

5.

RELIGION AND ROMANCE

5.1. ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN MEXICO

The 1920s were a period of conflict between the Mexican church and state, which escalated from cold to open war. The established colonial Roman Catholic church had been a primary supporter of the Spanish Imperial government and was thus a target for regulation after the Independence movement of 1810–1821. The nineteenth-century Laws of the Reform passed by Liberal governments severely restricted church rights and activities. These laws were applied variously over time, depending on the tendency of the ruling Federal or state government. During his long dictatorship, Porfirio Díaz declined to abrogate the laws but applied them lightly and even made occasional private and public gestures in support of the church. His wife donated a window to the French church in Mexico City, Notre-Dame de la Charité (Génin 1933: 426). The church experienced his rule as a time of comparative peace and reconstruction, and the hierarchy supported his generally right-wing politics (e.g., Chávez Sánchez 1998: XI, 5, 17, 53, 63–73). The church also continued to work to reestablish its status as the official church of Mexico, that is, its religious hegemony, in order to exclude from the country Protestants, Masons, spiritualists, neo-pagans, socialists, and the like.¹ At the same time, although the Mexican church was generally right-wing, it followed the teachings of Leo XIII's 1891 *Rerum Novarum* in reaching out to the workers, the peasants, and the poor; and continued such attempts into the 1920s, founding organizations that competed with those of the government.²

But the general rightist orientation of the church influenced its initial negative stance towards the Revolution and its later support of the counter-revolutionary Huerta. The church was thus perceived as anti-Revolution and attracted the hostility of revolutionaries, especially the Constitucionalistas, starting with Carranza and culminating in Calles. Indeed the church reentered politics more openly than before in order to take advantage of the disorder of the Revolution to ameliorate its position. In response, the revolutionary governments passed anti-church laws and moved to active persecution, especially under Calles, elected president in 1924.³ The reaction was the bloody Cristero revolt of 1926–1929 and a strong antagonism between Catholics and the government that continued into the 1940s.⁴

The historical result was a revived and general anti-clericalism in a population that was intensely devout.⁵ Such a situation was familiar to Charlot from France and fitted to a certain extent his own position. Indeed, he saw his anti-clerical and even communist colleagues as basically religious. He appreciated José Guadalupe Zuno, governor of Guadalajara, who persecuted the church.⁶ But the antagonisms between church and state were stronger in Mexico than in France, and the government position was enforced by legal and non-legal means. For instance, the public celebration of Mass was forbidden in 1926, although it was allowed in private homes the following year.⁷ Charlot told me how circumspect Mass-goers had to be: on Sunday morning, he would walk down a street and follow the furtive indications of men stationed at corners until he reached the place where the Mass would be said.

While at Chich'en Itza, with no opportunity to hear Mass because of the absence of priests,⁸ he would go off by himself to read the service of the day in his Missal: "lu messe dans la chapelle arrière des Monjas" 'read Mass in the chapel behind the Monjas' (February 29, 1927); "lu messe à Monjas" 'read Mass at the Monjas' (May 27, 1928). In fact, this was his practice in France and occasionally in Mexico when there was a regular officiant (e.g., Diary July 15, 1928). Reading the Mass is mentioned frequently in his diaries throughout these years, and Charlot found the practice satisfactory: "lu messe communion esprit près extase" 'read Mass, spiritual communion near ecstasy' (August 1, 1926); "lu messe – très bon" 'read Mass – very good' (January 23, 1927); "lu messe avec intensité" 'read Mass with intensity' (June 12, 1927); "lu messe pieusement" 'read Mass piously.'⁹ Such reading became part of Charlot's affective spirituality: "désire de lire la messe" 'desire to read the Mass' (September 2, 1928), although he took advantage of trips to Mexico and Mérida to go to Confession, Mass, and Communion. But his mother complained bitterly of the difficulty of attending Mass, which became one reason she was happy to move to the United States.

However, no Catholic could escape the atmosphere of violence. On November 23, 1927, while Charlot was viewing a painting by Alva de la Canal at the Russian consulate, he heard the shots that summarily executed the Jesuit Miguel Agustín Pro:

vu peinture Alba au consulat russe. Entendu fusillé. Vu passer les corps des gens du complot GRANDE TRISTESSE. (Diary November 23, 1927)

'saw painting by Alva at the Russian consulate. Heard shots. Saw the bodies of the conspiracy pass by. GREAT SADNESS.'

I was close at hand and heard the successive volleys that killed Father Pro and his followers. Then I watched the mounted police charging into the crowd of faithful who fought for a blessed touch of the freshly sealed coffins.

In the countryside, deprived of mass and denied their devotional images, peasants rose in arms. Cristeros they were called, followers of Christ. An Emiliano Zapata had once led these same men to victory, but Zapata was dead. Their rustic revolution, or rather revulsion, was brave and brutal and doomed. (Orozco 1974: 12)

Beyond official persecution, Catholics were always vulnerable to attacks by hostile particulars.¹⁰ The practice of Charlot's Catholicism was thus as dangerous as that of his modern muralism.

Fortunately, Mexico City was comparatively quiet while Charlot was living there, and he was in Chich'en Itza through much of the worst of the persecution and Cristero revolt (Meyer 1976: 72). Yucatán was greatly troubled only starting in 1931 after he had left (Chávez Sánchez 1998: 234 f., 238, 240, 261). Charlot's loyalties were certainly divided at this time, for he supported wholeheartedly the Revolution and even took the side of the Constitutionalist in the national struggles of the time. In a letter to Walter Pach of November 5, 1922, Charlot jokes: "Il me faut donc faire ce sacrifice en l'honneur du curé Hidalgo" 'So I must make this sacrifice in honor of Father Hidalgo,' invoking as a "saint" the

uncanonized, defrocked, revolutionary Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. At times, Charlot assumed an oddly detached view of the conflict, as Anita Brenner reported on July 22, 1926:

the organized religious movement of protest—300,000 strong. Charlot had already spoken to me of it—Said the Pope was going to put an interdict on Mexico. Churches solemnly closed, etc. A thing which has not been done since the Middle Ages. He himself, he said, was delighted, “because I will have a chance to see a beautiful ceremony, done once in hundreds of years!” (Glusker 2010: 208)

Charlot wrote informally but extensively about his religious beliefs, practices, and feelings in Mexico, as he did in France. Many documents record his religious development over the period. He starts using his Notebook C in 1918 and continues until 1923; he uses his Ludwigshafen Notebook from 1920 to 1925. He is also addressing religious subjects in his poems. His diaries, started in 1922, regularly note Mass, Communion, and Confession. For the first time on May 10, 1922, he encloses this information in a box and continues to do this sporadically through 1923 (e.g., 1922: June 13, 29, July 7, 12, 26). On January 23, 1924, he establishes a system with one box in the top left corner for religious records and another in the bottom right for artistic. That is, he was recording his religious life as carefully as his artistic. But no verbal records can cover an inner life, much less one as complicated as Charlot's. My discussion will consist of broad strokes.

In Volume 1, I have discussed at length Charlot's religiosity in France and indicated some of its later developments (Chapter 1, Sections 3.3, 3.7; Chapter 5, Section 5.3, 5.4; Chapter 7, Section 7.2). I will note here the salient factors that influenced his growth during his Mexican period. From his earliest childhood, Charlot was imbued with a sense of wonder before the beauty of nature, which he connected intimately with that of art. Indeed, as a young child, he invented a religion that consisted of his placing offerings in the hands of figures he drew. The art itself that he was exposed to—like the Mesoamerican collections at home and the Egyptian art at the Louvre—was most often an expression of religion. The variety of such art indicated that of the religions that inspired it. This childhood experience created Charlot's tolerance—or more correctly, appreciation—of the diversity of world views and beliefs. This was reinforced by having relatives that were Christian, Jewish, Bolshevik, and atheist. Charlot would absorb into his Christianity many of the truths he found in other traditions and cultures. For instance, in the twelfth station of his 1920 *Chemin de Croix*, he portrayed himself offering his physical heart to the crucified Jesus, joining the Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart with the Aztec sacrifice of the heart as the symbol of life itself. Aztec religion would help Charlot express the obsession with death found in his poems and experienced in World War I. Similarly, he would not restrict Christianity to his own denomination. He would also question the Christian emphasis on personal morality and suppression of sin as compared to positive community activities, asking rhetorically, “What has religion to do with morality?” But he always imposed a strict morality on himself.

Even as a child, Charlot felt his vocation as an artist, which was encouraged and supported by his family. He considered this vocation religious, with all its related responsibilities and rights: “que chacun prit sa croix et me suive : sa croix : particulière vocation” ‘that each person take up his cross and

follow me: his cross: particular vocation' (Diary September 4, 1925, on Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). The responsibilities included those to his religion and to his community. As the creator of his own works, Charlot had also the duty and the right of an artist to determine his own standards and resist external attempts to betray them, whether from schoolmasters or clerics. He also had to negotiate the relationship of the Christian virtues to his vocation. Personal humility had to be coordinated with artistic autonomy; sensuality and emotional control, with the appreciation and exploration of physical beauty: "mon talent...cause de ma faiblesse et de sa promesse" 'my talent...cause of my weakness and its promise' (Diary April 26, 1925). Sexuality was both a strong temptation and the power that revealed the interconnections of all things in the universe:

la sensibilité sexuelle, ou la sociale, ou la religieuse, qui seules peuvent l'amener à
coordonner ces objets entre eux avec une finalité définie (1924 Prologue)
'the sexual sensibility, or social, or religious, that alone can lead him to coordinate
these objects among themselves with a definitive finality.'

