepared to resist the plans of their traditional enemy. The German Provisional Government initiated an international campaign to discredit the French troops and to alienate them from their British, American, and Belgian comrades. The point of the attack was racist: out of 200,000 troops, France was using some 42,000 people of color—Black Africans, North Africans, and Southeast Asians—to occupy a white nation. The French intention, the Germans argued, was to humiliate them:

Die Belegung des Rheinlandes mit Farbigen war eine Kulturschande, nicht nur wegen der zahlreichen Sittlichkeitsverbrechen dieser Halbwilden, sondern auch wegen der Erniedrigung für eine weiße Rasse, Farbige als Besatzungstruppe über sich dulden zu müssen.

'Quartermen the Rhineland with coloreds was a cultural scandal, not only because of the many moral crimes of these half-savages, but also because of the humiliation for a white race to have to bear coloreds as Occupation troops over itself.'<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, they argued, the danger of the policy was international. Ritter von Eberlein stated that using people of color as occupying troops would give them a feeling of power over whites that would lead them to revolt in the colonies (1921: 2 f.); the result would be (148):

jene gewaltsame Reaktion der unterdrückten Völker...die sicherlich **den Untergang der europäischen Kultur** bedeuten würde.

‘that violent reaction of suppressed peoples...that would surely mean **the downfall of european culture.**’

During the war, German propagandists had used black troops as fearful symbols of the wrongfulness of the Allies, and this imagery persisted through the Second World War. Even Thomas Mann could write in 1915 (Hamilton 1979: 166):

A Senegalese negro, guarding German prisoners, an animal with lips as thick as cushions, passes his grey paw across his throat and gabbles: “They ought to be executed. They are barbarians.”

In 1967, an Englishwoman who had spent World War II in Germany with her Nazi husband said to me of African-American soldiers: “What do you expect when you let loose a band of savages on a civilized country!” The great fear evoked by the Germans was that of black Africans and North Africans having sex with German women. Scare stories were spread worldwide and created the intended effect, especially among Americans, whose practice of lynching forward black males was commended.<sup>18</sup>

The French authorities were caught off guard by this campaign.<sup>19</sup> For all the individual prejudice in the French population, people of color enjoyed normal public rights in France, and the government resisted the attempts of American military personnel to introduce segregation into the country. For instance, when the American military made available to the French army four regiments of African-American National Guardsmen—to avoid black combat units fighting beside American white ones—they provided the French with detailed instructions on how the soldiers should be treated according to American prejudices; the French ignored the advice (Henningsen 1980: 380 f.). In fact, the French army paid particular honors to the 15<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment of African-American troops, nicknaming them the “Hellfighters.” Colonial troops—the *zouaves*, *turcos*, and *tirailleurs indigènes*—had fought loyally for France since the 1830s, and were an important part of the self-image of the French empire, figuring heroically in patriotic illustrations. For Mangin, “la force noire” ‘the [colonial] black force’ was an essential component of “la plus grande France” ‘the most extensive France’ (McCrum 1978: 629). A government publication states that France feels “émotion et gratitude” ‘emotion and gratitude’ for its colonial troops (Ministère de la Guerre 1916: 197 f.):

accueillis en France non comme des mercenaires mais en frères d’armes, traités sur le front, aux dépôts, dans les ambulances et les hôpitaux, comme les soldats français eux-mêmes.

‘welcomed in France not as mercenaries but as brothers in arms—treated at the front, in the depots, in the ambulances and the hospitals, just like the French soldiers themselves.’

These soldiers had fought with great sacrifice during the war and had been sent into Germany as a regular part of the army, a French debt of honor to their comrades-in-arms. The French argued that their North African and Southeast Asian troops were the heirs of millennial civilizations, and that they and the Black Africans had received the traditional French education. They disputed accusations that colonial troops had been accused of sexual crimes more often than white troops, a point demonstrated by paternity figures: most illegitimate children were from American fathers, 1,851; followed by the British with 988; the white French with 767; finally, “Men of colour” were responsible for only 15.<sup>20</sup> Any accusations of sexual crimes were investigated, and convicted soldiers were punished. Rather than troops of color imposing themselves, they were themselves being chased actively and blatantly by German women.<sup>21</sup> An official enquiry for the U.S. State Department by the American commander, General Henry T. Allen, upheld the French position and characterized the outcry as a concerted German propaganda campaign.

In the detailed and—the French claimed—exaggerated German pamphlets, such as *Farbige Franzosen am Rhein* (1923), I have found no accusations made against Moroccan troops at the times and places of Charlot’s service. The Moroccan Division was famous for its discipline. In fact, the large-scale German propaganda offensive on the race question began only after April 1920, shortly before Charlot’s demobilization (Nelson 1970: 614). Charlot’s own testimony was that there was intense sexual activity among the Occupying forces and German women and that the initiators were the women, either seeking favors from the soldiers or being attracted by their marshal machismo—all power, uniforms, and boots—which he felt was a German trait. He told me a very incorrect story that was circulating among his Moroccan troops. A group of them had been invited to tea by some German women in a village. A pleasant conversation was pursued through the afternoon, but the women became increasingly restive. Finally, one of them took a noncom aside and asked, “Could you tell me please when the men begin raping?”

Charlot was in too low a station to be active in the higher politics of the Occupation, nor does any surviving evidence suggest that he participated in the tendentious French cultural activities; he was more interested in immersing himself in German culture. Charlot was inevitably aware of Separatist movements, and the little evidence available suggests that his attitude towards them was francocentric. In his copy of the journal *Feuer: Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Kunst und Künstlerische Kultur* (Year 1, Fascicle 1, October 1919: 31, 34 ff.), in the article by Alfred Flechtheim on a German artist, “Mein Freund Nauen” (28–36), Charlot marked statements that emphasized the cultural distance of the Rhineland from Berlin and its closeness to France. The artist is German, but he is trained in the “tradition française” ‘French tradition,’ in Charlot’s words in the margin (34); more precisely, Nauen “ist Rheinländer. Und die Leute vom Rhein sind Franken...” ‘is a Rhinelander. And the people from the Rhine are Franks’; Charlot’s marginal note is emphatic, “le Rhénan est un Franc” ‘the Rhinelander is a Frank.’ Indeed, Flechtheim argues that Rhinelanders appreciate modern French art better than many Frenchmen and concludes: “Deutschland wird nun Frankreichs Erbe sein” ‘Germany will be France’s

heir' (35); "Der Niederrhein wird der Erbe sein von Paris" "The lower Rhineland will be the heir of Paris' (36). Charlot has underlined both sentences, the former twice. Elsewhere, Charlot has even made a reference more pointed, paraphrasing "Wie sollten die Berliner auch die Westdeutschen verstehen?" 'How should the Berliners understand also the west Germans?' as "Berlin ne comprend pas le Rhénan" 'Berlin does not understand the Rhinelander' (31). Charlot's interest was not merely political. At the time, he was studying German art intensively and would naturally have been interested in comparisons between German and French art.

Charlot also shared the general military desire for material forms of security against any possible German resurgence. In his poem *Nous allons repartir sur les routes lorraines*, Charlot writes that his friends complain of his "militarism"; this was a term used for those French who sought material safeguards (e.g., Nelson 1975: 162). In the same poem, Charlot pits the politicians against the military: "Monsieur Renaudel déclare que Foch est fou" 'Mr. Renaudel declares that Foch is crazy.' Foch was the public champion of the military's position, and the socialist parliamentarian Pierre Renaudel (1871–1935) stands in the poem for all those who are unable to understand the military's needs.<sup>22</sup> Charlot felt that the military had a professional knowledge of its requirements and that politicians were distracted by other considerations. Charlot once told me of a between-wars parliamentary decision to fund half the thickness of armor requested by the military for their new tanks, a typically political compromise that was fatal for the tank corpsmen. Charlot also felt keenly the failure of the peace process—the Paris Peace Conference opened on January 19, 1919—which had squandered the sacrifice of the soldiers and created the new dangers that would eventuate in World War Two.

Far from the debates on the world stage, the day-to-day experience of Charlot and his unit was simply that of living among the German people and, for the officers, with German families in their own homes. Despite all the negative emotions the soldiers had brought with themselves from the war, Charlot and his unit, from the very beginning, had good relations with the German population. On arriving at their very first station, Jugenheim, Charlot wrote his mother, peppering his letter with the argot of the *poilu*:

8–1–[19]

*Jugendheim* [*sic*: Jugenheim] près Mayence

Tu vois que je ne m'étais pas trompé quant au terme du voyage.

Je te joins 2 cartes postales que je n'ai pas envoyées encore.

Ici c'est uniquement boche. Nous sommes très bien installés pour la popotte [*sic*: *popote*] ds 1 salle à manger et un salon. Nos proprios sont archi patriotes mais nous reçoivent grandement. Le père, pour nous épater, nous a offert du vin du Rhin (parfum et goût de figue) Nous lui avons répondu par du champagne.

Tu vois que nous ne reproduisons pas ici les atrocités commises en France. Je suis même étonné de l'absolue correction des soldats français.

Les habitants qui mettent de la mauvaise volonté se font d'ailleurs attraper à fond—  
Le fait ne s'est produit qu'une fois à la batterie.

B Baisers

J Charlot

January 8 [1919]

Jugenheim near Mainz

You see that I wasn't mistaken about the end of the trip.

I enclose 2 postcards that I haven't sent yet.

Here it's exclusively *boche*. We're very well installed for the mess in a dining room and a living room. Our proprietors are extreme patriots but receive us in great style.

The father, to confound us, offered us some Rhine wine (bouquet and taste of fig).

We responded to him with champagne.

You see that we don't reproduce here the atrocities committed in France. I am even astonished by the absolutely correct behavior of the French soldiers.

The inhabitants who act with bad will catch it completely—It only happened once at the battery.

Big Kisses

J Charlot

Charlot remembered living in German homes as an intercultural experience (Interview November 18, 1970):

And of course being at war with Germany, there was no relationship to the people. And going to Germany and living in German homes, of course, I met Germans, and they were human. They didn't have horns or tails. But I think that the relationship personally with Germans was more or less the average one that the French troops of occupation had with German families, who were rather nice or good to us. I remember that we were always puzzled by a sort of incomprehensibility just because we were French and because they were German. I remember that the officers—I was at the time one of them or went with them anyhow—were invited to a dinner which was obviously a sort of a feasty dinner with very good wines and so on, by one of the important people of the little town where we were. And then at the time of dessert—everybody had been drinking and so on and were in a happy mood—he got up and he said he would propose a toast. And he proposed his toast to his son who had been in the war and had been killed in such and such a place on this very day, and he had arranged that thing as an anniversary to his dead son, and he wanted soldiers to be there because his son had been a soldier. So the first idea we all had is that we had been poisoned. But not at all. He just had that respect for being a soldier as a profession and that extra respect for officers that made him feel that it was in honor of his son, that little feast. Things like that puzzled us sorely.

Charlot felt that it was his study and growing appreciation of German art that brought him closer to the German people (Interview November 18, 1970):

But my own, well, change of mind or change of heart, if you want, was not by being with the people, but with German art. German art was a tremendous impact. I had never studied it very much. I knew a few names, of course: Albrecht Dürer and so on. But I told you before how meeting some of the great masterpieces of German art taught me much more than meeting the Germans themselves. And when you admire the art of a people, of course, you admire the racial characteristics that made that art possible.

Being billeted with German families meant also that the soldiers were living in the same homes with young German women. Charlot's first drawings in Germany, dated January 10 and 12, are of:

Lotte Kuhn  
Die tochter von Karl Kuhn  
Jugendheim  
  
Lotte Kuhn  
the daughter of Karl Kuhn  
Jugendheim

In a later interview (November 18, 1970), Charlot would consent to make only a short, anodyne remark on the subject: "There were, of course, relationships to women, which were very, I would say, natural and normal, and they were rather nice, pliant things by our standards anyhow." German women, however, presented an immediate and critical problem for Charlot, which he expressed in his art, his poetry, and in a series of Meditations and prayers that he exceptionally wrote down during 1919 (the references below will be made by date). During that year, Charlot clearly needed to vent his feelings and to organize his thoughts and was using poems and prose for that purpose. The meditations are close in theme and style to the poems: a number of passages could be arranged colometrically, and poetic devices and word play are used: e.g., *Et me voici seul à nouveau dans la plaine pleine de haine* (Assumption 1919) and *Seigneur, Seigneur, l'heure leurre* (June 4, 1919). The tone is, however, personal to the point of being confessional.

Charlot had felt earlier the heightened sexual promptings of wartime and, going into the Occupation, had expressed the soldiers' excited anticipation of meeting German women in the festive peacetime atmosphere. Those expectations were largely fulfilled. Officers billeted with families were in close, daily contact with young German women, and the French army established military bordellos in the larger population centers.<sup>23</sup> More important, German women were generally throwing themselves at the French soldiers, attracted by their power, resources, and uniforms. In the 1970s, Charlot recited to me from memory the concluding lines of his poem *Au pas de nos chevaux, aux vaux Rhénans, au tôt* (July 1919), which encapsulated for him the ordinary relationships of the time:

vers ces filles neuves, verseuses de vin d'or  
dont les chairs blanches, au bruit des bottes, se couchent.  
  
'towards these new girls, pourers of golden wine  
whose white flesh, at the sound of boots, go to bed.'

The French soldiers were naturally responding, and the atmosphere was orgiastic:

et ces "vainqueurs" se disloquent, honteux troupeau  
vers quelque chambre où quelque garce se délabre. (*Maître, des casques et des  
stupres, et des sabres*, March 26, 1919)

‘and these “conquerors” dislocate themselves, shameful troop,  
towards some room where some whore ruins herself.’

The entire military community was saturated with the sexual atmosphere (October 18, 1919): “le contact  
lourd d’âmes bestiales et ces plaisanteries obscènes sur la femme” ‘the heavy contact with bestial souls and  
these obscene jokes about women.’ Charlot felt himself completely out of place:<sup>24</sup>

Pour moi, me voici au milieu des jupes—avec des jambes et des rires—et cela ne  
m’agrée point.—Je suis comme le grand-père—qui ne comprend plus que les enfants  
jouent—et pourtant je n’ai nul souvenir de pareils jeux—et n’en désire point

‘As for me, here I am surrounded by skirts—with legs and laughter—and it doesn’t fit  
me at all.—I’m like the grandfather—who no long understands that the children are  
playing—and yet I have no recollection of such games—and don’t want any’

Charlot remembered this impression vividly as in “On n’est pas parfait” of November 1, 1922:

France où l’amante est l’amie ; Angleterre, garces ;  
Allemagne, ouvertes comme de beaux fruits mûrs,

‘France where the woman lover is a friend; England, bitches;  
Germany, open like beautiful ripe fruit.’

Charlot’s companions saw that he was resisting and attempted to draw him into the party.

Charlot records one such attempt (June 27, 1919):

et lui l’ami d’autre monde, gracile parmi les gracieux (et peut-être la fourche prête  
vers sa taille ronde) m’a dit : "Cette blonde, la veux-tu"...

Il m’a dit "Prends-la" et moi de rire comme un vieillard qu’on incite à saute-mouton  
—C’est un jeu d’enfant et qui ne sied à l’âge grave et vénérable—A chaque temps son  
occupation particulière—Au païen, la danse—la chair nue et prise—mais au chrétien  
suffit son Dieu—

‘and he, the friend of the other world, gracile amid the graceful (and maybe with the  
pitchfork ready at his round waist) said to me: “This blonde, you want her?”  
He told me, “Take her,” and I laughed like an elder whom one pushes to leapfrog—  
It’s a children’s game that doesn’t fit a serious and venerable age—Each time has its  
activity—To the pagan, dance—the flesh nude and taken—but God suffices for the  
Christian—’



On this occasion, Charlot felt, not sexual temptation, but the amusement of his companions: “et tu vois, devant, il n’y a pas même eu tentation mais le rire sur ceux-ci—comme de porcs à l’auge—” ‘and you see, in front, there wasn’t even temptation but laughter on those—like pigs at the trough—’ He was aided by God’s actual grace, the infusion of power to resist a particular temptation: “tu vois, la grâce particulière et du moment suffit” ‘you see, particular grace and the grace of the moment suffice.’ He closed his eyes and found himself alone with God: “je me suis trouvé seul avec mon Dieu sur l’autel rien qu’au clos des yeux—” ‘I found myself alone with my God on the altar at the moment I closed my eyes—’ As later in Mexico, Charlot hoped that his resistance would bear witness to his faith and provide a good example (March 18, 1919):

Celui-ci est un homme semblable à nous—et le jour de cette révélation, qu’ils disent :  
“—Il n’est point chaste par impuissance”—et ils béniront Dieu sans le savoir—de  
cette force qu’Il donne aux siens—

‘This person is a man similar to us—and may they say on the day of revelation: “—  
He isn’t chaste because of infirmity”—and they will bless God without knowing it—  
through this power that He gives to His own—’

Nevertheless, Charlot was aware that he was immersed in an occasion of sin. His drawings of German women, starting with Lotte Kuhn, reveal how beautiful he found them, and his Meditations contain glowing descriptions (Assumption 1919):

Il y a ici des jeunes filles en fleur—saines et robustes avec une âme comme de grande  
vache tranquille—et du col rond des nuques grasses que découle le regard comme une  
gemme claire sur l’opulence de la poitrine saine, les reins vastes et durs, la ligne du  
dos docile le jeu d’élastiques chairs—Elles ont la simplicité de marcher nu-pieds  
souvent et la plante plate l’orteil habile meublent et répercutent l’âme comme le jeu  
des doigts et des mains—

‘There are here young women in flower—healthy and robust with a soul like a big,  
quiet cow—and from the round neck with its fat nape, how the gaze flows like a  
glowing gem onto the opulence of the healthy breast, the loins vast and hard, the line  
of the docile back, the play of elastic flesh—They have the simplicity to walk often  
barefoot, and the flat sole and able toe ornament and reverberate their soul like the  
play of the fingers and the hands—’

From his early adolescence, Charlot was intensely attracted to women: “une frénésie me vient de cette possession plausible possible—” ‘a frenzy comes to me from this plausible, possible possession’ (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*, “Son Etat Actuel,” September 1922). In a poem written in November 1924 in Mexico (*On a beau les bourrer avec des connaissances*), Charlot will write of resisting sexual temptation:

Ça n’est pas rigolo surtout pour un esthète ;  
La femme est ce qu’on trouve de plus près du beau

‘That isn’t fun, especially for an esthete;

The woman is what one finds the nearest to the beautiful’

When he was seventy-nine-years old, Charlot told me in conversation that Captain James Cook *must* have had sex, as reported in a Hawaiian text, with a Kaua‘i princess because she was so beautiful and willing. I said, “You have to realize, hard as it is, that some people just aren’t interested in sex.” “Ah,” he said, “I have to admit that, for that, I’m an animal.”

Charlot’s poems are explicit about the sexual temptations he was experiencing. In *Maître*, *Maître, voici l’heure orde et nuageuse* (March 19, 1919), he writes “ma chair est jeune au vieux désir” ‘my flesh is young with old desire’:

cette fille, elle a des chairs blanches. Ses cils gueusent  
un regard, (son col dur et rond comme l’œuf)  
son rire rouge est comme une plaie et tel l’œuf  
vide, sa phrase tinte aux chaleurs des muqueuses.

Elle est bestiale, avec des trilles d’oiselet,  
sa chair est là contre mes reins, si je pouvais  
préférer son masque ivre à votre Face austère.....

‘this girl, she has white flesh. Her eyelashes cage  
a look (her neck, hard and round like a leather ball),  
her red laugh is like a wound, and like an empty egg,  
her talk tinkles in the heat of the mucous membranes.

She is animal, with the trills of a little bird,  
her flesh is there against my loins. If only I could  
prefer her drunken mask to Your austere Face...’

In “*ne désirer l’œuvre de chair qu’en mariage*” (March 19, 1919), he writes of the resurgence of his adolescent temptations, especially the olfactory:

et pourtant je regrimpe aux anciens jours fiévreux  
et pourtant le sel bat les dents, les doigts fiévreux  
la sueur de l’aisselle et le creux de la cuisse.

‘and yet I climb again the old, feverish days,  
and yet the salt hits the teeth, the feverish fingers,  
the sweat of the armpit and the hollow of the thighs.’

The temptations are clearly intense: “mes mains veulent des peaux, mes dents quêtent des bouches” ‘my hands want skin, my teeth seek mouths.’<sup>25</sup> Charlot’s Meditations are equally explicit and begin immediately at Jugenheim:

Horreur ! Voici toute cette chair autour de moi—blanche révoltée et prisonnière—Et il n’y a pas moyen de la délivrer et de lui parler comme l’ami—car eux, sur elle, des mots obscènes.—Et je n’en parlerai plus devant eux—parce qu’ils se rient—et de cette chair en fleur—font la boue—... et j’ai plaisir à considérer cette mécanique céleste—fleurissante sur ce terreau d’Allemagne—et que je sois venu de si loin, de la Ville grise—la regarder se mouvoir et pétiller et que je ne la posséderai point—mais nul autre—sinon celui—buveur de bière—qui a tué mes frères-là-bas.—et il me plaît l’avoir à mon côté, lisante—avec des mots pleins la bouche, mâchés contre moi  
(January 10, 1919)

‘Horror! Here is all this flesh around me—white, in revolt, and imprisoned—And there is no way to free her and to speak with her like a friend—for they, about her, obscene words.—And I will no long speak in front of them—because they laugh at me—and of this flesh in flower—make mud—...and I take pleasure in considering this celestial mechanism—flowering on this bit of German earth—and that I’ve come so far, from the gray city—to see her move and bubble, and that I will not possess her—but no other—unless he—drinker of beer—who has killed my friends back there.—and I’m happy to have her at my side, reading—her mouth full of words, mashed against me’

Voici plus grave—Satan—noir et cornu et riant. Il me présente ces chairs chaudes—ces anatomies parfaites et créées—et je sais qu’il n’y a qu’à étendre les doigts—et toutes ces chairs dans ma paume—et le rire—et le jeu des lèvres et des jambes...  
Comme la truie et le porc accouplés—moi et cette pensée charnelle— (June 4, 1919)

‘Here is something more serious—Satan—black and horned and laughing. He presents this hot flesh to me—these perfect and created anatomies—and I know that I only have to reach out my fingers—and all this flesh in my palm—and the laughter—and the play of lips and legs...’

Like coupled pigs—me and this carnal thought—’

Me voici libre et je regarde autour de moi—de droite, de gauche, de tous côtés—dans ma paume il y a de beaux bouquets d’or—et proches, mais glacés comme d’une vitre—de beaux corps et seins de jeunes filles naïves—

Et voilà ce que je voulais Vous dire : A nouveau mon regard jeûne vers ces corps qui ne sont pas de mon sexe—le durcissement bestial du phallus—et ce petit frisson à fleur de peau comme du chat qui se gratte—A nouveau mon corps comme une branche d’aubépines—pleine d’épines mais bien vive—mais il n’y a plus la fièvre lascive et moite des seize ans— (August 1919)

‘Here I am free and I look around me—right, left, on every side—in my hand are beautiful, golden bouquets—and near, but glazed as if by a window pane—beautiful bodies and breasts of naïve young women—

And here is what I want to say to You: Anew my gaze fasts towards these bodies who

aren't of my sex—the bestial hardening of the phallos—and this little shiver along the surface of my skin like a cat that scratches itself—Anew my body like a thorny branch—full of very lively thorns—but it no longer has the lascivious and clammy fever of sixteen—'

Charlot was surprised at the strength of the temptations he was feeling (July 29, 1919): "Mais pourquoi est-ce que vous m'avez donné ce sang rouge et chaud—cet élan vierge cette Force !" 'But why have you given me this red, hot blood—this virginal impulse, this Power!' As he analyzed his feelings, he saw that they arose in part from his "imagination débordante" 'overflowing imagination' and his desire for new experiences (June 27, 1919): "Que je n'ai point la curiosité de l'adolescence mais la niaiserie du premier âge" 'That I don't have the curiosity of adolescence but the foolishness of the first state of life.' Despite his religious convictions, he was drawn to experiment in actions that he recognized were sinful:

Seigneur voici ma petite cervelle toute bourrée de votre réalité—mais qui (plaisamment) se voudrait rendre compte elle-même des néants humains.

...

Et que vous soyez mort pour nous—et que nous continuions à errer vers la Bestiale—  
Et que vous nous ayez dévoilé le Père—et que Satan nous tente encore— (June 4, 1919)

'Lord, here is my little brain completely stuffed with your reality—but which (pleasantly) would like itself to account for all these human nullities.

That you are dead for us—and that we continue to wander towards the Bestial—  
That you have revealed the Father—and that Satan tempts us still—'

Charlot was also feeling a great need for companionship and comfort. In a Meditation,<sup>26</sup> he sees himself surrounded by men while God is in his heart. Yet, "j'ai tant soif d'amitié !" 'I'm so thirsty for friendship!' He would so like to hold a woman, but the relationships of the time would not allow him to have a genuine human contact:

Il y en moi un grand désir de presser contre ma poitrine—et il y a beaucoup de jeunes filles qui s'offrent—mais ça ne serait pas du tout ça—comme êtreindre un mannequin dans l'armature de bois rigide—

'Such a great desire is in me to press someone against my breast—and there are lots of young women who offer themselves—but it wouldn't be it at all—like hugging a mannequin with its armature of rigid wood—'

He cannot have a pet, and his military companions recoil the moment he reveals the religious conflicts he is feeling:

et l'homme, dès que mon cœur bondit, timide—dès qu'il voit que je ne suis pas comme lui mais une partie dans Dieu et l'autre désirante—Il s'effare—parce qu'il est bien avec lui-même—il se suffit à lui-même—

‘and the man, the moment my heart bounds up, timid—the moment he sees that I am not like him but partly in God and the other part in desire—He’s afraid—because he’s very comfortable with himself—and suffices for himself—’

As a result, Charlot is withdrawing into himself behind a façade that leaves him in his loneliness:

et mon âme se retire comme la sensitive froissée—et il n’y a plus de moi que le masque rigide et vide (si peu moi !) et en moi ce grand sanglot de solitude qui brame

—  
‘and my soul draws back like a sensitive woman rubbed the wrong way—and nothing remains of me but the rigid and empty mask (so little the real me!) and in me this big groan of solitude that cries like an animal in heat—’

He feels himself alone with Christ but is still unhappy; he desires Christ in some human form:

Non que je sois seul avec Vous (qui me suffit)—mais j’aimerais si bien en Vous ceux-ci vêtus de corps—et j’aurais toute la mimique de l’amour quoique non-apprise et il me semble que je serais l’ami qui aime... (July 29, 1919)

‘Not that I be alone with You (which would be enough for me)—but I would like so well to have in You these men clothed in bodies—and I would have all the mimicry of love, although unlearned, and it seems to me that I would be the friend who loves...’

L’heure est venue de me "résigner" à Vous—puisqu’il est dit que nulle créature ne Vous prévaudra—qu’il est *certain* que nulle création ne dépassera le Créateur. Et pourtant Vous semblez pauvre et borne, croix d’1<sup>m</sup>50 de haut face à la Terre multiple et riche— (Assomption 1919)

‘The hour has come to “resign” myself to You—since it is said that no creature can prevail against You—that it is *certain* that no creation can surpass the Creator. And yet you seem poor and limited, a cross five feet high facing the Earth, multiple and rich— (Feast of the Assumption 1919)’

Charlot is feeling conflict both between himself and his group and also inside himself (*Seigneur, seigneur, voyez ces choses sans vergogne*, between March and May 1919):

Ils boivent, dorment, baisent, rient. voila ces gens  
et mon âme est parmi eux, vierge et désirante.

‘They drink, sleep, screw, laugh. That’s how they are  
and my soul is among them, virginal and full of desire.’

Christ makes a better companion and perhaps a help against temptation:<sup>27</sup>

O seul Hôte possible—Vous voici en popotte avec nous—assis et causant plus et mieux qu’aucun autre soit—Qu’ils prennent dans les plats avec leurs doigts et s’empiffrant roulent ivres—mais à nous deux une conversation à jamais délectable—polie et pensante—

‘O only possible Host—here You are in our mess—seated and talking more and better than anyone else at all—Let them eat with their fingers and, stuffing themselves, roll drunk on the ground—but for us two, a forever delectable conversation—polite and thoughtful—’

Yet Charlot desires the physical body, the human companion.<sup>28</sup> His religion is leaving him alone and lonely with Christ: “et me voici seul à nouveau—dans votre Rire inextinguible !” ‘and here I am alone again—inside your inextinguishable Laughter!’<sup>29</sup>

Even without the efforts of his friends, Charlot was being pursued by women. He felt he was a special target because of his better education and social graces, but most especially because of his officer’s uniform:<sup>30</sup>

Et je puis jouer au freluquet—l’écusson d’or au col, l’épée sonnante, et le talon dans l’étrier—et renâcle le cheval et s’ébroue—sous la fenêtre de celle qui sait—  
‘And I can play the conceited young blade—gold badge on collar, rattling sword, and boot in stirrup—make the horse snort and whinny—under the window of the woman who knows—’

In the first stanza of a poem of March 26, 1919, he draws a picture of the atmosphere:

Maître, des casques et des stupres, et des sabres  
dans ce terreau fleuri de vignes, blanc de peaux.  
Ce galon d’or qui prend les filles à l’appeau.  
Ce lit étroit où leurs reins révoltés se cabrent.  
  
‘Master, helmets and debaucheries, and sabers  
in this land flowering with vines, white with flesh.  
This gold galloon that lures the girls into the trap.  
This narrow bed where their reacting loins rear up.’

The temptation of pride is joined to that of sex (October 18, 1919): “est-ce que Dieu se révèle aux personnes de ta condition—qui ont l’or aux manches, l’orgueil au cœur—” ‘does God reveal Himself to persons of your condition—who have gold on their sleeves, pride in their heart—.’ Charlot was feeling for the first time the connection between sex and power (August 1919): “cette connaissance orgueilleuse de ma Force et de ma condition—” ‘this proud knowledge of my Power and of my condition—.’ Charlot described a scene perhaps on his first night of his billet in the home of the Kuhn family; the description fits the drawings of Lotte Kuhn (January 8, 1919):

O la brave petite—sa chair pleine et saine—grasse de nuque et de menton—sa poitrine maternelle—et ses nattes rondes.—Je disais au père "La France au-dessus de tout"—Elle m’a cinglé au visage—de mots roides—Et lui aux lèvres fines—aux mains exercées—le Français svelte—il lui a demandé ses chants d’Allemagne—(comme à la captive contrainte—un baiser) Elle les lui a donnés—comme on mord—et sa poitrine bondissante et souffletée—sa face de haine—ses gestes rudes—disaient

l'amour du Vaterland—où il y a manger—et de beaux hommes blonds (et ceux-ci tués en France). et la fécondité femelle—l'odeur du foin et des chairs enfantines. Elle bondissait comme la chienne dont on tient les petits—et le Français vainqueur—la sentait dans sa poigne, féroce moite et close, comme la chienne aux lèvres troussées hargneuse—que le maître frappe au museau.

Ils m'ont assailli—Je les tiens à la nuque—et il est juste de serrer, afin qu'ils se souviennent—et ne recommencent pas.

'O brave little one—her flesh full and healthy—nape and chin fat—her breasts maternal—her braids round.—I said to the father, "France over all"—She lashed out at my face—stiff words—And he with his thin lips—his practiced hands—the slim Frenchman—he asked her for her songs of Germany—(like a constrained captive—a kiss). She gave them to him—bitingly—her breast heaving and breathless—her face full of hate—her gestures rude—spoke of the love of the Fatherland—where there's enough to eat—and beautiful blond men (and those killed in France). and female fecundity—the smell of straw and infant flesh. She jumped up like a bitch when someone takes her puppies—and the conquering Frenchman—felt her in his fist—ferocious, clammy and closed—like a snarling bitch with bound lips—whom her master beats on the muzzle.

They have attacked me—I hold them by the neck—and it's just to squeeze so that they remember—and don't start again.'

Although nothing untoward appeared on Charlot's surface, he makes clear his inner state. Just beginning the Occupation, Charlot feels himself the conqueror—"Frankreich über Alles"—and repeats unconsciously the cruel demand for a song made to the Israelite exiles as they wept by the waters of Babylon (Psalm 137). The tone disappears after this from his writings, but the sadistic references typical of Roman Catholic devotionalism—the Crucifixion, the torturing of saints—are used in his religious poems of this period, suggesting a momentary, unconscious connection between power, sadism, and sex.<sup>31</sup> In any case, Charlot was clearly entering into a state of mind and a set of emotions that were entirely new to him.

Beyond his uniform, Charlot was realizing perhaps for the first time that he was attractive to women (June 27, 1919):

de galbe j'étais beau—dans la tenue neuve—la cravate clouée d'or—le menton glabre—et la ligne svelte des reins éphèbes—et autour ça s'agitait—

'in outline, I was good looking—in a new uniform—my tie-pin gold—my chin clean-shaven—and the svelte lines of an ephebe's loins—and all around, agitation—'

As a result, his view of his own body was changing. Whereas before the war he saw it as weak and vulnerable and even wrote of it in feminine terms, following Catholic mystical rhetoric, he now saw himself as battle-hardened and emphatically, even hyperbolically, male:

Et c'est pourquoi voici ces membres et ce torse :  
dents avides, génitaux durs, paumes retorses,  
os, derme, muscles, nerfs, cotés, bornés, pourris. (*Seigneur, seigneur, voici mon corps,*  
*et puis ce don*, May 4, 1919)

'And that is why are here these limbs and this torso:  
avid teeth, hardened genitals, devious palms,  
bone, skin, muscles, nerves, sides, limited, rotten.'

He puts aside the old image and, in order to resist temptation, takes on those of a robust armored warrior and a powerful draught horse (March 18, 1919):

Maintenant Dieu t'a mis devant tout ce peuple d'animaux—et il te faut revêtir  
l'armure—tu n'es plus la vierge fileuse—mais robuste (*il le faut*)—le percheron  
solide aux cuisses.

'Now God has placed you before all these animal-like people—and you have to put  
on your armor—you are no longer the sewing virgin—but robust (*it is necessary*)—  
the solid draft horse under your thighs.'

He is the same person but is now acutely aware of his male organ (August 1919): "et ce corps petit et poilu, doté d'un ventre énorme—et les boutons et crevasses de la face" 'and this little hairy body, endowed with an enormous belly—and the pimples and lines of the face.' Charlot's belly had not grown to enormity; he is using a euphemism similar to the nineteenth-century English practice of using *neck* for *bust*.

Charlot depicted this new image of himself in his finished gouache *L'Occupation* of July 29, 1919.<sup>32</sup> Seen in profile, a slim uniformed French soldier—in all likelihood a self-portrait—sits astride an immense draught horse whose surging, muscular body and raised head express all the virility latent in the confident, straight-backed but relaxed soldier. The phallic imagery is stressed in the front of the saddle which emerges from under the soldier's loins and also by an erect rock formation in the background under the horse's loins. Charlot will later use phallic imagery in two erotic doodles on the same sheet as the drawing *Young Woman of Rheingönheim* of July 28 to August 1919. For the first time, during the Occupation, sexual symbolism becomes significant in Charlot's work; it will become a major theme many years later in Hawai'i. The use of the draught horse as a symbol of virility is clear from the Meditation of March 18, 1919, cited above. Moreover, the soldier holds a rose in his teeth—an image found in a publication of the time<sup>33</sup>—and wears the spurred boots Charlot found were so attractive to German women; both spurs and boots are mentioned in Charlot's poem of the same month, *Au pas de nos chevaux, aux vaux Rhénans, au tôt*, quoted above. The gouache is based on the patriotic folk prints Charlot had already used as a basis for the Ste. Barbe Series, but the large areas of painterly wash suggest that it was not a preparation for a print (which Charlot's comrades would certainly have appreciated), but a finished work. The colors are few but used with finesse: the horse's brown and ruddy coat articulating its musculature; the saturated blue of the uniform thinning into the stirrups, cinch, and background; an almost imperceptible yellow outline against the creamy paper; the whiter highlights on hooves and



helmet, and the rose forming a highlight not through the intensity of its color but through its uniqueness in the image. Charlot achieves his goal of using subliminally the finest artistic devices in order to create an image with all the strength and legibility of popular art.

Charlot dedicated his new body to God and hoped that its strength would help him in resisting temptation. He also prayed for strength: “Apaisez la Bête, Seigneur—et le cochon qui sommeille, ne le réveillez point—” ‘Calm the Beast, Lord—and don’t wake up the sleeping pig—.’<sup>34</sup> In his poem *et qu’un baiser royal recule le mot louche* (June 9, 1919), he prays:

ôtez des yeux l’orteil qu’agace la babouche  
ôtez des dents le goût du derme chaud pétri  
ôtez des reins l’ardeur des reins ; Daignez un tri  
dans ce cerveau, ces yeux, ces mains et cette bouche.

‘remove from your eyes the toe that the slipper irritates  
remove from your teeth the taste of warm, kneaded skin  
remove from your loins the ardor of loins; Grant a sorting out  
in this brain, these eyes, these hands, and this mouth.’

Charlot was receiving the help of a spiritual director, whom he described as physically repugnant—so different from the German women—and a horrible speaker of French (July 29, 1919):

Il est chauve et niais et pue des pieds—et ses lèvres sont comme des crevasses  
mauves—et son front de rides rigides torturé—O les ongles de deuil—les dents de  
crasse—mais surtout la belle langue de France le doux parler—il l’écache et l’arrache  
d’entre ses dents—comme il de l’ongle.—la fibre des viandes mâchées.  
Voici pourtant mon directeur—Vous lui mîtes aux mains la crosse dans ce but tout  
spécial de me guider un an. Et c’est comme s’il avait la tonsure et la sandale pourpre  
—et je m’incline devant sa Face de Maître—

‘He is bald and foolish and his feet smell—and his lips are like red crevices—and his  
brow is tortured with rigid folds—O the fingernails in mourning black—the teeth  
black with dirt—but above all the language of France, the sweet speech—he grinds  
and tears it between his teeth—as he does his fingernails.—the fibre of chewed meat.  
He is, nonetheless, my spiritual director—You put the Cross into his hands with this  
very special purpose of guiding me for a year. And it is as if he had the tonsure and  
the purple sandal—and I bow before his Master Face—’

Charlot used theology to help himself, comparing a poor image of the earthly body to that of the glorified body after the resurrection:<sup>35</sup>

absurdité, banalité de cette chair  
pendue au tétin flasque, aux chairs molles des lices  
mais reflurir, lucide et lilial, et clair !

‘absurdity, banality of this flesh  
hung from the flabby teat, with bundled flesh  
but bound to rebloom, lucid, lily, and clear!’

All things except God deceive in their promises of joy:

Vanité : Chercher quelque chose hors de soi.  
En quel temps, en quels lieux trouverons-nous l’extase  
vins bus, livres fermés, chairs prises, tout déçoit. (*Vous avez mis mes pieds au creux  
de bien des pistes*, September 15, 1919)

‘Vanity: To look for something outside oneself.  
At what time, in what places will we find ecstasy  
drunk wines, closed books, flesh taken, everything disappoints.’

Unusually, Charlot even grasped backwards for his Thomist philosophy (February 20, 1919):

O mon ami voici ces créatures à nouveau—mais tu as confiance et tu sais qu’elles  
sont des signes... Ici il n’y a point de noir en place de blanc mais la matière borne et  
enveloppe d’un ordre spirituel

‘O my friend, here are these creatures again—but you are confident and you know  
that they are signs... Here there is no black in place of white, but limited matter, the  
envelop of a spiritual order’

These anti-material Catholic teachings were standard means of strengthening resistance to sexual temptation, and Charlot was clearly familiar with them. He did not, however, develop them in his writings because of his unconventional perspective as an artist, who uses “a specialized channel of sensuous reactions—the stock-in-trade of the maker of Fine Arts” (*Born Catholics* 1954: 96). In his undated notes on Greek art, he copied the text: “Parrhasius peignit ce tableau, il aima le plaisir et pratiqua la vertu...” ‘Parrhasius painted this picture. He loved pleasure and practiced virtue....’ Charlot could in fact articulate more positive views of the body in his received theological terms, for instance, in “*Obligation de connaître Dieu*” n.d. (probably in Mexico in the early 1920s):

Créatures : Je jouis beaucoup de la beauté, j’*aime* la beauté dans les créatures  
physiques.

Cette attraction très forte est préfigure de celle, infiniment plus forte que j’aurai  
(quand je la verrai) pour la beauté du Créateur.

Je dois lui être reconnaissant de cette jouissance de la beauté, laquelle (indirectement)  
est l’amour sensible de Lui, que n’arrive pas à susciter en moi l’idée de sa perfection.

‘Creatures: I very much enjoy beauty, I *love* beauty in physical creatures.