Thomas Aquinas identifies the general effulgence of being as the power of interconnection, but Charlot specifies it as sexuality. To understand that sexuality, Charlot reached back beyond Christianity to the myth of the androgyne who was divided into male and female. In *Unis, l'homme et la femme éclosent androgyne* of September 1922 (1920–1924 Civil), Charlot translated the myth as much as possible into Christian terms. In the *Dieu : Mythe* section of his 1923 *XX proses suivant la Psychoplastie de D. M. Rivera*, the myth is accorded more importance of its own:

et dans un ultime effort héroïque sépare
l'un sexe de l'autre sexe.
Voici l'androgyne ouvert, le miracle accompli.
Ses deux moitiés tombent comme une grenade éclatée.
Il y a un moment d'attente qui est le moment de Dieu,
Puis comme les tronçons du serpent qui, séparés, éternellement divers, se collent sans
s'unifier
cicatrisés se relèvent
l'homme et la femme.

and in a final, heroic effort separates itself
the one sex from the other.
Now is the androgyne open, the miracle accomplished.
Its two halves fall apart like an exploded grenade/pomegranate.
There is a moment of suspense which is the moment of God,
Then, like cut sections of a snake that, separated, eternally divers, cleave without
uniting,
raise themselves cicatrized
the man and the woman.

Sex was of major importance for Charlot's experience and thinking, but the Christianity he had learned reduced it to a secondary factor and temptation, one that influenced his view of religion:

Has visto el anuncio del libro de Krishnamurti que dice : "Como ser buenos siguiendo sus instintos. Como ser morales haciendo lo que quieren." Que lastima que no sea verdad porque estoy muy cansado de luchas y de luchitas. (JC to AB "Ya se acabo la season")

'Have you seen the announcement of the book of Krishnamurti that says: "How to be good following your instincts. How to be moral doing what you want." Too bad it isn't true because I am very tired of struggles big and small.'

In *XX proses*, he is finding a more adequate thought model, but only in Hawai'i, would he find a religion that was based on sensibilities and reached conclusions similar to his own.

Charlot's awe before the beauty of the universe led him to deemphasize the Christian teaching of the fall with the sin of Adam and Eve. The physical world is good and only human beings debase it by misuse. As God's creations, all things speak to us of His glory and our salvation:

Hay que tomar "things material" in its full sense: ["]Things created" como son objetos, animales (the attribute of simplicity in animals is for me one of the nearest exteriorisations of god)... (JC to AB February 2, 1925)

'It is necessary to take "things material" in its full sense: "Things created" as are objects, animals (the attribute of simplicity in animals is for me one of the nearest exteriorizations of god)...

Accordingly, mental prayer is easier when contemplating "lo creado" 'the created.' The artist, like the scientist, reveals God's message in his plan of the ordered universe. The order of true art reflects that of Creation:

I don't agree with that business of being free with nature. I think that nature gives us a model that is established; the very fact that it is there would ask of us a tremendous respect because what nature is there, just by its being, depends on all those many mysterious laws of growth and family resemblances, I was saying, that makes it dangerous for us to tamper with nature. Now that doesn't mean that our route has to be realistic in the sense that people use realism, but it means that we cannot use nature...I think that nature is a model and that in our art we don't have to copy nature because we could copy only the surface of nature. We have to act again certain laws which are similar to the laws with which nature creates. (Interview October 7, 1970)

Charlot expanded the mystical idea of the Unitive Vision from individual closeness to God to the closeness of all things among themselves and with God. As his confessor, Daniel Dever, stated after his death, Charlot saw how all things fitted together. Charlot's Christianity was more physical than the norm in the French Roman Catholicism of his youth.

In France, Charlot was also drawn to the mystical life, which the philosopher Jacques Maritain was promoting as open to all Christians, not just exceptional ones. The experiential aspect of religion was important to Charlot from his childhood. Charlot read the classic mystical authors, like John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, and Thérèse de Lisieux, as well as controversial ones like Anne Catherine Emmerich, and followed spiritual exercises of various sorts. Although he did experience religious emotions, his major tendencies reasserted themselves:

Well, I suppose there are all degrees. If a sort of meditative mood would be an experience, I suppose in prayer one gets into a meditative mood, but I was rather stupid about it. When I was again very young, maybe sixteen or so, I read a very big book which was based, I think, on Teresa of Avila, *The Castles of the Soul*. So that you got into the first castle, the second castle, the third castle, and so on, until the tiptop of mystical visions. And I would go through the first castle, and then after two weeks or so I was a little tired of it, and I decided I'd enter the second castle of the soul, and so on. Then, after I think four castles, I found it was all of my own doing, and that nothing specially happened to make me a better man, so that since then, I really worked out just with prayer and the regular run of devotions, rosary and so on, and devotion to the saints, and that has been sufficient for my sort of devotion. So I certainly cannot consider myself mystical in any way. If I had to describe my brand of religion, I would say that I'm a parishioner. (Interview October 10, 1970)

On another occasion, my father told me that he had moved from the first castle to the highest one only to find himself back in the world he had started from. Accordingly, in his depictions of the Holy Family, Charlot always focused on their ordinary humanity, their unremarkable fulfillment of their family duties. A salient example is Charlot's devotion to St. Joseph, an ordinary man without a vocation to celibacy, but caught in an extraordinary and—to the outside world—unmanly situation; he nevertheless fulfills his family duties, however incomprehensibly (Volume I, Chapter 7, Section 2). Charlot's mystical tendencies remained with him till the end of his life, drawing Indians and Pacific Islanders to him personally, and helping him, I believe, understand their religious cultures.

The connection between the physical and mystical is provided in Catholicism by the sacraments and liturgy. However, in Charlot's youth, the liturgy had lost most of its communitarian participation. The priest, his back to the congregation, recited the Mass in low tones while the lay people silently read their Missals or said their rosary. The emphasis was on the individual's relation to God as in mysticism. In Mexico, Charlot did continue to favor the same physical religious practices he had in France like Ash Wednesday (e.g., Diary February 25, 1925). Although feast days might include group activities like processions, which Charlot appreciated and depicted in Brittany, he could nowhere experience in France the vibrant and artistic devotions of the Mexican parish into which every member poured his or her energy. The villagers' direction of their own feast days agreed with Charlot's French anti-clericalism as did their localism with his Gallican sympathies. Moreover, Charlot's religion tended to social betterment. He learned from Léon Bloy a dislike of the rich and bourgeois and a championship of the poor. Charlot shared with many French Catholic intellectuals a conservative theology with a progressive social sense.

In Volume 1, I summed up Charlot's French religious period:

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. (Volume 1, Chapter 7, Section 7.2)

But at this time, Charlot's religiosity was not consistent. He could return to the standard Catholic devaluation of the physical below the spiritual. He used briefly the idea that the incarnation was an abasement:

Du degré d'abaissement dans l'Incarnation et dans l'Eucharistie. (1920–1925
Ludwigshafen: "Journal des Méditations," June 4, 1920)

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

Jésus et l'Église un corps total. L'Église visible c'est nous. Son humiliation dans ce corps malade.¹¹

'Jesus and the Church, a total body. The visible Church is us. His humiliation in a sick body.'

Mexican religious artistic influences began the moment Charlot disembarked at Veracruz, attended Mass in the cathedral, and watched the Indian priest elevate the host with his dark hands. Brown replaced white as the color of spirituality. Mexico would strengthen some strains of Charlot's Christianity and diminish or even eliminate others. Edward Weston also felt the intensity of individual and community devotion: "But I was often awed by the fervor, the agony, of the Indian man as he knelt with outstretched arms before his God" (Weston 1961: 176); "many holding lighted candles, hundreds of flickering candles lighting passionately devout faces—such faith!" (37).

Charlot's earliest religious practice in Mexico was continuous with his French. At Mass, he meditated on the Missal text and continued to record his meditations, which often followed the liturgical calendar.¹² He said the rosary as he did the rest of his life (Diary September 30, 1922). He continued reading the mystics he had discovered in France, like Anne Catherine Emmerich (May 6, 1924) and especially St. Thérèse of Lisieux (May 6, 1923), who was a prominent figure in his devotions (1923: May 6; 1924: January 21, 27, July 15), the subject of lectures he gave (1923: May 6, 9, 10, 11, 18; 1924: May 13), and even a topic of conversation with Nahui Olin (May 17, 1923). Charlot shared this devotion with his mother (December 25, 1928), who was calmed on her deathbed by a relic of the saint (January 13, 1929; also 16). Charlot felt "grande émotion" 'great emotion' on her canonization (May 17, 1925). As seen in Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 7, St. Thérèse influenced Charlot's thinking about art on one point:

What humble pride she may have felt in her artistic achievements cannot be shared by any conscientious art critics. Yet, the scrolls, and hearts, and lambs that she lovingly limned must have been pleasing to God...have we kept in the church a place for innocence in art as God has kept a place for His innocents in Heaven? (*AA I*: 255)

He would explain how da Vinci's "Annunciation" was "a prayer in paint" and how, in the Catholic devotion, "there is a little niche—not a big one—for sweetness and prettiness." (*Art: The Work of Jean Charlot* 1949)

In Mexico, Charlot also read M. J. Ribet's monumental study of mysticism, *La Mystique Divine* (1879/1883; Diary 1923: September 29, 30, October 5, 14). Charlot would never lose his interest in mysticism. Until the end of his life, he would talk about Teresa of Avila and, when he had cancer, created a statue of the vision of John of the Cross: crucified Christ flying over the world. Parenthetically, John may have interested Charlot also because he was inspired by Arabic street songs. In the early 1950s, he had me read Herbert Thurston's *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism* (1951) and discussed it with me several times. In the 1960s, my father borrowed my book of Mansur Al-Hallaj and, after reading in it, returned it with the words, "Your man certainly knows what he's talking about." Charlot would continue reading his favorite French authors, like Léon Bloy, and take up new authors, like Joseph Gratre (*Commentaires sur l'Évangile de saint Mathieu* [1863]; Diary July 16, 1922), and new subjects, like the Apocryphal Gospels (Diary March 23, 1924).