This very strong attraction is a prefigurement of the one, infinitely stronger, that I will  
have (when I see it) for the beauty of the Creator.

I must be grateful to him for this enjoyment of beauty, which is (indirectly) the

sensible love of Him, that the idea of his perfection does not succeed in arousing in me.’

In *La création a été assujettie à la vanité* of June 2, 1926, he writes:

Le péché originel fut péché intellectuel de l’homme *pensant* (savoir le bien et le mal) et le corps fut instrument, comme la pomme. Il est donc virtuellement dans le même état de sainteté, qu’avant la faute mais dévié aux fins humaines viciées. Quand fin de l’homme identifiée à fins de Dieu le virtuel se réalise : Le corps devient corps glorieux, *qui est sa vraie figure*. réalisé partiellement en vie dans les Saints.

Pratiquement : Donner à notre corps la règle la plus sainte est nous approcher de sa vraie condition de vie, nullement le maltraiter mais le réjouir

‘Original sin was an intellectual sin of the *thinking* man (to know good and evil), and the body was the instrument, like the apple. He is thus virtually in the same state of sanctity as before the sin, but diverted towards corrupted, human ends. When the ends of man are identified with the ends of God, the virtual becomes real: The body becomes the glorious body, *which is its true form*. Realized partially in life in the Saints. Practically: To give to our body the holiest rule is to bring us close to its real condition of life, in no way to mistreat it but to make it rejoice.’

For Charlot, art was always connected to sensuality and, from his first oil painting of the cook at Poissy, had occasionally been connected to sexuality as well. When I interviewed my father on this period of his life, I asked him about the conflict I saw in his poems between religion and sensuality; he replied:

Well, I don’t know what problem you speak about because, of course, we live through our senses. I think the problem that arose was not sensuality in general but sensuality in my own business as an artist. I had been a sculptor, I was a painter, and those things refine the senses, either the textural approach or the visual approach. Those things are in themselves, are by definition, sensuous, and I realized that sensuality as such was completely part of my vocation, of my vocation as an artist, that I couldn’t do what some people do and let go of sensuality... I had no right to let go of sensuality, which was part of my trade. And I think that is where the problem really came in, because I took myself very seriously in my vocation as an artist, and that was directly one of the means to perfect my vocation, was the senses, and I couldn’t really stop them. They had to go on, they had to, well, sense things, either, again, textures, colors, and so on and so forth, otherwise I would not have been a good artist. It wasn’t a question of refusing the world. There was no question of doing that. I couldn’t do it, otherwise I couldn’t have done my art, and that is where the problem came in. (Interview October 10 1970)

Charlot rejected a priestly vocation in Mexico when he learned that the priest in charge:

would have put me through a training where the senses would have been weakened, so to speak, and I realized that I had no right to do that, no right to accept that, so of course I remained in the world.

As an artist, therefore, Charlot had to cultivate his senses, not dull them or reject them. Sensuality, however, opened Charlot to sexual feelings, which were severely restricted by his religion:

subjugue ton désir multiple et maraudeur,  
ton imagination trop prompte à l'alarme ;  
Eteins-toi, volupté, couleur, mémoire, odeur. (*Pour mes vingt ans*, February 8, 1918)

'subjugate your multiple and marauding desire,  
your imagination too prompt to be alarmed;  
Extinguish yourself, voluptuousness, color, memory, odor.'

Charlot would eventually solve for himself the dilemma of being a Catholic artist—both intensely sensual and intensely religious—but the tensions would be acute and central throughout his youth.

Charlot also turned towards a simple pleasure in the beauty of nature as a means of distracting his mind from sexuality. Although Charlot was always a lover of nature, the specifically anti-sexual purpose suggests that this exercise was the advice of his spiritual director. Nonetheless, he was deriving comfort from feeling his connection with nature. In the poem *Maître, Maître, pourquoi naître à ces nouveaux aîtres* (March 21, 1919), he writes: "Je veux vivre plus clair et nu que cette plante" 'I want to live more clear and naked than this plant.' In his long devotional poem *L'Enfant Prodigue* (May 10, 1919), the father gives the same advice to the Prodigal Son:

l'art qui libère la chair saine  
des prisons  
et des suggestions d'obscènes  
horizons.

*Sois simple* tel l'oiseau qui niche  
dans les bois.

art which liberates the healthy flesh  
from prisons  
and suggestions of obscene  
horizons.

*Be simple* like the bird that nests  
in the woods.'

In *Seigneur voici le temps de m'éjouir en Vous*,<sup>36</sup> Charlot finds the solace he is seeking. The day is sunny, the sky is blue:

il fut un temps où je pleurais de désirs fous.  
Maintenant tout me contente. Rires. Dimanches.  
Cloches au ciel, prière. travail. une hanche  
ronde. du pain. Tout est candide. rien n'est fou.

Votre Création est claire comme un geste  
d'enfant...

there was a time I wept from mad desires.  
Now everything contents me. Laughter. Sundays.  
Bell towers against the sky, prayer. work. a round  
hip. some bread. Everything is frank and guileless. nothing is mad.

Your Creation is clear like a child's  
gesture...'

Charlot also used his old defenses against sexual temptation. He counters sexual attraction with the thought of death:

mes doigts joyeux comme l'abeille au creux d'asters  
rident dans la chair chaude aux révolutions baroques.

J'ai dit: "Ce cahuteau charnel, la mort s'y choque..." (*Or je considèrai : ce corps blanc qui me froque*, n.d.)

my fingers joyous like a bee in the aster's hollow  
laughed amid the hot flesh with its baroque responses.

I said, "This carnal shack, death crashes against it..."

A more characteristic defense against temptation was Charlot's effort to see women as full human beings rather than sex objects, an effort that had begun with his first stirrings of sexuality: women were mothers, sisters, and wives. Women had souls as well as bodies (January 10, 1919): "la belle chose, de Dieu bâtie—Il y a joint une petite âme pétulante" 'the beautiful thing, built by God—He has joined to it a little, petulant soul.' Their sexuality had a purpose: "celle-ci blanche et chaude, construite pour la maternité" 'this one white and warm, constructed for maternity.' In the religious context, he should see women as living a full human life (February 4, 1919):

Ah ! Seigneur qu'il fait bon avec Vous. laissez-moi me retirer avec Vous—ne me condamnez point à leur société—la parole factice—la lèvre aussi—Qu'elle ferait mieux comme fille de ferme—et moi dans la prière—

‘O Lord, how good it is with You. Let me retire with You—don’t condemn me to their company—the word false—the lip also—She would do better as a farm girl—and I in prayer—’

Charlot’s long poem of September 1919, *Des femmes que j’ai rencontrées en Allemagne spécialement de Rheingonheim et Eppstein*, was given the subtitle: *Prière générale pour avoir le goût vrai de la femme* ‘General prayer to have a true taste in regards women.’ In the section on public prostitutes, he writes:

C’était le plus souvent de bonnes ménagères  
des femmes qui avaient roulé dans la misère  
J’ai souvenir d’une maternelle et amère.

Pour qui n’est pas client elles ont des trésors  
d’expérience et vont bestiales vers la Mort  
comme des bœufs qu’on pousse au travail d’un dard fort

‘They were most often good homemakers  
women who had rolled in misery  
I remember one who was maternal and bitter.

For the person who isn’t a client, they have treasures  
of experience and go like animals towards Death  
like cattle pushed to work with a strong prod’

He compares them favorably to hypocritical bourgeois women, and asks Mary, the Mother of God, to help him see herself in all women:

"Faites que je révère en la femme Marie  
en tout ventre Celui qui de Vous fut marri,  
en toute gorge celle où Vos dents se marient.

...

que je regarde en face, et goûte la dent sûre  
la femme, Votre très semblable créature."

“Make me revere Mary in the woman,  
in each belly, the one You made suffer,  
in each throat, the one to which Your teeth clung.

...

may I look full in the face and taste the woman,  
the tooth sure, Your very resembling creature.”

In his devotional poem of December 5, 1919, *Annonciation*, he uses the same phrase of Mary as he did of prostitutes: she was a “bonne ménagère” ‘good homemaker.’

Similarly, Charlot also reminded himself often of his ideal of marriage, or of a single career, or even of the priesthood (February 3, 1919):

Et moi qui veux être fiancé à lui—ou à une bonne femme ménagère  
Et peut-être qu'il y a une bonne femme au bout—et des petits enfants plein les jambes  
—et peut-être il n'y a que la passion de la couleur—et le Christ au chevet—et peut-  
être le sacerdoce—âpre et doux—j'ignore—

'And I who want to be engaged to him—or to a good woman home builder  
And maybe there is a good woman at the end—and little children underfoot—and  
maybe there is only the passion of color—and Christ at the bedside—and maybe the  
priesthood—bittersweet—I don't know—'

God had to be a part of such a union:

Qu'en vous Dieu vienne, ami blanc d'âme au corps  
svelte, et que nos trois cœurs battent d'accord. (*Distique*, n.d.)

'May God come in you, a friend with a white soul in a svelte body,  
and our three hearts will beat in harmony.'

In his devotional poem *L'Enfant prodigue* (May 10, 1919), sexual correctness is joined to family devotion:

à se remémorer las, l'âge  
lilial  
de la chair vierge et du visage  
filial

'to recall, tired,  
the lily age  
of virgin flesh  
and filial face'

Charlot's experience in his own family was still an aid for him in living correctly.

More specific to the Occupation was Charlot's view that sexual indulgence was a betrayal of the war effort and those who had died. In the poem *Maître, des casques et des stupres, et des sabres* (March 23, 1919), he writes: "Ils ont crucifié la Victoire aux gestes glabres" 'They have crucified the Victory with smooth gestures.' How can he imbibe when he thinks of those "qui ne trinquent plus parce qu'ils n'ont plus de bouches" 'who booze no longer because they have no mouths'? Sexual exploitation can be compared to those Bolsheviks, Monarchists, and profiteers who have exploited the peace (*la France saigne à toute artère, ridicule*, December 8, 1919): "Vierges, nous t'offrirons, France, nos cœurs raillés" 'Virgins, we offer you, France, our mocked hearts.' The disruption of sexual license is ultimately dangerous for the whole society (July 29, 1919): "ou sinon toute la hiérarchie à l'envers, la France perdue —" 'or else all the hierarchy turned upside down, France lost—.'

In the middle of this moral struggle, Charlot managed to keep his sense of humor, finding his state childish and pathetic (June 4, 1919):

Ayez pitié de ma prière comique et triste—de s’appliquer à des choses si nulles—et de l’importance qu’elles ont sur ma route.

O l’humoresque prière, la bouche qui rit et l’oeil lourd de larmes—

Pity my comical, sad prayer—to apply oneself to such nothings—and of the importance they have on my journey.

O the humoresque prayer, the mouth that laughs and the eye heavy with tears—’

His poem *Seigneur voici venu le temps des sécheresses* (September 1919) coupled his resisting temptation to the eventual triumph of Christianity; Charlot later crossed it out and noted “(idiot !).” Similarly, just as for his earlier poems, his expressions of anguish and alienation during the Occupation must be balanced with the happier expressions of the time.

One of Charlot’s most important efforts to analyze his relations with German women was his long poem written in September 1919, while he was traveling to Souges: *Des femmes que j’ai rencontrées en Allemagne spécialement de Rheingonheim et Eppstein*, to which I will refer in this discussion as *Des femmes*. He begins by establishing his social position as an officer: “Comme j’étais un officier lourd de galons” ‘As I was a young officer heavy with galloons.’ He then describes his relationship with various types of women as well as individual women. With prostitutes, he felt his relations were impure, although they did not go so far as sexual contact. He felt great sympathy for them because of the misery they were experiencing and appreciated their good qualities as housewives who were maternal with the men. He sought to revere in them Mary the Mother of God and, as in his earlier *Madeleine* poems, saw them as souls to be respected and saved. In a Meditation (Assumption 1919), he describes the attraction and repulsion he experienced encountering a prostitute:

Et cette autre Belle-du-Soir, connue au bord du Réverbère—avec ses dents pointues et mauvaises, la narine sémite, le puits nocturne d’yeux magnifiques ! Ce corps cambre, savant d’attaches, ces gants blancs à ces doigts suburbains, le verbe rieur et noble—Je me suis penché sur elle un instant mais cabré Je me redresse et je fuis collée aux naseaux l’odeur du soufre !

‘And that other Beauty-of-the-Evening, known on the edge of the Streetlamp—with her bad and pointed teeth, Semite nose, the night-well of magnificent eyes! This body arches, knowing its reins, these white gloves on these suburban fingers, the verb smiling and noble—I inclined an instant towards her, but straightened up, I pull myself together and flee, the smell of sulphur stuck to my nostrils!’

In another Meditation (March 18, 1919), he writes of his kissing of a woman when his soldier friends put him up to it:

et je me laisse embobiner aux cocasseries des hommes—qui se gonflent du jeu de l’amour—pour dire ces femmes perdues—



‘I let myself be deceived by the antics of the men—who puff themselves up with the game of love—that is to say, these lost women—’

His assessment of the event is mature and balanced:

Demande la force qui est 1/7 des dons de l’Esprit !—Et ne te trouble point d’avoir embrassé cette fille—ne t’embarrasse point de ta chair flairant sa chair proche—(et il n’y a rien là que d’humain.)

Tu as cru devoir le faire, tu l’as fait—peut-être ne le ferais-tu pas maintenant—ne t’inquiète point de ce que tant de questions proposées—sur la minute—tu ne les résolves point toutes heureusement.

‘Ask for strength, which is one seventh of the Gifts of the Spirit!—And don’t trouble yourself about kissing that girl—don’t be at all embarrassed at your flesh sensing her near flesh—(there is nothing there but the human).

You thought you had to do it, and you did it—maybe you wouldn’t do it now—don’t disturb yourself with so many questions raised—at the moment—you won’t resolve them all happily.’

This type of experience accords with his prayer (February 2, 1919): “Protégez-moi Seigneur pendant la tentation—pour que j’en sorte fortifié !” ‘Protect me, Lord, during temptation—so that I come out of it fortified!’

In *Des femmes*, Charlot mentions also young women who have been well brought up and whose respectable families would have welcomed a proper relationship:

Il en est d’autres, jeunes filles comme il faut  
dont les parents m’offraient au goûter des gâteaux  
et qui me jouaient très gentiment du piano.

‘There are others, well brought up young ladies  
whose parents offered me cakes at tea  
and who played for me very nicely on the piano.’

Charlot found them naïve, unable to understand him as he was after his experiences in the war. He will find the same problem among the French women in whom he hoped to find a companion on leave later in France.

Most of *Des femmes* concerns two women with whom Charlot had a more intense relationship. The first was a simple young woman whose beauty Charlot describes at length and whose affection greatly comforted him:

Et comme j’étais une âme violente et triste  
Vous m’avez refait au contact d’yeux d’améthyste  
l’âme naïve et non lascive ni artiste.

‘And since I was a violent and unhappy soul,  
You remade, with a look of your amethyst eyes,  
my soul naïve and not lascivious or artistic.’

They indulged in caresses, and Charlot was moved by her response:

ce renversement las du col et de la face  
et l’abandon quiet de ce corps sans grimace,  
Après la tâche ce repos de bête lasse.

‘this tired throwing back of the neck and face  
and the quiet abandon of this body without a grimace,  
After the task, this resting of the tired beast.’

They did not, however, complete the sex act:

A celle-ci je puis donner le nom de sœur  
Sa bouche pantelait vers ce creux de mon cœur  
et j’ai respecté son corps gonflé de douceur.

‘To this one I can give the name of sister  
Her mouth panted towards the hollow of my heart,  
and I respected her body swollen with sorrow.’

He remembered her with great happiness as a physical experience:

Son don fut pauvre comme est pauvre toute chair.  
Son âme sautait sous les doigts comme un concert  
humble, et son souvenir charnel et sot m’est cher.

‘Her gift was poor as all flesh is poor.  
Her soul bounded under my fingers like a humble  
concert, and the memory of her, carnal and dumb, is dear to me.’

Charlot may be thinking of her when he writes in a Meditation (Assumption 1919):

J’aurais plaisir à l’une d’elles docile, entre mes mains comme une poupée molle et  
moite avec ce sourire ruminant et la prunelle plate comme un fruit bleu—Je rêve  
d’une comme d’un coussin—ou comme d’une tour que j’assiégerai dans les folies de  
la jeunesse—ou comme d’un clavier souple et voluptueux—sous le contact des doigts  
habiles—

‘I would be pleased with one of them, in my hands like a doll soft and moist, with this  
thoughtful smile and her pupil flat like a blue fruit—I dream of one like a cushion—  
or like a tower I will besiege in the follies of youth—or like a supple and voluptuous  
keyboard—under the contact of skillful hands—’

The second woman was a complicated intellectual with whom Charlot felt a deeper affinity: “Cette autre fut plus qu’un incident sur ma route” ‘This other was more than an incident along my route.’ She was religious and lived a moderate life; “Pourtant son âme était inquiète et désireuse” ‘But still her soul was unquiet and filled with desire.’ She read many books that complicated her thinking and spoke about Schopenhauer as Charlot caressed her palm. Charlot wanted to turn her away from Goethe and Kant towards a greater appreciation of nature as God’s creation, which Charlot himself was doing as a help in resisting sexual temptation. She spoke wonderfully of her search for truth and God, which she would continue until she reached union with Him, “l’Unitive” ‘the Unitive state,’ a term from Charlot’s earlier study of theology. Charlot was moved spiritually and physically as he listened to her, and their conversation elevated them as “Nos deux Anges veillaient près nos deux corps d’enfants” ‘Our two Guardian Angels watched over our two childlike bodies.’ She gave a gift, her soul, that was greater even than her beautiful body.

Charlot seems to have met this second woman at Eppstein, and his poem *Voici ma chair jeune qui rit dans la moisson* of August 15, 1919, records their first or one of their first meetings. She is well dressed and nice, and Charlot appreciates “son âme saine et discrète” ‘her soul healthy and discreet.’ But she clearly has an inner life:

Elle semble souffrir quelque peine secrète  
Elle n’est pas mariée et elle a vingt trois ans—  
Son fiancé c’était ce feld-webel, toisant  
de haut—Nous l’avons tué devant Verdun, ce crois-je.  
‘She seems to suffer some secret pain  
She is not married and is twenty-three-years old—  
Her fiancé was that sergeant major, who looked down  
On everybody—We killed him in front of Verdun, I believe’

She is happy to see him and encouraging when he has long conversations with her. One evening, they sit together in her bourgeois living room, and he caresses her palm with his fingers:

ses doigts s’énervèrent à mes doigts  
Elle épiait, semi-troublée, mais je dois  
dire qu’elle attendit en vain que je prélude.  
Etant d’esprit peu romantique et de chair prude  
her fingers were enervated by mine  
She watched, half-troubled, but I must say  
that she waited in vain for me to make my move.  
Being little romantic in mind and prudish in body.’

She broke off and went to the window, and Charlot writes slightly of her disappointment. He would have liked very much to have held and kissed her: “Et c’est pourquoi j’ai dit : Allumons la lumière” ‘And that is why I said, “Let’s turn on the light.”’ Charlot is attempting to write humorously, as he used humor to

put off the woman—a practice he would follow in Mexico. But the tension between his desire and his resistance is manifest and difficult for the woman he is with. As later in Mexico, he allows himself to indulge in caresses but not the complete sexual act. He thus places himself in the position of being a tease. He also suffered from it. Charlot seems to be remembering this evening in a later writing:

Rappelez-vous ce soir dans la petite ville ennemie—la tête du canapé au long de la porte—du doigt toc, elle venait—ensemble docile et chaude.—Je crois qu'en retenant ainsi 3 heures durant ma phalange—et vous savez combien pleine était l'attraction—j'ai fait un pas vers la folie et à jamais estropié mon désir.— (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*, "Son Etat Actuel," September 1922)

'Remember that evening in the little enemy village—the head of the canapé alongside the door—a tap of the finger, she came—together, docile, and warm.—I think that in thus holding back my phalanx for three full hours—and you know how full was the attraction—I took a step towards madness and crippled my desire forever.'

Charlot's compassion for the woman is, however, revealed in several other writings about her (Assumption 1919):

Il y en eut une d'âme transplantée—dont j'admirai le délicat linéament—petit cœur perdu et fratrique—dans sa famille grosse et grasse—A celle-ci par-dessus nos pays et nos religions mêmes avec l'apitoiement du pauvre pour le pauvre—j'ai donné la main—et j'ai joué dans ses doigts mes doigts qui savent, et j'ai voulu dilater son âme frileuse, mais qui perdit l'accoutumance—

'There was one with a transplanted soul—whose delicate lineament I admired—a little heart, lost and sisterly—in a gross and fat family—To this one across even our lands and our religions with the pity of the poor for the poor—I gave my hand—and I played my knowing fingers among hers, and I wanted to open up her chilly soul, but which had lost the habit—'

Charlot continued to think about this woman, and she inspired two of his better poems of the period. *Epstein (sic)*—which he started on August 8, 1919, and finished in January 1920—is a prayer to bring peace:

Pour cette âme discrète et ce corps rose et plein,  
pour cette-ci dont le fiancé se meurt au large  
'For this discreet soul and this body rose and full  
for her whose fiancé died far away'

May Christ give her the true Faith and the essential love and identify her sufferings with his:

et comme Vous fûtes creusé par la souffrance  
abreuvez-la du miel de Vos fiels, que le ciel  
s'ouvre pour celle-ci qui hait, blonde, la France

‘and as you were scarred by suffering,  
pour over her the honey of your gall, so that the sky  
opens for this woman who hates, blond, our France’

The last poem Charlot wrote about this woman seems to be *Quatrain*, undated but written in Paris after his demobilization:

Amie, un cœur las d’être à nul humain cœur n’ente  
Porte ta solitude avec douceur  
Dieu close au soir ta plaie lancinante  
Emmi le blanc val des vierges, tes sœurs.

‘Friend, a heart tired of being grafted to no other human heart  
Carries your solitude with sweetness  
God closes in the evening your painful wound  
Within the white vale of virgins, your sisters.’

Charlot’s relationships with German women were not merely physical. He clearly sympathized with them on many levels and was grateful for their affection. Indeed, he did not blame them for his own moral failings and always maintained the possibility that they were better than he (March 18, 1919): “Elle est peut-être plus avant vers Dieu que moi—” ‘She is perhaps further along towards God than I am—.’ Moreover, his encounters with women who had suffered in the war deepened his views. Early in the Occupation, he wrote a poem closely related to his meditations, *Voici le corps de celle-ci. Il a crû devant mes yeux—comme le folio s’ouvre* of January 18, 1919. In it, his image of women is already much fuller than hitherto, and his idea of marriage is devoid of poetic rusticity. Charlot describes the woman as someone he knew since she was a child. Unless this is poetic license, she is French, but the key to his deeper understanding is his compassion for her suffering from the war, a suffering he was encountering among the German women. The woman is about to be married, and Charlot remembers her as a child:

Elle a fleuri vierge hautaine—Son cœur s’est déchiré. Elle a saigné de ses blessures  
jeunes—Mais elle n’a point permis le péché—Elle a gardé l’étonnement de la boue.

‘She flourished a proud virgin—Her heart has been torn apart. She has bled from her young wounds—But she has in no way permitted sin—She has kept her astonishment at the mud.’

She had a childlike petulance and laughing eyes and all the conscious beauty of youth. But she is more deeply attractive now that she has experienced suffering: “Mais combien plus savoureuse—maintenant que la douleur l’a contrainte—et ses yeux tant de fois cernés d’angoisse” ‘But how much more flavor she has—now that sorrow has constrained her—and her eyes have been circled so many times with anguish.’ She is not a beautiful little animal, but a full human being with a spirit. She cannot be approached merely sexually, but only in the whole context of a religious marriage. The pair will live together with God and use their bodies knowing they will rise with them from death into eternity. All their little earthly actions will be great in that they are willed by God.

Charlot felt that he had been changed by his sufferings during the war and that he could now be understood only by women who had undergone similar experiences. In general, his relationships with German women were unsatisfactory, but the most fulfilling had been with the woman who had lost her fiancé at Verdun (Assumption 1919):

je n'ai pas trouvé une âme à me refléter, pas un miroir docile à mon image—Seuls quelques jeux (—et encor vers cette âme candide—quelques soirs—) mais nul robuste savoir—nul secours réel—O mon Dieu, voici encore des expériences tentées, des verres bus, dont il ne reste à la glotte qu'une âcre morsure des lies—

'I have not found a soul to reflect me, no mirror docile to my image—Only a few games (—and yet towards this candid soul—several evenings—) but no strong knowledge—no real aid—O my God, here again some experiments tried, some glasses drunk, that have left in my throat only the acrid bite of the dregs—'

His failure to achieve a satisfying relationship was due partly to the social conditions of the Occupation (January 10, 1919): "Et il n'y a pas moyen de la délivrer et de lui parler comme l'ami—car eux, sur elle, des mots obscènes" 'And there is no way to free her and to talk with her like a friend—because the men, about her, obscene words.' German women seemed always to pose a moral threat; on leave in France, he begins a poem, *Maître, vous m'isiez hors des femmes d'Allemagne* 'Master, you have hoisted me away from the women of Germany' (April 1, 1919). Charlot was also looking to France for "la promesse de compagne" 'the promise of a companion.' But as seen below, he failed on his two Paris leaves to find in French women of his age the kind of understanding he had enjoyed in Germany. He returned, therefore, for the remainder of his duty with a more affectionate and grateful attitude towards German women (*Seigneur voici le temps venu de me tourner*, January 2, 1920).

Charlot's poems assume his successful resistance to the full sexual act at least up to October 1919. His last Meditation of October 18, 1919, reveals, however, that the physical caresses he allowed himself were having an affect on him. He is increasingly impatient as his Occupation service drags on, keeping him in occasions of sin; his guardian angels "n'entendent rien sinon le bruissement des désirs et l'ahan précipité des artères violentes" 'hear nothing except the rumbling of desires and the hurried breathing of violent arteries.' His flesh tells him that he wants to hold his woman again and enjoy this time the full passionate act:

*Voix de la chair* : "ô la tenir toute, bouche, tripe et boyaux et tout dans ma main pétrissante. A nouveau le goût de sa bouche et le jeu des paupières pâmées, avec ce regard en charnière—et cette fois-ci non plus comme des communicants naïfs mais la ruée rouge, l'assouissement plénier."

*Voice of the flesh*: "o to hold her entire, mouth, tripe, guts, and all in my kneading hand. Once again the taste of her mouth and the play of her swooning eyebrows, with that sideways look—and this time no longer like naïve communicants, but the red rush, the full satiation.""

He has been allowing himself caresses with a woman, and the impressions they have made on him are building up into a powerful temptation:

et comme la tentation infiltre subtilement dans les basses régions organiques. Parce que j'ai tenu ce pauvre corps, squelettes, muscles et tout, je veux le retenir encore—et avant cela je n'en avais pas désir, mais aujourd'hui l'odeur m'affole

'and as temptation filters its way subtly into the lower organic regions. Because I've held this poor body, skeleton, muscles, and all, I want to hold on to it still—and before that, I hadn't any desire for it, but today, the odor drives me crazy.'

He has not committed the full sex act and thought their caresses innocent, but they have left him with an increased sexual desire. He knows he should follow his religion, but it isolates him like a leper whom no one will comfort with physical contact, comfort that Charlot needs:

et la main et les yeux ne toucheront ni paume ni regard, et les pieds ne se reposeront dans nulle paume amie, ni la tête aux seins tranquilles...

Et cela m'est pénible car je voudrais comme d'un petit enfant qu'on berce, m'appesantir aux bras lassés—et cette chair chaude contre ma chair—et cela me serait joyeux de ne pas assembler d'idées l'une dans l'autre—de ne pas jouer l'homme raisonnable—

'and the hand and the eyes will touch neither palm nor gaze, and the feet will not place themselves in a friendly palm, nor the head between tranquil breasts...

And that is painful for me because I would want, like a little child being rocked, to sink down heavy with tired arms—and this hot flesh against my flesh—and that would be for me a joy to stop collecting ideas one inside the other—to stop playing the reasonable man—'

He finds no such comfort among the soldiers with their crude sexual atmosphere and feels he has to retreat into his religious isolation, denying himself the pleasures of childlike physical caresses:

Voici que je ne suis le fiancé d'aucune chair mais de l'Esprit—

Il me faut me résigner à ma condition noble—et comme il n'est pas permis de jouer aux petites infantes...

et voici que retombe le bras lassé de l'enfant noble—et mon âme elle se retire en elle-même et pleure.

“Here I am the fiancé of no flesh but of the Spirit—

I must resign myself to my noble condition—and since it's not allowed to play at being little infantes...

and thus the tired hand of the noble child falls back—and my soul retires into itself and weeps.'

Charlot feels no religious consolation to compensate for his sacrifice of physical comfort:

voici que je me suis retiré dans Votre forteresse—mais elle est vide et je n’y trouve pas trace de Votre Présence—et par contre dehors hurle et déferle—le rythme des créatures concrètes—

‘here I am retreated into Your fortress—but it is empty, and I find there no trace of Your Presence—and on the contrary, outside, howls and unfurls—the rhythm of concrete creatures—’

But why should God console him when he is so proud; the woman is worthier of His attention:

Tu sais qu’il a donné bien des choses à cette femme simple et humble qui ne demandait rien—toi qui demandes tu n’auras rien

‘You know that he has given much to this simple and humble woman who asked for nothing—you who ask, you will have nothing’

Realizing again his lowliness comforts Charlot by returning him to his religious view. He hopes that he is being tried spiritually in order that he may later be accorded a good religious marriage.

The description of the woman—skinny, work-hardened, physical, and lower-class—fits a type Charlot described in his previous Meditation: not prostitutes, but peasant or working-class women who have taken up with the soldiers and handle their household chores as well as providing sex (Assumption 1919):

Il en est d’autres plus maigres, âcres—courbées au renoncement des lavages quotidiens—et dont le meilleur repos est en l’épluchage des légumes—Celles-là, la vie les a déjà serrées de près—d’anxiété, quelques-unes se sont données—et il leur en reste aux yeux l’effarement du brutal, l’agonie du désir su. Mais elles sont bien humbles et propres, empressées au service contumace—et elles quêtent l’accueil de l’étranger—avec l’humilité du chien dans la promesse de la femme.

‘There are others, skinnier, bitter—bent over by the self-denial of the daily wash—and whose best relaxation is cleaning vegetables—Those women, life has already closed in on them tightly—some gave themselves out of anxiety—and the alarm at the brutality lingers in their eyes, the agony of known desire. But they are truly humble and clean, willing at their contumacious service—and they seek the welcome of the foreigner—with a dog’s humility in a woman’s promise.’

In Charlot’s angry and sarcastic summary of his religious life, written in Mexico in May 1927, he indicates that he succumbed to the final sexual temptation. On the evidence, the woman involved was the sister of the mistress of one of Charlot’s subordinate officers;<sup>37</sup> that is, she fits the description of the woman given above. She may have been pushed by the soldiers to approach Charlot, as had happened before; he speaks of her playing a role. Charlot now sees that the sessions of physical affection he was allowing himself—which he calls rehearsals—were indications of what would happen, clear enough to anyone less naïve than himself. Their relationship began like his others. In *Seigneur, seigneur, voici des*



*heures monotones*, written at Rheingönheim on August 29, 1919, and noted “sur Suzel,” he describes a tempting but unfulfilled connection with himself in control:

et c’est pourquoi je l’ai élue à mon vouloir.  
Elle vient coudre près de moi, docile, au soir  
comme la chienne près du maître, dans la chambre.

‘and that is why I chose her to be at my beck and call.  
She comes to sew by me, docile, in the evening,  
like a bitch near to her master, in the room.’

He sees that the temptation is sexual, “L’odeur du soufre” ‘The smell of sulphur,’ but feels that it is weak enough to risk. He finds her beautiful and simple, softly affectionate like a pet dog: “doux comme une chienne bonne” ‘gentle like a good dog.’ He caresses her with his eyes and his fingers, “cette âme menue, humble et tiède de poupée” ‘this slim soul, humble and tepid, of a doll.’ Similar descriptions are found of other German women.

The sexual act seems to have happened shortly before Charlot left Germany; that is, after his return from leave in Paris in early January 1920 and before his later demobilization in May. He seems to be saying that if he could have held out just a little longer, he would have been a good example—expressed sarcastically, the modern equivalent would be a poster-boy of sexual resistance.

Quand la guerre m’a pris j’ai dit : De l’innocence d’ignorance à l’innocence volontaire, Mourons. (Avril 1917.) Ça n’a pas été si facile. Ça a même été un four. Dès les répétitions ça se voyait, mais pas pour ce régisseur novice : C’est malheur que le présent seul compte : quelle vendange si les grappes passées n’avaient pourries. ~~Quel vin du Rhin!~~ De France et d’Allemagne je serais retourné en héros. Mon uniforme pendu au "Musée des jeunes convertis" propagande papale. Et vraiment j’avais souffert beaucoup, malgré Suzel qui était la maîtresse d’un de mes sous-officiers. La sœur casée, dont je mécomptais l’acuité sexuelle pour ne l’avoir jamais éprouvée ce Mexique d’aisselles et d’arçes. La garce, elle joua son rôle. J’y accrochais mon ignorance crue savante et comme le rayon ~~de soleil~~ de crochet, elle me fit office—D’une accidentelle putain j’appriis quelques trucs futiles...

‘When the war took me, I said: From the innocence of ignorance to voluntary innocence, Let us die. (April 1917.) That has not been so easy. That has even been a flop. That was visible from the beginning of the rehearsals, but not for this novice stage manager: It’s unfortunate that only the present counts: what a vintage season if the old bunches hadn’t rotted. ~~What a Rhine wine!~~ From France and from Germany I would have returned a hero. My uniform hung in the “Museum of Young Converts,” papal propaganda. And really I had suffered much, despite Suzel who was the mistress of one of my subordinate officers. The married sister, whose sexual acuity I miscalculated for never having experienced this Mexico of armpits and arse. The whore, she played her role. I caught on her my ignorance thought knowledgable, and

like ~~the ray of the sun~~ the spoke of a hook, she performed the service for me. From an accidental whore, I learned a few futile tricks...'<sup>38</sup>

In an “Essai sur mon état actuel” of September 25, 1922 (*Notebook C*), Charlot wrote of this event:

Allemagne : SHORTHAND. Suzel SHORTHAND : j’y ai usé vraiment la jeunesse de ma volonté.

‘Germany: Suzel : there I really used up the youth of my will.’

Charlot had been revising his view of himself since his entry into the army: he concluded that his previous sexual purity was the result of ignorance and social support, not of inner strength. During the Occupation, he accused himself of sexual failings and religious hypocrisy (March 18, 1919):

ô Masque obscène—ô face Tartuffe rose pâle.—Regarde tous tes péchés dans la Lumière—Ils grouillent et fouettent—et de ce que l’homme t’ignore tu préjuges ton innocence—et parce qu’il sait la faute de celle-ci qu’il lapide—tu prends la pierre—ô grotesque—mais relis donc ton Evangile !

‘O obscene Mask—O pale, rose, Tartuffe face.—Look at all your sins in the Light—They swarm and lash—and you prejudge your innocence by what no one knows about—and because he knows the sin of this woman whom he stones—you take up the stone—O grotesque—but go reread your Gospel!’

His ultimate sin now seemed the result of a long series of actions that had been naïve and overconfident. The only mark Charlot made in his copy of *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas-à-Kempis was next to a passage describing a person temporarily in the state of grace who thinks he will never fall (Thomas-à-Kempis 1874: 6). In his poem *J’ai tant passé de ponts, tant su fuir de fleuves* (January 8, 1920), he suggests that he had used his reason to excuse the risks he was taking: “convolvé ma raison en tant de sens subtils” ‘convoluted my reason in so many subtle senses.’

Charlot resolved to remain celibate until marriage, as can be seen in a poem of 1920 or 1921.<sup>39</sup>

The poem was written at Montmartre, “Café Place Clichy avec Legendre” ‘Café, Place Clichy, with Legendre,’ Charlot’s friend from the Académie Colarossi, where they paid for sessions to draw nude models. The woman for whom the poem was written, Lili, may have been a model and, according to Charlot’s description, was a prostitute. Charlot opens with a quotation from Matthew 19:12:

“il en est qui se font eunuques pour l’amour de moi. que celui qui veut comprendre comprenne.”  
 ““There are some who make themselves eunuchs for the love of me.” Let him who wants to understand understand.’

It was not this lubricious gift that made Charlot lose the thread of God’s teachings. Charlot has had pleasure in knowing her body; but the word he uses for *know* is *savoir*, not *connaître*, which would imply sexual knowledge; Lili may have been a nude model. He is, however, sad about her soul. Like Madeleine of the streets and courts, she needs to find the unique Master. Sex draws us mysteriously, but its odor

reminds us of our corpses; temptation is countered with the thought of death. Charlot prays that she will leave her life of decadent luxury and throw herself at Christ's feet like Mary Magdalene:

Crois-moi; délaisse prince, cocktail, thé russe;  
 Achète le parfum, brise le vase et verse  
 car j'ai prié Jésus pour toi, ma sœur perverse.  
 'Believe me; leave prince, cocktail, Russian tea;  
 Buy the perfume, break the vase, and pour,  
 because I have prayed to Jesus for you, my perverse sister.'

Charlot would find, however, a sexual atmosphere in Mexico perhaps even headier than that of the Occupation, and his struggle would continue.

## 7.2. RELIGION

Charlot had been overwhelmed by his experiences in the war and the Occupation, as he states in his poem *J'ai tant passé de ponts, tant su fuir de fleuves*:

vu crever tant d'amours, s'effondrer tant de preuves,  
 ...  
 et fais sonner ma joie à tant de lèvres neuves,  
 ...  
 mes doigts ont ahané vers tant de chairs vivantes<sup>40</sup>  
 'seen explode so many loves, collapse so many proofs,  
 ...  
 and rang my joy at so many new lips,  
 ...  
 my fingers have panted towards so much living flesh'

His only solution is to attach himself to Christ like a piece of meat hung up on a butcher's hook.

Charlot's greatest temptation during the Occupation, and perhaps even during the war, was sexual, and he used all the religious means at his disposal to resist it. But his religious life continued also with all of its other dimensions, including his wide reading, as can be seen in a list of books he was thinking, I believe, of taking with him into the Occupation:

Piété :	Voragine.	L. Dorée
	Emmerich.	D. Passion
		V.—d—L. Vierge
	Thérèse Enf. J.	Vie.
	Hildegard.	Visions
	Beuse M. Marie.	Vie
		Ancien Testament

N. Testament

Épîtres St Paul et œuvres patristiques

Mercier

cour de philosophie<sup>41</sup>

Charlot continued his intellectual explorations of Christianity as seen in notes made probably in late 1918 (*Notebook C*). Starting probably from remarks by Father Cadart, the priest connected to the Gilde, Charlot develops arguments against personal pride. Our personal value does not include the qualities that God has given us or their logical development. Do we have anything else? Charlot does not believe we do. Only through God, who is Truth, can we have correct ideas. Only God's grace makes those truths enter our hearts and become action. Even our bodies and those around us depend entirely on God. Nothing is personal to the human being; God does all good. As a consequence, we have no reason to be proud. Charlot's own "valeur personnelle" 'personal value' is "infime vu mon manque d'expérience" 'minute given my lack of experience.' His "valeur de métier (se mesure au gain)" 'professional value (measured in production)' is also "infime" in view of how little he has accomplished, a few drawings and sculptures. Again, "Impossible—en tirer orgueil" 'impossible to find a basis for pride.' Even animals and pets do not depend on us the way we depend on them. We must realize that God uses all things to act upon us; completely dependent on him, we cannot be proud. Other texts are more balanced (*Ludwigshafen Notebook*, August 27, 1920):

id. les *vertus* peuvent s'acquérir par la raison (+ docilité à la grâce), s'amplifient par l'étude et l'habitude. font donc l'objet d'un commerce humain.

les *dons* ne sont praticables ni par étude, ni par actes (habitude), viennent de l'Esprit sans aucun commerce humain (sauf adhésion) (cf. Simon le Magicien)

ils restent après la mort comme logique à la nouvelle vie.

'idem. the *virtues* can be acquired by reason (plus docility to grace), growing by study and habit. They form thus the object of human interchange.

the *gifts* cannot be practiced either by study or by acts (habit); they come from the Spirit without any human interchange (except agreement) (compare Simon Magus) they remain after death as logical for the new life.'

Similarly, Charlot was using the daily liturgical texts as subjects for meditation, which was often intellectual: the texts would be interpreted philosophically and morally, usually by using allegory and the idea that Old Testament events and figures prefigured those of the New Testament. His notes are preserved on loose sheets and, from June to October 1920, in a notebook he bought in Ludwigshafen. Many notes reflect the standard Catholic teaching of the time:

Que notre amour plein (sainteté) répond à l'amour plein de Dieu. (comme dé à coudre et mer, tous 2 *pleins* d'eau). (June 4, 1920)

'That our full love (sanctity) corresponds to the full love of God. (like a thimble and the ocean, *both full* of water.'

(a : biens terrestres : état actuel des Juifs. b : venue de l'Esprit-Saint à l'époque de leur conversion). (November? 1920)

‘(a: worldly goods: the current state of the Jews. b: the coming of the Holy Spirit at the time of their conversion).’

de l'observation physique dans l'Ancien Testament mûrir surtout en observation spirituelle dans le nouveau (June 9, 1920)

‘from the physical observation in the Old Testament to mature primarily into spiritual observation in the New.’

Others apply philosophical terms in unconventional ways (July 9, 1920):

comme un homme riche dont la façon de vivre serait un but à tous (cause exemplaire) —possédant des richesses suffisantes pour que tous vivent comme lui (cause méritoire) et donnant ces richesses à ceux qui le désirent (cause efficiente).

‘like a rich man whose way of life would be an end for all (exemplary cause)—possessing sufficient riches so that all may live like him (merit cause), and giving these riches to those who want them (efficient cause).’

However, Charlot's personal concerns are most often expressed in these interpretations. For instance, on a loose sheet dated September 1921, “19<sup>e</sup> Dimanche après Pentecôte,” he expresses his characteristic sympathy for the poor: “les *Pauvres* (que Dieu assimile à soi-même)” ‘the *Poor* (whom God assimilates to Himself)’; “c'est la mort des pauvres, avancée par la souffrance et la fatigue” ‘it's the death of the poor, hastened by suffering and fatigue.’ Similarly, in the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, he identifies himself with the *spiritually* poor (June 2, 1920):

Ce que Dieu demande aux riches : les Saints  
" " " pauvres : les pécheurs—moi.

‘What God demands from the rich: Saints  
What God demands from the poor: sinners—me.’

He hoped that his lesser position was also of service to God:

figure des Saints et des *apprentis Saints*. dont le rôle est de maintenir le contact pour la foule avec la présence journalière de Dieu—et réaliser au maximum les actes du service de Dieu (June 16, 1920)

‘figure of Saints and *apprentice Saints*. whose role is to maintain contact for the crowd with the daily presence of God—and realize to the maximum the acts of the service of God.’

Des différentes sortes de chrétiens—les uns sur le char de la grâce—les autres sous le fardeau des péchés et seuls.—eux aussi servent au sanctuaire—Espoir (June 20, 1920)

‘On different sorts of Christians—the ones on the chariot of grace—the others under the load of sins and alone.—those also serve in the sanctuary—Hope.’

A major emphasis of Charlot’s notes is the positive religious value of God’s creation, starting with the most feared and despised material beings (June 7, 1920):

L’homme lépreux et la maison lépreuse.

De la solidarité des créatures : anges, hommes, animaux, objets. Que nos "frères inférieurs" ne nous doivent pas être plus indifférents qu’à Dieu. Qu’ils participent en qq. sorte à la Rédemption (désiré des collines éternelles) dans leur solidarité avec l’homme—

De la valeur spirituelle des objets : lieux d’élection (Eglise, images). lieux possédés. Prions pour que Dieu nous présente favorablement notre salut par les objets et autres créatures

‘The leper and the leper house.

On the solidarity of creatures: angels, human beings, animals, objects. That our “inferior brothers” should not be more indifferent to us than to God. That they participate somehow in the Redemption (desired by the eternal hills) in their solidarity with man—

On the spiritual value of objects: chosen places (Church, images). possessed places. Let us pray that God presents our salvation favorably to us through objects and other creatures.’

All things follow God’s will in their own way (October? 1920):

—du "vrai". vrai est l’individu quand Conforme aux qualités de l’espèce : or vrai vrai pour les minéraux : soumis à pesanteur, densité etc.

" " végétaux : suivre lois fécondité croissance.

" " animaux : soumission à l’instinct.

" homme : par *raison, volonté*,

tous 2 libres découle l’acte libre

par essence l’acte vrai est agréable à Dieu, parce que dans son plan.

‘—on “the true”: that individual is true when in Conformity with the qualities of the species: thus true

true for the minerals: submitted to weight, density, etc.

true for the plants: follow laws of fertility, growth.

true for the animals: submission to instinct.

true for the human being: by *reason, will*

both flow from the free act

by its essence, the true act is agreeable to God, because in his plan.’

Matter itself is good and can be polluted only by the human being’s misuse of it (n.d.):

La matière proche des passions (aliments, corps) est très bonne puisque de Dieu. Son usage humain la pollue.

‘The matter near the passions (nourishment, body) is very good because from God. Its human usage pollutes it.’

Sexuality in marriage accords with God’s plan, and its pleasure should be received with joy (December 10, 1921):

Fête Immaculée Conception

l’acte de cette Conception est l’acte type du mariage chrétien : voir détails dans s.

Emmerich : but unique : donner un saint à l’Eglise. plaisir accessoire reçu avec joie (Porte d’Or).

‘Feast of the Immaculate Conception

the act of this Conception is the archetypical act of Christian marriage: see details in

Emmerich: unique end: to give a saint to the Church. accessory pleasure received with joy (Golden Gate).’

Charlot takes as his model of such a marriage that of Joachim and Ann, the parents of Mary, who kissed as they met each other at the Golden Gate, one of Charlot’s favorite stories (July 30, 1920): “St Anne—son rapport avec les devoirs d’état—soins et enfants—la porte d’Or” ‘Saint Ann—her relation to the duties of the married state—care and children—the Golden Gate.’

Even Jesus lowers himself into the materiality first of his physical body and then of the Holy Eucharist (June 4, 1920):

1<sup>er</sup> Vendredi parité entre S. Cœur. viscère. contenant la Charité

S. Sacrement. apparence de pain contenant Dieu.

Du degré d’abaissement dans l’Incarnation et dans l’Eucharistie.

‘First Friday, parity between Sacred Heart. entrails. containing Charity

Holy Sacrament. appearance of bread containing God.

On the degree of abasement in the Incarnation and in the Eucharist.’

Charlot would have a lifelong devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which symbolized Christ’s humanity and his act of self-sacrificing love for human beings. The human heart was also the central sacrifice of Aztec religion, symbolizing life itself. The Church is the continuation of Christ’s humanity and the physical place of refuge for human beings (August 13, 1920): “de l’Eglise continuant L’*humanité* de NS. seule port pour nous hommes” ‘on the Church continuing the *Humanity* of Our Lord. only safe port for us human beings.’ Charlot drew from Christ’s humanity the reason for the powers of the Church (October 13, 1920):

Confession—reconnaissance du pouvoir *exécutif* de Jésus dans son humanité et ses délégués. La nier, c’est par méconnaissance de son humanité.

‘Confession—recognition of the executive power of Jesus in his humanity and of his delegates. Denying it is by failure to recognize his humanity.’

As members of the Church, human beings are part of the body of Christ, and their imperfections are partly the cause of the humiliation of the Incarnation (August 16, 1920):

Jésus et l’Eglise un corps total.

L’Eglise visible c’est nous. Son humiliation dans ce corps malade.

‘Jesus and the Church, a total body.

The visible Church is us. Its humiliation in a sick body.’

Conversely, the humiliation of the Church’s members before the world participates in Christ’s own (August 24, 1920):

du ridicule devant les hommes des choses agréables à Dieu. Ne pas craindre d’agir contre les hommes, quand pour Dieu—

‘on the ridiculousness before human beings of things that are agreeable to God. Don’t fear to work against human beings, when on behalf of God—’

From the human being’s membership in Christ’s body arises his vocation (July 3, 1920):

Dieu dans N S J C. a la vocation du rachat dont l’Eglise parfaite sera la plénitude.

D’où : notre vocation personnelle est de plénifier l’Eglise dont nous jouirons avec J C.

‘In Our Lord Jesus Christ, God has the vocation of redemption of which the perfect Church will be the fulfillment. Hence: our personal vocation is to complete the Church which we will enjoy with Jesus Christ.’

The fruit of the Christian’s actions results from his connection with Christ (September 24, 1920):

la souche. nous les sarments

unité de sève—*unité de fruits*

[He] the stock. We the shoots.

unity of sap—*unity of fruit*’

The painter’s vocation is to be an intermediary between God and human beings by reproducing natural objects in such a way as to make God’s plan visible (August 17, 1920):

du rôle du peintre : aboucheur entre Dieu et L’homme : homme : lui reproduire les éléments naturels : alphabet.

Dieu : organiser cet alphabet en phrases à sa gloire, non suivant nous-mêmes mais dans l’obéissance à son plan.

cf : le maçon ordonne les pierres dans l’obéissance—et son résultat est conforme au plan qu’il ignore



‘on the role of the painter: the intermediary between God and Man: man: reproduce for him the natural elements: alphabet.

God: organize this alphabet in sentences for his glory, not following ourselves but in obedience to his plan.

compare: the mason orders the stones in obedience—and his result is in conformity to the plan he does not know’

That is, God has used natural objects like an alphabet to express his glory, a reference to Delacroix’s view of nature as an encyclopedia to be arranged by the artist. By true observation and depiction of nature, avoiding any egotistical imposition of the self, the artist makes God’s plan visible, even if he himself does not fully grasp that plan in its fullness. As a result, Charlot can consider his art making as a form of prayer (June 2, 1920): “Que l’offre de mon travail physique correspond pour les Saints aux contemplations—” ‘That the offering of my physical work corresponds to contemplation for the Saints—.’ Just like Mary Magdalene, the artist uses material objects to glorify God (July 21, 1920):

St<sup>e</sup> M. Madeleine. de l’utilisation spirituelle des instruments. modifier et non anéantir le vieil homme.

de l’utilisation pour Dieu des objets de métier : pour M. Madeleine. Nard. Cheveux—

‘Saint Mary Magdalene. of the spiritual use of instruments. modify and not nullify the old man.

of the utilization of objects of the profession: for Mary Magdalene. Nard. Hair—’

Just as Mary Magdalene revealed the true nature of those objects as offerings to God, so the artist reveals God’s plan in those objects (July 21, 1920):

moi : représentation des formes.

d’une clef spirituelle du monde physique.

me: representation of forms.

of a spiritual key to the physical world.’

The artist does this by the common devices of selection and organization (August or September 1920):

Quand dessine un modèle

je dessine les traits conformes (piété : bons actes.

j’efface les traits non conformes—et les évite (crainte. mauvais actes nuls).

When draw a model

I draw the conforming traits (piety: good acts.

I efface the non-conforming traits—and avoid them (fear. bad, worthless acts).’

Consequently, in Charlot’s view, composition and symbolism are not the imposition of human thought on nature; nature itself is meaningful because God’s creation, and the role of the artist is to reveal the meaning that God Himself has expressed in His work. Even the voluptuous pleasure that an artist feels after completing a good work corresponds to the spiritual voluptuousness of Wisdom (late August? 1920):

C v d A la *Sagesse*. en quelque sorte la volupté spirituelle correspond à la volupté  
bonne après une tâche p. ex.

‘Wisdom. in some way the spiritual voluptuousness corresponds to the good  
voluptuousness after a task, for example.’

In his address to the Gilde on “La Probité Artistique” of March–April 1917, Charlot had mentioned:  
“L’amour de ce plaisir de création que ressent celui qui fait passer une part de lui-même dans ses œuvres”  
‘The love of this pleasure of creation that is felt by the person who passes a part of himself into his works.’  
The life of the artist with all its physical work and its pleasure also is a true Christian vocation.

These ideas were personal, not theoretical, for Charlot. In his birthday poem of 1919, *Pour mes  
21 ans*, he accuses himself of having lost two decades of his life in unproductive pride and sin, garnishing  
his Catholic rhetoric with flourishes of poetic devices. Charlot’s Meditation of January 11, 1919,  
explicitly pierces the literature in order to reach a genuine understanding. A third of his life has passed,  
and he has reached his majority. He must now choose his career, but he turns to God to make that  
decision. He has no talent for business but only for art:

Pour il me semble que je ne suis pas compatible—avec la monnaie, matérielle, et la  
recherche du luxe—et je considère aussi qu’au bout de mes doigts—vous avez mis ce  
don qui ne peut rester clos.

‘For it seems to me that I am not compatible—with money, the material, and the  
search for luxury—and I consider also that at my fingertips—you have placed this gift  
that cannot stay closed.’

God knows he is not lazy, and he wants very much to have a wife and family. But he does not know  
whether this will be possible. Charlot’s worries about his ability to support a family continued throughout  
his life. In his “Essai sur mon état actuel” of September 25, 1922, he writes: “pour rétablir il faudrait sortir  
de l’isolement sentimental et social. me marier. pour cela il faut argent” ‘to reestablish myself, it would be  
necessary to leave emotional and social isolation. to marry. for that, money is needed.’ Charlot’s worries  
are connected to his failure to handle his family’s finances after his father’s death, which made him feel that  
he was incompatible with moneymaking. God will have to decide whether Charlot will enjoy the pleasures  
of sex and marriage or whether he will pass his life alone. In any case, death will come soon enough, and  
he should not attach himself to the things of this world. He should cling to God like a shell-fish on a rock  
in a stormy sea. But abandoning the poetic image—“sans aucune figuration de mer et de roc” ‘without any  
imagery of ocean and rock’—he thanks God that his task of living is ultimately so simple and natural,  
“pareille aux phases de la terre et de la lune” ‘similar to the phases of the earth and the moon.’ He rejoices  
in being part of God’s creation: “Vous me donnez cette grande et belle création—et moi, je l’embrasse toute  
entière comme un bouquet !” ‘You give me this great and beautiful creation—and I, I embrace it in its  
entirety like a bouquet!’ He arranges the flowers as an offering of his art to God: “vous l’offrir comme une  
mosaïque de mon invention” ‘to offer it to you like a mosaic of my invention.’ Again he pierces through  
the literature—“sans aucune comparaison de flore” ‘without any comparison to flora’—to reveal that he is

really talking about the human beings around him whom he wants to help move forward on their way to God. For this mission, God must train him throughout his life like an apprentice to a master artist and even like an artist with his work of art:

Et comme pour manier l'outil—il faut un bon ouvrier—voici le long apprentissage. Il va durer encore XL ans—et de la main qui tâtonne—il forcera le chef d'œuvre.

'And as to manipulate the tool—a good worker is necessary—here is a long apprenticeship. It will last another eleven years—and from the hand that gropes—it will force a masterpiece.'

Like the saints, Charlot must be formed to radiate God's light to others. He has a long way to go; at this time, he cannot even meditate fifteen minutes without God's help. Nonetheless, he prays that God will extract him from "ce milieu obscène" 'this obscene milieu,' which is pulling him down into the mud. He calls on God, Mary, his guardian angel, and his patron saint, so that he will listen to God's word, stay chaste, and walk straight.

Charlot's poems emphasize his desire for a strong, effective Christianity, for example, *Je ne veux pas être le figuier qu'on dessèche* of March 21, 1919. In *ô que ma parole ne soit pas inutile* (n.d.), he wants his word, his Christianity, to be that of a strong young man up to the task. Charlot uses his new image of himself: "Que ma parole soit un corps d'homme nubile" 'May my word be the body of a nubile man.' He does not want the sham Christ that the Jewish merchant palms off on people of debilitated piety:

Pour ça, rejeter la littérature et l'art,  
L'art de peindre et le militaire.<sup>42</sup>

'Rather than that, reject literature and art,  
The art of painting and the military.'

Quacks will try to cure him of his stigmata, but those wounds of Christ will burst out and censure everything he reads and says. Only the most painful Christianity will be enough for him. In the unfinished poem, *Seigneur le temps est-il venu. le docteur Faust* (n.d., 1920), Charlot derides a comfortable, luxurious, and self-indulgent Christianity, overconfident in the correctness of its beliefs:

nous croyons en un Dieu rempli de patience  
tant qu'heureux de nous voir si gros et si nourris  
à l'Heure, il nous fera crédit de nos créances.

'we believe in a God full of patience  
so happy to see us so big and well fed  
on time, he will give us credit for our beliefs.'

Such Christians are honored by the world they should oppose:

Ainsi nous serons honorés, riches et chauves.  
des valets veilleront sur nos digestions.

les guerres laisseront nos précieuses peaux sauvées.

Les magazines nous poseront des questions;  
Vieux nous couronnerons sans remords des rosières,  
centuplant notre or en vertueuses gestions.

‘So we will be honored, rich, and bald.  
servants will watch over our digestion.  
wars will leave our precious skins intact.

Magazines will ask us questions;  
Old we will crown without remorse the village good girls,  
multiplying our gold a hundredfold in virtuous deeds.’

They are the worst part of the world that rejects the most fundamental calls to action of true Christianity: “Rions parmi les cris des pauvres qu’on égorge” ‘Let us laugh amidst the cries of the poor as they’re slaughtered.’ Charlot would despise the idea of “sanctity as a genteel social accomplishment” (AA I 272).

Charlot’s references to poverty are personal; he was deeply worried about his family’s financial situation. His poem *Seigneur voici mon âme pauvre et ma chair pauvre* (Good Friday 1919) was written when he heard that they were spending ten percent of their capital each year: “voici la pauvreté en grande pauvreté” ‘here is the poverty in great poverty.’ In *Voici que vous avez vu ma faiblesse* (n.d., probably early 1917), he states that he thought his sufferings would be a sacrifice; he now sees that they are punishment:

Voici qu’il me faut abandonner toute richesse et suivre la loi de votre Pauvreté.  
Voici que je vais être seul, comme l’anachorète, et cependant au milieu du monde  
dans la prière manuelle, le travail de tous les jours.

‘Now I must abandon all richness and follow the law of your Poverty.  
Now I will be alone, like the anchorite, and, nonetheless, in the middle of the world  
in manual prayer, the work of every day.’

His hope is based on God’s Providence in which a goal has been set for him. Charlot refers to his mother, suggesting that the poem has been prompted by his family problems. Charlot’s sufferings arise from his faults and are unworthy to be offered up to God:

Parce que je l’ai offensé dans ma chair et l’esprit, et que j’ai honte de ces stigmates  
ignominieux superposés aux Siens.

Il est temps qu’il me donne sa Force et j’accomplirai sa Volonté.

‘Because I have offended Him in my flesh and spirit, and because I am ashamed of  
these ignominious stigmata superimposed on His.

It is time that he gives me his Strength and I accomplish his Will.’

In September–October 1916, Charlot had articulated a general vision of a religious society in his long poem *De la grâce en allégorie d'une Cité close que ses habitants désertent pour y retourner tôt après*. On December 1, 1919, he again took up again the traditional Christian image of a city in *La cité*, a poem closely related to Charlot's prose Meditations of that year. Charlot states that the picture of the city came to him while he was praying after receiving Communion and that the picture is related to his own soul:

Voilà ce que j'ai vu en ce jour (où Dieu était dans ma bouche.)—Mon âme était pareille à cette Cité tranquille—

'There is what I saw on that day (when God was in my mouth).—My soul was similar to this tranquil City—'

He opens his eyes and sees to his surprise that the city he inhabits has changed. Even more than in the earlier poem, the human and the godly, the natural and the supernatural, are living visibly and tangibly side-by-side, as if in a vision of Anne-Catherine Emmerich. Halos can be seen behind heads, guardian angels mirror the gestures of their charges, and the Holy Spirit blesses them from above. God the Father walks the streets as "un vieux Monsieur" 'an old Gentleman.' Charlot goes into the street and sees figures from the Old and the New Testaments, like "un mendiant qui est Jean-Baptiste" 'a beggar who is John the Baptist.' All is smooth and untroubled. Christ is present in the Eucharist and presides at marriages, feasts, and dances. Scientists, far from opposing religion, thank God for their important medical discoveries. Educators invite God to inaugurate their new schools. Bohemian young artists live joyously with their nude models and fresco walls with gratitude to God:

Il y a là des jeunes gens pas sages du tout—en feutre et pantalon de velours—et des palettes aux mains—ils chantent et rient—et de belles jeunes filles nues posent—Ils enfresquent les murs de ces belles formes, et l'œuvre finie, joyeux, rendent grâce.

'There are some young people, not at all wise—in felt and corduroy pants—with palettes in their hands—they sing and laugh—and beautiful young women pose nude—They fresco the walls with these beautiful forms, and when the work is finished, give thanks with joy.'

Business people are honest and generous to the poor, who are not revolutionary, but the beneficiaries of God's consolations:

Il y a surtout des ouvriers et des pauvres. Ils ne veulent pas manger les plus riches,—mais reçoivent d'abondantes consolations—et la présence de Dieu parmi eux.

'There are especially workers and poor people. They don't want to eat the richer people,—but receive abundant consolations—and the presence of God is among them.'

*La cité* has the charm and fantasy of a folk painting, but Charlot's longing for a joyful, artistic, and Christian sensuality is manifest as well as his hope for God's help in his own poverty.

Charlot's poems, liturgical notes, and plans for art to be placed in churches are symptomatic of his continuing movement from a devotionism that emphasized the individual and mystical towards his "religion of the parishioner" that emphasized the community and the physical. This movement was stimulated, I believe, by Charlot's ever increasing conviction that his vocation was to be an artist and that physical art had the character of a prayer. Charlot arrived at this thought through his personal meditations, but it accords essentially with traditional Catholicism. Through the Incarnation, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became flesh. He instituted Sacraments, which are physical means of communicating grace. The Eucharist is Christ's body eaten by the members of his Church, which is itself the Body of Christ. In Charlot's Catholicism, spirit and matter could be united just as thought and emotion were expressed through matter in an integral work of art. Consequently, Charlot could be a Catholic artist as one thing, not two. Significantly, Charlot's thinking did not lead him to art; rather, his practice of art influenced his thinking. As a result, his "religion of the parishioner" is more original than he thought: Charlot was integrating religion and art into a seamless vocation.

### **7.3.**

### **POLITICS**

Religion was a component of the contentious politics of France and Europe that led to the war and the failed peace. Throughout his life, Charlot had family and personal relations with advocates from the full spectrum of political positions, from his anarchist father on the left, through the paternalism of Léon Harmel and the social charity of Catholic organizations, to the extreme right-wing views of some artists and intellectuals connected to the Gilde. Charlot had, therefore, no doubts about the importance of politics, the conflicts between views, and the sincerity of at least some of those involved. Because of his varied background, Charlot could understand the feelings and motivations of opposing sides and established and maintained a human relationship with people of opposing views. For instance, Charlot opposed Communism because of its atheism, but did not deny the sincerity of many individual Communists he knew or fail to acknowledge their shared ideals. Nor did he, like many Roman Catholics, extend his opposition to all leftist movements. Similarly, in Hawai'i, he maintained friendly relations with both the labor leaders convicted in court and the judge who presided over the trial.

The fundamental decision in social problems was whom to support. All the evidence suggests that Charlot immediately sympathized with the poor, the "underdogs." The family and religious influences on this decision have been described earlier. Charlot's stance was visceral and produced a general prejudice against rich people—and even an initial antipathy towards rich individuals.

In his short, unsystematic remarks on politics, Charlot seemed to see society as dominated by an establishment formed by an alliance of the rich and the politicians. In the background of World War I were the powerful economic interests that manipulated the tragedy for their own profit. He described a Mexican financier who had survived the Revolution and prospered under the succeeding governments as one of those powerful people who remain in the background and "always" fare well, whatever the surface tumult.

A group could improve its social position and merely join the establishment. Charlot arrived in Hawai'i in 1949 during a period of intense labor struggle. He designed a float for the left-leaning ILWU

(International Longshoreman's and Warehousemen's Union) and worked with the UPW (United Public Workers), becoming friends with the pioneering generation of Hawai'i's labor leaders. When with the election victory of the Democratic Party, labor became a part of the establishment, Charlot had less fellow-feeling with the new generation of "organization men." He recognized the utility of this second phase of consolidation, but felt also that the union "underdogs" had become "upper-dogs." That is, the basic domination of the establishment remained, and other underdogs had to struggle on without union support. Similarly, Charlot sympathized with the pioneering leaders of the Russian and Mexican Revolutions, but not with the next generation.

Charlot's awareness of the need to ameliorate the situation of the poor and oppressed is clear from his actions, statements, and artistic subjects, like the *Cargador* 'Burden Bearer' in Mexico. However, like many Frenchmen and artists—and like Roman Catholicism itself—he was surer about the problems than the solutions. Any political solution was imperfect and could go wrong. For instance, reformers could want to make workers bourgeois or assimilate Indians into the mainstream culture. Political views could even lead to war, and Charlot's prayer at the end of World War I included "Rejet des idéologies" 'Rejection of ideologies' (*Notebook C*: "Prière"). This disabused, even cynical view, did not, however, lead him to abandon his sense of his social responsibility as an artist, as was done, for instance, by some members of Dada.

Charlot's decision was to focus on people's attitudes, to make them see the poor and the members of oppressed groups as fully human beings who deserved sympathy and respect for themselves and their way of life. No solution was acceptable that lessened people's humanity or disrespected their way of life. Charlot would direct his own effort and art to the views and emotions that lie deeper than any theories or solutions and that must be positive for any human action to be beneficial. Charlot's focus enabled him to address perennial themes. Solutions come and go, but "The poor you have always with you" (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8). Moreover, his art could be directed at the guts rather than the brain. That focus is described in a bilingual article written with Anita Brenner in 1928:

au cœur de son travail mexicain bat l'émotion humaine. La plèbe douloureuse, la pauvreté glorifiée, le travail présenté comme une fonction noble, le surnaturel familier et le familier miraculeux, tous ces éléments exaltent, dans son œuvre, un esprit révolutionnaire intime qui, au rebours des thèses sociales, ne peut être ni reçu, ni transmis, mais doit germer spontanément.

"human emotion beats in the heart of his Mexican conceptions. The sorrowful populace, the glorification of poverty, labour presented as an ennobling function, the supernatural made familiar and the familiar made miraculous—all these elements arouse in his work a revolutionary spirit which, contrary to social theses, may be neither received nor transmitted, but must spring to life spontaneously." (Brenner 1928)

Charlot's focus accords with those of artists like Orozco and differs from that of Rivera, who proposed specific solutions and a defined ideology in his art.<sup>43</sup> For Charlot, Rivera's specificities faded

with time, and his paintings were understood either as depictions of historical events, like protest marches, or as more general themes, like people struggling to improve their situation. That is, like medieval and Renaissance paintings, Rivera's distilled into universal meanings and feelings:

After centuries, the pious function of medieval images is forgotten by the collector who admires instead the plasticity... his eye tastes the carmine of a stenciled blood-splash on the split pate of a martyr, without seeing the martyrdom. The Marxist message of some of our modern artists will fade out even more thoroughly, dealing as it does with earth and *Das Kapital*, not with a timeless Heaven—and naked plastic qualities will come to the fore.

All such prints born of a non-esthetic purpose raise the old argument of *l'art pour l'art*, and answer it all at once. Truly felt emotions leave lines, values and colors etched all the more deeply to match a warfaring purpose. The war over, win or lose, lines, values and colors keep imprisoned the vibrant heat of the message long after its topical meaning is lost. (AA II 144)

Charlot's attitude is consistent with his view, discussed earlier, that style is primary in art, even over message. Moreover, for Charlot, art was in itself socially relevant, even if at times on a deeper, less obvious level. He found self-evidently foolish the criticisms made of Edward Weston during the Depression that his photographs lacked social content. Great art has social resonance as such because it helps us see our world more clearly. For Charlot, Van Gogh's painting of a peasant's shoe, a study for *The Potato Eaters*, "says it all."

Nonetheless, Charlot's stance and artistic focus did not entail his withdrawal from civic life. He kept himself informed, was scrupulous about voting, and donated money and art to candidates he supported. Those candidates were invariably liberal to left wing. Indeed, some idea of solutions Charlot could sympathize with can be seen in the politicians he admired, like Felipe Carrillo-Puerto, the socialist, pro-Indian governor of Yucatán, killed by rightists in a revolt subsidized by American oil companies. Charlot greatly admired Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In the early 1950s, I was reading in *LIFE* magazine Herbert Hoover's memoirs that claimed he had established effective policies and the economic solution was set to improve; "That's what *he* says!" my father snorted. Charlot admired Roosevelt's "great" rhetorical style. His speeches might seem a little old fashioned today, he told me, but at the time, they were "inspiring." Charlot's leftist stance was a bond with his later Marxist friends in Mexico, a stance that could bemuse Siqueiros, the great storyteller:

Charlot did efforts to demonstrate that our revolution took its place in catholicism, that nothing in our human program could be condemned by the Pope, not even violence, for what more violent than catholicism in its ideological fight.

Said he "Syndicalism rated the blessings of Leo XIII, the best friend of labor. Catholicism is universal, as the communist international pretends to be." These heretical ideas were often mixed with remorse and after signing the syndicate



manifestoes Charlot went to confession, in preference to the French Fathers of the Church of Lourdes.<sup>44</sup>

#### 7.4.

#### POETRY

As with his study of art, Charlot took advantage of the peace to intensify his poetry reading. A list has survived of books that, I believe, Charlot was thinking of taking into the Occupation:

[Poésie] Littérature

Anglais— 4 pièces Shakesp.  
Allemand : Also sprach [*sic*] et traduction

Villen.— Charles d’Orléans—  
Anthologie XVI<sup>e</sup> Ronsard ?  
St Amans, Théophile.  
Cyrano, Trist. L’Érmité  
Racine ?  
Corneille ??  
L Fontaine

V. Hugo, Oriental. 70  
Hérédia—Baudelaire  
Laforgue . Mallarmé . Jammes.  
Clandel, Bloy

Charlot’s own production of poetry in the postwar period increased along with that of his visual arts, and I use these poems for their abundant biographical information. In quality, however, Charlot’s poetry reverted to its prewar role as secondary to the visual arts. That is, once Charlot was again able to produce artworks more freely, he expended his primary energy in that field. Whereas in art, Charlot was exploring stylistic options and large-scale programs, his poetry resumed the more traditional, even conventional character he had transcended on critical occasions during the war.

Most of Charlot’s postwar poems can be divided into the same three prewar categories: personal, devotional-religious, and folk-type. In all three, he returns to old poetic forms, such as the *Rondel* (November 1919), *Distique*, and *Quatrain*. He reverts to the sonnet for most of his personal poems. He also takes up again the use of antique poetic devices, like obsolete words and syntax, as in *France, enfant sur ta gorge où j’ai bu ce lait tiède* (December 9, 1919) and *7 ans déjà, Péguy, mort huis, voulut pour don* (January 4, 1920). A favorite device is medieval and pre-Pléiade plays on words: *mais serf, il sert/Dieu* (*S’il croise des coquettes qui piaffent et gloussent*, March 24, 1919); *l’aile telle belle* (*L’Enfant prodigue*, May 10, 1919). These can be heaped together as in *Maître, Maître, pourquoi naître à ces nouveaux aître* (March 23, 1919), which I need not translate:

Leur chair si cher cherchée l’autre la remboursa.

.....

le temps n'est plus aux lièvres qu'un printemps coursa,  
le temps n'est plus aux lèvres d'où "l'amour" doit naître.

Indeed, Charlot notes several times the use of the form as an experimental part of the composition: “vers de 11” ‘verses of eleven’ (*Seigneur, voici le temps de ma délivrance*, February 2, 1920); “essai de strophes macaroniques, style Ronsard” ‘experiment in macaronic strophes, in the style of Ronsard’ (*Ode à l’Eglise*, after May 1919); “Essai de strophes en vue d’une ‘Ode’” ‘Experiment in strophes in view of an “Ode”’ (*Je veux chanter ton los*, November 1919). At the beginning of *Je te veux chanter Marie* (October 9, 1919), he outlines the complicated rime scheme. As a result, Charlot’s poems often appear to be more exercises than personal expressions, even when he is using themes that are certainly personal for him. For instance, he notes that *Maître, maître, voici le pénultième thème* (March 21, 1919), was written in “rimes ‘couronnées,’” “‘crowned’ rimes’ which he learned from Théodore de Banville’s list of antique types of riming in *Petit Traité de Poésie Française*;<sup>45</sup> the poem, nonetheless, contains Charlot’s Icarus-theme of flying too ambitiously high: “singeant, dans un macabre et comique art, Icare” ‘imitating Icarus like a monkey, in a macabre and comic style.’ Even Charlot’s birthday poem of 1919, *Pour mes 21 ans*, is rendered impersonal by his use of old words; the poem is also a throwback to his juvenile Christian rhetoric of self blame. His earlier Meditation in prose on the same subject is much more personal, in all likelihood because Charlot does not have to worry about the poetry!

Charlot excluded most of his non-personal poems of this period from the collections he had typed later in the United States, which suggests that he was dissatisfied with their quality and wanted to preserve only those with the most obvious biographical interest. Nonetheless, a number of the poems of this period are intrinsically interesting, such as those in which Charlot continues the realistic descriptions of military activity, which he had learned to write during the war. *Or me voici dedans cette bonne Lorraine* of December 28, 1919, draws an attractive word image with picturesque details of a military train on the road. He develops a convincing onomatopoeia of walking horses and clanking equipment in a poem of July 1919, quoted above with an alternative translation:

Au pas de nos chevaux, aux vaux Rhénans, au tôt  
matin, au trot de nos juments sages et zanes,  
nous éclosons hors cette grande guerre insane,  
trinquaillants fers et cuirs sous vaux et sous coteaux.

‘With the stepping of our horses, through the Rhineland vales,  
early in the morning, at the trot of our mares, wise and dark,  
we blossom out of this big, insane war,  
clanking iron and leather along vales and river banks.’

In a promising poem, unfortunately unfinished, *C’est une station quelque part dans les Vosges* (December 19, 1919?), he writes:

J’ai déjeuné au mess américain, de sauge  
et de riz...

‘I lunched at the American mess on sage  
and rice...’

Similarly, Charlot’s poems on the postwar situation of France communicate a powerful emotion.

Charlot’s personal religious poems are generally more mature and manly, with less emotionalism, self-absorption, and rhetoric. Moreover, he achieves at times a more original expression of his Christian ideas than hitherto. The series of four sonnets, *Du Mendiant que je n’ai pas rencontré sur ma Route* (March 24–25, 1919), is a portrait of a beggar tramping, derided, the country roads and begging in the rude inns of postwar Germany. Charlot interprets the beggar’s lot as Christian poverty and detachment from the world; his angel-guarded wanderings are a pilgrimage:

Aussi il ne possède rien mais serf, il sert  
Dieu—

‘Also he possesses nothing, but serf, he serves  
God—’

The beggar is more Christian than the comfortable bourgeois. Charlot seems to relate the image to himself: a poor, traveling, friendless figure of fun. In *Thérèse de l’Enfant Jésus* (August, 1921), Charlot portrays the saint unconventionally as a “Bacchante chaude, tueuse de grappes” ‘Hot Bacchante, murderess of grape bunches’ in a concentrated, hermetic style that he will develop further in Mexico.

Charlot also wrote three long, formal poems on religious subjects. The unfinished *L’Enfant prodigue* (May 10, 1919) is a straight, folk-like narration; despite the personal relevance for Charlot of the figure of a sinful wanderer, the poem is impersonal. *Ode à l’Eglise* (November 1919)<sup>46</sup> resembles Charlot’s prewar rhetoric: the Church has been rejected and persecuted, but it will triumph in the end. Charlot is its “fiancé indigne” ‘unworthy fiancé’ who will fight for the Church, portrayed as a tortured woman. He ends the ode surprisingly with a prayer for his family.

*Je te veux chanter Marie* (October 9, 1919),<sup>47</sup> is the only successful poem of this type. The poem’s twenty-five stanzas display a complicated rime scheme and a number of antique words and phrases, but the effect is warm and folksy rather than academic. Charlot tells some of his favorite Biblical and Apocryphal stories—like the meeting of Mary’s parents, Ann and Joachim, at the Golden Gate—in the homely, naturalistic style he learned from Anne-Catherine Emmerich. Mary and Joseph are “gens de pauvre mine” ‘poor-looking people,’ and their poverty is emphasized throughout. Angels help with diaper washing, a scene Charlot read in Emmerich and used in his painting as well (Interview September 21, 1970):

Une trouppellette d’anges  
D’amour divin attiré  
Luttent pour laver les langes

‘A little troop of angels  
Drawn by divine love  
Compete to wash the diapers’

Mary’s physical and emotional sufferings are emphasized, her labor pains:

Marie la pauvre fille  
De souffrir ne peut bouger  
  
‘Mary, the poor girl,  
Can’t move for suffering’

and her grief at the Crucifixion:

Marie en grande douleur  
A perdu sens et couleur  
  
‘Mary in great pain  
Has lost her senses and color’

When I was helping my father with his fresco, *Calvary*, at Centerville, Ohio, in the summer of 1958, I was particularly moved by his full-scale drawing of Mary at the foot of the Cross. The theme of a mother’s suffering over her son’s death clearly had much significance for Charlot. Joseph is also emphasized in the poem, and in the poems Charlot wrote later in Mexico, he will compare his own sexual deprivation to Joseph’s. The story of the Marriage at Cana is given a symbolic interpretation, just as Charlot was planning to interpret the events of the Way of the Cross in his series of woodcuts:

Ce montre qu’il faut renaître  
d’eau du Baptême et du Vin  
qui au calice est divin.

‘This shows that we must be reborn  
with the water of Baptism and the Wine  
that is divine in the chalice.’

In the last stanza, Charlot provides a self-portrait, just as he does in his *Chemin de Croix*:

Fut composé cette histoire  
Par Charlot, parisien,  
(Qui est peintre peu notoire  
Cependant bon chrétien.)  
Pour édifier les siens  
Il la fit étant à Bitche  
D’esprit et de cœur non chiche  
Et n’a su la terminer  
Aussi longue et aussi belle  
Comme il l’avait désiré,

Servant comme officier  
La France en fils non rebelle,  
L'an mil neuf cent dix et neuf  
Le mois d'octobre étant neuf.

'This story was composed  
By Charlot, Parisian,  
(Who is a painter little known,  
nonetheless, a good Christian)  
To edify his friends;  
He made it while living at Bitche,  
Not stingy with spirit or heart,  
And wasn't able to finish it  
As long and as beautiful  
As he wanted,  
Serving France as an officer,  
as an unrebllious son,  
The year one thousand nine hundred ten and nine  
The month of October, being the ninth.'

Although the poem is finished, Charlot originally planned a much longer poem that he outlined in the same notebook:

'Parents – Porte d'Or – Education – *Visitation* – Annonciation – Le bâton fleuri –  
Mariage – Joseph doute – Sa vision – Consolation – Voyage – Bethléem. Naissance –  
Anges serviteurs – Bergers – Mages – *Circumcision* – *Purification* – Massacre des  
innocents. Fuite en Egypte – Les démons se brisent – *Rencontre de voleurs* – Retour.  
– Jésus retrouvé – Mort de St Joseph – Noces de Cana – Marie aux prédications –  
Passion : flagellation – Ecce Homo – Ch. de Croix – St Jean et M. – Stabat – Pietà –  
Apparition de JC à Marie – Pentecôte – Communions de Marie – Mort. – Assomption  
– Couronnement – Marie Auxiliatrice – Prière pour la France – pour tous, ma famille,  
moi. – Explications

Apparitions : La Salette, Lourdes

Parents – Golden Gate – Education – *Visitation* – Anunciacion – The flowering staff –  
Marriage – Joseph doubts – His vision – Consolation – Voyage – Bethlehem. Birth –  
servant Angels – Shepherds – Magi – *Circumcision* – *Purification* – Massacre of the  
innocents. Flight into Egypt – The devils break – Encounter with robbers – Return. –  
Jesus found again – Death of Joseph – Marriage at Cana – Mary at her prayers –  
Passion: flagellation – Ecce Homo – Way of the Cross – St. John and Mary – Stabat  
Mater – Pietà – Apparition of Jesus Christ to Mary – Pentecost – Communions of  
Mary – Death. – Assumption – Coronation – Mary the Helper – Prayer for France –

for all, my family, me. – Explanations

Apparitions: La Salette, Lourdes'

*Je te veux chanter Marie* is a very attractive and accessible poem and demonstrates successfully Charlot's goals in such works: to create poems that would achieve the same ends as his liturgical art.