Charlot found many French Roman Catholics in Mexico, first and foremost, his own mother whose spirituality—expressed in her own notebooks—he admired. There were also a large expatriate community and many French priests and nuns, some of whom had come to Mexico to escape the anti-clerical government at home.¹³ Institutions with their own clerics were established for the foreign community, like the Iglesia Franco-Americana de México and the Colegio Franco-Inglés.¹⁴ The main church of the French community was Notre Dame de Lourdes, whose patriotic priests spread French culture as well as Catholicism.¹⁵ Siqueiros joked about Charlot's arguments for the compatibility of Catholicism and revolution:

These heretical ideas were often mixed with remorse and after signing the syndicate manifestoes Charlot went to –ion, in preference to the French Fathers of the Church of Lourdes.¹⁶

In Mexico City, Charlot found two lay organizations for Catholic youth. The Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française (ACJF) ‘Catholic Association of French Youth’ had been founded in 1886 in France as an extreme right-wing political group but was moving leftward under the influence of Leo XIII. Charlot knew his encyclical *Rerum Novarum* from France and was reading it in Mexico (Diary April 5, 1925). The Mexican counterpart, the Asociación Católica de la Juventud Mexicana (ACJM) had been founded in 1912 by the French expatriate priest Bernard Bergöen, adapting the model of the French organization to Mexico.¹⁷ Although Charlot lectured on Bloy at the ACJM, his diary references are to the French organization.¹⁸ On the evidence of his diary, the two organizations did not overlap in members or officers. All those Charlot mentions (Turin, Laval, LaSalle, Salles), including priests (Rougier, Lejeune, Élie, Cadart, Daumas, Hilliet), have French names and do not appear in the long rolls of the Mexican organization published by Facius.¹⁹ Moreover, Charlot’s brief descriptions of committee work on the organization’s statutes differ from the large conferences of the ACJM (e.g., Facius 1958: 242, 247). Charlot records no political activity of the ACJF, whose members were probably conforming to the prudent neutral position of foreigners in Mexico. The ACJM, like most Mexican Catholic student organizations, was extremely militant in the church-state conflicts and engaged in protests, demonstrations, and even armed resistance (Facius 1958: e.g., 179–188, 198, 240 f., 312–316, 328 ff.). Among its many martyrs, the ACJM counted Humberto Pro Juárez, brother of Miguel Agustín Pro, and José de León Toral, the assassin of President Obregón (Facius 1958: 240).

Charlot was an active member of the AJCF, reading the Gospel and other offices (Diary 1925: April 6, 10, 11), carrying the flag on the feast of Joan of Arc (May 13, 1923; May 11, 1924) and Christmas (December 25, 1924), taking part in processions (April 17, 1924; November 19, 1925; January 7, 1926), and instructing adults and catechumens.²⁰ The members of the AJCF gave talks or lectures to the group or its study circle (1922: September 8, October 22, December 1, 15; 1923: June 22,). Charlot’s friend Turin gave one on Pascal (September 28, 1923). Charlot spoke on Joseph Gratry’s *Commentaires sur l’Évangile de saint Mathieu* (July 16, 1922), on Léon Bloy to the AJCM (July 21, 1922), on Peter Chanel, the South Pacific missionary and martyr (March 28, 1924), a “conférence improvisée au AJC sur art égyptien” ‘improvised talk at the AJC on Egyptian art’ (May 2, 1924), religious art (August 1, 1924), Désiré Charnay (October 3, 1924), Abbot Suger (?), rebuilder of Saint Denis in Paris and art patron (1924: October 1, 10; 1925: March 19), and the pilgrimage to Chalma (February 6, 1925).²¹ Charlot was also elected to an AJC committee for the “révisions des statuts” ‘revisions of the statutes’ of the organization (August 18, 1922). This duty occupied many evenings,²² and Charlot complained of the lack of help, which convinced him to resign (1924: February 1, May 9). At the next election, J. Salles was elected president and Charlot secretary (July 27, 1924). As such, he remained on the committee (1924: July 30, August 29; 1925: March 4, 18). When he finally resigned as secretary, he was reinstated as “pro

secrétaire” ‘provisional secretary’ (July 15, 26, 1925)! He had clearly established himself in a leadership role. The AJCF also held more social occasions, like lunches and dinners (December 28, 1924; 1925: May 15, June 14).

The most prominent French Roman Catholic Charlot met in Mexico was the Marist Father Félix de Jesús Rougier (1859–1938). Rougier had originally intended to work as a missionary in Oceania, but health problems led to his being sent to Colombia and then to Mexico. The connection to Fiji of Rougier and his brother and fellow Marist Emmanuel Rougier (1864–1932) provides a curious coincidence with Charlot. Félix Rougier’s one theatre play was a life of the missionary-martyr Peter Chanel, whom Charlot depicted in his 1962 mural *Black Christ and Worshippers* in Naiserelagi, Fiji (Sicilia 2007: 587). In all likelihood Rougier interested Charlot in the saint, and Charlot gave a lecture to the ACJM—Asociación Católica de la Juventud Mexicana—on Chanel on March 28, 1924, after one about the Oceanic mission on January 4, 1924 (Diary). Emmanuel had an unusual career in Fiji, building an enormous church with stained glass windows imported from France and entering into conflicts with the hierarchy.²³ Moving to Tahiti, he became a successful entrepreneur while remaining a priest, earning the appellation “the millionaire priest.” He had a scholarly interest in Oceanic cultures and history, publishing a Fijian dictionary and a book of myths and legends, now lost. In Tahiti, he helped found the Société des Études Océaniques and was its first president (Boulagnon 2002: 170–174).

Charismatic, immensely active as a pastor, confessor, spiritual advisor, and organizer, Félix Rougier founded no fewer than four religious orders in Mexico, dealing constantly with the hierarchy, detractors, and even the Mexican government: the Congregation of the Holy Ghost Missionaries (1914); the Daughters of the Holy Ghost for the education of youth (1924); the Guadalupe Missionaries of the Holy Ghost for the Indians and the poor (1930); and the Oblates of Jesus the Priest for priestly formation and education (1937). He was charged several times with the pastoral care of the European communities in Mexico. Rougier was declared a Venerable Servant of God in 2000, the first stage in the process of beatification.

In 1902, a decisive event in Rougier’s life, he met the mystic Concepción Cabrera de Armida (1862–1937), whose revelations he accepted as communications from Jesus and Mary. Cabrera, often called Concha, was a widow with eight children, one of whom died young (Sicilia 2007: 246–249, 286–289). She encouraged Rougier, who became her confessor, and they formed an effective if controversial and sometimes divided team (Sicilia 2007: 21–33, 262–281, 442 f.). She herself wrote voluminously and founded five apostolates, organizations for religious work. Cabrera was declared Venerable in 1999. Cabrera’s life was an example of the Mexican Church’s promotion at that time of women’s piety and religious activism. I have found no evidence that Charlot ever met Cabrera, although Rougier did introduce him to a mystical nun (Diary: February 9, 1925).

Charlot was impressed by Rougier:

It has been my privilege to know two saints, to use the word in its broader meaning, one of which at least, the founder of an order, stands a good chance of being canonized. (Summer 1951 Apologia)

I was tempted, in fact, you probably know that, to get into a monkish career. I was approached, in fact, by a Father Rougier, who had founded an order. He was in Mexico, incidentally, lived in, I think it was in Coyoacán that he had his motherhouse. And his brother was also a Rougier and also a monk, was in Fiji at the time, was a missionary in Fiji, and published a book of, well, folk stories in the Fijian language on the mission press, just to show you that those people were unusually intellectual besides being a founder of orders. (Interview October 10, 1970)

Charlot had much in common with Rougier. They were both patriotically French, but loved Mexico as much or more (Sicilia 2007: 509). They both spoke Mexican Spanish with a French accent (500). They were both drawn to mysticism and liturgy (255) and had both been reared in the distinctive French Catholicism of their time, a religiosity the older Rougier largely maintained while the younger Charlot was developing further under Mexican influences. A comparison of the two highlights Charlot's differences with the common spirituality of his youth.

French Catholicism emphasized devotion to Mary, part of a general trend to balance the maleness of the hierarchy with the femaleness of mystical emotion. A number of Marian apparitions and women mystics nourished this trend. Rougier was an extreme Marian (e.g., Sicilia 2007: 26–29, 345 f., 627 f.). Coming to Mexico in 1901, he was drawn to Our Lady of Guadalupe and thereafter practiced devotions to both Mexican and French manifestations of the Virgin: Our Lady of Lourdes, the Virgin of La Salette, la Virgen de los Remedios, and an unofficially recognized Mexican apparition (250 f., 376, 429 f., 558). Rougier enlisted women to help in his work, including the wife of Porfirio Díaz (256–259, 452 f.). Rougier connected Concha to Mary, a connection the mystic herself encouraged (28, 291). Although a mother of eight children, she felt Jesus had told her that he considered her a virgin because of her repugnance for the physical act of sex and her refusal to sleep through the night beside her husband (28, 246 f., 268 f.). Rougier was devoted to Concha as virgin and mother.

Charlot wrote a number of meditations on Mary in his French period and early in Mexico, which show that he had the usual French Marian emphasis and had studied the works of mystics like Saint Hildegarde and Anne Catherine Emmerich.²⁴ These writings provide a baseline for his Mexican development: rather than separating and exalting Mary as an individual, he placed her in his thinking and art solidly within her extended and nuclear family: with Ann her mother, Joachim her father, Elizabeth and Zachariah her older relatives, Joseph her husband, and Jesus, her child (1958 *Mary and Art*). An early indication of this tendency is a meditation in the Ludwigshafen Notebook of around 1920:

St^e Anne patronne de ménage

St^e Anne—son rapport avec les devoirs d'état—soins et enfants—la porte d'Or.²⁵

Saint Ann, patron saint of the household

Saint Ann—her connection to the duties of her state of life—household duties and children—the Golden Gate' [where she met her future husband]

This family emphasis is central to his life and work, as seen in Volume 1 and in Charlot's unpublished 1958 lecture series *Mary and Art*. Similarly, rather than emphasizing her singularity—like virginity—he connected her as closely as possible to the normal experience of women, like sorrow at a son's death. In this, he came into a rare conflict with a dogma, one he had professed earlier: the perpetual virginity of Mary, according to which she was a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus. Arguing against this idea with the conservative theologian Frank Sheed, Charlot asked, "What of the women who take comfort in childbirth from the thought that Mary suffered the same pains?" Similarly, Charlot shared with Rougier the strong French devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which he used in the art of his French period, but he did not emphasize the added devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary (Sicilia 2007: 339–345, 607).