A curiously successful long poem bears the antique title *Grande complainte de la garde-barrière et de son amant, mise en vers français avec l'histoire de leur vie amoureuse et de leur mort semblablement, de l'érection de leur sépulcre et ce qui s'en suit* (June 1921). The third of a series, the poem is preceded by two concise and sarcastic poems in Charlot's developing and most modern style. The *Grande complainte*, on the contrary, pretends to be a folk poem, a popular ballad. The first stanza is in fact a quotation—"Le 1er quatrain est d'Arrou" 'The first quatrain is from Arrou'—and Charlot takes the story from there.<sup>48</sup> The folk mask is, however, quickly revealed as assumed; the poem is both intellectual and modernizing in its references, cynical tone, and mock-heroic style. Orpheus and Eurydice, Charon at the Styx, Heloise and Abelard, are invoked heroically, but modern references turn all references to sarcasm. The unrequited male lover threatens suicide and calls his beloved his "Landrue," a feminized form of the famous serial killer of women, Henri Désiré Landru (1869–1922). Pale, romantic English girls will consult their Baedeker before the lover's tomb. The tone of the poem's ending is unmistakable:

et le soir les gardes-barrière  
pieux, viendront gémir, hurleurs,  
sur nous , en rond, assis sur leurs  
derrières !

'and in the evening, the barrier-guards,  
pious, will come to sob, howlers,  
over us, in a circle, seated on their  
behinds!'

Towards the end of 1920 and into 1921, Charlot began to develop a modernizing style that he would use for his best poems into the late 1920s: concise, intense, imagistic, and hermetic, with lines broken by disconnected phrases into a jagged rhythm. In doing so, he is probably moving from his influences in the Catholic Literary Renaissance to poets like Apollinaire and Max Jacob. On January 4, 1920, Charlot described his relationship with one of the premier Catholic poets:

7 ans déjà, Péguy, mort hui, voulut pour don  
féal, vous rimer ces vers en même neuvaine.  
Je n'encorderai sur son lut ma lyre vaine  
n'espérant d'exhausser à son chant ce bourdon.

'Seven years already, Péguy, scorned at his death, wished as a faithful gift,  
to rhyme for you these verses in the same Novena.

I won't tune to his lute my vain lyre,  
not hoping to exalt this drone to his song.'

As the year progressed, Charlot grew away from such Catholic poets with their achieved synthesis of style and content. I believe that the same intellectual and emotional disquiet that was inspiring his visual art moved him towards a style that would better reveal the fissures that had opened in his view of the world and in his emotional life, especially his tension and his anger. In *Sagesse* (October 12, 1920), he specifically relates a modern poetic style to modern life, in which the old poetry is both socially and emotionally inappropriate:

la Faim parle, l'alexandrin  
se tait, et le dodécamètre

se taisent hélas (ô style haut !)  
tels poèmes qu'Homère échote,  
la lyre fait place au stylo  
et la rime, homme amer, aux cotes.

'Hunger speaks, the alexandrine  
silences itself, and the dodecameter

such poems as Homer speaks,  
silence themselves, alas! (o elevated style!)  
the lyre makes place for the fountain pen  
and rhyme, bitter man, for stock quotations.'

However, Charlot is himself torn between the old and the new, clinging to regular lines and rhyme, and to a classical view of and taste in poetry. Unable to bridge the gaps, he covers his own development with sarcasm:

Pégase s'échappe, usé lièvre;  
l'âme en ce micmac art renie.  
consolons-nous abusées lèvres  
emmi l'ami macaroni.

'Pegasus escapes, like a used hare;  
the soul in this scheming renounces art.  
let us console ourselves, abused lips,  
with the macaroni friend.'

The word *macaroni* refers in this context, I would argue, to macaronic verse: a decadent alternation or even jumble of languages within a single piece of writing. That is, Charlot is saying that his new poetry is not a unity of style and view, but discord forced into a form. That Charlot was uncomfortable with the emerging poems shows that they were true self-expressions. Indeed, Charlot had difficulty recognizing his better

work in poetry, as seen in the earlier discussion of the ephrastic poems he wrote during the war. Only later in Mexico will he use his new style freely to express his emotions, especially his most violent ones, in his last truly powerful poems.

## 7.5.

## ART

The Occupation was a period of intense visual creativity for Charlot. In his “Mes Dessins en Allemagne,” dated from December 28, 1918, to February 10, 1920, eighty-two large drawings and watercolors are listed, far more than survive. Several sheets contain instructions for matting—“sur rose” ‘on rose’ or “gris” ‘gray’—indicating that he considered them formal and finished works of art and was probably preparing them to be exhibited. *Michel* of February 11, 1920, retained its contemporary matting (mistakenly destroyed in a recent conservation): the sheet was pasted to a light gray cardboard sheet and a rectangle was ruled around it; outside of that, a thin rectangular band was ruled and colored with a rose wash. This is another early example of Charlot’s lifelong interest in frames. Charlot did not list all his drawings, even the larger ones, and left out all the small sketches and his drawings for the *Chemin de Croix*. A *Disassembled Sketchpad* survives in the JCC, which contains drawings done in the army and after demobilization, that is, from probably late 1919 into 1920.

Charlot was unloading the artistic energy that had been pent up during his combat service, digesting and expressing his experiences both in the war and the Occupation, and receiving new visual influences from German art. He both continued the thematic and stylistic direction of his earlier period and branched out in new directions.

### 7.5.1. STUDYING ART

Charlot had seen German art before the war and could say that he knew it “well” (Interview October 13, 1970), but he had not yet focused on it:

the Louvre had, I suppose, some important things of German art, but they were not presented in such a way that I could pick out the qualities that we think of when we think of German art, and I was so interested in other things, mostly really the French school, that I hadn’t looked specifically to German things. (Interview November 12, 1970)

Charlot had liked Germany before the war and intended to use his time in the Occupation to study more closely the country, the people, and especially the art:

Of course I liked very much what I saw of Germany, and later on when I went back after the war as the victorious troops of occupation, I had a little more leisurely way of observing Germany, the German people, and German art, which is certainly one of the things that influenced me, because I find not only that it is beautiful, but that it has a note, it gives a note that no other art gives. Even though it’s not Spanish, or French, or Italian certainly, it is something that is a must, I would say, to give a rounded idea of the art of man. (Interview October 22, 1970)



Charlot visited museums and churches and read books on German art, old and new; for instance, two books on Albrecht Dürer and a damaged copy of Georg Biermann's *Max Pechstein* (1920) survived in his library.<sup>49</sup> He appreciated the distinctive qualities of German art in general:

Well, again, it's purely the point of view of a Frenchman, of a man who was brought up considering French painting as being world painting, a certain sense of Classicism, a certain sense of beauty which descends, really, from the Greek tradition perhaps more than the Roman. And in my classes on the history of art, I used to work myself to a certain excitement explaining that the German artists, as they created a language that was definitely German, allowed the survival of barbaric forms, forms that you find in the Vikings, for example, and the early Celtic works of art and an apotheosis of forms that seemed horrible to the Classics. I mentioned, for example, bugs, lizards, and frogs, and bats, and so on. I used to say that, of course, with all my heart and really as an enormous compliment that what we like to call perhaps prehistoric Europe remained alive only through German art, until I got a very irate letter from a lady who signed herself as being a German countess, telling me that if I went on insulting German art in the classroom, she would denounce me to the president of the university. So I toned down a little bit what I said, but the substance is that: that they have a tremendous role to play in keeping alive European primitive arts that would have completely disappeared really under the invasion of the Romans carrying Greek culture with them. (Interview November 12, 1970)

The impact of the difference was strong: "Germany shook my faith in order, in this order *à la* Poussin that, in France, is considered essential to art" (AA I 288).

Charlot was most impressed especially by two artists: "In 1919 I was with the Army of Occupation in Germany where I became acquainted with the work of the great German masters, Matthias Grünewald and Stefan Lochner, which had a great influence on my work" (Spring 1937). Charlot saw the two artists as a pair of contrasts: "the two magnetic poles of Germanic art":

Soldiering in the first World War and the subsequent occupation of the Rhineland proved more than a martial interlude. Thanks to the war, I met with the art of ancient German masters.

In Colmar I saw the works of Mathias Grunewald; in Cologne, those of Stefan Lochner.

Grunewald is violently dramatic and my work at its most passionate owes much to him.

Lochner, Grunewald's opposite, paints infant angels chubby and pink, and as frisky as puppies.

My pictures of Malinches bear his stamp. These tiny folk dancers, armed with mock swords and rattles, and dressed in their Sunday best, are of course Mexican. Yet it was Lochner who first taught me that there can be greatness in playfulness.<sup>50</sup>

I cannot date precisely Charlot's study of the two artists, but he seems to have worked on Lochner first. Attached to Charlot's notes on Grünewald is a brief study of the 1473 altar piece *Madonna in a Rose Garden* or *Virgin of the Rosebush* by Martin Schongauer (born 1445 to 1450, died 1491) in the Dominican Church in Colmar, which Charlot summarizes: "C'est de l'Ecole de Cologne, en triste, et plus de tact" 'It's the Cologne School, but sad, and with more tact.' Charlot, therefore, was already familiar with Lochner's school, and his usual practice of naming Grünewald before Lochner may reflect his hierarchy of importance.

Charlot states clearly that he first studied Stefan Lochner when he visited museums in Cologne:

And we went all the way from the South, Ludwigshafen, to Köln in the North, and in Köln, especially, there were some wonderful museums in which I really got very close to a good knowledge of the School of Köln of the 1400s, which I think is one of the influences on my work: the very clean color, a flower-like color, if you want, of the School of Cologne, the sort of rounded volumes, even the sort of childishness of those chubby angels in the religious pictures; all those things, without being conscious of it, certainly became part of my vocabulary.<sup>51</sup>

The encounter with Lochner was less intense than that with Grünewald but was also influential:

there was a School of Cologne and the head of the school or the main master was Stefan Lochner—I did not experience until I was in Cologne. I went to the, I think it was the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum that has some very beautiful Lochners. The experience with Lochner was a little different. It tied more easily with the things I knew before because he is a man who is more of the Middle Ages, who uses a local color with a little more, I was going to say conscience, than Grünewald. He doesn't spill in one robe, for example, from green to pink to violet; he keeps the robe all red or all blue. So that I had already seen those possibilities in the folk pictures, in the *Images d'Epinal*. But what impressed me very much with Lochner was the nearly infantile proportions of his people. Of course, the angels are supposed to be babies, and they have their big heads and those little rounded bodies, and that's to be expected. But he has also those big heads and those little rounded bodies on the kings, for example, who are old men with long, white beards, who come to bring the presents to Our Lady and to the Child, and Our Lady herself is as childish in her proportions as the Child. And there is a sense of innocence that comes through those infantile proportions. It should be in a way belied by the tremendous craft with which he crafts his paintings, but it isn't. The sense that you get from a Lochner is a sense of innocence... And I've always been very sensitive, I would say, to the idea of innocence. And I found it in the *Images d'Epinal* again, and I think it comes in my own work very often. I have a whole part of my work as subject matter goes which really I wouldn't say is patterned after Stefan Lochner, but allowed me to present the same feeling through the same proportions, that is, the series of the dancers, of the

*Malinches*... the girls are very young girls, and they had what I would call the Lochner proportions. And that came in my representation, even in the sketches, of course, that I made from them, but later on I sort of enlarged the theme, and it became really a mixture of innocence and heroic that I like very much, that means something for me, even though quite a number of people are sort of repelled. They don't quite understand what it's about. So this is what I owe to Lochner.

For me the Lochner is summarized by those Madonnas in usually rose arbors and with little angels running around and doing certain, sometimes domestic chores, lighting the fire to cook, and such things. And I think that, well maybe even in the subject matter, some of my *Flights*, *Rests on the Flight into Egypt*, and so on, owe something to Lochner, shall we say subconsciously as long as that is the word nowadays.

(Interview November 12, 1970)

Charlot was not interested in Lochner's composition<sup>52</sup> or color, but in the mood he created with his style. Although that style, unlike Grünewald's, was unsuited to depicting the war, its mood did satisfy a need that arose from the conflict: the longing for tenderness and innocence. Similarly, after the Vietnam War, Vietnamese filmmakers and audiences enjoyed a special satisfaction in scenes of people being nice to each other. Tenderness and innocence are unusual qualities in a twentieth-century artist, and their prominence in Charlot's work is a paradoxical result, I would argue, of his experience of World War I. Charlot was also struck by the difference of Lochner's work from French (*AA I 289*): his Madonnas and angels "were in the worst taste—and also they were beautiful."

Charlot made a special trip to Colmar in Alsace to view Grünewald's Isenheimer Altar, in either late 1919 or early 1920.<sup>53</sup> Charlot was overwhelmed:

I had read, however, I think it was in Huysmans about Grünewald, and I wanted very much to see the Grünewalds of Colmar, which are the main, of course, work of Grünewald. I was at the time with the troops of occupation on the Rhine... I could take a few days, and I went to Colmar. I stayed a whole day there, I remember, taking notes about the Isenheim Altar, and it was a big experience, a big impact on me through the idea of color. Of course, I knew color through the other masters, and I knew color through the moderns—the Fauves and Matisse and whatnot had been famous for their color—but there was such a complexity and such an intensity in Grünewald. I think he was the first old master in which one was forced to say that the most important means with which he expressed himself was color. The big Christ on the black ground and flesh green with the purple-red wounds were something that struck me. I wouldn't say that I was expecting that because the people who spoke of him, Huysmans and others, spoke of the intensity of the religious experience that Grünewald should have gone through in putting down his paints, and for me the experience was really painterly rather than religious. And I felt that Grünewald himself had had a tremendous visual experience of the world that he had put down in

those terms; exactly like Van Gogh, for example, was going to put down his color experience of the world, which blended with his own inner passion. In Van Gogh it's easy to distinguish the experience of the world through visual means because the subject matter, as a rule, is rather neutral... With Grünewald I think it's a little more delicate because people will rush to the fact that he has, well, the *Temptation of St. Anthony*, those horrible devils, and of course the dead Christ on the Cross, sort of nearly beginning to rot, we could say. And they go directly to the subject matter and decide he is a mystic. It wasn't, as I say, with me a religious or mystical experience, but a tremendous painterly experience within my craft to see the complex harmonies of colors with which he harmonized his things... I think that Grünewald is probably, perhaps with Piero Della Francesca, the greatest colorist, that is for me, of course. All those things are subjective. So I stayed there the whole day long. I remember I was in my uniform of artillery officer, and at the time things were still very close to the war, and I caused a little flurry among the people around, just taking notes in front of those pictures for twelve hours of the day while the museum was open. And I would say I never recovered. That is, I never could think of things in terms of rational design in the terms that Poussin had heard design. You can take a drawing of Poussin for one of his big compositions: you have the essentials of the composition. But we don't have, of course, some compositions of Grünewald in that sense though he must have made some. But they are always modified by the sense of color. So I learned something there that remained with me all my life, I think, and whatever color I choose to use, the color will always modify the line and the composition.<sup>54</sup>

While at Colmar, Charlot bought three 15" X 17" black and white photographs of the Isenheimer Altar paintings, which he kept the rest of his life (they are now in the JCC). In his notes, he recognized their inadequacy for conveying the color impressions he was experiencing:

La photo déforme parce que beaucoup d'ombres ne sont indiquées que par un changement de couleur et non de valeur.

'The photo distorts because lots of shadows are indicated only by a change of color and not of value.'

Charlot kept his detailed notes on the Isenheimer Altar, which are also in the JCC. He made a booklet by cutting in half horizontally stationery from the Hotel de France in Colmar and then folding the half sheets vertically. Thirteen quarter-sheets contain Charlot's notes on Grünewald in a very small hand, with a concluding paragraph on Schongauer. One quarter-sheet contains notes on the symbolism of the Way of the Cross, and another on the Old Testament events and Christian subjects.

With the intensity of his ephrastic poems, Charlot concentrates on identifying the colors in the painting, often complicated, for instance:

Madeleine : au corps noyé dans un flottement carmin crémeux, bordé au bas d'un vert bouteille jaune avec pans d'un drap d'or rigide à ombres vermillons. Une cordelière vermillon flotte au ventre. Cheveux blond or friselés guimpe vert émeraude profond d'où jaillissent les bras glauques ombrés de vermillon pur (bras gauche.)

'Magdalene: with body drowned in a creamy, carmine undulation, bordered at the bottom with a bottle-green yellow with ends of a rigid cloth of gold with vermilion shadows. A vermilion girdle floats at the stomach. Gold blond, curled hair; deep emerald wimple from which project the glaucous arms shadowed with pure vermilion (left arm).'

He notes the coordination of colors—"Belle harmonie par alliées entre le rouge du manteau et la peau tannée-orangée du costume" 'Beautiful harmony with allied colors between the red of the mantle and the tanned-oranged skin of the dress'—as well as originalities—"Exécution admirable les ombres au minimum, suggérées par des teintes froides" 'Admirable execution, the shadows at a minimum, suggested by cold tints'—and differences from modern practices in one section: "Pas d'harmonie générale" 'No general harmony.' He notes historical parallels: "Clairs roses et blanc (technique belge.)" 'Rose and white clarities (Belgian technique).'

A terre une mosaïque désagréable  
nuages violacées et Père Eternel dans une gloire rousse (ridicule)  
Un Père Eternel carmin et jaunâtre (laid)

'On the ground, a disagreeable mosaic  
clouds with violet and Eternal Father in a russet glory (ridiculous)  
An Eternal Father carmine and yellowish (ugly).'

Charlot summarizes later his criticisms:

Dans les beaux endroits il s'échauffe, peint alors par larges touches sur le frottis premier.

Puis il erre dans des finesses fausses (Père éternel). alors sec et d'un dessin déplorable, des nuances déconcertantes (anges

'In the beautiful places, he warms up, paints then with large touches on the first scumble.

Then he wanders into false finesses (eternal Father). Then dry and with deplorable drawing, disconcerting nuances (angels'

He also notes a problem in the drawing of a detail. Nonetheless, Charlot's criticisms accentuate the excitement of his general impressions. Grünewald is more advanced than all of those who followed him in the history of art:

Grünwald n'a rien à apprendre pour la vision. Sans tradition il a trouvé tout. Nous, éduqués par des générations de chef d'œuvres, à son étude, avons l'impression d'une chose *neuve* et d'un progrès sur les autres.

'Grünwald has nothing to learn for vision. Without tradition, he has found everything. We, educated by generations of masterpieces, studying him, have the impression of a *new* thing and of progress beyond the others.'

Charlot defines Grünwald's methods of using color:

il voit les couleurs et admirablement les variations colorées dans l'ombre et les clairs-obscurs. Dans les lumières il plaque à valeur égale le ton dominant d'autres le chauffant ou l'affroidissant suivant les cas. le gris qu'il emploie dans certaines ombres est indéfinissable : très chaud il tient du mauve et de l'orange, quoique gris.—

Il compose son ensemble sur un ou 2 tons dominants qui s'équilibrent.

Il sait surtout s'imposer une discipline (fond noir du Christ.)

Une fois l'harmonie générale trouvée, il étudie les grands tons et les soumet à toutes leurs valeurs et alliées, avec un raffinement extrême.

'he sees the colors and, admirably, the colored variations in shadow and chiaroscuro. In the lights, he combines, at equal value, the dominant tone with others, warming or cooling it according to the case. The gray that he uses in certain shadows is indefinable: very warm, it has something of mauve and orange, although gray.—'

He composes his ensemble on one or two dominating tones that balance each other.

Above all, he knows how to impose a discipline on himself (the black background of the Christ).

Once the general harmony has been found, he studies the large tones and submits them to all their values and allied colors, with an extreme refinement.'

In contrast to Charlot's notes on color, his remarks on the process of creation and the composition are brief, for instance:

Son dessin ne cherche pas les volumes mais la ligne. Les faces sont comme développées sur un plan. tous les doigts contournés comme de goutte.

'His drawing does not look for volumes but line. The faces are as if developed on a plane. all the fingers twist as if with gout.'

Like others at the time, Charlot was struck by the modernity of Grünwald's altar: "l'intensité expressionniste de certains morceaux rappelle (le dessin de Matisse), les préparations de Cézanne" 'the expressionist intensity of certain pieces recalls (the drawing of Matisse), the preparations of Cézanne.'

Charlot's Colmar notes confirm the point of his later interview that he was struck as a painter primarily by Grünewald's use of color, which became a pervasive influence in Charlot's art. However, he clearly felt the impact of Grünewald's figural style as well: "the Grünewalds constituted an apotheosis of the demonic that, in France, I had plainly dismissed as devilish. It was great art based on unrest, from the rabidly gnarled outlines to the willful assonances of color-chords" (AA I 289). As seen above, unrest or instability had been one of Charlot's main impressions of the war, which he would express in his two first frescoes in Mexico, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* (1922–1923) and *Cargadores* (1923).

Contemporary artists like Max Beckmann and Otto Dix discovered in the subject matter of the altar and its stylistic distortions a model for their own anguished efforts to express the horror of the war (e.g., Cork 1994: e.g., 181, 272 f., 302–306); their own works reveal Grünewald's influence clearly. All great artists were thinking alike about the war. As discussed elsewhere, Charlot was making human contact through art with his former enemies:

El "francesito" llegado a México en 1921 estaba marcado por los horrores de la Guerra mundial, y, recuerdo, me contó que cayó en la cuenta del "absurdo" de esta Guerra, al llegar con el ejército francés a Colmar, donde por la primera vez vió [*sic*] las pinturas de Mathias Grünewald.

— "¿Cómo", me decía él, "podía yo aceptar haber luchado en contra de un pueblo que ha dado un pintor como Grünewald, es decir un pintor que siendo universal, es más que alemán o francés?" (Baciu 1982: 24)

'Arrived in Mexico in 1921, the "little Frenchman" was marked by the horrors of the World War. And, I remember, he told me that he suddenly realized the "aburdity" of that war when he arrived with the French army at Colmar where for the first time he saw the paintings of Matthäus Grünewald.

"How," he said to me, "could I accept to have fought against a people that produced a painter like Grünewald, that is, a painter who, being universal, is more than German or French."

The impact of German art on Charlot is less obvious than on the German Expressionists because wider and more thoroughly absorbed. For instance, Charlot did not adopt Grünewald's specific sense of distortion, and he was already intimately familiar with Grünewald's subject matter. No straightforward stylistic influence can be found in the work in which it would be most expected, Charlot's *Chemin de Croix*. Charlot's first mural, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* of 1922–1923, is one of his "most passionate" works, and certainly the most "violently dramatic"; one might find Grünewald's influence in the importance of color in the work and in the contortions of the features; one might find a similarity between the falling and slumping figures of the soldiers in the bottom left corner of the Resurrection panel and the Indians in the corresponding position. Such connections are not, however, apparent and would probably not be made without an acquaintance with Charlot's own remarks. That is, any influence from Grünewald has been joined to others and thoroughly assimilated into Charlot's personal style. Indeed, I believe *The Massacre* shows familiarity also with the battle scenes by Albrecht Altdorfer (ca.

1480–1538) and the unusually close viewer’s position in *Christ Bearing the Cross* (1515–1516) by Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516).

At this period, the importance of German art for Charlot was, I believe, more general and emotional: “Grunewald is violently dramatic and my work at its most passionate owes much to him.” Germanic intensity of expression expanded Charlot’s ideas of how overtly emotion could be integrated into an art style that was classically measured and composed. That is, German art expanded the range of his expression. He needed that greater range to express his feelings about the war and was characteristically open to help from his former enemy. In the *Chemin* and *The Massacre in the Main Temple*, Charlot would not copy Grünewald, but he would be inspired by him. Indeed, German art made such a powerful impression that it provoked Charlot’s first—and almost unique—moment of unease with multiculturalism: “I began to experience the kind of intellectual quartering that became my lot as a displaced person, partaking of one culture after another” (AA I 289). Much of Charlot’s artwork during the Occupation would involve studying and assimilating the German art he was experiencing so intensely, facing its challenge to his own art. The result was positive. German art became for Charlot a lifelong study and was often mentioned in his writings. When I visited the Alte Pinakothek in Munich with him in 1968, he lingered longest before the German masterpieces and talked most about Michael Pacher’s *Altarpiece of the Church Fathers* (ca. 1435–1498, ca. 1483). He found it “astonishing” and pointed out especially the figure of Trajan rising from a pit in the panel on St. Gregory. I believe it reminded him of his own pit-digger in his first mural in Hawai’i (1949): the perspective of both paintings remains true even when the viewer is standing close to the painting.

German art was also, I believe, a support for certain of Charlot’s tendencies. The overt symbology of Medieval and early Renaissance German art—a main means of communication—coincided with Charlot’s interest in and use of Mesoamerican glyphs and development of regular themes. More obviously, Charlot went through a “German” period while studying German prints at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the most obvious creations of which were his illustrations for Paul Claudel’s writings on the Apocalypse.

Besides German art, Charlot was studying general subjects<sup>55</sup> and contemporary art in France as is clear from a note on the verso of a sketch:

Art :  
reproductions Grünwald. [*sic*]  
ttes reprod. allemandes  
Jeune P. Française  
*abonnement Bulletin*  
*Artistique.*

‘Art:  
Grünewald reproductions.  
all German reproductions  
New French Painting



subscription Bulletin

*Artistique.*

Charlot was already reading books by and about Cubists—like *Neue Französische Malerei*—and used Cubist faceting in his *Self-Portrait* of January 21–24, 1919. However, he first focused intensely on Cubism after his demobilization.

### 7.5.2. DRAWINGS AND WATERCOLORS

Charlot continued his wartime practice of recording the people and sights around him. Most of these continued the realistic style he had established earlier—along with increasing skill and expressivity—but he also interspersed these with stylistic experiments. The bases of these experiments are diverse. Cubism and *tâchisme*—the use of color dots or small areas—are French. Other works, I believe, are influenced by his study of German art. *Femme fumant* and *Eglise Annweiler* reveal arguably a study of Expressionism. The varying styles of the cityscapes, *Moi*, *La Virginité*, and *La Luxure* seem generally Germanic, the result of a diffuse influence from many sources, from ancient to modern, from high to folk, including children’s book illustrations. In all cases, Charlot absorbs his influences into a unified individual work, however much it differs from his other works of the same time. In a larger perspective, in the cityscapes and portraits, Charlot moves towards a stylistic synthesis of his experiments with his dominant line of development, a synthesis that he achieves at the end of the Occupation and carries with him into the next period. However, he then starts a new set of experiments based on his focus on Cubism.

Charlot’s *Small Sketchpad*, a mere 2-3/8” by 1-9/16”, which was probably started when he joined the Moroccan Division and continued into late 1919, indicates the range of his styles and subjects. As he had earlier, he portrayed and caricatured his military colleagues and the civilians among whom they were living. Besides the works described in the last chapter, Charlot drew three serious portraits. Two seem to be of French officers: a man with a moustache in full profile and another in three-quarters view, facing to the viewer’s left.<sup>56</sup> The former is done with the sharp point of a hard pencil; the latter with the side of the point of a soft one. Even on so small a scale, Charlot achieved contrasting effects. The faces have none of the tension of Charlot’s wartime portraits; the man in soft focus even has a slight smile. Charlot also portrayed a German man, perhaps an official, whose stiff bearing, Prussian haircut, small bristly moustache, high collar, and intense eyes peering through a pince-nez, emphasize his difference from Charlot’s French friends. Charlot caricatured German civilians just as he had French ones in Sézanne. Two women and a man are characterized by their outlandish hats, funny expressions, and abstract bodies. More of a straight report, a drawing of two men and a woman illustrates the “fashion of the time” (“Jean Charlot’s Notes on Early French Work”). The dress of the men resembles that in the unfinished sketch on the back of *Arbre*, which was done in Lorraine and is dated December 30, 1918. Charlot also made larger portraits of the Germans he met, five of which are listed in his “Mes Dessins en Allemagne”. Charlot was attentive to the visual differences he was encountering. A quasi-abstract drawing of a vase of flowers with a bird perched curiously on top shows that Charlot was continuing his customary genres as well.

Charlot made several drawings of German women, who were a preoccupation of his at the time, as seen in his poems. In his *Small Sketchpad*, he made five portraits of a “girl of family where living. All the same girl in these portraits” (“Jean Charlot’s Notes on Early French Work”). Despite Charlot’s statement, I believe one of the portraits is of a different model. Although one model is the same for four of the drawings—distinguished by her youth, her long slim neck, distinctive nose, and hairdo—Charlot has seen her in different ways. In one she is skinny, straightforward, and gawky. On the verso, Charlot has softened the angle of her head and given her an ethereal smile. In a third, he makes her strong and robust like a peasant, her slight scowl adding to her strength. In the fourth, he draws her again in profile, emphasizing her round jaw; below her, he draws in profile what looks like a young female type of Renaissance and late-Renaissance German art. Charlot seems to be comparing the living German woman to an ideal developed earlier in German art. If my identifications are correct, Charlot made a larger portrait of this same model, *Profile of a Young Woman*,<sup>57</sup> in which he emphasizes with a hard sharp pencil line the delicacy of her profile and—with lighter lines and shading done with the side of the pencil—its softness. Living in a German family, Charlot took the time to study the daughter of the house with his pencil in hand.

The fifth portrait is of a slightly older woman with a broader, puffier face, longer hair heaped up above her forehead, and more prominent eyes. Charlot portrays her in close-up in three-quarters emphasizing her high forehead, humid eyes, and determined mouth. The model appears to be Lotta Kuhn of Jugenheim—the daughter in the first family home in which Charlot was billeted. Charlot made two larger drawings of her that fit his verbal description: “sa chair pleine et saine—grasse de nuque et de menton—sa poitrine maternelle—et ses nattes rondes” ‘her flesh full and healthy—nape and chin fat—her breasts maternal—her braids round.’<sup>58</sup>

The first portrait of January 10 is in pure profile emphasized by a purple wash. The facial outline is strengthened with several passes of the pencil, and the hatching is bold with its separate strong lines; Charlot is curiously able to suggest contour with long straight lines. Lotta appears older than her age, her shoulders slightly stooped, staring forward but absorbed in serious thought, her mouth set. Charlot sees clearly the effect of the war on those left at home. I believe he is reminded of his own mother in the similarity of the two women’s profiles.

The second portrait, done two days later, is softer, but still strong. Lotta looks directly at the artist, a strong light falling on the left side of her face and leaving the right in shadow. Just looking at the light side, the viewer would see a traditionally attractive young German woman, but Charlot analyzes the shadow side of Lotta’s slightly fatty face into areas of lighter and darker hatching. However young the woman’s exterior, her interior shows the effects of much experience. On January 21–24, Charlot will express his own inner marks with Cubist faceting of his own face. Lotta’s face reveals, however, none of the negative turmoil he attributed to her in his Meditation of January 8. She looks at the artist with interest and warm affection—even with sympathetic penetration—and feels no shadow of defeat between them. In the eyes of several of Charlot’s German models as they look at him drawing them, the viewer senses the special understanding Charlot felt they had for those who had gone through the war, an understanding he missed sadly in the French women with whom he later sought refuge and comfort.

In these portraits, no trace can be found of the negative, at times reprehensible, feelings Charlot confessed in his *Meditations*: no triumphalism, no desire for revenge, no conqueror's sexual excitement. Charlot clearly makes human contact with his models as he scrutinizes them with his artist's eye, and they respond without wariness or discomfort. Charlot felt that true artistic creativity was itself purifying, purging any feelings unworthy of the dignity of the subject. A painting of a nude could not be prurient, otherwise it would not be truly art, but merely a superficial reaction, a diminishing of the full significance of the subject. Accordingly, the artist had to be able to gain access to a level that was deeper than any unworthy feelings he might have. Whatever temptations roiled the surface of his life, to do good art, Charlot had to be able to reach deep enough to respond in a fully human way to the subject in front of him.

Charlot's next drawings of German women are from Rheingönheim, where he resided except for side trips probably from late March to the end of August 1919. Two drawings are of the same young woman: *Babette* (apparently a nickname) of April 28 and *Hildegard*, May 11, described as "Hildegarde la fille de la proprio" "Hildegarde the daughter of the woman in whose home [Charlot] was billeted."<sup>59</sup> Hildegarde had a conscious and careful style of dressing; she wore a large dark hair ribbon with a light dress in *Babette* and a white ribbon with a black dress in *Hildegard*. She wears the latter combination in *Eglise*, a pencil and wash of the church of Rheingönheim done on May 8. In front of the church Charlot has painted satiric portraits of two women: "Elizabeth qui m'a couru après" "Elizabeth, who chased after me" makes gooo eyes at the painter; Hildegarde hangs back, but her cheeks are as red as Elizabeth's. As I reconstruct the scene, Charlot was painting the church when the two young women happened into the churchyard and started watching him from over the fence, moving him to add their satiric portraits to an otherwise straight cityscape. In "Mes Dessins en Allemagne," Charlot lists a portrait of *Elizabeth* done May 30.

Hildegarde is a classic German beauty—recalling the ideals of Dürer, Cranach, and even Rubens—and she can be quietly (*Babette*) or pertly (*Hildegard*) conscious of her looks. Charlot is fascinated by the loose fit of her pudgy skin over her skull and by its opaline variations. Her eyes are of a lovely pale blue, but communicate little emotion or intensity. Her expression is sweet and untroubled; she is a young middle-class girl who has escaped the sufferings of war and privation apparent in the faces of the other German women Charlot drew. For her portraits, Hildegarde has done herself up, and as she looks at the artist, she asks more how she looks than how he is. There are limits to the understanding and thus the comfort she can bring to the artist.

The middle-class Hildegarde was not, I would guess, the woman of Rheingönheim with whom Charlot had the happy physical relationship described above. That woman might be portrayed in Charlot's next dated portrait, which is unusually sexual: *Young Woman of Rheingönheim*.<sup>60</sup> Just as in his later drawing of Nahui Olin, Charlot's portrait communicates both the desirability of the woman and the desire of the artist. The woman looks off to the artist's left with her dreamy eyes luminously blue. Her red lips part—uniquely in this series—but not to speak; they simply relax into her thought. Her slimness, her long neck, the graceful attitude of her head, her thin upper lip, all give her an air that a Frenchman can appreciate, and her soft, cropped hair, highlighted with gold, has an unstudied chic. The model is not

middle-class like Hildegarde, but she has a way about her. Charlot's drawing seems to illustrate the lines of his poem *Des femmes*, quoted above:

ce renversement las du col et de la face  
 et l'abandon quiet de ce corps sans grimace  
 'this lazy throwing back of the neck and face  
 and the quiet abandon of this body without a grimace'

The drawing is a masterpiece of touch. The extensive reserves of the creamy paper indicate the paleness of the model's skin and hair. The greater part of the drawing is in light pencil with very short, tight hatching. Lines of barely perceptible red suggest the slight blush of the skin and then intensify at the lips and unexpectedly at translucent areas of the ears. The locks of hair are touched with thin hard lines of gold, and finally the eyes are uniquely blue: "Vous m'avez refait au contact d'yeux d'améthyste" 'You have remade me with the contact of your amethyst eyes.'

Sometime after completing the portrait, Charlot added two erotic doodles, the only ones I know by him.<sup>61</sup> On the right of the sheet, the model, recognizable by her hair, is sitting on the stairs she has apparently been sweeping. Before her, a goggle-eyed soldier, perhaps a self-portrait, stands straight as a poker. She turns her eyes downward with a modest smile, but holds the broom she has been using in such a way that it suggests the erect penis of the soldier. The doodle may place the model as a servant in the home in which Charlot was billeted, a circumstance that would explain their easy domestic contact described in *Des femmes*. On the left of the sheet, the head of a penis rises with a jubilant expression from the kind of thick, fashionable man's collar that Charlot had drawn earlier and which here resembles *labia maiora*. From the caricature of Elizabeth in *Eglise* to this portrait, the viewer senses the strong sexual atmosphere at Rheingönheim.

Charlot's last dated portrait, *Eppstein, Mademoiselle Weisbrot*, of September 3, 1919, returns to a middle-class subject: "ma proprio à Eppstein" 'my proprietor at Eppstein.'<sup>62</sup> She may be the second German woman for whom Charlot had serious feelings, whom he described in *Des femmes* and several other poems: middle-class, intelligent, capable, she has lost her fiancé at Verdun and "semble souffrir quelque peine secrète" 'seems to suffer some secret pain.' She searches for answers in German philosophy, and Charlot tries to interest her in Catholicism. The woman in the drawing looks down absorbed in thought. Her pupil is barely visible through the veil of her lashes, and her turbulent hair seems to express the confusion and pain of her thinking: "J'ai cherché Dieu sans le trouver" 'I have looked for God without finding Him.' Charlot wanted her to forget Kant and Goethe and look directly at the beauty of nature. As with his profile of Lotta Kuhn, Charlot sees the suffering of women in the war, which creates a bond of sympathy.

Two undated drawings portray the peasant or lower-class women who formed relationships with the soldiers and whom Charlot described positively in his poems and Meditations.<sup>63</sup> The model of *Portrait of Young German Woman, full face, unfinished* was connected to Captain Thibareng. Strong, sturdy, she impresses the viewer as one of the "bonnes ménagères" 'good homemakers' who attended to

the soldiers' living needs as well as their sexual ones. She smiles maternally at the artist, happy enough to oblige another odd demand. As in the portrait of Lotta Kuhn and the *Unfinished Drawing of Young German Woman*, Charlot establishes a deep eye contact with the model; both persons seem to penetrate each other. Charlot wrote in *Des femmes* of these lower-class semi-prostitutes:

Pour qui n'est pas client elles ont des trésors  
d'expérience...

'For him who is not a client, they have treasures  
of experience...'

Charlot felt in them an understanding of their sufferings during the war.

The model of *Unfinished Drawing of Young German Woman* has not arrived at the maternal and accepting calm of the previous woman. Skinny and hard, her life was toil and privation long before the war and has not changed since. Her eyes are agitated, even panicky, and Charlot's pencil picks up her mood. The soft touches on the face and neck contrast with the strong straight background lines that radiate from her head and thicken to a dark shadow behind her head. As in *Mademoiselle Weisbrot*, Charlot suggests the quality of her thought, in this case, a dark void. He apparently abandoned the drawing when he came to her mouth; he may even have erased it. The little that shows seems tense with pain.

The above drawings continue Charlot's main line of development, but as with several subjects at this time, he also experimented. During his stay in Maudach, February 2–March 24, he made in “my sketchbook” a pencil and wash sketch of *Anny*, “Some German woman in the cafés where the military congregated.”<sup>64</sup> The sketch is not a psychological portrait like the drawings discussed above, although the woman appears unhappy. Rather, it is a study of the working clothes and makeup of a prostitute: heavily mascaraed eyes, rouged cheeks, scarlet mouth, curled hair, and hat and neck at equally rakish angles. The sketch is stylized—especially the wide curve of the neck inclining backwards into the picture space from the bottom edge—but appears to be an accurate representation of the woman's showy outfit; the style of the sketch is appropriate to the subject.

On February 10, Charlot used the sketch for a highly experimental work, *Femme Fumant*, the racy sight of a woman smoking in public.<sup>65</sup> The innovative characteristics of this work have antecedents. The unusually vivid colors are like Charlot's earlier *Arbre* and *Chaise*, discussed above, but most of the colors are mixed, not pure, creating a garish, vulgar effect. The cigarette smoke flowing unrealistically to and off the edge of the painting are like the extensions of the legs in *Chaise*. The division of the body surface into areas of highly contrasted colors recalls Charlot's experimental works of 1916 or 1917: *Louis Goupil*, *Bearded Man in Profile*, and *Bearded Man with Hat in Profile*. But all these devices are used to create an effect of aggressive decadence, recalling the extravagant vamps of Charlot's poems. Rather than looking unhappily downwards, Anny tosses her head back and half closes her yellow eyes. Her right hand fingers sickly green beads that cast lurid reflections up onto the sagging parts of her skin. Her left elbow poses on the compositionally tilted table, and her hand tosses flamboyantly backwards, the tips of

her index and middle finger pinching the erect cigarette that emits a jet of white smoke arching upwards to the edge of the picture and out of the frame. An empty plate by her elbow, oval shaped in perspective, seems to invite contributions and suggests what she will give to get them.

As in the works of 1916–1917, Charlot has based himself on observation but so exaggerated his “analysis” that the effect is shocking. In *Anny*, the prostitute has ringlets along the bottom of her hairdo with the hair brushed straight up above them. In *Femme Fumant*, the ringlets have been regularized into a sort of chain, and the brushed up hair has been analyzed into hard columns; the hair becomes both wildly overdone and a hard helmet, a weapon of work. *Anny* has a simple green hat ornament of a vaguely floral shape. The same element in the *Femme Fumant* has been articulated to suggest both female and male genitals, and a drawing on the side seems to be exploring a way to make the decoration even more phallic. Unprecedented, however, is Charlot’s treatment of the hands: fantastically thin and flexible, indeed snake-like, they form an ugly parody of elegance. Charlot had a visceral dislike of the easy sophistication of elongated forms, a tendency that would become central to his art. Indeed, confronting the false face created by the prostitute, he fortifies his response with an elaborate geometric composition in which the disequilibrium indicated by the tilted table top—which performs the same compositional function as the curved neck in *Anny*—and the extravagant gesture is ultimately absorbed into a balanced system of thrusting lines and curves. Moreover, in all three related works, Charlot combines a two-dimensional with a three-dimensional composition: the neck and body can be perceived both as a two-dimensional diagonal and also as a three-dimensional tilting back into the space, a compositional problem that continued to intrigue him.<sup>66</sup>

Charlot returned to the sketch *Anny* for one of the only two prints he completed during the Occupation, *Woman with Hat*.<sup>67</sup> The print is more realistic than the sketch, and the woman has become respectable or at least nonprofessional. The geometric composition used in the previous two works is clarified: the woman’s bust and shoulders lean diagonally back into the picture space from the bottom right corner, while above them, her head leans forward, creating an unusual but balanced three-dimensional composition. The cross-hatching is, however, confusing, and Charlot was never happy with the result: “They really are terrible. I went too far with it” (Morse 1976: 8). I believe that Charlot was uncomfortable trying to use this particular experimental style in woodblock and also that, for Charlot, the subject was not one whose image would have a reason to be multiplied. The print does confirm, however, that Charlot was struck by the subject and did want to do something more with it or with German women in general. Speaking of the geometrized drawing of a woman’s head on the verso of his portrait of Mademoiselle Marchais—a preparatory work for the *Chemin de Croix*—Charlot mistakenly said: “looks like German drawings thought of doing woodcut of. Woman with Hat.”<sup>68</sup>

Although sexual attraction is communicated in some of Charlot’s drawings of German women, sexuality itself is not accorded the explicit attention it receives in Charlot’s writings of the time: only the two doodles described above depict it directly. Only with Hawaiian subjects would sexuality become a central theme of Charlot’s art as it was for the indigenous religion and culture; indeed, Hawaiian thinkers and artists had created a worldview that privileged sexuality as the permeating energy of the entire universe, mineral, vegetal, animal, human, and godly. That is, sexuality was primary rather than

secondary, as it was in Christianity. As a result, sexuality was a normal and recognized part of Hawaiian living and thinking and was unburdened by the emotional and intellectual difficulties found in Western culture and religion. Charlot once criticized my own writing on Hawaiian culture by saying, “When Hawaiians discuss sex, there’s none of your heavy breathing.” The release of Charlot’s own thinking on sexuality in Hawai’i is another indication of the importance of subject matter for him.

Charlot continued his prewar practice of drawing his surroundings, again alternating between his established style and experiments.<sup>69</sup> *Maudach Ma chambre du 2 au 4–2–19* of February 4, 1919, depicts a large, dark room divided by heavy interior curtains between a sleeping and a living area; the whole room, probably the best in the house, is in the heavy German bourgeois taste with rich, but uncoordinated colors. Charlot paints this unpromising subject in spots of color smaller than those used in *Arbre* and *Chaise*; the result is thus more *tâchiste* in the accepted sense. Charlot’s innovation is to use the technique for a dark interior, rather than a bright exterior, and to apply it to an interior that possesses none of the intrinsic color interest of one by Edouard Vuillard. The effects that interested Charlot seem to have been the glow on the yellow curtains caused by the hidden window on the far, bedside of the room, and the odd underwater effect produced by the mirror on the right wall. The finished work, in my opinion, does not escape the ugliness of the room itself.

Charlot continued also the practice of making still lifes of his clothes and equipment.<sup>70</sup> As in his drawing *Military Kits* of June 7, 1918, the *French Army Coat and Cap*<sup>71</sup> are tossed untidily aside, creating a rippling flow of blue surging diagonally down the sheet. The black cap looks like a rock in a stream. Charlot brushes the subject in fine spirals, and the uniform seems to have lost its tragic connotations and become a celebration of youthful, group masculinity.

*Still Life: Army Personal Effects*<sup>72</sup> of October 13 is a careful outline drawing of the valise and its contents that Charlot must have used on his trip from Eppstein to Souges and then to Bitche. Brushes, gloves, studs, a cuff, cologne, and so on, are aligned with books and sketchpads along a rising diagonal; all stuff to take on a trip. The drawing is completely satisfying and communicates Charlot’s happiness with his life at the time. This is the first of several drawings that Charlot did *au trait*—a single line delineating the form—a technique that requires ultimate manual skill, since nothing can be erased or fudged with shading.

At Bitche, Charlot moved into an army camp with its distinctive style and coloring. In *Toilette*<sup>73</sup> of November 12–13, he explores with interest the dismal pewter and plaster grays of his toilet stand and the wall behind it. Charlot’s fine sense of tone is joined here with his subtle coloring. The center of the painting seems all gray, but closer inspection reveals that Charlot in fact is using as much cream as gray in the area. He even reminds the viewer of his use of cream by displaying it in various lighter shades in the squared table cloth, the handle of the toothbrush, the end of the matchbook cover, and the hand towel. Cream is considered a warm color, and gray cold. Nonetheless, the cream seems to be completely absorbed into the cold gray. Charlot was always interested in these unusual color effects; for instance, he was very proud of making pink appear silver in the maile lei of his oil *Loea Hula, Portrait of ‘Iolani Luahine* (1976). Charlot also uses color to create the composition. The brightest colors are found at the

bottom right and the top left corners, creating a diagonal receding in space. The bulk of the toilet stand juts out between them, creating a counter diagonal, also in three dimensions. This second diagonal is emphasized by the dark brownish red of the wooden front face of the stand at the bottom left corner and the ruddy bristles of the toothbrush on the back shelf of the stand. Charlot is here using color as much as line to create an extremely complex geometric composition that would reward a full study.

As seen in his wartime drawings, Charlot was studying flowers and even kept vases of flowers in his station. “Mes Dessins en Allemagne” includes twenty titles that could refer to finished flower studies, only one of which is known. A drawing from a small *Disassembled Sketchpad*, probably done late in the Occupation, is similar to the war drawings in its intense simplification of flowers into roughly geometric shapes; an example from late 1918 or early in the Occupation would be the *Vase of Flowers, with Bird Perched on Top* from the *Small Sketchpad*.<sup>74</sup> The effect is to transform vase and flowers into an almost solid sculptural form. A finished work in this style is *Cyclamens*:<sup>75</sup> the viewer looks down on two flowerpots that have been placed beyond the window frame onto the deep sill of the window recess. The pot on the left contains cyclamens, a flower often displayed thus in Germany; the pot on the right shows the stocks of what are probably narcissus. The flowerpots are in shadow, while beyond them in the street below, three people walk in the bright sunlight falling on the yellow pavement and a pink wall. The flowers are as sculptural as their pots, whose surfaces are analyzed into areas that create the same upward thrusting movements as the plants. The stone sill is mottled with touches of color similar to those on the leaves. Pots and plants together fill out the interesting space crafted from the window frame, the sill, and the recess wall. In contrast, the people and the street are flattened and rarefied by the sunlight.

Charlot was also doing more traditional still lifes with a profusion of differentiated flowers. The drawing *Flowers in Vase*<sup>76</sup> uses conventions—draped background and classical vase—but Charlot distorts the space with tipping and the vase with twisting and challenges himself to absorb into his composition the jungle-like tangle of flowers emerging from the vase. That Charlot was using flower compositions for experimental purposes is clear from a pencil and wash composition that he crossed out with the words:

J’ai cherché sur fond dégradé du noir au blanc[,] Le sujet du blanc au noir. raté.<sup>77</sup>

‘I was looking for: on a background degraded from black to white, The subject from white to black. failed.’

He has crossed out a second pencil and wash of *Flowering Branches*.<sup>78</sup>

The background of *Cyclamens* is an example of Charlot’s interest in landscapes and cityscapes during the Occupation; fourteen items on the list “Mes Dessins en Allemagne” could refer to such works. The five known examples demonstrate that Charlot used the subject most often for stylistic experimentation. *Usines*, a pencil and wash done “de ma fenêtre” ‘from my window’ at Rheingönheim on May 3, 1919,<sup>79</sup> maintains the realistic, architecturally accurate style Charlot had used since childhood. Smoke streams from two chimneys of the undamaged factory, an impressive testimony to the continuing prosperity of the region. Composed in a sweeping horizontal format, the light horizontal lines and colors



are balanced by the few but emphatically black verticals. As in *Toilette*, color works equally with line to create the composition.

The modern architecture of the factory was familiar to Charlot, but the lack of true verticals and horizontals in older German buildings and towns stimulated him to stylistic innovation. As he wrote his mother on September 1, 1919, “J’ai fait 2 petits paysages curieux” ‘I’ve made two curious little landscapes.’ As mentioned above, a diffuse German influence can be felt for the first time in these works. As later in Mexico, Charlot is absorbing local art to depict local subjects. *Eglise*,<sup>80</sup> painted five days after *Usines*, explores the wobbly lines of the church, its tower, the wall in front of it, and the wicker fence; their soft curves bind them to the flowery tree, the bush, and the uneven ground. In this long-inhabited village, the works of man have flexed into the forms of the nature around them. The stylization seems to intensify as Charlot works downward on the painting: the tower is a realistic image, the church below it more atmospheric, and the plants and walls are simplified into folk-like images. Finally, Charlot burst into satire when the young women, Elizabeth and Hildegarde, appeared in the churchyard. In the next three paintings, Charlot’s style will be homogeneously bold.

In *Eglise Annweiler*<sup>81</sup> of November 20, 1919, Charlot looks down from his window onto a street corner that cuts a low triangle into the up-tilted ground from the right edge of the sheet; this triangle is made three-dimensional by a fence bordering the right side of the street and turning the corner with it. The complex corner of a brick church with attached buttresses cuts a non-parallel three-dimensional triangle at the top left of the sheet. The apex of each triangle is accentuated with a tree. Thus far, Charlot’s composition offers a great deal of complexity. However, he adds a completely new dimension. He places the above composition behind two trees that form a screen of black, leafless branches that are unrealistically, indeed unnaturally regularized and stylized (for instance, branches grow out of branches of equal size). He then paints a line along the tips of the branches—a line that could not exist in nature—to make them into areas, albeit lattice-like ones. The tree on the right is thus made to correspond to the triangle behind it, while the one on the left corresponds to the church above it. The composition resembles a game of chess played on two boards, one above the other, in which the imbalances of one plane compensate those of the other. Whereas in *Eglise*, Charlot seemed to be working in an atmosphere of folk art, in *Eglise Annweiler*, the violently bold black branches, with their ominous, anxious mood, may be influenced by German Expressionism.

In *Nonnes à Landau* of December 1, 1919,<sup>82</sup> Charlot revels in all the irregularities of the German cityscape; houses, street, steps, and walls seem to be made of some malleable plastic. The space seems to swirl glutinously around the objects. The painting has the playfulness of folk painting, even though the composition echoes the format and complications of *Eglise Annweiler*. The dominant light pastels are enlivened wittily by the black of the nuns’ habits, echoed by the openings of the windows. Charlot was clearly delighted and amused.

In his last cityscape, *Street Scene in German Town (Landau?)*<sup>83</sup> of March 25, 1920, Charlot returns to a greater solidity as he did also in his treatment of other subjects towards the end of the Occupation. For all their tilting and curved lines, the buildings are made of stone and plaster, and the

viewer could imagine walking on the street. In the center foreground, a bollard, or stump-like post, performs in the picture the same service it did in life: it prevents the viewer, as it did the pedestrian, from falling into the space before him. Charlot positively dangled the viewer in that space in *Nonnes à Landau*. Nonetheless, the corner architecture of the central building in *Street Scene* is much more flexibly expressive than the reportorial tower of the church in *Eglise*. As Charlot absorbs influences into the line of his development, they add to his work.

Charlot continued his wartime practice of making small portraits of his fellow-soldiers—which I have discussed in the previous chapter—the last of which is found in a *Disassembled Sketchpad* that overlaps the end of his service and the beginning of his postwar period. Some of these may have been favors for friends or officers; one of his two prints of the period, apart from the *Chemin de Croix*, is an ex libris woodcut done at Ludwigshafen in 1919 for Captain G. Chio (Morse number 9), whom Charlot remembered positively, trying to keep in contact with him after the war (Morse 1976: 8): “Captain Chio was my commanding officer, a nice man. He was sensitive, interested in art and music.” The print is an expanded and more expert version of the bookplate Charlot carved for himself in 1917.

However, during the Occupation, Charlot was able to use a larger format, and “Mes Dessins en Allemagne” lists a possible eleven finished drawings, six of which are in the JCC. Two of these are continuations of Charlot’s earlier style, like his portraits of German women. *Guitton*<sup>84</sup> is an outline drawing, *au trait*, like *Still Life: Army Personal Effects*, discussed above. The soldier shields his eyes with his left hand, propping his head up with his left elbow on the table at which he sits; his right hand holds a pencil but does not use it. The way the hand holds the head suggests painful thoughts. Is Guitton considering what he can write home? His slouch reveals his low, tired, even demoralized mood. The tablecloth looks like the one in *Toilette*, discussed above; Guitton and Charlot may have shared the same room, and Charlot’s spare, skilled line is all insight and sympathy.

*Travès*<sup>85</sup> is a handsome, even flattering portrait of Charlot’s immediate superior, in which his capacity to capture a living personality is in evidence. Charlot has, however, added an unusual editorial comment: on Travès’s collar, instead of the crescent moon of the Moroccan Division, Charlot has doodled a pig.

In contrast, the earlier portrait *Grimprel*<sup>86</sup> of March 12 corresponds to the experiments *Arbre* and *Chaise*. Using almost no pencil line, Charlot builds the portrait with areas of color. The choice of colors is unusual and unrealistic, for instance, odd yellows and greens for areas of skin. But the colors create a vibrant rather than a shocking effect, and that vibration is accented by the aura of dark color stripes that encloses the head. Despite the coloristic aims and the means employed, the portrait contains the type of detail one would sooner expect in a drawing, for instance, the parts of the skin in the eye socket that overlap and thus hold the monocle. On closer inspection, the viewer discovers that the washes are not laid flat, but assist in places with the modeling. Charlot has not reduced his subject to his experiment. Grimprel’s monocle over his right eye contains an abstract reflection, but his left eye fixes the viewer. The vividness of its blue reveals that all the coloring of the portrait is an accurate description of

personality. Charlot's experimenting does not involve deviating from his major concerns, but trying different means to achieve his aims.

In *Travès dormant*<sup>87</sup> of January 28, 1920, Charlot uses very strong colors but realistically; that is, he is absorbing his experiments into a solider, more representational style, as seen also in his cityscapes. Similarly, he will later absorb his Cubist experiments into his developing Mexican style. The officer's sleeping face—very different from the pencil portrait discussed above—is ruddy with overindulgence, his brow is pale and clammy, and one can almost hear him snore. Charlot has analyzed the face into color areas, but the edges are not sharp, and the areas themselves contain strong modeling. The colors are read immediately as natural blotches. Despite the ugliness of the subject—and Charlot's pig doodle, mentioned above, reveals some negative feelings about the person—the drawing is compassionate. The sleeping soldier is wearing his stiff red collar and heavy brown coat; even in his sleep, he must be uncomfortable. His exhaustion seems partly attributable to the war, the terrible weariness felt by all the veterans. The ruddy blotches of his face, however reprehensible, do show that he is still alive; indeed, having faced battle, feverishly desirous of living. Orgiastic misbehavior is also a mutilation inflicted by the war.

*Michel* and *Bihain* of February 1920 display the conclusion of Charlot's stylistic development of portraits during the Occupation.<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately, Charlot's list "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" ends in that month, so we cannot know what other works he created before he was discharged in May. Done two days apart, the portraits seem intended to explore the possibilities of a certain style: the former model is French, the latter, Charlot's orderly, is Moroccan; the former is full face, the latter in profile. Psychological penetration is deemphasized—neither subject has a pupil—and the images become iconic representatives. Both portraits are done in a heavy gray gouache with cream and white highlights, creating a monochrome effect. Subjects, clothes, and, for *Bihain*, the background are analyzed into areas that are strongly accentuated and modeled to create a sculptural effect. Charlot will develop this same monochrome style in his large *Portrait of Louis Goupil, profile* and *Louis Goupil's Hands* of 1920, which I will discuss in the next chapter. Charlot remarked of his early paintings in Mexico that the models resembled stone:

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)

The analysis in these two portraits is not Cubist, but in their solidity, the models seem sculpted in granite. A main thrust of Charlot's stylistic development reveals itself.

*Michel* is a forceful person and faces the viewer fearlessly, even aggressively. But his nose has been broken, and Charlot twists the side of his face as if it had been crushed by the blow. *Michel* seems to represent the soldier who has been wounded, but has survived, and now faces the postwar future. The image is hopeful in its emphasis on *Michel's* strength and experienced maturity.

*Bihain* is strong but calmer; the hardships of the war have been less of a shock for him than for the average French conscript. Charlot analyzes his profile with great attention; the image is both more abstracted than *Michel* and more familiar—Charlot was probably closer to his orderly than to his fellow Frenchman. *Bihain* is Charlot's first mature, major portrait of a non-European. The face is not exotic, but down-to-earth, practical. Behind *Bihain*, a pot with flowers on a table indicates his attempts at a little domestic prettiness, similar to Charlot's own. Above the table, a hanging boot recalls *Bihain*'s occupation. From his pipe, smoke rises in arabesques, suggesting his cultural background. But a thick black line and a broad highlight detach *Bihain*'s profile from all its attachments. Ultimately, *Bihain* is a fellow man, and the drawing is a monument to him.

A subject that was new in Charlot's work, at least since his childhood, but in perfect accord with the circumstances, was horses. The *Disassembled Sketchpad* contains eight knowledgeable studies of horses from nature, emphasizing their bulk, and one copy of an artwork of a horse. "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" lists "Cheval étude" for May 5, 1919. Charlot had a lifelong interest in animals and a long acquaintance with horses, factors that often proved the basis for the development of a regular theme or subject in his work. Charlot looks very happy riding his horse in several photographs taken at the time. His visual use of horses is, however, sporadic, for example, the cavalry charge of his first mural, *Massacre in the Main Temple* of 1922–1923. Charlot's drawings of horses during the Occupation give me the impression of being preparatory to some larger work. Similarly, several drawings—like the sheet with a seated French officer reading a newspaper, military caps, and a mess kit from the *Disassembled Sketchpad*—seem to be intended as preparatory studies rather than as artworks complete in themselves. Although I have no direct evidence, I suspect Charlot, towards the end of the Occupation, was considering some large-scale work to express his experience of the war. Such a project does appear later. In 1921, further along in his stylistic development, Charlot made notes for a Cubist work on that theme, "idéographie aztèque et Gleizes," and his "planiste" gouache *Bullet* may have been a preparatory exploration of the ideographs he would have used. Half of the unrealized fresco project for a parish church would have been devoted to the wounded of the war. If I am correct, on the evidence of his drawings at the time, Charlot's conception in late 1919–early 1920 would have been more realistic than *Bullet* and more direct than the fresco. Such a work was never realized, and Charlot's development of horses as a visual theme is perhaps one more loss involved in his move to Mexico. In any case, Charlot used his knowledge of horses to appreciate Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's accuracy in depicting them; he explained to me that the aristocrat Toulouse-Lautrec would have ridden horses from an early age. Charlot also admired the distinctively English genre of portraits of horses, exemplified by the work of George Stubbs, which he attributed to a particular, national love and thus knowledge of the animal.

Charlot continued his self-portraits in several styles. Charlot made at least two caricatures of himself. *Charlot Crapouillot* depicts him in a dashing uniform, but with thick glasses, stubby beard, and straggly hair.<sup>89</sup> A *crapouillot*, or trench mortar, fires behind him, bombs burst in air, and a biplane speeds past overhead. The drawing is undated, but the lighthearted mood seems postwar. The inscription suggests the drawing was made as a peace offering: "A ce vieux copain. Sans rancune. Son ami" 'To my old comrade. Without rancor. His friend,' followed by an artistic signature. On the verso is a funny

pencil drawing of Charlot driving a caricatured tank, probably a Saint Chamond; his head protrudes from the tailed tank making the ensemble look like a monstrous armadillo.

Charlot's *Self-Portrait, Cubist Style* of January 21–24, 1919, discussed in the last chapter, is one of the most important works of this period. It is the earliest anticipation of Charlot's Cubist works of 1921 and the most Cubist of all Charlot's experiments of 1919 and 1920. Significantly, Charlot turns to Cubism in the self-portrait as the best means for expressing his suffering in the war; in *Bullet* of 1921, he will use Cubism to express the feeling of disintegration he felt as he was shot at. Charlot seems to have started a similarly serious self-portrait on the verso of *Young Woman of Rheingönheim* of July 28 to August 1919. The lines are very light, and the drawing seems unusually clumsy; Charlot probably abandoned it as a bad start. "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" lists five other self-portraits, only one of which has survived: *Moi* of September 24, 1919.<sup>90</sup>

*Moi* was done at Souges the day after Charlot created two "dessins rehaussés" or drawings with wash highlights: *La Virginité* and *La Luxure*, both dated September 23.<sup>91</sup> The last two are stylistically identical, and *Moi* is very close to them: flat, curvilinear, strongly distorted. *Nonnes à Landau* of December 1 is a later development of this tendency. Unusual for portraits by Charlot, *Moi* is not a psychological study; nothing of the reflection appears that was being expressed so intensely in his poems at the time. The model is rather an excuse for a stylistic tour-de-force. On the verso, Charlot later added "(!)" to his earlier "*moi*." The very young man is perched on a thin, modern chair in his dress uniform with patent-leather shoes, framed by drawn curtains on either side, as if posing for a village photographer. Below his small, inclined head and winsome expression, his arms and legs bow out into a rough figure eight, strengthened by the elegantly full tunic and trousers. Between his shoes, a small Dalmatian curls himself into an almost perfect, egg-like oval. The design and the coloring are more stylish than usual, and Charlot's wit is allowed freer play. The curtain ties are touched with the same pink as the outlines of Charlot's skin, and the lightest stripes on the floor are the same cream as found in Charlot's tunic. The black of Charlot's hair and shoes is picked up by the tiny dots of the buttons on his sleeves. This is a style that could have made Charlot's fortune in commercial and fashion art, and his reasons for not using it for that purpose must be discussed in the section on his work in Paris.

Charlot's mission at Souges provided the leisure he needed to write his retrospective poems and to experiment with style. He wrote to his mother on September 24, 1919: "J'ai ici de bons camarades et un travail peu absorbant, ce qui me permet de dessiner" 'I have good comrades here and easy work, which lets me draw.' The subjects of his drawings and their inscriptions show that he was using both his visual art and his poetry to reflect on the moral issues he was facing in his life. On *La Virginité*, he wrote in a decorative border:

Cette femme ravissante représente la virginité. Je l'ai dessinée entre deux voyages a Bordeaux et parceque j etais ennuyé de vivre avec beaucoup de gens qui n'étaient pas vierges. Elle rit parcequ'elle est heureuse d'être vierge.

‘This ravishing woman represents virginity. I drew her between two voyages to Bordeaux and because I was tired of living with many people who were not virgins. She smiles because she is happy to be a virgin.’

On *La Luxure*, a similar border reads:

Ce vilain homme représente la luxure. il est laid parceque Satan est avec lui. il est assis sur un calvaire parcequ’il s’inquiète pour des dons de Dieu. Je ne veux pas ressembler à ce vilain individu. Gloire à Dieu.

‘This filthy man represents luxuriousness. he is ugly because Satan is with him. he is seated on a Calvary because he is worried about the gifts of God. I do not want to resemble this filthy individual. Glory to God.’

The man wobbles between the temptations before him—the pig and the section of the snake at the bottom foreground—and penance and salvation behind him, with a skull forming a fulcrum beneath his feet. These two drawings were apparently part of a series. “Mes Dessins en Allemagne” lists also *L’abstinence (dessin rehaussé)* of November 16, 1919, *L’Avarice dessin rehaussé* of January 12, 1920, and *L’orgueil* of January 14, 1920.<sup>92</sup>

Both drawings are done *au trait*, that is, as “outline drawings” with a thin, light, and extremely delicate line. All shading is provided by very light washes that follow the outlines rather than filling areas (with the exception of a small area under the seat of *La Virginité*). A very light pink and a white provide highlights in *La Virginité*, and a comparatively ruddy pink follows the outlines of the man’s skin in *La Luxure*. In both drawings, a human figure is paired with an animal one. In *La Virginité*, a young seated woman leans over a deer lying between her feet; in *Processional* of 1920, Charlot will portray with a deer St. Catherine of Alexandria, patroness of virgins. A white highlight on the hill and chapel behind the deer’s head suggests the horn of the unicorn, a paradoxical medieval symbol of virginity. The woman’s right hand guides the long, strongly phallic neck and head of the deer up towards her belly, beside which her left hand holds a flower to entice the beast. In *La Luxure*, a man with a two-horned haircut is perched on the pedestal of a wayside Calvary, hugging a monstrous pig that rears up on its hind legs to lick his extended neck. The man’s face is tilted in such a way as to reveal the nostrils, creating a snout-like impression; his oversized ears recall those of the pig to his side. Charlot’s use of the pig as a symbol of sexual misconduct has been seen before.<sup>93</sup> The human and animal figures are depicted in dramatic, even distorted postures with large blank areas or reserves that detach them from the backgrounds whose business of flattened details recalls tapestry or some of the children’s book illustrations of the time. Those figures, with their large gestures, fill out the visual space, pushing towards the edges of the rectangle, and creating striking images.

In apparent contrast to the immediate legibility of the drawings, the compositions are flagrantly complicated, working in both two and three dimensions through an obvious distortion of space. In *La Virginité*, the curve of the deer’s neck on the left corresponds to that of the woman’s arm on the right, creating a two-dimensional S-curve. The same curve is represented in three-dimensions by the woman’s

body, starting with her left foot in front of the side of the deer and continuing up her legs and back to emerge in her head and face. The two- and three-dimensional elements are held together by flattening the third dimension with the distortion of the bench the woman is sitting on and with the flatness of the background. The composition seems to be based on Charlot's 1917 unfinished bas-relief *Haloed Woman with Deer*, but Charlot has made the style more attenuated and flamboyant.

The distortion of space is even stronger in *La Luxure*: the cobbled ground tilts up and joins a village- or cityscape, flattened almost to abstraction in a naïve, folk-like simplification. Against this background, the impossible distortion of the perspective of the Calvary creates the false impression of a curve along the left edge of the drawing; from that curve, the figure of the man opens out like a fan towards the opposite edge. This fan-like opening creates both a two-dimensional and a three-dimensional effect, but the two effects are used to counterpoint, or even to neutralize each other. Portions of the male figure seem three dimensional, while portions neighboring them seem two-dimensional. Similarly, the figure of the pig, which the viewer would expect to be strongly three-dimensional, is flattened to its outline. Moreover, the forward placing of the hind legs at the bottom of the drawing contradicts the placing of the forelegs behind the chest of the man towards the top; the pig is standing vertically, not twisting, so Charlot is again using a distortion, impossible in nature, to flatten his visual space. The skull is similarly difficult to place within a naturalistic space. Although Charlot eventually abandoned this style, he used its flattening devices in the background of *L'Amitié*, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

The last surviving example of this series, *L'aumône* of January 13, 1920,<sup>94</sup> reveals Charlot absorbing his innovations into the mainstream of his style as he did in other genres. Charlot has extended the flattening to the figures, which have a graphic simplicity. Moreover, they resemble the figures of the *Chemin de Croix* and his first mural project for a parish church; their proportions are more realistic and their postures and gestures less histrionic. The title is provided in decorative calligraphy, but no inscription is written around the border. The point of the image is sufficiently clear: a French army medic gives a glass of water to a wounded German soldier; that soldier has a halo, evoking the Biblical verse "Whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me" (Matthew 26:40). The religious imagery is heightened by placing the two figures beside a stream of living water, an improbability on the battlefields of the time. The image may have been suggested by a famous photograph of a British soldier giving a drink to a wounded German prisoner; the theme is, however, central to Charlot's continual effort to avoid dehumanizing his enemy. Late in life, he described to Peter Charlot a famous incident from early in the war (e-mail to John Charlot, May 9, 1999):

He spoke once of a Christmas truce where the Germans and French met in the center of No man's land and toasted one another. I vaguely remember he said he did not do this, but he had heard that it was done.

Charlot was pursuing yet another line of stylistic innovation in liturgical art, one that he began in late 1918 or early 1919 and continued into 1920. One of the earliest pieces of evidence is a drawing from the *Small Sketchpad*. When Charlot saw this in the early 1970s, he wrote "don't know what stylized head

is” (“Jean Charlot’s Notes on Early French Work”). Despite the small size of the drawing, the head is heavily monumental; its features are strongly delineated, modeled, and distorted in size, creating an impression of Cubist-like analysis. The hair is swept backwards and solidified into columns, as was the hair in *Femme Fumant*. Nevertheless, the final effect is curiously classical. The head resembles a Roman emperor with a chubby neck. The heavy emphasis on the analyzed elements of the head recalls classical sculptures of gryphons.

The swept-back hair stylized into columns connects the above drawing to several others. *St J. Bapt.*, a pencil drawing from the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*, is similar in style to the tiny drawing described above: the swept-back hair, the strong features, and the classical impression. The large horizontal eyes have here a fierce expression, and the mouth is open to speak. The figure is bearded—Biblical rather than Roman—and the neck is muscular and dynamic rather than sensually opulent. A variation from the same sketchpad is a stylized, older face with a heavier beard; the back-swept hair is in transition to a more regular arrangement, and the features are more realistic and less pronounced. Perhaps the oldest surviving works in this style are three heads on two sides of a separate, ruled sheet, *Stylized Heads*.<sup>95</sup> On one side, an unusually crude profile is crowned by very high, swept-back hair. The hair of the two profiles on the other side is less exaggerated and is combined with other elements to blend into a unified form. Heavy lines accentuate the analyzed elements of the profiles. The subjects are not identified but are certainly liturgical.

A similar profile is found in the lower margin of a drawing of the Pavillon de Flore of the Louvre, originally part of *Sketchpad 1919–1921*. The expression is strong and cruel, perhaps intended for a Roman soldier during the Passion. The head is bald, but displays all the analysis and classicizing of the above heads. The verso of the sheet contains four studies of people praying. The gestures are strong, but not histrionic, and the full figures are composed into complete, expressive forms. The outlines and interior areas of the figures are first drawn in straight lines and then accented strongly with heavy hatching done with continuous, zigzagging lines. Charlot uses this heavy-hatching style in sketches of nudes done at this time, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

Three other sheets display the same style. A *Stylized figure with his arm over his head* resembles the bald profile described above; the hatching is similar but not the same as in the praying figures.<sup>96</sup> The impression made is again Roman and liturgical. On the verso is a study of two hands with connecting lines between the joints to unify the different elements into a form. One hand is elongated and consolidated in the same way as the four studies of *Four unicorns, four studies of hands*.<sup>97</sup> The unicorns are drawn with the same analysis and method of hatching as the praying figures described above. Finally, *Small Sketch Sheet* contains several works done in the same style.<sup>98</sup> On the verso are two stylized heads with swept-back hair and profiles with heavy lines analyzing the profiles into areas; the heads are strong, brutish, and look down. One has been scribbled out as a failure, I would suspect, because he tried to go too far in simplifying the profile into straight lines. The recto has a preparatory drawing for an *ex libris* with dedication:

A / JV DULAC / POÈTE FRANCAIS / CE SIÈCLE DE / DIEV / LE XX



‘To J. V. Dulac, French poet, this century of God, the twentieth’

Around the printing four angels fly. Charlot has condensed the conventional image of a baby head above two wings by enclosing the head within a wing shape—which serves as a cartouche like those used in Mexican Indian art—an interesting idea that Charlot did not develop further. The four angel emblems form a slightly pyramidal square. The style is very much the one under discussion with strong lines describing simplified faces; Charlot has used the style to emphasize the emblematic character of the angel figures. Under this square, Charlot has drawn a line and then printed an *ex libris* inscription:

J. CHARLOT / DECORATEUR / M’A GOUTÉ / P.P.L.

‘J. Charlot, decorator, enjoyed me. Pray for him.’

In style, this image seems to be posterior to the bookplate for G. Chio, mentioned above (Morse number 9); it is another exploration in a new style, like the later, very different “Jean Charlot me crut sien. p.p.l.” ‘Jean Charlot believed me his. Pray for him.’ This would indicate a best date of 1920 for the *Small Sketch Sheet*.

The similarities between specific elements of style and the liturgical subject matter demonstrate, I would argue, that these drawings constitute an experiment with style separate from the others Charlot was conducting at the same time. I would date these drawings from late 1918 or early 1919, because one of the oldest examples is found in the *Small Sketchpad*, which seems to reach only into the earliest period of the Occupation. Other examples are found in the *Sketchpad 1919–1921*, but are undated there. Charlot’s main work in liturgical art through the Occupation and in the months after his demobilization was on the *Chemin de Croix*. He had, however, designed those panels largely in 1918 and was realizing them without introducing any of the stylistic innovations he was exploring elsewhere. The different liturgical style described here may have been an alternative Charlot was exploring while finishing the *Chemin*. In any case, he did not adopt it for his mural projects later in 1920, nor did he use it in his designs for *La Théologie Régulatrice des Arts* of 1921. I conclude, therefore, that the end-date for this set of drawings is around the middle of 1920, that is, the time when Charlot finished the *Chemin* and had to decide which style he would be using in his mural project for the parish church.

### 7.5.3. CHEMIN DE CROIX

Charlot’s major accomplishment during this period was his series of woodcuts of the *Chemin de Croix*, sometimes called the Way of the Cross or the Via Crucis.<sup>99</sup> The creation of the *Chemin* extended from the war, through the Occupation, and into the postwar period. The preparatory drawings were made in Sézanne before the Battle of the Matz. In Germany, during the Occupation, Charlot acquired planks of pear wood and worked on the carving, primarily in Landau, but also on the road “as we slowly rode horseback along the Rhine, bivouacking all the way from Mannheim to Cologne” (AA I 288). After his demobilization, he printed the series at Chaumontel; a note in his *Ludwigshafen Notebook* might provide a date: “(Chaumontel [*sic*]). Jusqu’à 16–9” (Chaumontel). Until September 16.’ Naturally, revisions to the drawings and further cutting continued into the final stage of printing. Moreover, the title page was cut after Charlot’s demobilization, as indicated by his adding the epithet “démobilisé” to his name.<sup>100</sup> The

continuity of the creative process over three such tumultuous periods of Charlot's life is remarkable as is the combination both of thoroughness of planning and design and also of intensity of execution. The project was clearly of great personal importance, and Charlot would continue to create versions of the Way of the Cross throughout his life. Indeed, the *Chemin* and Charlot's first mural, *The Massacre in the Main Temple*, are the most powerful expressions he realized of his experience of the war, integrating emotion and intellect to appeal to the full humanity of the viewer and to depict an event that could be understood adequately only by responding with that fullness. Jesus' death was the Passion, which included physical pain, emotional distress, and cosmic significance. So was the war. Charlot's *Chemin* is a fully human response, and its success establishes it, along with the later *L'Amitié*, as one of the masterpieces of his French period. These were masterpieces also in the medieval sense: they showed what Charlot could do.

The stimulus for the *Chemin* was, I have argued above, the announcement in *La Gilde* of a contest for a Way of the Cross in a popular style for placement in churches to be reconstructed after the war:

Ensuite la Société de Saint-Jean organise un concours public de Chemin de Croix particulièrement intéressant puisqu'il s'agit d'œuvres populaires destinées à être installées dans les églises que nous allons reconstruire. Il faut se servir de procédés pouvant se prêter à la diffusion à bon marché.<sup>101</sup>

'Following this, the Société de Saint-Jean is organizing a public competition on the Way of the Cross, particularly interesting because it concerns popular works destined to be installed in the churches we are going to reconstruct. Processes must be used that can lend themselves to inexpensive diffusion.'

The *Chemin* was a change in purpose and audience from the prints Charlot was doing at the time: rather than producing devotional images for soldiers in the field, Charlot would be creating a series to be placed in a church for the ritual of parishioners. The project united Charlot's major interests. His own spirituality was moving increasingly away from an emphasis on individual mysticism towards the religion of a parishioner; the lists of feast days he wrote down at the time demonstrate his growing absorption in the annual liturgical cycle.

Moreover, the Way of the Cross was a traditional devotion with strong folk roots. Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem would follow the supposed route taken by Jesus from the house of Pontius Pilate, through the city to Golgotha, and then to his tomb. Starting from the fifth century, this route was reconstructed at various times and places in Europe for devotional purposes. The number of these reconstructions increased during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the form of the devotion gradually became fixed. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Way of the Cross was more commonly practiced inside churches, rather than in the open air. Charlot knew the traditional practice: "from the old days when the *Way of the Cross* was in the open and on the road in a sort of...in the nature of the road to Calvary" (Interview September 17, 1970). Charlot had studied and been moved by the roadside *Calvaires* 'Calvaries' of artists in Brittany, a folk devotion expressed in great folk art.

A Way of the Cross was also narrative art, in which Charlot had a lifelong interest; each station depicts a stage in the story. The parishioners follow that story physically, participating in the Way of Jesus as they themselves walk from station to station. The physicality of the sacraments and rituals was always an important part of Charlot's devotion as an artist. He was also acutely aware of the point of view and movement of the viewer. For instance, the fact that *The Massacre in the Main Temple* was situated on a staircase influenced the composition: not only would the viewer see the fresco from different angles, he would see it as he was experiencing the physical exertion of climbing. Similarly, the *Chemin* would be seen by people moving from station to station in a church.

Finally, a Way of the Cross was meant to be installed permanently on the walls of a church, giving the whole work an architectural context and reference; the entire series could be considered a special type of mural. The problem was to create an architectural unity out of fourteen narrative panels:

it's a good example of my desire to do things that are nearly encyclopedic, that is, monumental. It was one of my first, perhaps the first, *Way of the Cross* I've done... what appeals to me is to have fourteen objects that will make a continuity—in the esthetic approach, of course, but in the spiritual approach also.

that *Way of the Cross*... is a good example that I would call the monumental approach and that sense of designing a multiplicity to a unity. (Interview November 6, 1970)

Ultimately, the *Chemin* was a better vehicle for Charlot to express his feelings about the war than his single devotional images: the Passion portrayed the pain rather than simply praying for its relief.

The choice of the medium of woodcuts was closely connected with the above concerns. Personally, Charlot liked the medium, its strength and physicality, and had already produced prints in *bois de fil*, cutting along the grain (Morse numbers 2, 3, 5, 6). Moreover, wooden blocks themselves were sturdy but transportable, unlike lithographic stones. Another “of the reasons is just that you use a knife, and no need of complicated tools” (Interview November 6, 1970); a knife or penknife was even simpler than a burin. If necessary, Charlot could even print the blocks himself, as he had done earlier. Producing a Way of the Cross in prints also solved a problem being faced by those planning the reconstruction of the churches. For instance, Maurice Denis feared—correctly as it turned out—that the art would be supplied by the usual commercial firms with industrial reproductions of plaster statues and such like.<sup>102</sup> He argued that only original art was appropriate, even though it might be more expensive. The greater expense Denis feared was entailed by his insistence that an original work of art had to be unique. Prints, however, were original works of art that could be multiplied, thus reducing the final price. Feeling poor himself, Charlot was always interested in reducing the cost of art, in demonstrating that art did not have to be a luxury product.

Significantly for Charlot, the very simplicity of the medium was one reason it was used by folk artists, for instance, “some of the old Images d'Épinal.” Charlot stated that this connection to folk art was the main reason for choosing the medium (Interview November 6, 1970). Indeed, Charlot's intention throughout this period—as stated in his poem *D'un Art Pauvre*—was to learn from folk art how to communicate to the people, first the soldiers and now the parishioners. This foundation in folk art can be

seen in the use of colored paper in the printing, in the apparently crude lettering, and especially in the bold, simplified style, even more forceful than Charlot's earlier, more graceful liturgical work. For the viewer of today, instructed by over a century of modern printmaking, the *Chemin* seems highly sophisticated. But the parishioners of the time would have contrasted them to the classicizing, cluttered, prettified plaster bas-reliefs still found in many churches. In 1921, even the sympathetic art critic Pierre du Colombier could find the *Chemin* "trop brutal parfois" 'sometimes too brutal' and fear that the general public would burst into laughter on seeing it for the first time.

Throughout the *Chemin*, Charlot is in command of all the strengths of geometric composition: "The cross made a strong composition device, like the lances of Paolo Uccello, one of my favorites" (Morse 1976: 9). The same lances would inspire Charlot in his first fresco, *The Massacre in the Main Temple*. Verticals, horizontals, and diagonals are used throughout the stations, sometimes playing off the geometry of the Roman numerals with their strong verticals and opposed diagonals. At times, Charlot may even be using *X* as the abbreviation for the Greek *Xristos* 'Christ' as well as for the number ten: station XIII contains Jesus plus three people, and XIV has Jesus plus four. Nonetheless, in our interview of August 7, 1971, Charlot disparaged the compositional achievement of the *Chemin*:

There is a certain, of course, compositional order in the *Way of the Cross*...but I would say Cubism is very low there. It's just not much of it; it's just a minimum to make a composition, and the rest—the elongated figures and the spirituality or spiritualism, if you want, are still what I call Gilde Notre Dame. But I had made much stronger things in small gouaches and so on in the Cubist manner...