A major difference between Charlot and Rougier was the latter's narrow definition of the Church in the teaching "outside the Church there is no salvation." Rougier was a Eurocentric Romanist with little or no openness to any form of Church membership than the official one (Sicilia 2007: 167). Charlot's view was unusually broad even for post-Vatican II discussions: he believed in holy pagans (Daniélou 1957), pagan gods as God's servants, the importance of their rituals, and so on. All religious phenomena—as indeed all things—had a positive place in God's plan. As a result, Charlot and Rougier differed in their attitudes towards native spirituality and its relation to Christianity. Rougier was familiar with native religious experiences, as seen in Charlot's 1923 report, "Une Histoire du Père Rougier" in the Ludwigshafen Notebook: in Colombia, a young man, interpreted as an angel, appeared repeatedly to a young Indian woman to help her become a nun against family opposition. These apparitions led to the consecration of an altar to the angels, which became a popular devotion with the people. That is, an at least partially unorthodox experience was absorbed into an orthodox devotion. Charlot tended to move in the opposite direction: absorbing positive elements into Christianity in order to enlarge it. Rougier, like most Catholics, considered religions to be opposed. He attributed a special antagonism to the Jews, crediting *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the anti-Semitic writings of Henry Ford.²⁶ An impolitic expression of this oppositional view was Emmanuel Rougier's decoration of his church in Fiji with windows dedicated to Christians eaten by cannibals (Sicilia 2007: 361).

The above differences rested partially on opposite reactions to people of color. As seen above, on arriving in Veracruz, Charlot was deeply moved by the sight of a dark-skinned priest celebrating Mass. Rougier was repelled on arriving in Guadalupe: "todos son negros o mulatos!" 'they're all negroes or mulattos' (Sicilia 2007: 163). With only six percent of the population white, Rougier could complain about both the colors and the bad French:

Toda esa gente, venida de África, de China, de Amán, de la India, se fundió en una sola raza fea que habla el francés a lo negro, quiero decir, a lo diablo...²⁷
'All this people—come from Africa, China, Amman, and India—fused into a single ugly race that speaks a French *à la negro, à la devil*...'

Such prejudice is connected to a patronizing view of non-European peoples. Thus Rougier, a Fascist sympathizer, supported Mussolini and his invasion of Abyssinia as good for the natives themselves (Sicilia 2007: 167). Similarly, his concern for the poor and the Indians was expressed in nineteenth-century

paternalizing charity, like that of Charlot's relative Léon Harmel in France, rather than in empowering political change.

Despite these differences, Charlot greatly respected Rougier and used him occasionally as a confessor and advisor.²⁸ Their first meeting was probably the one at the Asociación Católica de la Juventud Mexicana recorded in Charlot's diary of April 6, 1923: "P. Rougier nous raconte à l'AJC de fort belle histoire" 'Fr. Rougier meets us at the AJC, a very beautiful story,' perhaps the one about the angel mentioned above. On May 10, Rougier wrote Charlot:

+

Par l'amour et la Douleur !

Jeudi 10 mai 1923

J espère beaucoup vous voir pour une "affaire."

Pouvez-vous venir bientôt ?

Quand ?

Pouvez-vous me [illisible] par la 33 Ericson (Tlalpan.) ?

Bien affectment

Félix Rougier.

'By love and Suffering !

Thursday, May 10, 1923

I very much hope to see you for a little "bit of business."

Could you come soon?

When?

Could you [send] it to me at the 33 Ericson (Tlalpan)?

Very affectionately,

Félix Rougier.'

Rougier had a religious house and novitiate program in a house called La Fama in the village of Tlalpan, which Charlot misspells Tlalpam (Sicilia 2007: 492 f., 529, 531, 616). On Sunday, May 13, after carrying the flag at the feast of Joan of Arc, Charlot records in his diary:

à Tlalpam vu père Rougier
je crois qu'il me veut pour son institut
(que la volonté de Dieu soit faite.)
'to Tlalpam. saw Father Rougier
I think he wants me for his institute
(God's will be done.)'

Rougier was always recruiting novices for his foundations (Sicilia 2007: 480).

Charlot became a visitor at Tlalpan, both on his own initiative and when invited by Rougier.²⁹ Rougier invited Charlot to make his Holy Week retreat at Tlalpan (Diary April 28, 1924), which was a welcome relief from his turbulent life of the time:

arrivé à Tlalpam par train 5 h. étudié toute la journée dans le jardin de roses...étude messe communion (Diary April 29, 1924)
'arrived at Tlalpam by train at 5:00 pm. studied all day in the rose garden...study Mass Communion.'
Tlalpam. étudié toute la journée procession de Marie. résolutions... messe communion étude. résolutions (April 30, 1924)
'Tlalpam. studied all day procession of Mary. resolutions...Mass, Communion, study. resolutions'

Charlot continued to find Tlalpan conducive to prayer and spiritual examination:

grande plénitude spirituelle (March 26, 1925)
'great spiritual plenitude'
très complexe prière à Tlalpam... je affirme résolution (Diary: September 28, 1925)
'very complex prayer at 'Tlalpam...I affirm resolution'
près lac prière Tlalp (November 10, 1925)
'near lake prayer Tlalp'

Charlot felt the attraction of a priestly vocation, which accorded with his view of himself as an artist: "Peintre, c'est comme moine ou prêtre" 'Painter, it is like a monk or priest' (1920–1924 Civil: "*Qu'est ce que je vais devenir*" [February 2, 1922]). But a conflict soon arose with his artistic vocation. On September 26, 1923, "le père Rougier vient me chercher pour dîner avec lui" 'Father Rougier seeks me out to have dinner with him.' In the course of the meal, Rougier asked a question that Charlot recorded carefully in his diary, enclosing it in quotation marks: "Est-ce que vous allez faire de la peinture toute votre vie ?" 'Are you going to do painting all your life?' Charlot seems to have been set back by the question. The next time he visited Tlalpan, November 21, 1923, he recorded that he felt uncomfortable and did not see Rougier. Charlot felt that Rougier's depreciation of his work was connected to his spiritualist view of Christianity:

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. That, of course, can be done. I suppose you see those paintings of monks with a skull in their hands and realizing that the world is passing and so on. But my own business as an artist was with the world, with the passing world, if you want, but I had to adhere to it and give it a little bit of eternity, perhaps, through my art. 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. I was tempted, in fact, you probably know that, to get into a monkish career. (Interview October 10, 1970)

Charlot once told me that Rougier also wanted him to abase his art to be more agreeable to the average person, but my father did not remember this when I mentioned it to him. The dangers for an artist-monk were real. When the Jan Verkade became a monk at Beuron, he was ordered to paint only in the monastery style and to destroy a more personal painting (Humbert 1954: 59). Charlot would continue to be attracted by "a monkish career." On November 22, 1926, Anita Brenner reported that Charlot talked about "a new order he might some day join—monks—etc. When speaking of these things he has a strange brilliancy in his eyes, and is very happy" (Glusker 2010: 290). Brenner's description suggests that one motive for considering a monkish vocation was Charlot's general *tristesse* 'sadness' or continuing depression at the time. Some three years later, on August 19, 1929, she wrote:

So that now his mind is almost crystallized the notion of joining the order he has long thought of. The thing that keeps him is that he is not certain he has a vocation, but might be going simply as an escape...the final test will be whether or not he makes a go of the painting, in the worldly social sense. If he finds he has no "role" as a painter, his "role" as an archaeologist won't hold him, I think. Hardly anything I can imagine would. And he would disappear, just as if he died. It gives me a very queer feeling. (Glusker 2010: 720)

As late as 1939, Carlos Mérida was surprised when he heard of Charlot's marriage to Zohmah Day because he had been convinced that Charlot would one day become a monk.³⁰ Baciú reports:

Carlos Mérida, contó, medio en broma, medio en serio, que en su juventud mexicana, Charlot tenía un comportamiento tan ensimismado y retraído, que sus compañeros

creían que iba a hacerse monje. Por esto, la noticia de su próximo matrimonio con la joven Zohmah Day, los había cogido de sorpresa. (1982: 9)

‘Carlos Mérida said—half in jest, half seriously—that in his Mexican youth, Charlot had such an absorbed and withdrawn comportsment that his companions believed he was going to make himself a monk. Because of this, the news of his approaching marriage with the young Zohmah Day caught them by surprise.’

Ultimately Charlot would remain an artist exploring a physical version of Christianity, although mysticism would always be a part of his own religion and of his understanding of others.³¹ At low points of his life, Charlot could speak the spiritualist language of his early religious instruction. For instance, when his mural hopes had faded, he wrote Anita Brenner:

Sabes el amor que tengo a la pintura que es socialmente toda mi vida. Bueno, pues a la mas minima necesidad religiosa yo dejaria la pintura y basta. (JC to AB February 2, 1925)

‘You know the love I have for painting, which is socially my whole life. Even so, give the least religious necessity I would abandon painting and that would be it.’

As far as I know, the only other time he expressed himself thus was in the early 1950s, when he could not find financial support to leave teaching and devote himself solely to the painting he wanted to do.

The schismatic Mexican Catholic Apostolic Church had been founded by the government in February 1925 as a short-lived rival to the Roman Catholic.³² Charlot would have avoided it, but a reporter visited its El Templo de Corpus Christi in the Avenida Juárez in June 1925 and reported seeing “una manta en la que el pintor Jean Charlot dio algunos brochazos” ‘a mantle on which the painter Jean Charlot had made some brushstrokes’ (Ramírez Rancaño 2006: 165). This is the only evidence of an artwork by Charlot being used in a Mexican church. He does mention a possible commission in his diary of January 18, 1925: “vu père Roustan pour peinture église” ‘saw Father Roustan for a church painting.’ He also notes in his diary of November 19, 1925: “reçu proposition de S Antonio pour peindre mur de 280 m² mais Diego la prit” ‘received proposition of San Antonio to paint wall of 280 square meters, but Diego took it.’ Rivera did not, however, produce the painting. Individual priests, however, could interest themselves in Charlot’s work (Diary July 28, 1924). As far as I know, Charlot did not speak badly of the Mexican church and its clergy. I have not found evidence of the Mexican church’s attitude towards him.