Charlot did retain in the *Chemin* compositions that he devised in early 1918 and that were simpler than some of those found in his work of 1919 and 1920, but in my opinion, they are very appropriate to the medium and to the purpose of the *Chemin*. In fact, he could occasionally speak of them positively (Interview August 7, 1971): "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 murals."

The stylistic element that Charlot criticized most—indeed the cause of his disgruntled mood during our interview of November 6, 1970—was connected with the Gilde Notre Dame and Marcel Lenoir:

There was, for them, there was a spirituality in elongation, and in that *Way of the Cross*, I am working within that world of thought that, we could say, thin people are more spiritual than fat people. Since then, and I think before that and after that also, I have had other ideas about spirituality, and I went back very quickly to the stocky bodies I had learned of in looking at Mexican antiquities. But that whole *Way of the Cross* was done in that elongated esthetic—the fingers, for example, very long and thin, long necks.

As I say, this is nearly a unique thing in my work. I'm very consistent, I must say, through the whole series.

Nowadays when I look at that *Way of the Cross*, I am a little worried by the, as I said,

the elongations. Not the elongations themselves, but what they signify. There is a sort of tying up of aristocratic forms, I would say, with spirituality. And as long as you've been working through my old books of poetry and so on, I remember that at the time I was writing those poems, I thought it was wonderful, that I was really a refined fellow, very spiritual, refined fellow on the way to holiness. Nowadays I am horribly worried by certain ways of thinking that come out in the words in those poems. I always tie spirituality with, for example, whiteness. I speak of the white fingers of our Lord and the white this and the white that, and it reminds me of something that I found in Bloy, I think, when he was very annoyed at somebody who said that "he was entranced by the whiteness of the Host." And there must have been in me something that disappeared somewhere on the way in living, because nowadays I really think that black, probably, and certainly brown have more of a tie with spirituality than white. However, I have to be humble. Those poems and that *Way of the Cross* were all done in good faith, and I have to accept what I was at the time, even though I have modified my color sense since.

As I said, now I feel a little ill at ease with the type of devotional approach of all those kind of long and lean, underfed people.

Jesus and Mary are the most elongated figures, the bad guys are the squattest, and Jesus' followers are medium. Charlot is not, however, entirely consistent. In the fifth station, Simon of Cyrene is as stocky as a Roman soldier because he needs to be muscular to help carry the cross; but in the ninth station, he is elongated as he holds up the cross while looking down compassionately at the fallen Jesus. Nonetheless, the distinction between thin and fat is certainly more systematic in the *Chemin* than in Charlot's earlier work; for instance, in *Christ Carrying His Cross, with rich border* of 1916–1917, some good people have a peasant-like stockiness. By the time Charlot moved to Mexico, this elongated, spiritualizing esthetic—"so refined, decorative, and sophisticated"—"repulsed me horribly" (Interview May 18, 1971). Developing a very different esthetic, Charlot became hypercritical, in my opinion, of the liturgical art of his French period and especially the *Chemin de Croix*.

Since the *Chemin* was meant to be placed in an architectural setting, it demanded the same kind of planning as a mural. In a typical church, seven stations would be placed on one side of the nave and seven on the other. The stations start on the right side of the church as one faces the altar, with the first station nearest to the sanctuary. The parishioner starts by saying a prayer facing the altar. He then turns right to the first station, pausing in front of it for prayer and meditation. He then moves station by station towards the back of the church until he reaches the seventh station. He then crosses to the other side of the nave—genuflecting as he passes in front of the altar—to face the eighth station. He then proceeds station by station back towards the sanctuary. He says his final prayers facing the altar. Charlot was long familiar with this traditional way of following the stations of the cross, which he described in a discussion of a version by Henri Matisse:

to pray in front of it according to the rules, so to speak, where you have to go a few steps at least from one station to another and say a short prayer as you walk those few

steps. Of course, that comes from the old days when the *Way of the Cross* was in the open and on the road in a sort of...in the nature of the road to Calvary. (Interview September 17 1970)

The *Chemin* is designed to exploit this placement of the stations: "I have a great conscience, I would say, when I do a job to do it according to the practical lines that are proposed to me." The first and last stations face towards the sanctuary. In stations three through seven, Jesus faces in the direction of the parishioner's movement, that is, towards the back of the church. At the eighth station, he turns, so to speak, towards the altar, and is oriented in that direction also in the ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth stations. In the fourteenth, Jesus is being entombed in the direction of the altar. He emerges from the altar side in the first station, and his body is returned to it in the last.

As stated above, Charlot was attracted by the narrative character of a Way of the Cross: the viewer walks through the stages of a story. Moreover, the parishioner participates in the very movement of Jesus, walking as Jesus walked; traveling as Charlot himself was doing continually during the Occupation. Each station is, therefore, a balance of self-containment and suggestion of a anterior and a posterior stage, a composed moment in space and time. The first station demands attention to something outside the picture frame. The crowd looks towards the left in space, towards the altar, towards Jesus, who will be presented to them. They also seem to be looking back in time, to some prior stage of the story; to some event that has angered the crowd. In many stations, figures are cut off by the borders, emerging from the left in stations four, six, seven, nine, eleven, and fourteen; and disappearing towards the right in fourteen. Moreover, the parishioner can see the station or stations beside the one he is facing, a situation that Charlot uses for narrative and expressive purposes. Stations one through three clarify each other. The heavy cross descends ever lower onto Jesus in stations five through seven. The three soldiers in stations ten and eleven form a continuous cast and contrast with the three faithful in twelve and thirteen. In the eleventh station, Jesus is being raised up towards the cross on the right; in the twelfth, he is raised above the border of the image; and in the thirteenth, he is brought down from the cross on the left. The movement is in the same direction as the whole *Chemin* and can be seen as a complete sequence by the parishioner with all three stations visible in front of him. Finally, Charlot emphasizes in the fourteenth station that the story has not ended with the entombment; the parishioner must now turn towards the altar and remember the Resurrection.

Stations of the cross are designed for meditation. As the parishioner pauses before each station and contemplates it, he discovers more meanings in the event depicted and more connections to other aspects of the religion. Charlot's earliest sketches for the *Chemin* in *Guerre 1918* are next to a list of subjects connected to the stations. The erasures reveal the care spent on the list, which includes references to other events, an Old Testament prefigurement, sacraments, and Christian teachings and practices:

Jug.	Jug. dernier (Apocalypse)
Simon de Cyrène	Eglise glorifiée la Croix participation au sacrifice
1 <sup>r</sup> Chute	Péché d'amour

2 Chute	" d'orgueil
3 Chute	" science
les S <sup>tes</sup> Femmes	[_ Eglise enseignante
Marie	<del>Acceptation de la douleur</del> la famille
Véronique	Eglise Le Chrétien image du Christ
Portement de +	L'homme <del>vaut la douleur</del> consolé
Dépouillement	Baptême
Clouement	Mortification physique
Crucifixion	Adam et Eve.
Mise au tombeau	Communion
Descente de +	J. confié à l'Eglise
'Judgment [of Jesus]	Last Judgment (Apocalypse)
Simon of Cyrene	<del>Church glorified the Cross</del> participation in the
sacrifice	
First Fall	Sin of love
Second Fall	Sin of pride
Third Fall	Sin of knowledge
The Holy Women	[_ the teaching Church
Mary	<del>Acceptance of sorrow</del> the family
Veronica	<del>Church</del> The Christian, the image of Christ
The carrying of the cross	Man is worth the pain consoled
Jesus stripped of his garments	Baptism
The nailing to the cross	Physical mortification
Crucifixion	Adam and Eve.
Jesus placed in the tomb	Communion
Descent from the cross	Jesus entrusted to the Church'

Working on the *Chemin* in Germany, Charlot continued to think of the stations in these terms. When he made another list of references on the sheets that he used for his notes on Gr<sup>u</sup>nnewald, he began to develop two layers of references, the first close to his original list, the second distinguishing the sacraments and preaching, that is, the life of the church:

On le juge	Jug dernier	confession	1
On le charge			2
1er chute	péché d'amour		3
2 "	" orgueil		4
3 "	" science		5
6 Simon l'aide			6
7 rencontre sa Mère.			7

8	“ Stes Femmes : pr	prédication	8
9	dépouillé.	Adam et Eve. baptême	9
10	cloué.		10
11	mort.		11
12	mise au tombeau	la communion	12
13	Véronique		13
14	descente de +	le Christ confié à l’Église	14

Simon l’aide : le chrétien participe aux souffrances du Christ  
 rencontre sa Mère : la famille  
 on le charge.

‘He is judged	Last Judgment	Confession	1
The cross is put on him			2
First fall	Sin of love		3
Second fall	Sin of pride		4
Third fall	Sin of knowledge		5
6 Simon helps him			6
7 meets his Mother.			7
8 meets the Holy Women		preaching	8
9 stripped	Adam and Eve	baptism	9
10 nailed.			10
11 death.			11
12 placing in the tomb	communion		12
13 Veronica			13
14 descent from the cross	Christ entrusted to the Church		14

Simon helps him: the Christian participates in the sufferings of Christ  
 meets his mother: the family  
 The cross is put on him.’

A third and final list is added to the Grünewald notes:

- Les Hébreux murmurent contre Moïse
- La veuve de Sarepta
- 6 Isaac et le bois du sacrifice
- 7 Agar et Ismaël.
  
- 9 Adam et Eve
- 10 le serpent d’airain
- 11 la mort d’Abel
- 12 Tombeau de Jacob



Jug dernier  
Eglise souffrante  
1 2 et 3 idem  
6 participation au sacrifice  
7 la famille  
8 les laïques et l'Éclésiastique  
9 la pauvreté  
    la méditation  
10 le devoir d'état.  
11 la résurrection des morts.  
13 le Chrétien image du Christ  
14  
  
'The Hebrews murmured against Moses  
The widow of Sarepta  
6 Isaac and the wood of the sacrifice  
7 Hagar and Ishmaël  
  
8 Adam and Eve  
10 the brass serpent  
11 the death of Abel  
12 Tomb of Jacob  
  
Last Judgment  
The Church suffering  
1, 2, and 3 the same  
6 participation in the sacrifice  
7 the family  
8 the lay people and the Ecclesiastic  
9 poverty  
    meditation  
10 the duty of one's state in life  
11 the resurrection of the dead  
13 the Christian, the image of Christ  
14'

Charlot's lists are related to the other series he was working on in 1917: sacraments, virtues, good deeds, and so on. They are also the result of his continuing interest in symbolism, as he stated when discussing his series on the Twelve Apostles:

I was looking for liturgical art in the sense of what symbols went to what saint or what apostles, and there is some research in there. Of course, I knew pretty well the art of the Middle Ages. I knew pretty well the symbolical quality of the accessories that you find with the saints in the cathedrals, and I thought that it was nice to follow up directly that line, to follow up the medieval artisan. We come always to the same things. (Interview October 13, 1970)

Charlot apparently intended first to express these references visually, using the same means as in the other series he was creating at the time. Among the preparatory sketches, as described below, are found a dagger to represent a Sorrow of Mary, an erased rondel of *L'Hostie*, which he used in a contemporary series, and a label "Adam" for a skull at Golgotha. Significantly, all such devices have been omitted within the interior of the final images.

Symbolic references have been confined to the vignettes Charlot included in the bottom borders of the stations. However, those vignettes do not correspond to the references in Charlot's lists. Moreover, only two vignettes have some reference to the event of the station. The vignette of the rooster in the second station, Jesus receiving his cross, refers to the cock that crowed at Peter's denial. "Joseph emerging from the well, symbol of Resurrection" (Morse 1976: 18) in the last station is clearly related to the next event after Jesus' burial. I conclude that Charlot deliberately chose subjects for his vignettes that would not refer directly to the events of the stations to which they were attached. Indeed, he could conceive of the vignettes as independent works, printing them separately, pasting them onto stiffer paper, and coloring and framing them in gouache. Similarly, he printed separately his self-portrait and the inscription of the title page, another indication of the disconnection he felt between the main images of the *Chemin* and their surroundings.

Charlot's tendency, I argue, was to reduce any overt symbolism in order to present the historic events of the stations as they would have been perceived by someone on the scene. Accordingly, the halos found in the sketches have been eliminated with the one exception of Jesus' in the thirteenth station. The meditation of the parishioner is focused exclusively on the actual event to which he must respond and from which he himself must draw lessons and make references. Charlot's ephrastic poems reveal how Charlot did this himself. The artwork makes an immediate impression on the viewer—"d'un coup d'œil" 'at one glance' in "Nous les Jeunes!"—who is thus drawn to examine the artwork carefully and become conscious of the emotion and thinking it conveys. The elimination of overt directions for thinking increases the emotional emphasis of the stations; they are indeed the story of Jesus' *Passion*. In "Nous les Jeunes!", Charlot had doubted the utility of symbolism that had to be learned; such symbolism emphasized the intellect rather than the emotions. In the *Chemin*, Charlot absorbed all of his own meditations on the stations into the power of the images themselves. The "realism" of the stations consists in their lack of overt symbolism, not in any details, archeological or anecdotal.<sup>103</sup> On the contrary, the images seem stripped to their emotional core, all clothing and appurtenances radically simplified, and even the Crown of Thorns omitted. This characteristic distinguishes the *Chemin* from Charlot's other designs of the same period.

This movement from general references to individual and emotional ones can be observed in Charlot's lists of references. In *Guerre 1918*, for the fifth station—Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross—Charlot crossed out “Eglise glorifiée la Croix” ‘the Church glorified the Cross’ and substituted “participation au sacrifice” ‘participation in the sacrifice’; on the later list, Charlot writes “Simon l’aide : le chrétien participe aux souffrances du Christ” ‘Simon helps him: the Christian participates in the sufferings of Christ’; a very appropriate point for someone following the Way of the Cross. Charlot expressed this point in his poem *Très bon petit Jésus, moi, pauvre, que j’êtreigne* of March 12, 1918 (somewhat reworked in 1925):

C’est sage de L’aider à porter cette planche  
Car Lui à terre, tout le poids serait pour nous.

‘It’s wise to help Him to carry this plank  
Because if He fell to the ground, all the weight would be for us.’

Similarly, the eighth station, Jesus meeting the women of Jerusalem, was connected to “prédication” ‘preaching,’ and his title on the final preliminary drawing accords with this. However, in the final print, he changed the title to the more personal and emotional *il pleure sur nous* ‘he weeps over us.’ Similarly, in the thirteenth station, Jesus’ being lowered from the cross was connected in both lists to his being “confié” ‘confided’ to the Church; in the print, the title is the very personal *marie le reçoit* ‘Mary receives him.’

The title of the thirteenth station is one example of Mary being made a particular focus of emotion in the *Chemin*; she receives more than the traditional emphasis and is the subject of the most emotive images. This focus accords with the attention given to the sufferings of women in Charlot’s wartime poems. I believe he is also drawing on his own experience of his mother’s fears for him; in both lists, the significance of the fourth station—Jesus meeting his mother—is defined as “la famille.” In the former list, “la famille” replaces the more individualistic “Acceptation de la douleur” ‘Acceptance of suffering.’ That is, Charlot was not excluding the community—family and church—from his meditations; he was seeking their emotional connection to the individual.

Although he rejected explicit symbolism for the *Chemin*, Charlot may have planned a parallel series that would have used some of his research. On the first page of the *Chemin* sketches in *Guerre 1918*, *Isaac porte le bois* ‘Isaac carries the wood’ is noted as an Old Testament prefigurement of Jesus carrying his cross; in the second list in the Grünewald notes is found “Isaac et le bois du sacrifice” ‘Isaac and the wood of the sacrifice.’ Indeed, Isaac appears in the central section of the title page of the *Chemin* carrying a cross-like object. An undated pencil and wash, *Isaac allant au sacrifice* ‘Isaac going to the sacrifice,’ may have been done at this stage of Charlot’s preparatory work, that is, February and March 1918.<sup>104</sup> Isaac’s relevance to Jesus is indicated by his being accorded, not the ordinary halo given to Abraham, but a type of halo usually reserved for Christ: a circle containing a cross. The only halo retained in the *Chemin* prints is of this type and is used to enshrine Jesus’ head in the thirteenth station. In *Isaac allant au sacrifice*, the child is not carrying the wood for the sacrificial fire; rather, he is leading the donkey on which it has been loaded. The donkey is in all likelihood a reference to the one Jesus rode on his entry into Jerusalem shortly before his execution. The picture is archeologically detailed and

anecdotal like the earliest, rejected drawings for the first and fourth stations. The Biblical stories were regularly used by artists in World War I as references to current events. The story of Abraham and Isaac was used, for instance, by Wilfred Owen in *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young* to express the commonly held view that old politicians were sending young men to their death. Charlot was acutely aware of the youth of the combatants, as seen in his poems, and was later cynical about the politicians involved; how much these ideas influenced his selection of the Sacrifice of Isaac as a subject in early 1918 cannot now be determined. In any case, he used the subject in his later art as one example of the terrifying dimension of Biblical religion.

An undated, unusually expressionistic pencil and wash, *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata*,<sup>105</sup> may also have been intended for such a series, expressing the theme of the Christian's participation in the Passion of Jesus, mentioned in Charlot's lists for the stations. The heavier coloring on the slightly irregular edges of the image suggests the borders of a print, and the protrusion of the knees beyond the bottom edge recalls similar devices in Charlot's earlier liturgical designs. While working in 1917 on his Ste. Barbe Series, Charlot had made a schematic, emblematic design for a print of St. Francis of Assisi, discussed in chapter 6.<sup>106</sup> In contrast, the new pencil and wash is "realistic" in the same way as the *Chemin*. Overt symbolism has been reduced to shadowy nails directed towards the crucifixion wounds appearing on the body of St. Francis. The image is the narrative of an event rather than the icon of its result. Just as in the *Chemin*, the "realism" is reduced to a visual minimum, and the emotion is intensified to its maximum. The kneeling saint rocks back under the impact of the vision; a gesture Charlot admired in Bernini's *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa* and used in his own 1976 portrait *'Iolani Luahine, Kneeling Hula* (checklist number 1350). The differences between the 1917 and 1918 versions of the same subject are symptomatic of Charlot's artistic development from his Ste. Barbe Series to the *Chemin*. The differences between *Isaac allant au sacrifice* and *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata* may display his development throughout his work on that series.

As I stated above, the *Chemin de Croix* is remarkable for the thoroughness and continuity of its planning and the passion of its execution. The first stage was Charlot's preparatory drawings, which I will discuss below along with the final prints. I emphasize here only that they cannot be considered as final works in themselves: "I made the drawings so they could be cut with a simple tool, which in that case was just two or three different knives that I had, sharp knives, single blades" (Interview November 6, 1970). Charlot states that he engraved the blocks for the *Chemin* at Landau, where he was stationed from late 1919 until May 1920. He remembered carrying the planks in his saddlebags as his unit was moving, so the engraving may have been started earlier: "Though mostly on the go I kept always close to me, in my saddlebags so to speak, the German pear tree planks out of which was carved this Way of the Cross" (Charlot 1977; Morse 1983: 2). Further cutting was needed during the printing, as described by Morse (1976: 9); and I have argued that the title page was created at that time. Charlot emphasized that the engraving of the blocks was a distinct stage of the creative process: "I think the technique is an improvement in some ways over the earlier things, a little more interesting way of cutting. Less of copying a reproduction of a work of art" (Morse 1976: 9). As seen below, the carving of the blocks added a great deal of power between the final drawings and the printing.

The medium was significant for Charlot, both in itself and because of its associations with folk art:

The *Way of the Cross*... was a question of liking to cut with a knife *bois de fil*, that is, just like the most primitive of artists. And that is a stabilization because the material has no fancy of its own. It has its own rules, and you have to abide by the rules.

(Interview April 2, 1978)

Charlot had earlier revealed a predilection for working in *bois de fil*—that is, with the block cut along the grain—and called attention to it on the title page of the *Chemin*: “dessiné et gravé sur bois de fil” ‘drawn and engraved on *bois de fil*.’ Just as he was drawing stylistic and thematic inspiration from folk art and devotion, so he would use a primarily folk medium to realize his vision. Moreover, woodblock shows the physical nature of the work. The viewer can recognize the muscular effort in the cutting of the hard wood, which adds to the communication of physical sensation and thus emotion. The viewer feels with the artist as the artist works. Similarly, Charlot’s serigraphs would display the cutting and tearing of the printing sheets.

Wood is a cheap and primary material. Charlot does not display the actual grain of the wood in the printing, as he did, for instance, in his portrait of his grandfather (Morse number 5); but he evokes the grain in the background clouds. Those clouds are cut in lines of several directions, which calls attention to a major aspect of the engraving of the *Chemin*. Working with *bois de fil*, the artist can cut most easily along the grain, which creates a smooth line. When he cuts against the grain, the line seems to reveal the extra strain. The longer either line is made, the more its peculiar qualities become apparent. As seen below, Charlot uses the difference between these two types of cutting for expressive purposes. Cross-grain cutting is the only type available in *bois de bout* blocks, that is, those whose surface is formed by the butt end of the block; the advantage of this wood engraving is the greater fineness of the possible cuts and thus the details. Charlot’s technical innovation in the *Chemin* is to combine the advantages of both *bois de fil* and *bois de bout*. That is, he uses both the long, bold lines characteristic of *bois de fil* and also the extremely fine lines of *bois de bout*. He announces this project on the title page of the portfolio: the top and bottom areas of the twelve apostles are typically *bois de fil* while the middle section could be mistaken for *bois de bout*. Unless one examined the original woodblock, one might suspect that three different blocks had been used. The viewer of the portfolio is thus alerted to look for the combination in the prints. Charlot remembered that the printer at Chaumontel “seemed particularly pleased with the title page” (Morse 1976: 9), which I believe was created there; Charlot explained to me that the printer had recognized his intention of using both styles and admired his manner of realizing it. The combination is in fact a tour-de-force, both in planning and in manual execution. An examination of the blocks reveals the extraordinary fineness of much of the cutting; nonetheless, gouges hardly visible on the inked block make their effect in the print. As a result, the blocks are near works of art in themselves; as Charlot stated: “The stations were large woodcuts on pearwood, cut in part with hammer and chisel, and closer in technique to carving than to engraving” (AA I 288; Morse 1976: 9). In his “Prologue, ou Présentation d’un Groupe de Graveurs sur Bois” of 1924, Charlot wrote:

Une belle épreuve de gravure est vraiment à trois dimensions. Il semble qu'on ne puisse l'apprécier pleinement que si l'habitude qu'on a du travail de la planche permet d'en reconstituer les creux au seul vu de l'empreinte.

'A good engraving proof is really three dimensional. It seems that one can appreciate it fully only if the familiarity one has with the work on the block permits one to reconstitute the hollows on just seeing the print.'

The deep chiseling on the block of the third station goes beyond what was necessary for the printing. The whole fourth station, Jesus meeting his mother, and the legs of the dead Jesus in the thirteenth station are as moving as if they were intended as bas-reliefs. The engraving of the blocks was essentially creative and passionate. Just as Charlot preserved the preparatory drawings for the *Chemin*, so he kept the blocks throughout his long "Odyssey" from France, through Mexico and the continental United States, to Hawai'i (Charlot 1977; Morse 1983: 2). The block from the title page was misplaced through the time Peter Morse published his supplement (1983), but was later found, and the complete set has been placed in the JCC.

The final stage of production was the printing. Charlot felt himself fortunate to find at the village of Chaumontel a country printer with an old-fashioned hand-operated press, "a primitive screw press" (Charlot 1977; Morse 1983: 2). Such artisanal printing would add to the rough, folk-art quality Charlot sought. In 1931, he wrote Paul Claudel about another project:

Un graveur de campagne, de ceux qui font les images de pèlerinage, serait l'idéal. Ils sont moins "raffinés" et je suis sûr que son interprétation de mes dessins serait plus intéressante qu'un strict fac-similé. (Reith-Bronner 2015: 241)

'A country printer, the kind that make pilgrimage images, would be ideal. They are less "refined," and I am sure that his interpretation of my drawings would be more interesting than a strict facsimile.'

Most important, the printer "got interested in the project and printed with great care" (Morse 1976: 9). All his life, Charlot treasured such collaborations, in which his assistants would make their own contribution to the final work. For instance, in 1968, he was delighted to find a printer at Malzéville, near Nancy, who had a store of long unused lithographic stones (Morse 1976: 346 f., 350). In such relationships, Charlot wanted to participate fully in the process of production, and the evidence suggests that he did so with the *Chemin*. He had planned for papers of different colors, as seen from the intermediate preparatory drawing for the fourteenth station, described below. The choice of paper color, so important for the effect of the print, could not have been left to the printer. Charlot himself kept five copies of the series, each in a different color; I believe he was characteristically preserving a record of his choices.

Throughout his life, Charlot was as interested in inks as he was in paints. He studied "les valeurs subtiles de l'encre" 'the subtle values of ink' in Chinese painting (Charlot 1950 *La Place de la Nature*) and directed the mixing and the application of the inks for his serigraphs produced at the Honolulu Sign Company in the 1970s. He was proud of his innovations and told a story he felt

represented his work (Tabletalk November 21, 1975). Charlot and Hiroshi Morikawa had printed two colors of a three-color serigraph. Hiroshi asked Charlot what the third color was. Charlot said, “Black.” Hiroshi paused, thought, and then asked, “A light black?”

One aspect of Charlot’s participation in the printing of the *Chemin* has left documentary evidence: Charlot was particularly anxious that the grain and imperfections of the woodblocks be hidden by the inking, writing on trial proofs, respectively of the fifth and seventh stations, “bois de la croix. trous au sol. robe” ‘wood of the cross. holes in the ground. robe’ and “trous croix et robe bourreau au V. au CH” ‘holes cross and robe of executioner at the V. at the CH.’ The effect of such directions can be seen, for instance, in the solidity of the inking on the cross. Other indications of Charlot’s creativity in printing can be found. An examination of the original edition, trials and finals, reveals that the inking was not mechanically uniform. For instance, as seen below, extra ink was applied around a highlight in the thirteenth station to make it bolder. Charlot was varying for expressive purposes the amounts of ink he used in different parts of the print. Close viewing of the printing of the original edition reveals that Charlot has used the glutinous quality of ink when its mixture is thick. Throughout this period, he used gouache to color and frame prints, and he seems in the *Chemin* to be transferring the three-dimensional qualities of applied gouache to printer’s ink.

Finally, Charlot seems to have varied the pressure used on different parts of the image during the printing. This is seen clearly in the unevenness of the trial proofs, some of which were pressed by hand:

I had no press so that all the proofs I made were done by hand, simply by putting the paper on top of the block, not the block on top of the paper, and rubbing, rubbing with the finger or with the nail. I have quite a number of those proofs before the blocks were completely cut. (Interview November 6, 1970)

Indeed for *Woman with Hat* (Morse number 10), Charlot had “printed the proofs with my fingernail.” Late in life, he criticized the heavy pressure used in printing the cover of Peter Morse’s 1978 book *Popular Art: The Example of Jean Charlot* because it “shows the work too much,” that is the shallower lines that should have disappeared (Tabletalk May 12, 1978). Varying the pressure—along with the application of the ink—enabled Charlot to realize one of the aims of his engraving of the blocks: the combination of extremely fine and extremely bold lines in one print. A clear example of this is the difference in the tenth station between the engraved lines of Jesus’ body and those of the group of soldiers at his feet; the same effect can be found, however, throughout the series. More generally, the fineness of the engraving required exceptional care in the printing; again, lines that are almost imperceptible on the block make their effect in the final print.

I conclude, therefore, that Charlot was present and working creatively throughout the printing of the *Chemin*. Varying the inking and the pressing was facilitated by the use of a hand-operated press: “that fellow had antiquated presses; they were sort of plate presses, and it was easy enough to print the blocks” (Interview November 6, 1970). Unfortunately, Charlot was unable to do this during the printing of the *Chemin* by Lynton R. Kistler in 1977. Although Charlot was happy with the new edition, a number of the corrections he specified in 1920 were not made, and the result was more uniform. As a result, the

original edition represents more accurately Charlot's original conception as well as recording his creativity through every stage of the production.

I will now examine the preparatory drawings and the designing of the *Chemin*, repeating some of the points I have made above. Charlot seems to have started work on the *Chemin* shortly after the announcement of the contest in the January 25 issue of *La Gilde*. Since the final preparatory drawings are dated by him "vers 3–18," the earlier preparatory sketches, discussed below, were most probably done in February. The first sketches for the project are found in the notebook *Guerre 1918*: three pages of sketchy projects for images with two-thirds of a fourth page devoted to a listing of the stations with their symbolic references. These pages are surrounded by preparatory sketches for other artworks and a rondel series on professions, so Charlot was working on several projects at the same time. Although these sketches differ from the final prints, characteristics of the series are already apparent. Some of the figures are extremely elongated; however, the distinction made in the prints between the elongated good people and squat bad ones does not appear in these sketches. At the top of the first page, the format of the print has been lengthened and narrowed to fit the single, upright figure; an idea Charlot would abandon immediately. The next sketch, in the middle of the page, uses for the first time the wider vertical rectangle that Charlot will ultimately adopt; however, at this point, he is considering the idea of alternating a horizontal use of the same shape with the vertical one. Charlot is already using the cross as a major compositional device in three of the sketches and will progressively extend that use. Similarly, his images will become increasingly unconventional as he concentrates his focus on the central figure of Jesus and employs various devices to intensify the narrative character of the series.

Charlot is still establishing his images. The three elongated sketches at the top seem designed for the first station, traditionally, *Jesus is Condemned to Death*. In the two sketches on either side, Jesus is seen in profile, looking towards the left either up at his judge or down towards the floor. In the print, Charlot replaced this image with a brutal crowd scene (Morse number 12). He adapted the middle sketch, in which Jesus is seen from the front, for the second station, *la croix reçue* 'the cross received.' He might have considered this decision as early as the moment of doing this sketch, if the heavy vertical line on Jesus' left represents the cross. However, he will later develop and reject a full-scale design for this station using the figure of Jesus in profile looking up.

The sketch in the middle of the page looks like a traditional second station: Jesus receiving the cross. It could also be one of the three falls suffered by Jesus as he carried the cross. The cross is used to define the composition, but the second figure in the composition is distractingly prominent. As he works on the project, Charlot will simplify his images to achieve greater focus and power. Indeed, the image below concentrates on Jesus and the cross that crushes him; the cross again being used as a major compositional and expressive device. Charlot will use this concentration—Jesus appearing alone—for the third station, *première chute* 'first fall'; he will use the figure of Jesus in this sketch for the seventh station, *seconde chute* 'second fall' (Morse numbers 14, 18).

At the top of the second relevant page in *Guerre 1918*, Charlot continues to explore Jesus' body in the stations of falling: Jesus on one knee with upright back (used ultimately in the third station,



*première chute*) and Jesus on all fours (used in the seventh station, *seconde chute*). Below them, Charlot sketches Jesus flat on his face, a climax of the three falls in the ninth station. The posture that Charlot ultimately used in *troisième chute* ‘third fall,’ is less bold: Jesus lies on his side. Charlot will continue to be interested in the flattened figure, which appears in his later preparatory sketches for large cloth designs.

In the middle left of the page is Charlot’s first idea for the eighth station, *il pleure sur nous* ‘he cries for us,’ usually called *Jesus Meets the Sorrowing Women of Jerusalem*. The diagonal of the cross is already used in this first idea, but it will be made sharper and stronger in the print. The woman holding her face in her hands will be used more starkly and less gracefully in the print, evidence of Charlot’s stronger expression after the war. The large standing figure of the woman facing Jesus in the sketch will be eliminated, just as was the prominent figure in the sketch of the second or third station described above. Here again, Charlot progresses by eliminating distractions from the focus on Jesus.

This same tendency can be found on the sketch to the left of *il pleure sur nous*: the first idea for the tenth station, traditionally, *Jesus is Stripped of his Garments*. Two figures to the side of Jesus form with him an arched mass; the figure on Jesus’ left is actually taller than he is. In the print, as will be seen below, Charlot will focus with less distraction on Jesus.

On the bottom left is Charlot’s first idea for the eleventh station, *on le cloue* ‘he is nailed to the cross.’ The format is horizontal, the cross is flat along the edge of the picture, and Jesus is largely hidden behind one of the three soldiers. The body of Jesus flattened on his back may have been designed to recall that of the third fall, where he is flattened on his face; the problem in both would have been the visibility of the body. In the print (Morse number 22), the format is vertical, the upright cross forms bold diagonals, and the body of Jesus is almost completely visible as the three soldiers lift it up to the cross. This method of nailing someone to a cross is impractical, and Charlot’s treatment is untraditional; it resembles depictions of Jesus being taken down from the cross, like the one by the Master of St. Bartholomaeus in the Louvre.<sup>107</sup> The tendencies of Charlot’s continuing work on the *Chemin* are again apparent.

The last sketch on this page, at the bottom right, is for the twelfth station, *il meurt* ‘he dies,’ or *Christ is Crucified*. Charlot had from the very beginning the idea of representing the crucifixion indirectly: only the feet of Jesus are seen. Charlot emphasizes rather the effect of Jesus’ death, first on his mother and then on a follower. The same emphasis on the suffering of women can be found in Charlot’s poems about the war and in the emphasis on Mary in the *Chemin* prints; for instance, in the foreground figure of the first station and in the title and image of the thirteenth station. Charlot will consider more changes for the twelfth station than for any other, an indication of its importance for him. But the basic three figures were established immediately and were retained and dramatized in the print.

At the top of the third page, Charlot uses a square rather than rectangular format for the thirteenth station, traditionally, *The Deposition* or *The Descent from the Cross*. The cross is not used, but Jesus’ stiffened body creates a diagonal that is balanced by the grouping of the three figures who receive

him. Charlot will change this image completely in the print, but will retain the three figures, for the purposes described below.

The print of the last, the fourteenth station—the Burial of Jesus—differs completely from the first sketch in *Guerre 1918*. Jesus is being placed on a Roman bed in an undynamic, frontal composition. Charlot is undecided about the accompanying figures, indicating the central one by nonrepresentational lines. Charlot had created a similar composition in 1917 for the design of a liturgical fabric, *L'ange apporte la palme à Marie agonisante*, but finally decided not to use it for this new subject.

One sketch survives from Charlot's next stage of work on the *Chemin*. The small *Burial of Jesus* is a careful study for Charlot's new idea for the fourteenth station, the placing of Jesus in the tomb.<sup>108</sup> A border has been drawn around the image, representing the border of the woodblock, and the background has been colored light purple with horizontal strokes that are so even that they give the impression that colored paper has been used; Charlot did in fact print the series on paper of different colors. The figures are outlined with light but multiple strokes, creating a soft effect, rather than the stark one of the final prints. Besides being the reverse of the print, the drawing still differs from the final image of the print. The figure of Jesus is the same but disappears out the left border of the picture; that is, the cliff into which he is being placed is not represented. Jesus is being interred by seven other figures, who form a mass that opens only behind the head of Jesus. The same opening will be used in the print, even though the mass is no longer used. The mass of the drawing descends from left to right, creating a pushing effect against the body, and recedes in space from right to left. The lines of the figures harmonize gracefully like those in Charlot's liturgical designs of 1917. The sketch represents Charlot's second surviving idea for the fourteenth station; he would further simplify and strengthen it as he worked towards the print. This sketch provides evidence of a transition from Charlot's earlier, more graceful liturgical style, to the stronger, bolder style of the *Chemin*. Finally, Charlot will use the mass as a hostile, aggressive force in the final first station, *on le condamne*; in *Guerre 1918*, the design of this first station was even less secure than that of the fourteenth.

Charlot deliberately preserved his final pencil drawings for the *Chemin*, conscious of their importance. Charlot prepared sheets 19-3/4" high by 13" wide, by dividing sheets 19-3/4" high by 25-3/4" wide along the middle vertical. On each final sheet, a clear difference can be seen between the machine-cut vertical edge and the one made by Charlot. The resulting sheet is big enough to contain the actual size of the print's image and inscription along with a useful margin. Charlot did, however, preserve one large sheet intact to form a portfolio cover for the set of drawings; the color of that sheet is light green, rather than the tan of the sheets and the paper is embossed "MONTGOLLIER A S<sup>T</sup> MARCEL = LES = ANNONAY." That this sheet was readied before the drawings were completed is demonstrated by the fact that four sketches have been made on it that represent a stage earlier than the final drawings. That is, Charlot planned from the beginning to keep his final drawings together as a group. Charlot did continue to develop his ideas on these final sheets, preserving some rejected ideas drawn full-scale and making the small sketches on the portfolio cover. The drawings are truly preparatory; they are not meant to stand on their own but to be realized only in the final stage of cutting and printing the woodblocks.

An example of this process is the development of the figure of Mary under the cross for the twelfth station. In *Guerre 1918*, Mary is seen full length from the back, standing and embracing the cross with both arms. On the verso of the front cover of the portfolio are two sketches of the same figure. In the earlier of the sketches, Charlot has turned the figure three quarters, with only the left arm turning around the back of the cross and the right hanging limply at her side. The next sketch, I believe, is the one started full-scale and then rejected (now the verso of the final drawing): Mary has been moved to the right of the image, has her right arm around the cross and her left hand on her heart, and faces the viewer frontally. (A small, geometrized study for the head of this figure exists on the verso of Charlot's pencil portrait of Mademoiselle Marchais, the head tilting to Mary's right rather than to her left.)<sup>109</sup> Charlot may have felt that this image was still insufficiently forceful and dramatic. I believe he then made the second portfolio sketch of the figure, which had two stages. In the first, Mary, back on the left and in profile, leans diagonally and heavily against the cross, her left arm around the back of the cross, her right hanging straight down. Mary's right leg is stuck straight out, creating a diagonal with her back and head. Her left leg is stuck out awkwardly in front of her. Charlot then bent the left leg at the knee, further emphasizing Mary's diagonal motion of falling toward the cross and propping herself up on it. The posture recalls those in *Guerre 1918* of Jesus falling on one knee or on all fours as well as that of Mary in the fourth station. Charlot used this solution in his final design, twisting the figure frontally to accentuate Mary's pressure on the cross and raising her right arm again to embrace the front of the cross. The rejected, frontal figure of Mary was transferred to the first station, in which she embraces, as it were, the right border of the print. Charlot recalled that he used *The Avignon Pieta* or *The Pieta de Villeneuve les Avignons* for the figure of the dead Jesus in the thirteenth station (Morse 1976: 9). I believe he might have been inspired for this figure of Mary by the famous sculpture of *The Synagogue* at the Cathedral in Strasbourg. Finally, on the portfolio cover, Charlot drew a detached dagger of the type used in images of the Seven Sorrows of Mary. He ultimately rejected for the *Chemin* any such overt symbolism, but he was clearly thinking of the devotion to the sorrows of Mary while developing the series.

I will now discuss the stations in order, describing their development as much as the evidence allows. Charlot developed his first idea for the first station—found in *Guerre 1918*, discussed above—into a full-scale drawing: Jesus stands in profile looking at Pontius Pilate seated high above him. A column topped with an idol separates them, while a scribe records the judgment: *ON LE JUGE* 'he is judged.' Charlot crossed out the image (using the diagonals!) and wrote in the top margin: "à refaire (autre mode.)" 'to be redone (another way).' That is, he completely rejected the image. Compared with the final prints, it seems calm and anecdotal.

The final drawing, on the recto, is one of the most dynamic of the series. The moment depicted is changed to that of the crowd calling for Jesus' condemnation, although the title will be changed only on the print to *on le condamne* 'he is condemned.' The transfer of the figure of Mary from a trial of the twelfth station suggests that this drawing was one of the last to be created. Mary constitutes a foreground vertical on the right border of the print, her feet resting on the base; her vertical is echoed by the roman numeral I appearing in the top left corner. Although the numeral floats in the image, its size makes it appear to be in the distance of the visual space. When it is related to the vertical of Mary, a corridor of

space is created that recedes diagonally from right to left. Against this corridor presses the pointed front of the phalanx of a mob. The upper bodies form a two-dimensional triangle pointing towards the object of their hate; the hands raised above the interior of the mob indicate that it forms a three-dimensional triangle as well. In the drawing, Charlot has traced lines between the extended finger-tips of the rioters; he is ensuring that he will create both a massive and a bristly effect, like that of squares of pikemen in the battle paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In front of this phalanx, three figures are picking rocks from the ground and throwing them forward, the artillery of the attack. (The rocks still on the ground will be echoed by the dice in the tenth station.) The arm and hand of the most forward figure are twisted back unnaturally in order to resemble a medieval catapult. However, no attempt is made to portray the sequence of throwing; the image is all chaotic rabble.<sup>110</sup> Charlot would portray another such vicious attack in his first mural, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* of 1922–1923. The untraditional appearance of Mary in this first station indicates from the beginning that she will constitute one of the main themes of the *Chemin*.

After the crowded aggressiveness of the first station, the second comes as a shock: Jesus stands alone with his cross. He faces us as if we were the crowd of the first station. As stated above, this image seems to have been considered for the first station in *Guerre 1918*; the sketch below it, would have been a more conventional depiction of Jesus being loaded with his cross. Charlot opted for original depictions of both events.

The essential difference between a preparatory drawing and its print is clear in the second station. In the preparatory drawing, Jesus has been placed in a space created by the the juncture of two walls and the floor; he is standing with his back to the corner and holding the upright of the cross, whose long, rectangular solid counterpoints the space of the room. Jesus himself seems pressed between the cross and the wall. In the drawing, the walls and the floor are blank, so the image is somewhat empty. The cutting of the block changes this impression completely. A halo of space is left around Jesus, as if he were caught in a prison spotlight. But around that halo, on the floor and the two walls, the block has been cut with lines directed aggressively at Jesus; all the hate aimed at him in the first station is made visible in these sharp lines that target him.

The cross appears for the first time in this station. It leans slightly against Jesus as can be seen by comparing its angle to that of the edge of the picture and the roman numeral “II” beside it; the two capital I’s echo Jesus and the cross. This vertical placement of the cross forms a baseline for the angles it will assume in the following stations. Jesus stands upright with his cross; Charlot emphasizes his willing, indeed heroic assumption of his martyrdom by changing the title from the traditional “IL EST CHARGÉ DE SA +” ‘he is burdened with his cross,’ in the drawing, to the unusual “la croix reçue” ‘the cross received,’ in the print.

The third station immediately uses the cross as the major expressive device. Seen upright in the previous station, its diagonal is all the more impressive in the third: it descends, crushing a frail Jesus underneath. The idea for the image can be found in *Guerre 1918*: on the first sheet, Jesus is crushed under the cross, and on the second, he is shown kneeling on one knee. In the final drawing, Charlot has

intensified the sense of weight by depicting the cross in absolute profile rather than at an angle, as in the first idea. In the drawing, the crosspiece is indicated by solid, realistic, pencil lines; the print, more interestingly, uses a solid white reserve for the lower side of the crosspiece and lightly scratched lines for the upper.<sup>111</sup> At one point, Charlot was unhappy with the image and wrote “à refaire” ‘to be redone’ in the top margin of the preparatory drawing. He decided, however, to proceed with it, creating one of the most moving images of the series.

Charlot rejected his first full-scale drawing for the fourth station, “RENCONTRE DE M.” ‘The meeting with Mary.’ The drawing is similar to the rejected drawing for the first station, and the two were probably abandoned at the same time. Charlot crossed both out along the diagonals, and at the top right margin, Charlot has written “idem,” which seems to refer to the note on the drawing for the first station, quoted above. Neither drawing has the emotional intensity Charlot was seeking. Mary here steps gracefully forward, inclines herself in a formal attitude of prayer, and is kissed on the top of her head by her son. The drawing resembles Charlot’s earlier liturgical art, which was now felt to be inadequate. The figure of Jesus is, however, stronger and will be retained with modifications. One interesting feature will be abandoned: Jesus rests the cross on his right shoulder and stretches his left arm along the crosspiece, prefiguring the crucifixion.

In the final preparatory drawing, Jesus stands in profile against the border of the print with the upright of the cross resting on his shoulder at an angle that follows the true diagonal of the rectangle. The crosspiece has again been suppressed. The greatest change is in the figure of Mary: she rushes up at Jesus pressing her agonized face against his neck, while he kisses her brow. Her movement towards him can be followed in the three-dimensional swoop of her robe; her diagonal appears even more dynamic cutting across that of the cross. Her hands grasp at Jesus’ chest, and his left arm reaches down towards her to receive her forward rush. Jesus’ calm accentuates Mary’s agitation. In the print, Charlot changes the traditional title he first used to “sa mère le joint” ‘his mother joins him.’ That is, she is emphatically a participant in his Passion. Accordingly, she will be portrayed in the same posture at the crucifixion. Finally, Charlot’s composition mirrors the roman numeral IV, with Jesus as the upright and Mary the diagonal, the other branch of the V being echoed in the upturn of her robe behind her.

The fifth station, “simon l’aide” ‘Simon [of Cyrene] helps him,’ uses parts of an image Charlot developed in *Guerre 1918* for the second station, as I have argued above: Jesus is seen in profile with the cross on his shoulder. The second figure, however, no longer towers over him, pressing the cross down upon him; rather Simon is placed down the upright of the cross, behind and below Jesus, and deeper into the pictorial space. Simon is bald, squat, and brawny—much like the villains in the series<sup>112</sup>—but Jesus still has to carry the main burden of the cross, which again presses down on him with awesome weight. The cross seems in danger of falling forward from the weight of the crosspiece; Simon seems to be holding the base end down as much as up. Jesus stands in profile, his legs placed far forward and backward in an effort to stay upright. The composition turns like a propeller at his hips with the right arm of Simon picking up the turning motion from Jesus’ left knee to his right and indicating the turning of the cross as it falls forward. In the drawing, Charlot has placed a halo around Simon’s head (and perhaps also around Jesus’); he has removed the halo in the print in accordance with his tendency to depict all

incidents realistically rather than symbolically. Finally, the roman numeral V echoes the angles of the meetings of the upright with the crosspiece. Moreover, the two angles of the V help connect the previous station to this one: in the fourth, the cross slanted up towards the left, in the fifth, towards the right. The fifth, sixth, and seventh stations will use a progressive lowering of the cross as a unifying device.

The sixth station—in which Veronica wipes the face of Jesus with a cloth and then finds his face imprinted on it—later became a favorite of Charlot's: a sacred prototype, as it were, of printmaking. He had not, however, developed this conception at the time of the *Chemin*, and the reference in *Guerre 1918*, “Eglise Le Chrétien image du Christ,” is unrelated to his later emphasis. “V. ESSUIE SA FACE” ‘Veronica wipes his face,’ shows neither Jesus’ face nor the printed image; indeed, she drapes the cloth over his head in a way that would make an image impossible. The oddity of this depiction was compounded when Charlot changed the title to *la sainte face* ‘the holy face.’ In fact, the action of the two figures crouched below the cross—which seems to be propped up against a wall—is barely legible. The position of Jesus’ body with his hands between his knees is original, but the most interesting figure of the station is the towering, bored, and distracted Roman soldier; Charlot would always think of Jesus’ death as the kind of important historical event that went unrecognized at the time. The cross is again depicted in absolute profile with a reserve streak indicating the light on the bottom side and light hatching, the reflection of the light from the top side onto the upright; these minimal cuts fulfill their descriptive function. The diagonal of the cross is lower in the rectangle than in the fifth station, but somewhat higher than in the seventh; a slow, painful lowering of the cross is suggested. Charlot has again used the roman numeral: the soldier echoes the I of the VI and the cross the right diagonal of the V.

The seventh station, *seconde chute* ‘second fall,’ is based on the figure of Jesus on all fours in *Guerre 1918*, page 4. The three “falls” are among the simplest and most powerful prints in the series. The cross is again the most prominent expressive device. The angle from which it is viewed is varied slightly from the sixth station; more of the underside of the crosspiece is seen, described in well-cut long straight lines that give an abstract impression of wood grain. The crosspiece is depicted more realistically in perspective, with the edges of the crosspiece extending out from the edge of the upright. The diagonal of the cross is placed at the lowest stage from the fifth to this station. The cross forms a slightly open angle with the rising black ground under Jesus, and the viewer suspects that the cross will continue descending towards the ground. Jesus is being squeezed between the cross and the ground as if between the blades of a pair of scissors. This closing action of the cross is emphasized by several means. The more realistic description of the crosspiece adds to the sense of weight in front of Jesus’ body. A part of the upright disappears out the right border, adding weight with its distance. Rather than beating Jesus to get him to stand up, the robust soldier is pushing the front of the cross down with his right arm and preparing to beat against that front with his left. The soldier is thus adding to the pressure on the front of the cross that will cause it to descend still further, pinning Jesus between itself and the ground. Jesus’ spindly body seems unable to withstand the pressure. All Jesus’ feelings are conveyed through his body in stations five through seven; his face, a more facile locus of expression, is completely hidden. Charlot will similarly hide Jesus’ face to emphasize the expressive body in his large bronze crucifix of the 1970s. Jesus’ right foot is stretched bare on the ground and turned up to show its bottom. Looking at

Caravaggio's *The Crucifixion of Saint Peter* of 1600–1601, Charlot once told me that this position showed that a person was in a particularly helpless, vulnerable state.

The eighth station—Jesus meeting the sorrowing women of Jerusalem—was first sketched in *Guerre 1918*, page 5. Charlot has retained the standing Jesus holding his cross at an angle as well as the woman on her knees with her face in her hand. He has not adopted the horizontal format he was still considering at that point, and he has suppressed the woman standing almost as tall as Jesus, as he has suppressed other competing figures used in these preparatory sketches. Finally, as elsewhere, he has deleted the halo around Jesus' head in order to remain realistic. In the sketch, Charlot has traced a half-circle behind the three figures, as if he were considering a rotating effect with the cross. In the final drawing, however, the cross is again crushing, the women groveling underneath it. The angles of their bodies echo that of the cross as, for instance, in the fourth station; and Jesus' gaze moves down along the cross towards them. Charlot's original title, "IL ADMONESTE LES S<sup>es</sup> F<sup>es</sup>" 'He admonishes the Holy Women,' fits the Biblical passage in which he urges the women to weep not for him, but for themselves and their children (Luke 23:28); this accords with Charlot's symbolic association of the station with the "Eglise enseignante" 'teaching Church' in *Guerre 1918*, with "prédication" 'preaching' in the first Grünewald list and "les laïques et l'Ecclésiastique" 'the lay people and the Ecclesiastic' in the second. Significantly, he changes the title in the print to "il pleure pour nous" 'he weeps for us'; teaching again cedes to emotion.

The eighth station provides another clear example of the preparatory character of these drawings: the cutting of the block renders the faces of the women before Jesus more drawn in their grief. The "anecdotal" face of the woman behind Jesus—very like those in the rejected drawings of the first and fourth stations—is simplified into an archetype in the print. The distinct strokes of the hatching of the woodblock are more definite than the pencil shading of the drawing, both clarifying the forms and unifying them into a faceted group. The falling hair of the woman seated in the foreground is more distinct and thus more striking in the print. Throughout, the cutting is particularly bold in this print, and Charlot creates effects by contrasting the smoothness and ease of the cuts along the grain with the scratchiness and effort of those against. The former are found mostly in the figure of Jesus and the ground below his feet; the crosscuts, mostly in the women. Charlot is using the different effects in the type of cuts to express the contrast between the calm of Jesus and the emotional turmoil of the women. That this was a conscious decision by Charlot is demonstrated by the fact that the figure of Jesus in the early stages of the print was described mostly with cross-grained cuts and these were overlaid in the later stages with vertical cuts along the grain. That is, the expression of the prints is essentially that of the medium.

In *Guerre 1918*, the third fall seems to be represented by Jesus' body lying flat and face down on the ground with his arms straight out in front of him. The ninth station of the *Chemin, troisième chute* 'third fall,' is less bold. Jesus *has* been lying on the ground, but one of the two soldiers is now rousing him and pulling him up by the shoulder. The soldiers seem to worry whether Jesus will survive long enough to be crucified, and Simon of Cyrene, holding the cross up behind him, looks down with concern. Charlot portrays their emotions clearly without departing from the simplicity of means proper to woodcut.

The surviving drawing for this station is *au trait*, in outline only, and I suspect that it was done after the fact, probably traced from the print; none of the interesting working of the clothing found in the woodcut is indicated in this drawing as it was in those done for other stations.

Several stages of the development have survived for the tenth station, traditionally *Jesus is Stripped of His Garments*. In *Guerre 1918*, Jesus is framed by two figures, one of whom is taller than he is. In the next stages of preparation, Charlot follows his tendency to increase the focus on Jesus and clarify the narrative: in the final print, he isolates Jesus to the right and creates a group of three soldiers squatting before him. The moment of the event has been changed as well, from the stripping of Jesus to the gambling for his garments. Moreover, the change from two figures to the three soldiers helps Charlot connect this stage of the narrative with the next: the three soldiers form a recognizable team from one action to the next.

The stages of these changes from the sketch to the print can be followed. The sketch in *Guerre 1918* was clearly a depiction of Jesus being stripped. On the verso of the final drawing for the tenth station is a rejected, full-scale drawing of this scene, labeled “IL EST DÉPOUILLÉ” ‘He is stripped.’ Jesus stands isolated and naked on the right, while two soldiers fight over his robe on the left. A skull at Jesus’ feet, in the bottom right corner of the drawing, is labeled “Adam.” Charlot has crossed out the design (again, along the geometric diagonals of the composition) and written “à modifier” ‘to be modified’ in the top right margin. The problem seems to have been that the entangled group of two soldiers competed too much in scale and interest with the figure of Jesus. Charlot’s tendency throughout these preparations is to intensify the focus on the main character. Similarly, in accordance with his tendency to avoid overt symbolism, Charlot will omit the label on the skull; it then becomes a realistic object at Golgotha ‘The Place of the Skulls,’ where the bodies of the executed were normally discarded rather than being buried.

The next two sketches are found on the verso of the back of the portfolio cover. In the first sketch, Jesus stands facing away from the soldiers, as in the large drawing, while they squat below him, without forming a definite shape, throwing dice to win his clothes. The skull is in the corner in front of Jesus’ feet as before, while the dice, which were made of bones, occupy the bottom left corner. The next portfolio sketch, like the print, shows Jesus facing the soldiers, while they group themselves well below him. The skull is still in front of Jesus’ feet, so it has been placed closer to the dice; skull and dice are drawn large and round to clarify the relation.

In both portfolio sketches, Charlot has drawn the line from the upper corner on Jesus’ side, down over his head towards the group of soldiers, and finally over their heads and out the other side of the picture. In both sketches, this line swoops up over the group of soldiers, somewhat like Mary’s robe in the fourth station. In the preparatory final drawing, however, Charlot has simplified that line to a downward diagonal that parallels the ground; in the print, the ground line will be strengthened further by laying on it the straight, black upright of the cross. The sword of the soldiers forms an X with the ground or cross line that echoes the roman numeral X. The soldiers themselves form a compact group. Again, Charlot has simplified and strengthened the composition. He has also brought the skull on the ground



into a clearer relation to the dice by eliminating the leg of the soldier that separated them in the second portfolio sketch. Interestingly, Charlot continues to use on the drawing the title *IL EST DÉPOUILLÉ*”; on the print, he finally replaces it with the more appropriate *on joue sa robe* ‘they gamble for his robe.’

The tenth station displays Charlot’s virtuoso, variegated carving of the blocks. Although prepared by the drawing, Charlot was clearly working freely with his knife, describing the figures with an unusually large variety of types of cuts. The cross-hatching is exceptionally fine, resembling *bois de bout*, the result of unusual manual control. The sympathetic figure of Jesus is delicately drawn, the hatching reminding the viewer of the marks of the scourge. In contrast, the squatting soldiers, all bold lines, repulse. The original edition of this print is a good example of Charlot’s varying of inking and pressure: both are lighter for the figure of Jesus and heavier for the soldiers. The even heavier inking and uniform pressure of the reprint obscure some of the quality of the block.

The eleventh station, *Jesus is Nailed to the Cross*, was first sketched in horizontal format in *Guerre 1918*, page 5. As stated above, the vertical of the print suggests a less conventional image: the cross, in the process itself of being raised, forms two diagonals with the upright and the crosspiece; the roman numeral XI becomes a reverse image of the process of erection. Jesus is being pulled up by both hands to be nailed, and the cross-piece prefigures the position into which Jesus will be placed. The cutting of the block seems a deliberate contrast to that of the previous station: cross-hatching has almost disappeared and has been replaced with large and regularized hatching. Much of this hatching slants from top right to bottom left, unifying the effect. The systematic steadiness of this cutting is particularly clear on the block. Despite this deliberate simplicity, the figures are perfectly realized; the soldier holding Jesus’ feet on the right is a tour-de-force of depicting the human anatomy caught in a complicated gesture.<sup>113</sup> This special hatching is suggested only vaguely in the final preparatory drawing, which contains much more cross-hatching and variety of pencil strokes. Charlot again was using the cutting of the block as an essential stage in the creativity of the series.

The same process is apparent also in the cutting of the twelfth station, originally called “CRUCIFIXION” and then changed to “il meurt” ‘he dies.’ The final drawing shows a variety of strokes, somewhat more simplified and regularized in the figure of Mary. In the cutting of the block, however, Charlot has greatly increased the use of vertical strokes, which echo the vertical of the cross and suggest the peace of death. Interestingly, the vertical strokes predominate in the women, more accepting despite their grief. The greater agitation of the male disciple on the left is expressed by the use of non-vertical lines in all but one small area. The lines are fine and long in contrast to those of the previous station.

The central personage, Jesus, is raised into the invisible mystery of his sacrifice, and the focus of the station is on the effect of Jesus’ death on his mother and his followers, a focus found in the earliest sketch in *Guerre 1918* page 5, with Mary and the male disciple, John, under the feet of Jesus. I have described above how Charlot intensified in stages the figure of Mary. Charlot has followed the Gospel of John in choosing the Apostle John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26), to represent the male followers. Charlot had a special devotion to John and named me after him. Charlot was intrigued with the idea that John was so young at the time that when he is described as reclining close to Jesus at

the Last Supper (John 13:23), he is actually sitting on His lap. I believe Charlot also saw a parallel to his own life: as Jesus dies, he confides to John the care of Mary (John 19:26 f.).

Although grief stricken, Mary, John, and a second woman seem also to support Jesus. Mary and John lean against the cross, the outside leg of each extending outside the border of the print, as if propping up the cross like pyramidal buttresses. The cup on the ground recalls the biblical passage in which Jesus asks that this cup, if at all possible, pass from him (Matthew 26:39, 42; Luke 22:42); the cup that the followers were also asked to drink (Mark 10:38). The cup may also contain the liquid used to quench Jesus' thirst while he was dying (John 19:28–30); Charlot several times quoted to me with emotion Jesus' statement "I thirst." That is, Jesus' family and followers have brought him what support and comfort they could. The emphasis on them falls also on the parishioners making the Way of the Cross; they are urged to examine themselves and what they have done in response to the crucifixion.

As if answering this appeal, the artist himself appears: Charlot portrays himself in a "dead space" of the image, offering his heart to Jesus and asking the parishioners, "PRIEZ POUR L'AUTEUR 1919" 'Pray for the author 1919.' Even when being critical of the *Chemin* late in life, Charlot liked this portrait:

There is one thing in there, though, that touches me nowadays, and that is my self-portrait. I think there is the Cross, it's in the Crucifixion, the Cross, and there is John and Mary and Mary Magdelene, I think, and there is myself, and I've represented myself in my full uniform of lieutenant in the Moroccan Division, which I was with at the time, of the Foreign Legion, and I think I hold my heart in my hand and offer it to Christ. Of course, that ties up with the type of poetry I was doing at the time. But it *is* one of the rare self-portraits that I did. It's a good one. I think the year would be 1920, and I think I made little prints, separating them from their context, of the thing as a self-portrait. (Interview November 6, 1970)

Charlot looks very young with his glasses and his stiff military collar. After the 1917 project for a print of the *Sacred Heart*, this is Charlot's second use of the heart as a religious symbol. It is his first use of the medieval and Renaissance device of placing contemporary portraits into the dead space of a religious or historical scene. He will do this most notably in his first fresco, *The Massacre in the Main Temple*, in which he depicts himself showing the fresco to Diego Rivera, Fernando Leal, Luis Escobar, and a child representing posterity. Just as he did with the vignettes of the *Chemin*, Charlot made a separate printing of his self-portrait and painted around it a blue frame in gouache.

Charlot's final preparatory drawing for the thirteenth station—Jesus being taken down from the cross—is a different conception of the scene from that of his sketch in *Guerre 1918*, described above. He does retain the three figures, who connect the narrative with the twelfth station and who contrast with the three negative figures of the soldiers in the tenth and eleventh stations. Despite the differences, Charlot's design for the thirteenth station is one of the most conventional of the series. He also includes elements he will eliminate as he worked on the series, which suggests that this was one of the earliest designs. First, he employs overtly symbolic elements. The four figures are still provided with halos as they were

in the first sketch in *Guerre 1918*. In the print, only Jesus' halo is retained, the sole halo in the series. Second, a symbolic rondel was drawn in the blank space now occupied by the roman numeral and then erased. The subject is *L'Hostie*, a design for which is found on the next page of *Guerre 1918*. On the same page, *Communion* is listed as the symbolic reference for the *Mise au Tombeau*. Charlot may have been planning symbolic rondels for each station, although it is certainly possible that he simply picked up a sheet he had been using for another purpose. Finally, Charlot uses overt references to earlier works, reviving a tradition in liturgical art. He remembered *The Avignon Pieta* (Morse 1976: 9); in addition, the hooded figure of Mary recalls the *pleurants* or mourning figures by Claus Sluter and others on the tombs of the dukes of Burgundy at Dijon. Mary's costume is compatible with the rejected drawing for the twelfth station, but not with the revision Charlot made of it, another indication that this design is early.

Charlot, however, could not avoid being original; as he said of the figure of Jesus (Morse 1976: 9): "Then, in fact, I felt I was just stealing it. Now I don't see that it is so close." Jesus has been brought down from the cross, the upright of which joins with the border behind him. His arms are still stretched stiffly out from his body, his feet seem stuck together, and his torso has not lost the twist of its agony. Charlot's cutting of the figure seems to participate in the torture and the pain. The stretched muscles of the legs, though stiff in death, seem still to ache. The mortality of the flesh is so blatant that the halo serves a purpose, besides making more obvious the connection to the prototype, *The Avignon Pieta*. The relation of Jesus' tilted head to his chest anticipates that of the shrouded corpse being deposited in the tomb in the next station.

Charlot cut the block with the boldest contrasts between reserves and printing. In the drawing, normal highlights can be found on the bowed head of Mary, on the head and right knee of the woman in front of Jesus, and on his rib cage and hip. In the cutting and printing, however, Charlot eliminated most of the transitions between the highlights and their surroundings, creating a strong, but unrealistic contrast. For instance, in the drawing, the highlight on the woman's knee is prepared normally by surrounding light lines that darken as they move away from the highlight. In the cutting, Charlot cut more and more wood off the knee, making it lighter; the cut around the highlight was widened to create a little pool for the ink. Then in the printing, Charlot applied extra ink around the highlight, destroying any impression of transition. The result is that a very light highlight is surrounded by the blackest possible circle of printed ink. Similarly, the knee and leg of Mary, unremarkable in the drawing, take on a harsh streak of light. Throughout the print, such clashes of light and dark seem responses to German Expressionism. The print is curious in the series in that the design shows Charlot at his most traditional while its execution is among the boldest. The cutting of the wood was truly creative.

Finally, Charlot continues his emphasis on Mary, changing the title from "JÉSUS DÉCLOUÉ" 'Jesus is unnailed' to *marie le reçoit* 'Mary receives him.' Charlot's symbolic reference in *Guerre 1918* was "J. confié à l'Église" 'Jesus confided to the Church' and in the Grünwald notes "le Christ confié à l'Église" 'the Christ confided to the church.' The focus on Mary was, therefore, a conscious decision.

I have described above the two earliest surviving stages of Charlot's design for the fourteenth station, traditionally called *Jesus is Laid in the Tomb*. This final station is meant to be contrasted with the

first. There Jesus was unseen; here he is hidden in his shroud, held dead on a true horizontal. In the first, a large mob was shouting towards the left; in the last, a small remnant of quiet followers places him in the tomb towards the right. When the stations were placed in a church, Jesus would be approaching the first station from the altar and would be returned towards the altar in the last. In both lists of symbolic references, that of *Guerre 1918* and of the Grünewald notes, Charlot connects the entombment respectively to “Communion” and “la communion”; that is, the Eucharist, the consecrated bread transubstantiated into the body of Christ. That Charlot had this reference in mind is revealed by his change of the title from “MISE AU TOMBEAU” ‘Placing in the Tomb’ on the final drawing to *le tabernacle* ‘the tabernacle’ on the print; the tabernacle is the place where the Eucharist is kept on the altar. That is, the story is not over, although it might seem so to those without faith. After the death comes the Resurrection, indicated by the subject of the vignette: Joseph of the Old Testament emerges alive from the well into which he had been thrown by his brothers to die. The design and cutting of the fourteenth station are the quietest in the series, a deliberate anticlimax. The narrative has reached a pause, not a culmination. To experience that, the person who has made the Way of the Cross must now turn to the altar.

I have argued above that Charlot created the title page of the *Chemin* at Chaumontel while the series was being printed. This may be the reason the local printer took a special interest in it. For the cover, Charlot used designs he had made in 1917 for a bookmark-sized series of the Twelve Apostles. By doing this, Charlot’s designs were not wasted and the same general style was used on the title page as in the stations. Charlot was creating very different sorts of designs by 1920, and some elements of these intrude into the central panel of the title page, probably the last section of the *Chemin* to be created and one for which Charlot did not use earlier designs. For instance, the articulation within the form of Isaac in the central section differs greatly from the treatment of the interiors of the forms of the Apostles; the figure of Isaac resembles Charlot’s experiments in strong Cubistic hatching seen in some of his drawings of 1919–1920. The solid background of plant forms resembles that of *L’Amitié*.

As stated above, the title page is a tour-de-force of engraving. Charlot reveals the vertical grain of the block in the background of the inscription. The lines appear to be casual remainders from the process of “cleaning” the block so that the background will be uninked in the print, but the lines are carefully regularized and spaced around the lettering. The letters themselves, like the clouds in the stations, seem to display the difficulties of carving in different directions on the wood, communicating an impression of the effort involved; Charlot created the same effect in his own *ex libris* of 1917 (Morse number 3). The irregularity of the resulting letters reveals their manual origins and connects them to folk art. The major focus is, however, on the juxtaposition of *bois de fil* and *bois de bout*. The Apostles are engraved with all the graceful, lengthwise ease of *bois de fil*, while the columns that separate them are scratched with bold strength against the grain. The central panel exploits the technique and esthetics of *bois de bout*. Extremely fine white lines make the dominant black gleam. Finally—uniquely in the series—Charlot uses stippling for the background of the title itself. The viewer is advised that Charlot knows more than he shows in this one portfolio.

Symbolism is used in several ways on the title page. Within his image, each apostle is endowed with his own traditional symbol or prop, a result of Charlot's historical research. The central section is also taken from traditional iconography: a genealogical tree of Old Testament patriarchs. This subject was called The Tree of Jesse because the base was normally formed by that figure. Charlot has, however, replaced Jesse with Noah. I consider this a multifaceted reference to World War I: after the catastrophe emerges the new beginning.<sup>114</sup> Charlot will also depict the flood in his later large designs for liturgical cloths. Three of the Patriarchs carry cross-like objects: Isaac, the wood for his ritual sacrifice; Moses, his serpent-entwined staff (the second Grünewald list mentioned "le serpent d'airain"); and Gideon, the sacred pole of Baal, which he has cut down when he destroyed the altar of that god. Joshua holds up his arms in a cross-like gesture. Charlot is using these figures as prefigurements of the Crucifixion, a general intention seen already in his list in *Guerre 1918*. However, none of these figures or the apostles can be related to individual stations as Charlot planned in *Guerre 1918* and in the list connected to his notes on Grünewald. The title page invites the reader generally to connect the stations to various aspects of the religion, but does not direct him in detail. The symbolism is thus being used in the same way as the vignettes of the stations.

However, the title page, filled as it is with arcane symbols and references, is clearly appealing to the intellect rather than the emotions. Moreover, its complexity—recalling the Baroque business of early printed graphics—differs from the folk-like simplicity of the stations; its technical bravura, from their seeming brutality; and its tiny scale, from their monumentality. The purpose and audience of the title page are obviously different from those of the stations. The title page will not be placed on the wall of a church, but on the table of an art collector, appealing to his knowledge of art history and appreciation of technique. The title page instructs the connoisseur how to view the following stations.

The title page was printed on cardboard or thicker, stiffer paper the same size as the regular prints (it seems to be made of five regular sheets pasted together). This front cover was then attached to a back cover by a cloth spine pasted onto each, leaving a width of cloth to accommodate the prints. The title print constituted, therefore, the outside front cover of the portfolio, no provision being made for its own protection. This remained Charlot's practice for portfolios and even book covers. Even the wrapper of the hardcover *Picture Book* of 1933 is an original lithograph! Charlot was in fact very proud of his covers, considering *fiji: eight color serigraphs* of 1978 (Morse number 754) "the best lettering I've ever done." A number of his prints have, however, been thrown away because people could not believe that an original would be used as a protective covering.

Along with other works, Charlot exhibited the *Chemin de Croix* at the *Exposition d'Art Chrétien Moderne*, an exhibition of modern liturgical art organized by the Société de Saint-Jean at the Pavillon de Marsan of the Louvre from December 1920 through January 1921. The exhibition was anticipated as a display of the talents of younger liturgical artists (Denis 1922: 253–258). In the catalogue is listed:

103. – *Chemin de Croix* (14 stations et un frontispice).  
gravé sur bois. (*Exposition d'Art Chrétien Moderne* 1920: 14)

‘103. – Way of the Cross (fourteen stations and a frontispiece).  
engraved on wood.’

Charlot’s work and the *Chemin* attracted an unusual amount of notice. In his “Accomplish. 4—” of November 1930, Charlot noted “*Award* for wood-cuts.” Maurice Denis marked Charlot’s name and entries with an X in his copy of the catalogue.<sup>115</sup> C. de Cordis wrote in *La Revue Moderne* (April 1921):

un remarquable chemin de croix en bois sculpté, comprenant 14 stations avec un frontispice gravé sur bois.

‘a remarkable Way of the Cross in sculpted wood, comprised of fourteen stations with a frontispiece engraved in wood.’

Another reviewer would use an adjective that would express the reaction of a number of viewers:

Les bois de M. Bertrand, les rudes stations gravés par M. Louis Charlot, les savants dessins de M. Chadel nous ramènent aux arts graphiques, à la peinture religieuse, suprême manifestation de l’art chrétien. (Escholier 1921: 40)

‘The wood pieces of Mr. Bertrand, the rude stations engraved by Mr. Louis Charlot, the knowledgeable drawings of Mr. Chadel, take us to the graphic arts, religious painting, supreme manifestation of Christian art.’

In his review of the exhibition, Pierre du Colombier departed from his intention to discuss only group efforts in order to call attention to two individuals; after expressing his general worry that the public would be unjust to the modern liturgical art exhibited, he writes:

Le désir de mettre en relief les efforts collectifs de l’art sacré nous a contraint à ne point nous arrêter aux isolés. Nous nous en voudrions cependant de ne point signaler d’un mot le mérite des œuvres d’art graphique. Maître de sa technique comme peu de graveurs, Bertrand se montre égal à lui-même, dans la force sûre d’elle-même. Et Charlot nous a offert, taillé dans le bois, un très remarquable Chemin de Croix, trop brutal parfois, trop attaché à de certaines modes, mais d’une souveraine habileté dans l’ordonnance générale des noirs et des blancs. Seulement une œuvre comme celle-là nous ramène à une constatation que nous faisons au début de cette note : nous sommes certains que, là devant, le public rirait. Mais il a ri aussi des impressionnistes qu’on a fini par lui imposer. Aurons-nous une élite catholique disposée à jouer le même rôle que les amateurs profanes, à ne point craindre, pour un temps, le ridicule ? De son attitude dépend la renaissance de l’art sacré. (January 10, 1921: 100 f.)

‘Our desire to bring out the collective efforts in sacred art have forced us to pass over isolated examples. However, we would blame ourselves if we failed to point out even briefly the merits of the graphic artworks. Master of his technique like few engravers, Bertrand shows himself worthy of himself, with a self-confident strength. And Charlot has offered us, cut in wood, a very remarkable Way of the Cross, sometimes too brutal, too attached to certain modes, but of a sovereign skill in the general

organization of the blacks and whites. Only a work like this takes us back to a finding we made at the beginning of this notice: we are certain that, in front of that Way of the Cross, the public will laugh. But they laughed also at the Impressionists, who in the end they had to accept. Do we have a Catholic elite willing to play the same role as the worldly collectors, not to fear, for a time, ridicule? On its attitude the renaissance of sacred art depends.'

The *Chemin* struck Colombier as so strongly, even brutally modern that it risked rejection by the Catholic public. In fact, Charlot himself witnessed such a reaction:

I had them in the annual exhibition of the Arts Décoratifs at the Pavillon de Marsan at the Louvre, and they were exhibited. I had put some nice sort of velvet type of mats on them. They looked very good to me, and I was quite crushed when I went there to hear remarks. I was crushed by the fact that most people passed by without stopping, which you usually do in a very large group exhibition, where there are so many items. But there was a cleric showing around some of his people, and he passed by there, and they wanted to stop and look at that *Way of the Cross*, and he said, "No, no. That's all right. Those are just outlines." And then he herded them to another room. And there may be in me... a strain of being anticlerical... because of things that happened to me with people, shall we say, in clerical costume.<sup>116</sup>

The *Chemin* was, however, immediately appreciated in Mexico. On his exploratory trip in early 1921, Charlot had been welcomed by the staff of the Academy of San Carlos and allowed to use the many rare books in their library. Charlot reciprocated by donating a copy of the *Chemin de Croix*. He then returned to Paris to liquidate the family estate in order to move permanently to Mexico with his mother. On his return to Mexico City later that year, he found that several young artists had discovered the *Chemin* and were anxious to meet him. The *Chemin* was thus Charlot's introduction to the group of young artists with whom he would eventually work in the Mexican Mural Renaissance:

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)

The *Chemin* must have appealed to the tragic sense and robust artistic taste of the Mexicans. I believe also that it resonated with their own emotions from the Revolution, which were not yet reaching expression in art.

Charlot believed—and other art historians have agreed—that the *Chemin* was important in the revival of Mexican printmaking:

My baggage, if you want, of art was that *Way of the Cross* made in woodcut, and that was a good introduction to people... 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 were no more mural possibilities than there were in France. But there *was* something connected with the graphic arts.<sup>117</sup>

When I visited Mexico City in the summer of 1992, a young art historian told me he had been excited by a recent exhibition in which the entire *Chemin de Croix* had been shown. Charlot himself was happier with the *Chemin* at the end of his life than he had been during our interviews (Morse 1983: 2).

## 7.6. THE RETURN TO CIVILIAN LIFE

In September 1919, Charlot used the trip to Souges as a moment of respite to put his thoughts in order. On the train from Germany to Bordeaux, he wrote the long poem on his relations with German women: *Des femmes que j'ai rencontrées en Allemagne spécialement de Rheingönheim et Eppstein. Prière générale pour avoir le goût vrai de la femme.*<sup>118</sup> He was referring to these relationships in his poem on finding peace at Souges:

Maître voici la serpe de la sérénité  
Après la fièvre de ce violent cœur instable  
l'apaisement dans ces baraques et ce sable  
dans le jour qui s'affaïsse et meurt dans la beauté.

'Master, here is the billhook of serenity  
After the fever of this violent, unstable heart  
the calming in these barracks and on this sand  
in the day that sinks and dies in the beauty.'

A second major subject of his thoughts is mentioned in his letter to his mother of September 24, 1919:

Toujours au camp de Souges. Je vais assez souvent à Bordeaux. La vie n'est pas désagréable, mais je préfère l'Allemagne, surtout parce qu'ici l'esprit est mauvais chez le civil, alors que là-bas nous sommes mieux traités. J'ai ici de bons camarades et un travail peu absorbant, ce qui me permet de dessiner.

'Still at the Souges camp. I go fairly often to Bordeaux. Life isn't disagreeable, but I prefer Germany, especially because here the civilians have a bad spirit, whereas we



are treated better there. I have good comrades here and easy work, which allows me to draw.’

Charlot was thinking fondly of Germany and his army comrades because, like many soldiers of many wars, he felt in the civilians at home a lack of understanding and appreciation. In his address to the Gilde of April 1919, “Les Leçons de la Guerre,” delivered while on leave in Paris, Charlot had already noticed a difference between his feelings and those of the civilians: “A peine issu de cette guerre, tout embué encore de l’esprit de lutte (conservé peut-être plus vivace parmi les troupes d’occupation)...” ‘Hardly out of this war, still covered by the spirit of combat (perhaps maintained more strongly among the occupying troops) ....’

Service in the war had increased Charlot’s patriotism and endowed him with a martial spirit. He thanks God he has been born French (December 16, 1928):

Merci, Maître, d’avoir permis que l’humble graine  
germe en France et que ce corps fleurisse français

‘Thank you, Master, for permitting the humble seed  
to germinate in France and that this body flowered French.’

France is his wet-nurse whom he now defends like a knight in armor:

Or casqué du heaume et chaussant l’éperon d’or  
je n’ai pas oublié que tes membres mi-morts,  
tes chairs vides me dorlotèrent, ô Nourrice. (*France, enfant sur ta gorge où j’ai bu ce  
lait tiède*, December 9, 1919)

‘So helmeted with metal and booted with golden spurs  
I have not forgotten your half-dead members,  
your slack flesh coddled me, O Nurse.’

France needs defending because it is in peril. In *La France saigne à toute artère, ridicule* (December 8, 1919, two versions), Charlot expressed his anger at the peace negotiations which have profited only kings and Bolsheviks as if the war had been fought for nothing: the great sacrifice they and their fallen comrades had made was being squandered by the governments and the peoples. Only the Occupation soldiers had not prostituted themselves; as ridiculed as France, they remained faithful to their country. The failure of the peace reinforced Charlot’s negative feelings about governments and political solutions to social problems. He agreed with Bloy and much of the Bible that in the world, the forces of the world almost always won. The real winners of World War I were the big businessmen, the arms dealers, the war profiteers. He enjoyed the parody that transformed Woodrow Wilson’s famous statement, “The world must be made safe for democracy” into “*a* safe for democracy.” The Mexican Revolution had, after Charlot’s own time, arrived at the same result. He once described Eduardo Villaseñor (1896–1978), a friend of Zohmah Day’s, as one of those money men who manage to come through any upheaval. Charlot was not, however, withdrawing from his social obligations; on March 31, 1920, while still in the Occupation, he received his voting card:

Carte d'Electeur  
Ville de Saint-Mandé  
Qualification : Elève Ecole des Beaux Arts  
Demeure : Avenue Alphant 31 bis

'Voter Card  
City of Saint-Mandé  
Title: Student at the Ecole des Beaux Arts  
Residence: Avenue Alphant 31 bis'

But politicians were not the only ones at fault. In fact, the French people seemed intent on forgetting the war and its dead. In *Maître, maître voici. La mort lourde m'opombre* (March 19, 1919), he satirizes those returning to their intellectual and bourgeois comforts:

Je m'engraisse, je ris aux femmes, je suis plein  
d'indulgence pour ma cervelle  
...  
chairs chaudes, foins fleurants, soupes au soir, cieux chromes;  
C'est gênant qu'ils soient morts et pourris, ces milliers.  
  
'I get fat, I smile at women, I'm full  
of indulgence for my brain  
...  
warm flesh, flowering hay, soup in the evening, yellow skies;  
It's tiresome that they're dead and rotten, those thousands.'

In the long *Toussaint, Sujet: les corps des camarades parlent* (November 1–2, 1919), Charlot expresses his view fully. This is the time of the dead; his comrades rot, but “Les vifs ont oublié les morts” ‘The living have forgotten the dead.’ Youth, love, and hope were crucified, and the sacrifice fructified their country. In recompense, France offers the dead monuments of smoke and the old-fashioned rhetoric of speech-making. Charlot’s anger rises from his consciousness of the dead as people and his capacity for imagining the lives they had and might have led:

et moi je dis : Les morts convulsent leurs tombeaux  
et crient : “Oyez le plaint de nos langues sans lèvres,  
de nos rictus crevés d’obus et de corbeaux.

Paysans, ouvriers, docteurs, bourgeois, orfèvres  
nous étions gais de vivre.”

‘and I, I say: The dead shake their tombs  
and shout: “Hear the complaint of our lipless tongues,  
of our grimaces burst by shells and crows.

Peasants, workers, doctors, bourgeois, goldsmiths  
we were happy to live.’