From his landing in Veracruz, Charlot was also attending Mexican churches and ceremonies —“Messe au village indien avec Luciana, Ribera, Leal” ‘Mass in Indian village with Luciana, Rivera, Leal’ (Diary May 28, 1922)—and participating in Mexican devotions: “pour Amecameca. visité la pèlerinage de Sacro-Monte. Ch de +” ‘to Amecameca. visited the pilgrimage of Sacromonte. Way of the Cross’ (Diary May 5, 1923); la Virgen de los Remedios (Diary September 8, 1923; September 7, 1924); the Christmas practice Las Posadas (Diary December 22, 1924); and “las 4 Apariciones de la Virgen à l’Hidalgo” ‘the four apparitions of the Virgin to Hidalgo’ (Diary December 12, 1924), about which I have found no information.

Charlot's later description of experiencing Mexican Catholicism reveals that it was equally personal and intense as that of discovering Mexico as a whole, which he described in his earliest articles:

my Parisian prayers were tintured with a cold and clear investigation not unlike that attendant on scientific research.- The brain seemed the best instrument of prayer.

(Summer 1951 Apologia)

the Mexican church offers a bedlam of shapes and colors, addresses itself to the bowels rather than to the head.

The priest in his pulpit denouncing both himself and his herd as sinners arouses a passion for God that warms the same veins and accelerates the same heartbeats as does physical covetousness.

Contrasted as this national brand of church was to the French, I did not feel an incompatibility between them. Rather did this operation of the affective will complete the operations of reason. Part of the magic was due to plastic facts. How could a painter's eye resist the sight of a varicolored clergy whose pigmentation ran from the pink of the Spanish hidalgo to the green of the Tarahumara, passing by all shades of reds, coppers, and bronzes. A high mass with those metallic faces and hands emerging from the gold and silver of surplices could silence in its statuesque plastic whatever scruples against faith would arise in the artist. A sermon delivered by Indian lips as sharp and as defined as Egyptian sculpture edified through the eye as much as through the ear.

To the young-soldier just come back from the wars, the Mexican church was also an answer to questions raised by violent death and physical sufferings. Here perhaps a French outlook, in its serene insistency on the metaphysical, would have proved insufficient. A French faith was hard put to reconcile, otherwise than in a syllogism, spiritual goods and the sight of those men, bloated, retching, dying, after a gas attack, this experience of maneuverings and of calculations to send a shell to explode where it could wreck more living flesh.- The good Mexican martyrs pictured in churches, beheaded, disemboweled, or crushed, were a comforting parallel to this still vivid experience. The physical descriptions of flames and worms in Purgatory and in Hell made by comparison seem casual the intermittent hardships one had just passed through.

As a painter, to whom all things in both the inner and outer world come to be figured in physical, paintable terms, the Mexican devotions, with their kind of animal insistency on tactile things, dovetailed to perfection with my craft.

Charlot also enjoyed the characteristically Mexican humor of Mexican Christianity:

Coming from the generic to the particular, it is good to know of a few unpublished and humorous miracles, as of the angel who gave a holy nun a message to be relayed to her bishop, all the while mimicking the His Grace's voice and delivery, which was from the nose and loud. That unitive vision does not destroy such tomboy

characteristics, makes somehow paradise more appetizing a place than if it was, as some dream it, to be a place full of milquetoasts and whitewashed pharisees.
(Summer 1951 Apologia)

Charlot's most important experiences were those at Luz's village of Milpa Alta and on the pilgrimage of Chalma. According to his diary, Charlot first visited Milpa Alta on May 28, 1922, where he attended "Messe au village indien" 'Mass at Indian village.' He records several other visits (Diary 1925: August 19, September 21, 22, 23) and made the Chalma pilgrimage on January 28, 1925, in which Indians stream toward the site along Precolumbian paths.

At the very least, Indian religion and Christianity could be compared through features like holy water: "Most of those nudes are tied up with things I saw when I went on the pilgrimage to Chalma. The stream there is a little big like Lourdes—there is certain good luck having to do with the water" (M178). But the encounter of Indian religion and Christianity had developed much further in Mexico. At the base of Charlot's experiences was the religion of the people, a syncretism of Christianity and indigenous religion, created through the Mexican Indians genius for integrating disparate elements into their cultures.³³ Milpa Alta had been a cult center; its Náhuatl name means "Altar surrounded by mountains" (Zantwijk 1960: 2--6, 24). For the Indians as for Charlot, art was inspired by religion and was used in religious observance. Charlot viewed his artistic vocation in the same way:

deriving, he explains, his 'artistic motivation from a concern with religion as a force, and art'—which he considers as one of the few essentials of human nature—"as a means." (Reed 1960: 74)

Milpa Alta appeared especially religious, even when compared with other Indian villages:

se llevan a cabo celebraciones religiosas especiales y fiestas de los pueblos y barrios con marcados rasgos comunitarios. Es en las fiestas donde la personalidad e identidad de los milpaltenses se manifiesta con toda su fuerza creativa y colectiva... algunas estimaciones apuntan que al año se celebran "720 fiestas paganas y religiosas". (Farfán Caudillo 2008: 219)

'special religious celebrations and fiestas of the villages and neighborhoods with marked communitarian traits are performed. It is in the fiestas that the personality and identity of the Milpa Alta people manifests itself with all its creative and collective force...

'some estimates suggest that per year "720 pagan and religious fiestas" are celebrated.'

Such fiestas are accompanied by special local foods and much traditional music and dance (Farfán Caudillo 2008: 219 f.). Charlot listed dances he watched at feasts.

The experience of an intense, communal religiosity expressed through arts impressed Charlot as can be seen in the many life-long themes it inspired, discussed above. Indeed, Charlot was reminded of the Medieval religious life of the people that he had admired in France: "magnifique comme les

mystères” ‘magnificent like the mystery plays’ (Diary January 5, 1925). Charlot’s 1946 Náhuatl play *Mowentihke Chalman/Los Peregrinos de Chalma* is cited as a description of the Chalma pilgrimage: “Esa masiva experiencia de la religiosidad” ‘This massive experience of religiosity’ (Farfán Caudillo 2008: 219). Charlot described an experience that inspired his subject Festival Chalma Procession:

With Luciana, we went for example to Indian pilgrimages, which were really pagan business and not white man’s business or tourist business. This is a procession in Chalma. The Virgin, the statue of the Virgin with the seven swords in her heart, is being carried along on the shoulders of the people. You can see, of course, the Veronica Kerchief carried by an old gentleman in front, and so on and so forth. There was a terrific intensity in the devotion of those people, and they were so intent that that particular procession caught me between two walls in a narrow alley, and I thought I was going to be flattened as a pancake. Much as I tried to press against the wall, I was somewhat bruised. So I tried to celebrate such a happening with this picture. (March 8, 1972)

Rome wisely decrees that local customs, however peculiar, should be respected if their end be devotional. Thus in the pilgrimage of Chalma after the mass confessions and communions, the priest retires, leaving the nave in possession of the “Arab” dancers, who could be described by the tourist, if there were any there, as huge and ugly devils, masked and horned. They perform a noisy and sweaty dance in front of the miraculous crucifix that seals and entombs in his own cave Tezozomoc, Lord of the Caves, a mighty daemon himself that was addicted, before he was put in leash, to child sacrifices.- Such physical prayer, well able to infuriate or petrify a cool head, gibes well with the artist, who receives and gives through his senses, whose working at his art would remain futile if it was less than a manual prayer; his hands performing as it were the work of the Lord, as do here the Indian legs and feet. (Summer 1951 Apologia)

Charlot would experience the same religious and artistic stimulus in Hawai‘i. He thrived where Christianity was enriched by a living indigenous religion expressed through art. His confessor, Daniel Dever, said that a Charlot painting was a prayer on the wall.

Luz herself maintained some common syncretic beliefs and practices that Charlot depicted. About the lithograph *La Nana* (M82) of “Luz, child, and toy,” he explained: “They made those little toys of straw, like a cat’s cradle. There is something of a mixture of Christian and pagan in it.” She recounted an experience of “el demonio” she had had when young (Jiménez, Horcasitas, and O. de Ford 1979: 52 f.). Luz’s *cuENTOS* ‘tales’ themselves are permeated by native religion.³⁴ Luz also had to confront some village elders’ desire to sacrifice Concha.³⁵

But it was Luz’s mother, Juana Manuela, who was truly knowledgeable about Aztec religion and who shared her knowledge with Charlot.³⁶ After the destruction of the traditional Aztec educational

institutions, women had enhanced their already high traditional station by becoming educators and primary cultural transmitters (Zantwijk 1960: V, 17, 30 f., 43 f., 73 f., 69, 81 f.). Jesús Villanueva Hernández, Luz's grandson and historian of his family and Milpa Alta, emailed me in 2007:

En cuanto a mi bisabuela Juana Manuela, sí tenía conocimiento de medicina herbolaria y hasta de la antigua cultura prehispánica náhuatl, según Van Zantwijk, Juana Manuela le relató un canto a Huitzilopochtli, que él conservó y hace unos meses me envió copia del documento.

‘As to my great-grandmother Juana Manuela, yes, she did have knowledge of herbal medicine and even of the antique prehispanic Náhual culture. According to Van Zantwijk, Juana Manuela related to him a chant of Huitzilopochtli, which he kept and a few months ago sent me a copy of the document.’

Brenner knew Juana Manuela as well and described a conversation with her:

Luz's mother came to see me. Talked a good deal and rather splendidly. How we had to suffer something always. In the revolution it was the Federales and now the stopping of religion. (Glusker 2010: 293)

Juana Manuela argued strongly against surrendering Concha to *Chingretería* “Term used by the Nahuatl people for practices to appease the gods” (Glusker 2010: 801). Brenner reports a conversation with her in the *temascal*:

Luz's mother said, pointing to a baby that they had there—a poor, tiny little thing —“Luz wants to take it to the Chingretería...and she wants to take Conchita, too. I tell her that if she wants to take [someone] to Chingretería, why doesn't she take herself, since she had lived enough...If she takes Conchita, I shall go and snatch it away...Let Luz die if she wants to. But I've had enough trouble with Conchita and I don't see why it should now come to nothing... (Glusker 2010: 365)

Charlot's subject *Dance at Dawn* was inspired by seeing Juana Manuela dancing with another of her granddaughters as the sun rose: “It is Luz's mother, age about ninety, and one of the grandchildren. It's a sort of private ritual. There's no real explanation” (M111). Knowledgeable and strong, Juana Manuela was the second of a series of older women who were important for Charlot's religious understanding and development: Mademoiselle Marchais in France, Agnes Meyer in the United States, Jennie Wilson in Hawai'i, and Mrs. Gupta in India.³⁷ In Mexico and Hawai'i, Charlot recognized women as the primary modern transmitters of traditional culture.