They offered themselves for France expecting France to respond to their sacrifice. Charlot appeals:

O France incrédule  
Aie pitié de ceux-ci qui te tendent leurs mains  
sans chairs, écorchant leurs squelettes aux rotules

‘O unbelieving France,  
Pity those who reach out to you with fleshless hands,  
skinning their skeletons at the kneecaps’

Charlot remembers the dead he knew in the barracks:

Nous aimions danser aussi ; le tuf nu cerne  
nos reins ; nous eûmes des gencives, nous parlions  
d’amour, tandis que souffrant l’âtre des casernes.

‘We also liked to dance; the naked bedrock circles  
our loins; we had gums, we talked  
about love, while suffering the bitterness of the barracks.’

Cannot their humanity be recognized behind the repulsive façade of their wounds:

Ne nous méprisez pas, nous, mangeurs de ténèbres,  
que la pluie et l’orage ont lavés et blanchis ;  
nous, gonflés et bleus de gaz, que le pus zèbre.

‘Don’t despise us, us eaters of shadows,  
whom the rain and the storm have washed and whitened;  
us, swollen and blue with gas, whom the pus stripes.’

The true hope lies not in forgetful France but in the Resurrection, in which all soldiers, alive and dead, will have their special place: “Attendons en la Paix ‘nos’ résurrections !” ‘Let us await during the Peace “our” resurrections!’

Riding with his unit from Bitché to Landau, Charlot thinks about the situation: “La Victoire fructifie, au goût tendre-amer” ‘The Victory fructifies, with a sweet-and-sour taste’ (*Nous allons repartir sur les routes lorraines*). The politicians are not supporting the military, and the people are forgetting what the soldiers have done:

Savent-ils que c’est de notre sang qu’ils sont gras.  
O Seigneur Réenseignez-moi. Sans catéchisme  
Valait-ce peine de s’offrir pour ces ingrats

‘Do they know it’s from our blood they’re fat.  
Oh Lord, teach me again. Without a catechism  
Was it worth the trouble to offer oneself for these ingrates.’

Just as the military is being isolated from the civilians in government, Charlot’s attitude is distancing him from his civilian friends:

Les gens intelligents se donnent rendez-vous  
Pour confirmer l’horreur de mon militarisme  
  
‘Intelligent people have meetings  
To confirm the horror of my militarism’

In his isolation, Charlot feels like the Wandering Jew, filled with a dreadful anticipation unshared by others (*Juif Errant*, October 1919). His feeling of isolation is increased when he returns home on leave. He describes himself on his first leave in April returning “tel le Juif frais revenu d’Assour” ‘like the Jew arrived fresh from Assur,’ from the Babylonian Captivity (*Maître, vous m’issez hors des femmes d’Allemagne*, April 1, 1919). He stands again “dedans mes meubles et mes jours/d’hier” ‘amid my furniture and days of yesterday.’ He describes lovingly his friends from the Gilde:

mes amis d’hier, aux doigts adroits, aux cœurs d’accord,  
vivant au seul raisonnable désir d être Anges.  
  
‘my friends of yesterday, with adroit fingers and harmonious hearts,  
living according to the only reasonable desire of being Angels.’

He feels he will perhaps find someone to love: “la promesse de compagne” ‘the promise of a companion.’ But he is struck by the impression that he is out of the frame, that the person he sees in the mirror is no longer himself:

et mon corps et mon cœur ont défailli d’étais  
d’avoir (au salon vieux venu, vivace étrange)  
Vu celui-ci semblable à l’enfant que j’étais !  
  
‘and my body and my heart fell out of the frame  
for having seen (come old into the living room, long-lived, strange)  
this body still similar to the child I once was!’

In his typed collection, Charlot grouped this poem along with those he wrote on his second leave in December 1919. The second experience was even worse than the first. In September, Charlot had asked his mother for news of his friends in the Gilde (letter of September 24, 1919): “Envoie-moi des nouvelles de la Gilde quand elle reprendra” ‘Send me news of the Gilde when it starts up again.’ He wrote later (*AA I 288*): “So thoroughly scattered by then were the members of our guild that I do not know how it all ended.” Charlot was probably also thinking again of “la promesse de compagne” ‘the promise of a companion.’ In *Voici j’ai revu ces compagnonnets d’antan* (December 12, 1919), he expressed his disappointment. During the war, he had often thought of “ces ancelles/de Dieu” ‘these

maiden-supports of God' and their love. But they have not been able to offer him any understanding or comfort, and he felt wounded.

In another poem, Charlot states that his friends find him a militarist. Does God want to keep him solitary to raise him up like an eagle nearer to Himself? The image of the eagle expresses the fact that Charlot has moved beyond the state he was in before the war, whereas his old friends are still the same. They are unable to see him as he is now after all his experiences of the war. Some of Charlot's nostalgia for Germany may indicate that German women understood better than French what the soldiers had endured. In any case, in his poem *Seigneur voici le temps venu de me tourner* (January 2, 1920), he says he is happy to be returning to the Rhineland and its blondes.

Even bitterer was the feeling of having been passed over by life (*Seigneur, à ma lèvre ce relent d'amertume*, December 1919). While he was away three years at the war, his friends have made themselves successes:

J'ai vu des camarades gros, rentés, pignon  
sur rue. On encense leur gloire champignon

'I've seen comrades, big, endowed with incomes, rich property owners.  
People incense their booming glory'

Army work gave him the muscles of a worker, and now he returns like a Gros-Jean, always the ignorant hick. He comes back like the Prodigal Son after years of suffering and sin, but no one cooks him a feast. He hungers but hopes that some splendid good will finally emerge. In this period, Charlot saw himself in the figures of Gros-Jean, the Wandering Jew, and the Prodigal Son.<sup>119</sup>

An example of such a disappointing reunion is described in *Elle m'a dit des choses désagréables* (March 11, 1920); on a later typescript, he wrote in shorthand "Pour Huré," Marguerite Huré, the excellent artist Charlot knew from the Gilde. Charlot had made a long trip to see his old friend whom he esteemed (*AA I 288*): "I would visit when on leave the workshop where Marguerite Huré did stained glass, and did it beautifully." On the way, thinking about her and the time they had been together, he began to feel again his young, even childish self, now dead:

Elle aussi elle a bien changé : elle est Madame  
avec des phrases narquoises et des gants beiges  
quand j'ai vu cela ça m'a fait froid à l'âme.

'She also has really changed: she is Madame  
with quizzing phrases and beige gloves.  
When I saw that, I felt cold in my soul.'

She said disagreeable things and made him feel stupid and naked like a baby who needs changing.

Charlot could not look forward to his return to civilian life with unmixed emotions, but his experience as an officer had given him confidence in his powers of coping. As he writes his mother, Charlot is looking forward confidently to his demobilization and resumption of his previous activities

(letter of September 24, 1919): “Y a-t-il du neuf dans nos affaires, la fin de l’année approche—et ma démobilisation aussi, je suppose en Mars–Avril” ‘Is there something new in our affairs. The end of the year approaches—and my discharge also, I suppose in March–April.’

The greatest problem was financial. In his Meditation of February 3, 1919, Charlot had written: “Ma voie est simple—il y a ma mère à nourrir et puis après—selon votre grâce” ‘My way is simple—there is my mother to support and after that—according to your grace.’ His Good Friday poem of 1919, *Seigneur voici mon âme pauvre et ma chair pauvre*, was prompted, as Charlot noted in shorthand: “Quand j’ai appris que nous mangions à peu près le dixième de notre capital par an” ‘When I learned that we were spending about a tenth of our capital per year.’ Charlot’s response is all too religious: he applies to the problem Christian teachings about holy poverty and depicts himself, with anti-romantic details, as a wandering beggar or monk, like Benedict Joseph Labré, and as blessed by Francis of Assisi. Arriving back from his Paris leave on January 4, 1920, Germany already seems like a privileged time, and he expects soon to resume his burdens in France (*7 ans déjà, Péguy, mort huis, voulut pour don*). Charlot continued to plan for his life after demobilization. In *Proche Seigneur s’avère la délivrance* (February 26, 1920), he hopes that after the overwhelming experiences of the war and the Occupation, civilian life will allow him to refocus his mind on his relationship with God. *Seigneur, voici le temps de ma délivrance* (February 2, 1920), provides more details on his state of mind: “Je vais quitter l’uniforme qui strangule” ‘I’m going to leave this uniform that’s strangling me.’ He has gone through three years of cries and trances, threatened by a death crowned with the three colors of the French flag. He has had the success of becoming an officer, but the price was looking death in the eye, which has left lines on his young face and blood radiating its fire from the dark of his pupil. In *Maître, Vous me délivrez du bat* (May 17, 1920), he thanks God for keeping him safe over three years. He lists the three greatest dangers he has faced: death, fear, and sex:

la Mort ; sous d’innommables visières  
 la Peur ; et caressante aux viscères  
 la Luxure, seins hauts, jupons bas

Death; under unnamable visors  
 Fear; and caressing the bowels  
 Luxury, breasts up, skirts down’

He turns to religion for aid. Finally in May 1920, he writes a poem on the “jour de ma démobilisation” ‘the day of my demobilization’: *Merci Seigneur. Je me retrouve dans la chambre* ‘Thank you, Lord. I find myself back in my room.’ He is once again among his furniture and his books. As he did on his first leave in April 1919, he thinks of himself again as the child and the young man he was: “J’ai l’enfant/d’hier aux yeux” ‘I have the child/of yesterday in my eyes.’ This time, the thought does not alienate him from himself. He looks over his old collections and photographs, his copy of Buffon’s book of natural history with its fascinating pictures of elephants. Charlot is remembering how he looked at them as a child: “Je ne voyage plus qu’autour de ma chambre” ‘I journey now only around my room.’ He has certainly had many adult experiences since then, but the corner of his room seems to make them all unreal: “ce coin retrouvé

efface toute fable” ‘this corner found again erases every fable.’ As he looks through a book with its illustrations of distant cities, he feels again the wonderfully confident curiosity of his childhood:

le blanc du volume entrouvert  
renivre mon iris qu’effleura l’univers.

‘the white of the half-opened volume  
intoxicates again my iris, brushed by the universe.’

Charlot’s poem on his demobilization is the last in his collection *Vers : Période Militaire*. Charlot felt that he started at this point a whole new period of his life.

Although demobilized, Charlot remained in the army reserves and subject to their bureaucratic processes.<sup>120</sup> On July 31, 1920, he was assigned his same rank of Second Lieutenant “à T.T. [Titre Temporaire]” ‘temporary rank’ in the reserves. On August 13, 1920, he was attached as a reservist to a new regiment; all his papers were being sent to his new unit along with his petition to be made *Sous-Lieutenant de Réserve à T.D.* [Titre Définitif], or regular Second Lieutenant. On July 22, 1921, he was named *Sous-Lieutenant à titre définitif*, that is, regular Second Lieutenant, rather than temporary or provisional. On April 17, 1924, he received a new set of orders, that is, new papers, and was assigned to an artillery regiment at Vincennes. On July 22, 1925, he was promoted to First Lieutenant in the reserves. On November 12, 1930, while living in New York City, he received an *Ordre d’Appel sous les Drapeaux*, the order recalling him under the colors, but apparently was not required to return to France. On October 27, 1938, although already a United States citizen, he was mobilized to work in the procurement office of the French army in New York, where he remained until the office was disbanded by its commanding officer on July 18, 1940, after the fall of France.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Arbre*, pencil and wash on paper, 14-3/4” high X 10” wide, dated December 30, 1918; title from “Mes dessins en Allemagne”; written on sheet: “Lorraine.”

<sup>2</sup> *Chaise*, pencil and wash on paper, 15” high X 10-1/8” wide, dated January 1, 1919, title from “Mes dessins en Allemagne”; written on sheet: “Lorraine.”

<sup>3</sup> Tirard 1930: 228. Edmonds 1987: 202.

<sup>4</sup> The photograph is in the JCC. Charlot is identified as a second lieutenant, the rank to which he was promoted in June 1919, retroactive to May. In the mess accounts of the *Ludwigshafen Notebook*, Charlot notes the names: Percet, Larue, Gabriel, Rose, Cap. Chio, Cap. Thibareng, Soufflet, and Piguet. On Colonial troops in the occupation, see Greenhalgh 2014: 406.

<sup>5</sup> A second Massenheim is approximately three miles northeast of Frankfurt and could also have been the one Charlot means.

<sup>6</sup> A notebook was purchased in Ludwigshafen and a book in Mainz on November 26, 1919: *Neue Französische Malerei* 1913. A train schedule from Jugenheim to Mainz was tipped into this book when Charlot had it bound in Hawai'i. The sketchbook Charlot used for his *d'après les Métamorphoses d'Ovide, Amsterdam 1732* of 1921 was bought at Bad Tölz.

<sup>7</sup> Interview November 18, 1970: "at Christmas of 1918, we crossed into Germany, and I stayed there until 1920, I think, in and out. That is, I could return to Paris where my family was at the time, well, once or twice, I think."

On April 10, 1919, Marie-Josèphe de Fréminville wrote Maurice Denis asking him to lecture at an exhibition of the Gilde and to be a member of the jury for painting. Denis replied on April 14, 1919, asking for more details and remarking:

Si M. Charlot qui est venu chez moi ces jours-passés, m'avait donné de vive voix qq éclaircissements, je ne me verrais pas forcé de vous les demander.

'If Mr. Charlot, who visited me these last days, had given me orally some clarifications, I would not be forced to ask you for them.'

After discussing the letter with Charlot, J. Commère wrote to Denis with the requested information and added:

Quant à Mr. Charlot, s'il ne vous a point parlé de la Gilde dans sa visite c'est qu'il vous faisait une visite personnelle. Il n'était du reste pas bien au courant de la vie actuelle de la Gilde puisqu'il est venu en permission bien rapide.

'As to Mr. Charlot, if he did not speak with you about the Gilde on his visit, it is because that visit was personal. Furthermore, he is not fully informed about the current activities of the Gilde because he has come on a very short leave.'

I thank Ms. Claire Denis and the Musée Départemental Maurice Denis "Le Prieuré" for permission to use the above materials that are in their possession.

<sup>8</sup> His portraits of Louis Goupil, one dated April 26, 1920, appear to have been done from life.

<sup>9</sup> *Extrait du Journal Officiel N° 154 du 7 Juin 1919, Artillerie—Nominations—Active*. This and other French army documents used in the text are found in the JCC.

<sup>10</sup> Charlot to his mother, September 1, 1919. The orders are dated September 3, but Charlot was apparently told of the mission earlier.

<sup>11</sup> The abbreviations could stand for *Service Militaire Auxiliaire* 'Auxiliary Military Services' or *Service de Munitions d'Artillerie* 'Artillery Munitions Services.'

<sup>12</sup> Knight: e.g., *France, enfant sur ta gorge où j'ai bu ce lait tiède* (December 9, 1919). For the other images, see below. Poems used in this chapter can be found Charlot and Fassiotto 2005.

<sup>13</sup> *Seigneur voici le temps venu de me tourner*, January 2, 1920. See also Edmonds 1987: 88.



- <sup>14</sup> Tirard 1930: 283. Tuohy 1931: 97. Edmonds 1987: 89, 109.
- <sup>15</sup> King 1960. Tirard 1930: 71–83, 284–292, 402–407, 473 ff. Edmonds 1987: 85, 255–258. Tuohy 1931: 164–183, 202–213. Wachendorf-Berlin n.d.: 30–44, 71, 76 f., 88–98, 177 f., 185–220, 235 f., 255, 269 f. Nelson 1975: see index “Separatism, Rhenish.” MacMillan 2002: 170–175, 202 f., 468.
- <sup>16</sup> Tirard 1930: 259–278, 297, 494–503. Tuohy 1931: 96, 178 ff. Wachendorf-Berlin n.d.: 31, 85–88.
- <sup>17</sup> Wachendorf-Berlin n.d.: 98. Tirard 1930: 204 f., 302–307.
- <sup>18</sup> In general: Eberlein 1921: passim. Tirard 1930: 302–307. Tuohy 1931: 107–110, 155–163. Edmonds 1987: 203. Nelson 1975: 64 f., 177 f., 182, 206. Gershovich 2000: 177–181. Lynching: Eberlein 1921: 23, 37, 132.
- <sup>19</sup> Nelson 1970: 606, 610, 613, 626 f., argues that the French government was indeed forewarned, but stationed troops of color in Germany at least partially in order to humiliate further the vanquished, as the Germans themselves claimed. Nelson does, however, recognize the French arguments of solidarity among the veterans and General Mangin’s important support of colonial troops, pages 611 ff. Moreover, the French were clearly surprised by the extent of vehemence of the propaganda campaign the Germans eventually mounted.
- <sup>20</sup> Tuohy 1931: 117. See also Tirard 1930: 307–310.
- <sup>21</sup> Statements in earlier references and in Eberlein 1921: 28, 70, 92, 120; admitted by Eberlein 1921: 17, 19, 145.
- <sup>22</sup> Renaudel had in fact made a pro-separatism statement on December 29, 1918, and other socialists and left wingers had as well (King 1960: 2, 113 ff.), but the left was generally opposed to the military and thus its positions.
- <sup>23</sup> E.g., *Farbige Franzosen am Rhein* 1923: 50 f. Charlot was stationed at or near the following: Ludwigshafen (bordello established in January 1919), Landau (January 1919), Weisenau bei Mainz (1919), Wiesbaden (April 1919).
- <sup>24</sup> February 3, 1919. See also, e.g., the poems *Seigneur, seigneur, prenez pitié de ma rançœur* and *et qu’un baiser royal recule le mot louche* (June 9, 1919).
- <sup>25</sup> *Seigneur, seigneur voici ma chair lasse de lutte*, May 3, 1919. Also, *Maître, Maître, pourquoi naître à ces nouveaux aîtres*, March 23, 1919.
- <sup>26</sup> July 29, 1919. See also February 16, 1919; February 20, 1919.
- <sup>27</sup> June 4, 1919. Also, *Vous avez mis mes pieds au creux de bien des pistes*, September 15, 1919.
- <sup>28</sup> February 4, 1919. *et qu’un baiser royal recule le mot louche*, June 9, 1919.
- <sup>29</sup> February 4, 1919. Also, June 4, 1919.
- <sup>30</sup> June 4, 1919. Also, February 3, 1919: *et cet habit d’or !* February 10, 1919: *ce costume baroque que j’endosse*. July 29, 1919: *Et certes ma tunique est neuve, chamarrée d’or—*

<sup>31</sup> E.g., *Grande complainte de la garde-barrière et de son amant*:

plus cruels qu'aux cossus sérails  
pal, estrapade ou bastonnade.  
'crueler than in rich seraglios  
empalement, strappado, or bastinado.'

<sup>32</sup> *L'Occupation*, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, dated July 29, 1919, Rheingönheim. The figure appears to be based on the rider on a rearing horse in the middle right of Paolo Uccello's *The Hunt in the Forest* (1470).

<sup>33</sup> *Le Crapouillot de l'An 3000*, Noël 1919, p. 2, contains a satiric picture of French soldier with a rose in his mouth. Also *Le Crapouillot*, May 15 [or 16], 1921, p. 7. Since I have no other examples, I do not know how widespread this image was at the time.

<sup>34</sup> June 4, 1919. Also June 27, 1919.

<sup>35</sup> "*ne désirer l'œuvre de chair qu'en mariage*", March 19, 1919. Similar themes can be found in Decadent literature. Charlot made a copy of Albert Aurier's *La Contemplation*, in which the poet treats his rejected love's body as a corpse.

<sup>36</sup> Between May and December 1919. Also, *Maître voici la serpe de la sérénité*, November 17, 1919. *Seigneur, tyran jaloux*, n.d., mid-1920.

<sup>37</sup> Possibly related to this incident is the line in *Notebook C*, "Essai sur mon état actuel," September 25, 1922: "Saletés succession. régiment : Toupillet etc." 'Filthinesses in succession. regiment: Toupillet etc..'

<sup>38</sup> A single, unconnected verse from 1920 reads: "Nous pratiquâmes les stupres les plus subtils" 'We practiced the subtlest debaucheries.'

<sup>39</sup> On the manuscript is noted "retrouvé. 21" 'found again. 21.' This could mean either that he rediscovered the poem that year, which would imply that it was written in 1920, or that he wrote it in 1921.

<sup>40</sup> January 8, 1920. Also, *Vous avez mis mes pieds au creux de bien des pistes*, September 15, 1919; *J'ai fleuré tant de fruits, pêches mauves, bananes*, September 16, 1919.

<sup>41</sup> For identifications and references, see TF. Most of the authors have already been discussed in my text.

<sup>42</sup> Compare *Seigneur, tyran jaloux*, mid-1920:

mieux vaut, pieux, être Homais  
qu'athée Shakspeare.  
'better to be a Philistine and pious  
than an atheist Shakespeare.'

<sup>43</sup> On Orozco, see, e.g., Orozco 1962: 30; Reed 1956: 48; Tibol 1996: 176 f.

<sup>44</sup> Charlot's translation of an unpublished manuscript by Siqueiros, "Autobiografía," part of Charlot's research for his *MMR*. Spanish in Siqueiros 1977: 211.

- <sup>45</sup> First published 1872: 262 f.; complete list 259–263.
- <sup>46</sup> A draft is found in Uncollected; the finished version is in 1919 Brown Manuscript.
- <sup>47</sup> The draft found in Uncollected bears the title *Noël en histoire de Notre-Dame Marie*; the finished version is in 1919 Brown Manuscript.
- <sup>48</sup> I have not been able to identify Arrou. Charlot mentions an Arrou-Vignos in connection with another of his poems. A clipping with a poem by Arrou is in the JCC.
- <sup>49</sup> Singer 1918. Dürer n.d. All three books are in the JCC. Charlot was also reading German works on non-German art, such as Sauer *Die ältesten Christusbilder* n.d., and studies of modern and contemporary art.
- <sup>50</sup> *MMR* 1963: 180. Also, Charlot April 6, 1966.
- <sup>51</sup> Interview October 13, 1970. In my list of materials received from Odette in the early 1970s, I mentioned “post-card of Stephen Lochner, *Madonna in der Rosenlaube*, Köln.”
- <sup>52</sup> When I myself saw Lochner’s works in Cologne, I was impressed by his compositions and considered them an example of how intellectual art can be used to appeal to a pious public. When I asked Charlot about this point in the above interview, he characterized Lochner’s compositions as “surface diagrams and arrangements” derived from the practice of manuscript illuminations. I believe Charlot was satisfying his compositional interests with other artists and was more interested in other qualities he found in Lochner. But I feel that Lochner’s quantum of geometry did help Charlot secondarily to appreciate the work.
- <sup>53</sup> Arguments can be made for both dates. Charlot pasted his notes on the paintings in his copy of Hugo Kehrer’s *Matthias Grünewald: Das Wunder des Isenheimer Altars*, 1919, which he bought at Ludwigshafen on January 17, 1920. On the other hand, Charlot made notes on a sheet of the *Disassembled Sketchpad* that included “reproductions Grünewald (*sic*)” and also “Jeune P. Française.” The latter may refer to the book *Neue Französische Malerei* 1913; on the flyleaf of that book, Charlot wrote: “Mayence 26–11–19” ‘Mainz, November 26, 1919.’
- <sup>54</sup> Interview November 12, 1970. Brenner 1970: 304, during the occupation, Charlot was “absorbed in Mathias Grünewald.”
- <sup>55</sup> Charlot may have bought in Germany his copy of *Die Weibesschönheit in der Kunst* n.d.
- <sup>56</sup> The verso of the latter contains the abandoned beginning of a portrait of the same person.
- <sup>57</sup> *Profile of a Young Woman*, pencil on paper, 11-3/4” high X 8-7/8” wide, 1919.
- <sup>58</sup> *Profile of Lotta Kuhn*, pencil and purple wash, 10-1/4” high X 14-3/4” wide, dated January 10, 1919. *Lotta Kuhn*, three-quarter profile, pencil on paper, 10-1/4” wide X 14-3/4” high, dated January 12, 1919. Charlot has written on the sheet:

Lotta Kuhn

Die tochter von Karl Kuhn

Jugendheim

‘Lotta Kuhn, the daughter of Karl Kuhn, Jugendheim.’

- <sup>59</sup> *Babette*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4” high X 10-1/4” wide, dated April 28, 1919; Peter Morse gave the title *Hildegarde*, but the title used here is found in “Mes Dessins en Allemagne.” *Hildegard*, pencil and gouache (?) on paper, 14-1/2” high X 9-1/2” wide, dated May 11, 1919; the right side of the portrait has been trimmed along with the ending of the date. This date is given in “Mes dessins en Allemagne.” Some shorthand reads: “Hildegard la fille de la proprio” ‘Hildegard, the daughter of the woman we were billeted with.’ On the verso are the words “sur rose” ‘on rose,’ and the painting has been matted with rose, probably at a later date.
- <sup>60</sup> *Young Woman of Rheingönheim*, colored pencil on paper, 14-3/4” high X 8-3/4” wide, dated “du 28–7 au 8–19” ‘from July 28 to August 1919.’ At some later date, Charlot wrote the title *Lotta Kuhn*, but the subject is clearly a different woman, and at that date, Charlot was no longer at Jugendheim.
- <sup>61</sup> While he was writing his catalogue raisonné of Charlot’s prints in the early 1970s, Peter Morse hinted to Charlot that he would like to see his erotic work, but did not receive an answer.
- <sup>62</sup> *Eppstein, Mademoiselle Weisbrot*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4” high X 8-3/4” wide, dated September 3, 1919; written in the top left corner: “ma proprio à Eppstein” ‘my proprietor at Eppstein.’ This drawing is not listed in “Mes dessins en Allemagne,” but another drawing appears “6 9 19 Eppstein proprio dessin” ‘September 6, 1919, Eppstein, proprietor, drawing.’
- <sup>63</sup> *Portrait of Young German Woman, full face, unfinished*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4” high X 8-3/4” wide; writing: “pas fini” ‘unfinished’ and “[shorthand] de la popotte du capitaine Thibaireng” ‘...of the canteen of Captain Thibaireng.’ *Unfinished Drawing of Young German Woman*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4” high X 10-1/4” wide.
- <sup>64</sup> Morse 1976: 8 (number 10). *Anny*, pencil and wash on paper, 6-3/4” high X 4-1/2” wide; written: [shorthand] “Anny.” Charlot’s reference to a sketchbook from which this sheet has been detached is a reminder of how many works have been lost.
- <sup>65</sup> *Femme Fumant* (Peter Morse title: *Woman with Cigarette*), pencil and wash on paper, 10-1/4” wide X 14-3/4” high, dated February 10, 1919; written: “Maudach” and [shorthand] “Anny.” The title is from “Mes dessins en Allemagne.” Ambroselli 2003: 65 ff., heavily made-up women were a theme of the time, depicted, for instance, by Rouault.

<sup>66</sup> E.g., *Pictures and Picture-Making*, Disney lectures May 17, 1938, on his *Mayan Builder*, 1930, checklist number 187 (Builder, moonlight, Chichen Itza), 28" X 28":

This painting includes two features that I couldn't find together in any of the old masters. One is the shift in two dimensions of the rectangular area of the picture proper, Figure XXVIIa. The dotted area in the diagram is out of the picture, while part of the picture is the striped area outside the picture frame, because the eye imagines a rectangle. Secondly, through the perspective from down up, the vertical plane of the picture has been tilted backwards to about 45 degrees. So in this picture are put together two shifts—one in two dimensions and one in three.

<sup>67</sup> Morse number 10. See also Morse 1983: 2. Charlot probably printed the block during his April leave in Paris.

<sup>68</sup> "Jean Charlot's Notes on Early French Work." Charlot produced other related drawings. On the verso of *Bihain* of February 13, 1920, are faint lines outlining a woman's head and face. This may be an unfinished drawing of a German woman. The woman may, however, be wearing a Phrygian cap; that is, she may be a patriotic image of Madeleine, the symbol of France.

<sup>69</sup> *Maudach Ma chambre du 2 au 4-2-19*, pencil and wash on paper, 14-1/8" high X 10" wide, February 4, 1919; listed as *Chambre* in "Mes dessins en Allemagne."

<sup>70</sup> "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" lists a *Petit déjeuner* for June 30, 1919; the two *Masques* of February 9 and 11, 1919, may be gas masks. In the *Disassembled Sketchpad*, a mess kit—plate, bowl, spoon, and fork—is found on a sheet with sketches of an officer reading a newspaper and two military caps.

<sup>71</sup> *French Army Coat and Cap*, pencil and wash, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated March 22, 1919.

<sup>72</sup> *Still Life: Army Personal Effects*, pencil on paper, 15-3/8" high X 10" wide, dated October 13, 1919.

<sup>73</sup> *Toilette*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated November 12–13, 1919; written: "Bitche." The same stand or another example of that army issue is found on the verso of *L'Occupation* of July 29, 1919, described above.

<sup>74</sup> Vase with flowers, from *Disassembled Sketchpad*, 7-1/2" X 5"; 19 cm X 12-1/2 cm, done probably late in the Occupation.

<sup>75</sup> *Cyclamens*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-1/2" wide X 10-1/4" high, January 1920. "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" lists three drawings of this subject dated January 23, 26, 30, 1920.

<sup>76</sup> *Flowers in Vase*, pencil on paper, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, on verso of *Unfinished Drawing of Young German Woman*.

<sup>77</sup> On verso of *L'Occupation* of July 29, 1919, described above.

<sup>78</sup> *Flowering Branches*, pencil and wash on paper, 10-3/8" high X 14-1/2" wide, on verso of *Usines*, dated May 3, 1919.

- <sup>79</sup> *Usines*, pencil and wash on paper, 10-3/8" high X 14-1/2" wide, dated May 3, 1919; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne." Also listed is *usines n° II* for May 11, 1919.
- <sup>80</sup> *Eglise*, pencil and wash on paper, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated May 8, 1919; written "Rheingönheim"; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne." A sketch of a tower is found on the verso of *Dandy French Officer with Binoculars*, which I date 1920. The body of the church is cut off, so I conclude that Charlot employed in 1920 a piece of paper that originally had a larger sketch. The tower appears to be German architecture of the type that interested Charlot during the Occupation.
- <sup>81</sup> *Eglise Annweiler*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated November 20, 1919; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne."
- <sup>82</sup> *Nonnes à Landau*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated December 1, 1919; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne."
- <sup>83</sup> *Street Scene in German Town (Landau?)*, pencil and wash on paper, 10-1/4" wide X 14-3/4" high, dated March 25, 1920.
- <sup>84</sup> *Guitton*, pencil on paper, 15-3/8" high X 10" wide, dated October 26, 1919, placed Bitche; in "Mes dessins en Allemagne" at the same date: "Guitton (au trait)."
- <sup>85</sup> *Travès*, pencil, 14-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated November 13, 1919; listed at the same date in "Mes dessins en Allemagne": "Traves (dessin)."
- <sup>86</sup> *Grimprel*, pencil and wash on paper, 10-1/4" wide X 14-3/4" high, dated March 12, 1919; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne." On the verso is written: "Prière de ne pas oublier Philippe Grimprel 9 rue Lincoln Paris VIII<sup>e</sup>" "Please do not forget Philippe Grimprel 9 rue Lincoln Paris VIII<sup>e</sup>."
- <sup>87</sup> *Travès dormant*, pencil and wash on paper, 14-3/4" wide X 10-1/4" high, dated January 28, 1920; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne."
- <sup>88</sup> *Michel*, gray and cream gouache on paper, monochrome effect, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, February 11, 1920. Title and date based on identification with item listed in "Mes Dessins en Allemagne." *Bihain*, gray and cream gouache on paper, monochrome effect, 14-3/4" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated February 13, 1920; title from "Mes dessins en Allemagne." Charlot's backings of both drawings, designed and executed by hand, were destroyed during a recent conservation.
- <sup>89</sup> "*Charlot Crapouillot*", pencil, ink, wash, 19 cm high X 12-1/2 cm wide, irregular. Greenhalgh 2014: 72 f., on the *crapouillot* with a photograph.
- <sup>90</sup> *Moi*, pencil and wash, 14-5/8" high X 10-1/8" wide, dated September 24, 1919; listed in "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" as "Moi. (aquarelle)." Also listed are: *Moi*, April 24, 1919; *Moi*, January 22, 1920; *Moi (encre)*, January 24, 1920; *Moi dessinant*, February 15, 1920. The *Self-Portrait, Cubist Style* is not listed, and Charlot might have made a mistake in the year while dating *Moi (encre)*. However, not all the large surviving drawings are listed in "Mes Dessins en Allemagne," and I have followed the date written on the work itself.

- <sup>91</sup> *La Virginité*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-5/8" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated September 23, 1919; "Mes dessins en Allemagne": "La Virginité (dessin rehaussé)." On that list, the date of the day is given as "2"; but the entry is after "18"; Charlot wrote the first digit but not the second. The title is written on the bodice of the figure. *La Luxure*, pencil and wash on paper, 14-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide, dated September 23, 1919; in "Mes dessins en Allemagne," the drawing is dated September 24; I have followed the date on the drawing itself. The title is written on the side of the pig.
- <sup>92</sup> The two earlier religious subjects listed in "Mes Dessins en Allemagne" are not available for study: *Christ*, marked "ss date," but listed between January 21 and 31, 1919; *St Maurice*, May 26, 1919.
- <sup>93</sup> On the verso of this drawing, Charlot doodled a large and a small pig with the labels "c'est une truie" 'it's a sow' and "un p[etit] porcelet" 'a little piglet.' The images are affectionate, in contrast to the pig on the recto, and Charlot was probably reminding himself of the unsymbolic pigs whose sex resulted naturally in maternity and offspring.
- <sup>94</sup> *L'aumône*, pencil, wash, and gouache on paper, 14-1/2" high X 10-1/4" wide; in "Mes dessins en Allemagne": "L'aumône (aquarelle et gouache)" is dated January 13, 1920.
- <sup>95</sup> *Stylized Heads*, pencil on paper, 5-7/8" wide X 3-3/4" wide, undated; probably late 1918 or early 1919.
- <sup>96</sup> *Two Hands* and *Stylized figure with his arm over his head*, pencil on paper, 11-1/2 cm X 14 cm.
- <sup>97</sup> *Four unicorns, four studies of hands*, 10" high X 8" wide, date: 1919 or 1920.
- <sup>98</sup> *Small Sketch Sheet*, 3-1/2" X 5-7/8", squared, recto: design for an ex libris with a dedication for J. V. Dulac; verso: *two stylized heads*. I have been unable to identify Dulac.
- <sup>99</sup> In the typescript of a blurb written for Morse 1976, Charlot wrote: "A Way of the Cross cut on *bois de fil* is a major work of his French period." Besides discussing the *Chemin* in his interviews with me, Charlot wrote an introduction for the 1977 edition. Morse 1976: 9–18; 1983: 2. The series is illustrated in Langner, Doescher, and Doescher 1991.
- <sup>100</sup> I believe Charlot made a mistake in our interview of November 6, 1970, when he said, "So the first planks, actually, were cut, I think, in Chaumontel, where one of my uncles had his summer house, and the last ones I brought all the way back from Germany." Compare his remark in Morse 1976: 9: "Quite a lot, if not all the wood, was cut in Germany." Charlot's memory was obviously vague on this point; I believe that he may have been confused by the memory of cutting of the title page at Chaumontel and doing the final cutting of the other blocks during the process of printing.
- <sup>101</sup> Plum January 25, 1918. "Concours de Chemin de Croix" n.d., is the official announcement. Charlot did not enter the contest, which had a deadline for sketches of late March 1918. Compare Morse numbers 521, 578–592.
- <sup>102</sup> E.g., Denis 1922: 209–212 (written in 1919). See also Brillant 1920: 307 ff.
- <sup>103</sup> A high-level contrast is the postwar Way of the Cross painted by Denis for his own chapel at Le Prieuré.
- <sup>104</sup> *Isaac allant au sacrifice*, pencil and wash, 6-1/2" high X 5-3/4" wide.
- <sup>105</sup> *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, pencil and wash, 10-3/4" high X 8-1/4" wide.

- <sup>106</sup> *St. Francis of Assisi*, pencil on paper, 9-1/2" high X 6-1/2" wide.
- <sup>107</sup> The painting is illustrated in *Feuer*, Year 1, Numbers 2/3, November–December 1919, facing page 212. Charlot's design is earlier, but he could have seen the original in Paris.
- <sup>108</sup> *Burial of Christ*, study for Morse number 25, pencil on paper, background colored purple, 3" high X 2-1/8" wide, 1918.
- <sup>109</sup> Charlot was unable to identify this sketch when he saw it in the early 1970s, "Jean Charlot's Notes on Early French Work": "looks like German drawings thought of doing woodcut of. Woman with Hat. No, because German = later. Don't know how got on it. Not contemporary with recto."
- <sup>110</sup> Details of this station resemble an 1820 bas-relief of a stone-throwing crowd by Charles-Marie-Émile Seurre (1798–1858), *Orestes and Pylades Wish to Immolate Helen* (Schwartz 2005: 190): the gestures of throwing, the man kneeling on the ground in the forefront of the group, and the protruding triangle from the right being met by a descending diagonal from the left. I do not know whether Charlot knew and used this work, whether the work was an unconscious memory, or whether Charlot arrived at a similar solution for the same subject.
- <sup>111</sup> Curiously, the "vertical white line on the cross near the right edge" (Morse 1976: 11), which was marked "à couvrir" 'to be covered' on a trial printing and was in fact blacked in the original edition, was left in the 1977 reedition of the *Chemin*. I reconstruct the original process thus: in the drawing, a vertical pencil line separates the cross from the black border of the print. Charlot cut this line into the block, but then decided to thin the border, leaving the white vertical line to the left of the new border. He then wrote "à courvrir," deciding to suppress the line and merge the black of the cross with that of the border. In the original edition, this was done, but the light lines indicating the top of the crosspiece remain as an indication of the original thickness of the border.
- <sup>112</sup> Charlot will use baldness to portray the evil Lamech in his later liturgical textile designs.
- <sup>113</sup> Charlot may have turned the figure fixing the nail to the cross in El Greco's *Disrobing of Christ*, 1577–1579, in the sacristy of the cathedral of Toledo.
- <sup>114</sup> Compare the poem *Seigneur voici venu le temps des sécheresses* of September 1919: "l'arc-en ciel brille hors les trombes du déluge" 'the rainbow glitters from out of the waterspouts of the flood,' which replaces the line "Espérons en l'arc en ciel issu du déluge" 'Let us hope in the rainbow emerging from the flood.'
- <sup>115</sup> A photocopy of Denis' catalogue was generously made for me by Agnès Delannoy of the Musée Départemental Maurice Denis, who stated that the X was "probablement" 'probably' made by Denis himself.
- <sup>116</sup> Interview November 6, 1970. In the JCC is an undated letter: "J'ai béni et indulgencé ce chapelet (500 jours par grain)—et le crucifix pour le chemin de la Croix" 'I have blessed and granted an indulgence to this rosary (five hundred days per bead)—and the crucifix for the Way of the Cross.' The signature is difficult to read but seems to be "L. h. Card. Metz." This might have been given for Charlot's *Chemin de Croix*.
- <sup>117</sup> Interview October 18, 1970. Compare Rosales 1999: 123, 131.



- <sup>118</sup> Charlot noted: “En train. Frankenthal–Bordeaux 9–19” ‘In the train. Frankenthal–Bordeaux September 1919.’ On another manuscript of the poem, he writes: “fait pendant le voyage Epstein Bordeaux” ‘made during the voyage Epstein–Bordeaux.’
- <sup>119</sup> Gros-Jean: *Merci, Maître, d’avoir permis que l’humble graine* (December 16, 1918); *Seigneur, à ma lèvre ce relent d’amertume* (December 1919); also the later *Christ, ce corps encor, ce coup des cors bramés* (April 14, 1923: *Toi, Jean Gros-Jean*). The last line of La Fontaine’s *La Laitière et le Pot au Lait*, Livre VIII, Fable X, is, “Je suis Gros-Jean comme avant.” Wandering Jew: *Juif Errant* (October 1919); *Maître, vous m’isiez hors des femmes d’Allemagne* (April 1, 1919); also the later *Seigneur, pourquoi m’avoir cousu ce cœur farouche* (January 11, 1922). Prodigal Son: Charlot’s poem on the subject, *L’Enfant Prodigue* (May 10, 1919), probably has a personal reference in view of the advice from the father on sexuality. Charlot’s feelings were common among artist veterans, Cork 1994: 281, 300.
- <sup>120</sup> Charlot kept the *Certificat de Cessation de Payement* ‘Certificate of Cessation of Payments’ that stated that he had been paid up to January 31, 1919. The following is based on Charlot’s letter to the French consul of November 30, 1964, and documents in the JCC.