Charlot never described to me what Juana Manuela had taught him, but he intimated that it was considerable. His positive and respectful attitude towards Indian and indigenous religion—at times evident already in France—must have been fortified. The difference between his attitude and that of a conservative Catholicism, like Rougier's, was clear in his 1930–1931 collaboration with Paul Claudel, in which he tried to imbue the poet with a greater appreciation of the Aztec gods whom Charlot considered “relatives”.³⁸ I never asked my father what he thought about the Aztec gods, but he did consider the

Hawaiian ones to be real spirits like the angels of Christianity and joked that God had sent his angels to provide for the Hawaiians until the French Catholic missionaries could arrive (John Charlot 2006 Classical Hawaiian: 65, 67, 77 f.). He believed that Hawaiian religious experiences were real and experienced at least two himself (John Charlot 2006 Classical Hawaiian: 66, 78). I never asked him whether he had experienced Aztec ones. However, he did record a religious experience unconnected to syncretic Christianity: the discovery of an altar treasure in the “Buried Temple” inside the Temple of the Warriors at Chich’*en Itza*, a disc with a mosaic plaque contained in a stone jar:

transport du bijou dans l’urne bâton sur épaules Earl et Gustav je tiens à côté. quand on sort urne de la terre sens force spirituelle [pas forcément mauvaise] jarre approche relique. comme si je sentais l’importance du côté du temple son vrai noyau.³⁹
‘transport of the jewel in the urn, rod on the shoulders [of] Earl and Gustav I hold the side. when they take the urn from the earth, feel a spiritual force [not necessarily bad] jar approximating relic as if I felt the importance of the side of the temple, its true nucleus.’

The local workers stated that the disc was for magic or “cristal-gazing,” but Charlot thought it was a relic of the priest for whom the temple was built (JC to AB “You are so silent”).

Native peoples often notice when foreigners respond to their religion. Basically, Charlot thought about native religions as natives would, all the while feeling that they had a place in God’s total plan. This attitude facilitated his communication with and understanding of the native peoples he worked with. For instance, he was one of the few foreigners he knew who had been invited to participate in a Maya ritual.⁴⁰

Charlot was progressing from a conventional Roman Catholic attitude expressed in his poem *Je te veux chanter Marie* of October 9, 1919, an imitation of a folk piece, describing the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt:

Dedans l’Egypte ils arrivent :
C’est un grand désert où vivent
Les démons qu’on nomme dieux
comme chacals, crocodiles
Qui sont d’aspect odieux
Et de langue insidieux
Quant la famille débile
Aperçoivent, les démons
Fracassés, roulent des monts (*Le Manuscrit Brun*)
‘They arrive in Egypt:
It’s a huge desert in which live
The demons they call gods,
such as jackals, crocodiles

of odious aspect
and insidious tongue,
As soon as they see the weak family,
they roll shattered from their mountains.’

In Mexico, inspired by the Chalma pilgrimage, the Flight into Egypt became one of Charlot’s regular themes, in which the gods of Egypt were given a positive role:

Perhaps my special interest in the theme has to do with the relationship between pagans and Christians, the Holy Family forced to flee from their own race and country being hospitably received by pagans in a country most famed for its many ‘idols’. (1976 Flight into Egypt)

In France, Charlot had shown no particular devotion to the Marian apparitions of Lourdes and La Salette. But in Mexico, he became strongly interested in those of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Indian Juan Diego, which resulted in an image of her clothed as an Aztec princess on a *tilma* ‘leaf coat,’ a center of devotion considered miraculous in its origin and preservation on such a perishable material.⁴¹ As an art historian, Charlot judged that there was no artist at the time in Mexico who could have painted the image and that *Guadalupe*—the name of a Marian shrine in Spain—was a misunderstanding of the Náhuatl for “She who treads on the snake” (vs. Nebel 1992: 97). My sister Ann remembers his telling her that he had been allowed to examine the *tilma*:

I remember so clearly. Must have been in a trip home from college. Papa was well, and we spoke of Our Lady of Guadalupe that he was so devoted to. That he as an artist and other men in other scientific professions were able to examine at close touch the mantle. Must have been before he married mama. And there was no way it could be faked. Papa spoke with such assuredness that I did not doubt what he told me. And we never spoke of it again. Why he was there, the reason for such close scrutiny, I do not know. (email March 31, 2015)

Charlot started to collect Náhuatl sources on the apparitions and planned to translate them:

I remembered from the coming of Cook we have in the case of the so-called discovery here an important body of works that give the other side, the other image. Now I had worked also on similar subjects with Mexico for a while. I wanted to translate directly from the Náhuatl texts, from the Indian text, one of the earlier reports we have, at least of the sixteenth century, from the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe. And towards that, towards the Virgin of Guadalupe, I had gathered together whatever published texts there were. And there are some curious things about the verbal tradition. For example, there was a most important body of texts on that apparition which is dated 1530, ’31, was gathered together by a commission that was put together in 1660, that is, a hundred and thirty years later. And the people who want to debunk, we could say, the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe have had

their laugh about the change in time of a hundred and thirty years between the fact and the gathering together of what you could call ocular descriptions by witnesses. Then I remember that in my own case, I remember that when I was quite young, now, one of my first portraits was of a woman who remembered the coming of the official triumphal cart that contained the ashes of Emperor Napoleon that Louis-Philippe was bringing back from Saint Helena. (Interview September 29, 1975)

As an artist, Charlot was drawn to a devotion that centered on a miraculous image. Throughout his life he depicted another example: Veronica's veil, the cloth with which she wiped Jesus's face on his way to the crucifixion and which still bore his image. Charlot attended Guadalupe feasts, once with Edward Weston (1961: 109). Just as he had been moved in the cathedral of Veracruz on arriving in Mexico, Charlot was deeply impressed by the devotion he witnessed in the Guadalupe basilica: "été à Guadalupe : intensité d'adoration" 'at Guadalupe: intensity of adoration' (Diary October 21, 1928). He himself experienced the emotion: "été à Guadalupe : longue prière avec présence de la sainte Vierge [comme douceur à la basilique]" 'at Guadalupe: long prayer with presence of the Holy Virgin [like sweetness in the basilica]' (December 12, 1926). The devotion became an integral part of his spirituality. In his diary of December 12, 1923, he writes: "triste offert à Vierge Guadalupe" 'sad, offer it to the Virgin of Guadalupe.' In his 1955 *Fourteen Panels Symbolizing the Fine Arts*, at St. Mary's College, South Bend, Indiana, *Juan Diego with the Cloak of Guadalupe* represents painting. As an historian, Charlot was always interested in the value of oral tradition. The Virgin of Guadalupe was also identified with the Indian population whereas the Spanish tended to prefer la Virgen de los Remedios. Hidalgo, Zapata, and others took Our Lady of Guadalupe as the patroness of their causes. Unsuccessful attempts had been made to exploit her to support the upper classes and the Porfirista regime until Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception was enlisted in her place (Beezley 208: 90). Charlot shared the desire to recognize Our Lady of Guadalupe as the patroness of all the Americas (Chávez Sánchez 1998: 26). He felt the United States hierarchy chose Mary Immaculate as Patroness of America in 1846 because of negative racial feelings about Mexico. In 1959, Charlot painted the fresco *Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Four Apparitions* in the crypt of St. Benedict's Abbey church, Atchison, Kansas. Charlot's prize-winning illustrations for Helen Rand Parish's *Our Lady of Guadalupe* (1955) are described by Peter Morse:

It is also worth noting Charlot's strong personal interest in the miracle of the Virgin of Guadalupe. He had studied many accounts of it, both in Spanish and the original Nahuatl, which he spoke well. He gave the event considerable attention in his scholarly study, *Mary in Art*, which remained unpublished at his death. Thus, Charlot's personal interest, his experience with mural painting, and his deep knowledge of printing techniques all came together in this book to produce the best he could give. (n.d.)

Charlot permitted Fr. Martinus Cawley to use his Guadalupe illustrations as process prints in his series of publications *Guadalupe: from the Aztec: selections from the Nican Mopohua* (Uniform Title: *Nican mopohua: Selections: English*. 1992).

Charlot wrote extensively on Mexican Indian religion, both in archeological and in existential terms, making connections between traditional and contemporary Indian spirituality as well as Christianity and religion in general. I will discuss two lesser known writings. In his “El Papel de Rafael Yela Gunther en el Actual Movimiento de Arte” of September 27, 1925, Charlot contrasts the ruins of native civilization with the enduring spiritual values:

¿Qué es actualmente la vida indígena? Si se le compara con los esplendores de la época precortesiana se nos aparece como en decadencia: ni monumental arquitectura, ni religión propia; la vida social restringida a la política de aldea y a la familia; los oficios patriarcales reducidos a la crianza de animales y pequeñas industrias textiles: un contacto muy estrecho con las realidades naturales; la “hermandad” (para emplear la palabra con toda seriedad) con los animales domésticos, útiles a la labor: el asno que evita la fatiga de la carga de las largas jornadas y el perro, fiel amigo. En fin, la sumisión resignada a las fuerzas naturales, el sol, la lluvia, el viento, y a las leyes naturales, la ley del trabajo y de la fatiga, y, por encima de todo, la “serenidad” que da a los humildes la aceptación de las cosas tal y como vienen, y son: con resignación, si son tristes, y con gozo, si son buenas.

‘What is indigenous life today? If compared to the splendors of the Pre-Cortesian epoch it appears to us like a decadence: neither monumental architecture, nor its own religion; social life restricted to the politics of the village and family; the patriarchal occupations reduced to animal breeding and small industrial textiles; a very close contact with natural realities; the “brotherhood” (to employ the word in all seriousness) with domestic animals, useful for labor; the donkey that spares the burden of long voyages and the dog, faithful friend. In sum, the resigned submission to the forces of nature, the sun, the rain, the wind, and the laws of nature, the law of work and fatigue, and above all, the “serenity” given to the humble by the acceptance of things as they come and as they are: with resignation if they are sad, and with joy if they are good.’

His description resembles his admiring description of his fellow soldiers in World War I (April 1919 Des Leçons de la Guerre). He also uses his special feeling for animals as discussed in Volume I, Chapter 3, Section 2.

In his 1925–1926 “Ebauche d’un Essai sur la Religion Populaire Indo-Américaine,” Charlot contrasts the older Mesoamerican culture with its “standards de vie logiquement épurés, où se reflète sa forte tendance philosophique” ‘logically purified standards of life, in which is reflected its strong philosophical tendency’ to the North American with “L’amour de l’argent, du luxe et de la force physique” ‘love of money, luxury, and physical force.’ Both classical and contemporary Indian education emphasized the control of desire and pleasure:

C’est à quoi tend l’éducation moderne de l’enfant indien, d’une grande sévérité physique jointe à une suavité spirituelle destinée à développer toutes les qualités

émotionnelles dans le corps ainsi dompté. C'est ainsi qu'a pu se former cette race d'une si étonnante sobriété en tout, dont les besoins physiques sont réellement réduits au minimum.

'To this goal the modern education of the Indian child tends: a great physical severity joined to a spiritual suavity destined to develop all the emotional qualities in a body thus mastered. It is thus the this race has been able to form itself with such an astonishing sobriety in all things, whose physical needs have really been reduced to the minimum.'

The Indian is thus liberated from the desire for money that creates a slavery of work:

La profession n'est point sa préoccupation constante et le travail manuel ne l'empêche pas de vivre sa vie en profondeur.

'His job is not at all his constant preoccupation, and manual work does not stop him from living his life in depth.'

Charlot's own poverty enabled him to empathize with that of the Indian and interpret it as the holy poverty of Christianity. Beyond the criticized remnants of the classical religion, Charlot penetrated to the emotion that motivated both the pre-Christian and contemporary Indian spirituality:

Quelques mêlées que soient *les coutumes religieuses* de l'indien de superstitions, de magie ou de paganisme, *son sentiment religieux* est intensément pur.

'However mixed *the religious customs* of the Indian might be with superstitions, magic, or paganism, *his religious emotion* is intensely pure.'

The Indian's relationship with God is not determined by material goods, social conventions, sentimentality, or even morality in its narrow sense. He sees God in earthquakes and other catastrophes but not in commercial success.

Le rôle des démons sera d'inspirer les criminels et suivant l'affirmation évangélique, de posséder l'âme des riches pendant leur vie et de la recevoir aux enfers à leur mort.

Une telle sécurité des *réalités surnaturelles* est pour beaucoup dans l'apparent fatalisme social de l'indien...Et cette sécurité dans la contemplation, extériorisée aux grand pèlerinages, est *le fond de bonheur* de toute vie indienne.

L'abstrait d'une telle conception est fortement tempéré par la croyance à l'existence d'êtres intermédiaires entre Dieu et l'homme lesquels communiquent directement avec l'homme—Il n'est pas d'indien qui n'ait eu plusieurs fois dans sa vie affaire aux anges, aux démons, aux fantômes ou aux nahuals.

'The role of demons will be to inspire criminals and, following the Gospel affirmation, to possess the soul of the rich during their life and to receive it in Hell at their death. Such a security in the *supernatural realities* explains much in the apparent social fatalism of the Indian...And this security in contemplation, exteriorized during the great pilgrimages, is the basis of happiness of all Indian life.

‘The abstractness of such a conception is strongly tempered by the belief in the existence of beings that are intermediaries between God and man who communicate directly with the human being—There is no Indian who has not had several times in his life to do with angels, demons, phantoms, or naguals [an animal god attached to an individual].’

Mystical experiences that are extraordinary in Europe are part of everyday Indian life:

[the Mexican people] n’ont pas perdu le sens du surnaturel, qu’ils sont très près des créatures spirituelles qui nous entourent et que nous méconnaissons.

‘have not lost the sense of the supernatural, that they are very close to the spiritual creatures that surround us and whom we do not recognize’ (Charlot August 30, 1925).

Again Charlot emphasizes that Indian religion is not focused on narrow morality. The hero of folk literature:

n’est pas forcément moral. Il peut être un bandit (Benito Canales), un général, un Saint. L’important est qu’il soit animé d’une passion supérieure (amour de Dieu, de la liberté, de l’aventure) et auteur d’actions extraordinaires. (1925–1926 Ebauche)

‘is not necessarily moral. He can be a bandit (Benito Canales), a general, a Saint. The important thing is that he be animated by a higher passion (love of God, of liberty, of adventure) and the author of extraordinary actions.’

As discussed above, Charlot argued against the simple, bourgeois identification of religion with morality, which made him unusually tolerant with others while continuing to apply strict standards to himself.

Charlot found much to admire in Indian religion: its humility and poverty, its everyday mystical openness to the spiritual, and its essential expression in the physical and the arts. His openness had been nurtured by the positive views of the French Mexicanists. For instance, Désiré Charnay claimed that Indian philosophy and morality had not been surpassed by Christianity (1885: 92, 90 f.).

In France, Charlot used traditional Christian subjects. In Mexico, his depictions of Indian life became his religious art. His murals were his own version of the liturgical art of Saint Sulpice. Indians at their tasks were models of the moral and fully human life:

from the beginning up to now, the themes have enlarged around the same things: the very few costumes and accessories and the very few motions of the housework, for example, of the women, and that has been sufficient to guide really my whole art. Not so much perhaps as subject matter: as a general statement about—maybe not pleasant life,—but good life as I understand it and summed up in the life of the Indians. (Interview September 28, 1970)

Religion was not compartmentalized but permeated the life of the Indians, creating their cultural identity:

“Mexico est une terre essentiellement plastique, tragique et surnaturelle” ‘Mexico is a land essentially

plastic, tragic, and supernatural' (Charlot August 30, 1925). Similarly, Charlot would find in Hawai'i a people whose culture was their religion.

Charlot knew the official Catholic teaching that mystical experiences of any degree were not necessary for salvation and that faith without them was more meritorious because more difficult: "Ce service sans amour sensible doit être agréable parce que plus dur" 'This service without sensible, perceptible love must be agreeable because harder.'⁴² But religious experience was emotionally important for him: "manque de *grâce sensible* illusion de lutter seul" 'lack of *perceivable grace*, illusion of struggling alone' (September 25, 1922).

Charlot was always impressed by the intensity of a religion he encountered, a proof for him, I believe, of its vitality and power. Indian religious experiences were different from European ones, but just as powerful and certainly more frequent, more a part of normal life. Using these standards, Charlot could not claim superiority for his familiar European forms of Christianity but was challenged to understand the Indian contributions to Christianity and absorb them, when appropriate, into his own. As discussed earlier, this process was facilitated by Charlot's recognition that European forms of Christianity were themselves combinations of old and new: Christianity was reaching its full development in dialogue and interchange with the other religions it encountered throughout its history. The experienced worlds of Indians and Hawaiians was that of the Bible with its "many gods and many lords' (1 Corinthians 8:5).

In Mexico in the early 1920s, Charlot was attentive to his prayer life, noting experiences in his diary.⁴³ On January 14, 1922, he wrote the poem *Débile proie à mes mâchoires de Tantale* in which he complains about the sexless life his religion forces on him:

Votre mort (pour nous) fut charnelle, non mentale.
et c'est dans notre chair que nous quêtions son prix
"ils ont ce qu'ils demandent, ceux qui prient."
J'ai soif d'un catholicisme expérimental. (1926–1928 *Recueils Faits Par Jean Charlot*)
'Your death (for us) was carnal, not mental.
and it's in our flesh that we ask for its prize
"They have what they ask for, those who pray."
I'm thirsty for an experiential Catholicism.

The sarcastic last line is the clearest early expression of an idea that Charlot had already started developing positively. In his ca. 1970 draft of his review of István Rácz's *The Unknown God*, Charlot will describe the religious role of the senses:

Leaving metaphysics aside, this book is about what could be called the shape of God.

In the same way that a hound uses his nose to follow a trail, man, in his search for God, to detect the divine scent needs bring it within range of his five senses.

Flickering tapers, the taste of the host, the smell of incense, the voice of the flute, harp or zither—nowadays add the electric guitar—all have been put to service in this quest. At times they helped interpret the answers volunteered by a most elusive but not unwilling Quarry.

In Mexico, Charlot would continue to unify the mystical and physical strains of his French Christianity.

Charlot's religious writings late in his French period express a conventional opposition between material and spiritual and the beginnings of a view that related them together:

nous pouvons juger du spirituel par le physique.

Les anges peuvent reconstituer le physique par le spirituel

'we can judge the spiritual by the physical.

The angels can reconstitute the physical by the spiritual.'⁴⁴

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—

“ moi : représentation des formes.

d'une clef spirituelle du monde physique.'⁴⁵

'on the spiritual use of instruments. to modify and not annihilate the old man.

on the use for God of occupational objects:

for Mary Magdalene. nard. hair—

for me: representation of forms.

on a spiritual key for the physical world.'

Charlot relates the spiritual to the physical as the artistic idea to its expression in the work. This relation applies also to God's creation:

Preuves de l'existence de Dieu

Preuve expérimentale :

J'ai vue, Je vois un enchaînement logique entre tous les faits d'ordre interne et externe, moraux ou physiques, enchaînement créant un mouvement atteignant la sanctification (au point de vue canonique) collective et particulière. (1920–1921)

'Proofs of the existence of God

Experiential proof:

I've seen, I see a logical sequence between the internal and external facts, moral or physical, a sequence creating a movement attaining collective and particular sanctification (in the canonical point of view).'

God's Creation expresses his thought. Studying nature is simultaneously studying God. Thus nature should be a central part of spiritual life:

The man who could copy the world as is, would testify to the oecumenic truth. One may believe the fact that each action of man, casual as it may be, takes its place in a pattern, agglutinates fruitfulness to a larger gesture planned by God. (Summer 1951 Apologia)

But objective vision gives us the absolute proof that the accidental plays its role into a permanent fabric, that unrelated objects collaborate, unperceived from each other.

Cast shadows cement together the object and its habitat. The branch of a pine tree will complete a pattern started by a range of mountains miles away, a rose and a star furnish an accord. The same shape under shifting lights assumes new meanings. A logic more subtle than our own offers up spectacles in accord with aesthetic laws, bracing like dough all visible things, expounds in its "tableaux-vivants." All that the artist has to do is to read this book of Nature. This reliance in the exercise of one's art on God as expressed through natural vision results in a good dose of humility, for He is in the most direct sense a teacher. It seems that without this capstone of Faith, this ordered vision, physical as it is, indispensable to the painter, would disintegrate into a successive and meaningless grasp of separate objects. It seems that without faith, man can attempt only the worst kind of academic art. I have a special devotion to St. Veronica who, brushing the kerchief to our Lord's features, branded it with an excellent likeness. Both she and I use canvas as the screen on which to project the image. Both she and I are impelled to paint by looking at the Divine Face, she directly, I through this thin veil of His orderly creation. Her creative action was made possible because of the emotional intensity that acted through her body to the fingertips. All the planning, all the craft, all the knowledge to be found in a work of art would also be null if they were not qualified by passion.

Such statements accord with Charlot's expansion of the mystical teaching of the Unitive Vision from the union of the individual worshipper with God to the union of all things. Such an expansion entails a modification of the traditional teaching of the Fall of Creation as a result of Adam and Eve's sin:

Que la création non coupable du péché originel est encore, virtuellement, en état de sainteté. Viciée par l'usage qu'en fait l'homme coupable du péché originel, elle gémit. Plus l'homme domine la nature (civilisation mécanique) plus il dévie son but saint naturel (gloire de Dieu) en fin relative viciée par essence (humaine). (ca. 1926–1927 La création)

'That Creation—not guilty of original sin—is still virtually in a state of grace. Vitiated by the use the human being—guilty of original sin—makes of it, Creation groans. The more the human being dominates nature (mechanical civilization), the more he diverts its natural, saintly goal (glory of God) towards an essentially vitiated (human) relative goal.'

Thus the importance Charlot accords to the humble submission to the laws of nature—good because the design of God's Creation—which he praises in Indian religion (September 27, 1925).

The physical assumes a growing role in Charlot's devotion:

It is the physical that edifies me most within the religious... The introduction of water and wax—the Holy Saturday services, my meat—of fire, of bread and wine in the ritual are a solid anchor for my faith. I am grateful that I was not born into those sophisticated denominations, where sacraments have withered, where images are taboo. Rather than become a metaphysician, I would embrace idolatry. (Summer 1951 Apologia)

This pleasure in the concrete carries me without jolt from the visible to the invisible as with an artist's absentmindedness, I never could put my finger on the borderline. I bring to the spiritual such a realistic point of view. My spirits are no floating ghosts or evanescent lights but just as characterized as matter.

In *Je crois qu'il vaudrait mieux suivre la route droite* (1920–1924 Civil), his birthday poem of February 7–8, 1924—lines he recited to me late in his life—my father expressed his view of a physical heaven:

J'espère que là-haut cette épreuve passée,
l'uniforme des bienheureux sera la peau
Et qu'enfin chaque chose à sa place placée
nos chairs glorieuses mépriseront l'oripeau

'I hope that there above, this trial passed,
the uniform of the blessed will be the skin
and that at last, each thing placed in its place,
our glorified flesh will despise our old clothes.'

A variant of the last line is: "l'uniforme des bienheureux sera la peau" 'the uniform of the blessed will be their skin.'

The motive or impulse behind this intellectual development is the same as Charlot's inspiration as an artist: "Créatures : Je jouis beaucoup de la beauté, j'aime la beauté dans les créatures physiques" 'Creatures: I enjoy beauty very much, I love the beauty in physical creatures' (ca. 1926–1927 Obligation). Charlot does add that God's spiritual beauties must be much greater, but his starting point is still that the physical world provides a way to God rather than a distraction or temptation. Charlot's love of beauty becomes the basis for his life-long development of a Christianity that would encompass his experience of the religious inspiration of the physical: a religion in which his physical vocation as an artist is part of a physical religious devotion. On June 2, 1920, Charlot wrote in his "Journal des Méditations" (1920–1925 Ludwigshafen): "Que l'offre de mon travail physique correspond pour les Saints aux contemplations—" 'That the offering of my physical labor corresponds to contemplations for the saints—.' He is healing the split between the primarily immaterial religion he was taught and the physical work to which he felt himself called by God. In Hawai'i, Charlot would find a native religion based on awe before the beauty of the universe, which articulated in physical terms what Europeans did in spiritual (John Charlot 1990–1991: 67). Hawaiians also imbued their Christianity with their own values, which were also Charlot's.

For instance, in 1829 or 1830, the chiefess Kekupuohi composed a chant on first reading the Hawaiian translation of Genesis, including specific Polynesian traditions and concerns. Instead of having God breathe only into Adam to distinguish him from the rest of Creation, she describes God breathing into the whole universe, whose goodness and beauty come from the innermost being of God (John Charlot 2010: 37, 40 ff.). Charlot probably did not know this chant, but he would have agreed with it.

The communal character of parish life was deeply attractive to Charlot. His poems and personal notes express his feelings of loneliness and isolation and his desire for human connections: “*solitude intérieure. sentimentale et sociale*” ‘*interior solitude. emotional and social*’ (1918/1923 Noteobook C, September 25, 1922); “souffrir beaucoup de la solitude” ‘suffer much from solitude’ (Diary July 6, 1925). He was always happy to be working in a team, like the Gilde Notre-Dame in France, the army, the young muralists, and the collaborators needed for frescoes and ceramics. His choices of Mexican subjects show his appreciation of the family and the village engaged in group activities. He felt that the muralists were collaborating in societal reform despite the differences in their politics. Their group movement—part of the larger project of Vasconcelos and the government—was more powerful than individual charity, the widespread Catholic response to social inequality.

Acutely conscious of his own singularity, Charlot appreciated the normalcy of being a parishioner as opposed to a mystic, as he wrote in *Seigneur, pour délayer ce masque de superbe* of May 14, 1923:

Il est absolu d’être simple, l’Evangile.
Eh oui, nous ne pouvons rien sans la charité ;
Il faut jeûner, comme tous, carême et vigils
si nous voulons arriver à l’Eternité.

Ainsi, Seigneur, tant d’idéaux où je balance
ne sont que de vains jouets créés par des cerveaux,
ne soyons ni les clous, ni le fiel, ni la lance
mais de bons paroissiens et de simples dévots. (1920–1924 Civil)

‘It is an absolute to be simple, the Gospel.
And yes, we can do nothing without charity;
One must fast, like all, for Lent and vigils
if we want to go to Eternity.

So, Lord, so many ideals where I waver
are no more than vain toys created by human brains,
Let us be not the nails, or the gall, or the lance
but good parishioners and simple devout people.’

With the cult of saints, Catholicism tends to emphasize the extraordinary and heroic. Charlot tended to sympathize with the ordinary Christians. St. Francis is praised for giving up all his goods and renouncing

his father, who opposed his religious vocation. But, asked Charlot, how did the father—who had his own plans and hopes for Francis—feel to be renounced by his son? He was opposed to those Roman Christians who courted martyrdom by flaunting their religion and inviting renewed persecutions of ordinary Christians who were trying to survive with their families. Charlot wanted a religion that appreciated human emotions.

Charlot's developing parish Christianity had an impact on his art. In France, he had tended to feature single figures like Jesus and Sainte Barbe. The title page of his 1918–1920 *Chemin de Croix* includes individual portraits of the twelve apostles. In 1922 in Mexico, he produced two woodcuts of *Saint John, after El Greco* (M38) and *Saint Martin, after El Greco* (M39). But after he destroyed his painting *La Théologie régulatrice des arts*, he abandoned traditional religious subjects for years to concentrate on depictions of Mexican life and art, both of individuals and of groups. In Brittany and in his fresco project *Processional*, he had shown an interest in processions. But his experience of Christianity in Mexico inspired him to focus on a series of new subjects besides processions: dances, the pilgrimage to Chalma, the family preparations for fiestas, and so on. The life of the village blends indistinguishably into the life of the parish. When Charlot returned to more traditional religious subjects, the influence of Mexico can be seen in his emphasis on the Holy Family, as seen above: Jesus participates as the son of a normal family in its activities. Even his nuclear family was enlarged to the extended one, in Charlot's devotion as well as his art. When Charlot was recalled to the French army at the beginning of World War II—despite the fact that he was then an American citizen and the father of two children—he vowed that he would make a pilgrimage to the Quebec basilica of Sainte Anne de Beaupré, the mother of Mary, if he was not sent to Europe. He had long been devoted to her as the saint of family duties, as seen above in the note probably of 1920: “S^{te} Anne patronne de ménage” ‘Saint Ann, patron saint of the household.’ Officially demobilized at the fall of France, he made the pilgrimage in the early 1950s, bringing with him his family of four children.

5.1.1. ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Charlot's relations with women were extremely complicated in Mexico. I will discuss first the general factors and then their operation in individual relationships. In essence, Charlot was experiencing a struggle between his sexuality and his religion, alternating between opposite extremes while trying to find some middle ground. Perhaps significantly, he was reading Freud (Diary September 11, 1923).

In Mexico, Charlot entered into a period of heightened sexual sensitivity. In his essay “Son Etat Actuel, 1914–1922,” he described his feelings in violent terms:

Alors je me détourne un peu de Vous et vers les créatures—et elles me paraissent belles immédiatement à mon échelle, sans rien des choses en Vous qui me déconcertent.—et une frénésie me vient de cette possession plausible possible—mais votre texte me retient...

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'attrance—

j'ai fait un pas vers la folie et à jamais estropié mon désir.—...

—Ainsi vous m'avez rejeté de chez les hommes—pourtant, j'ai une âme d'homme et un corps d'homme—et ce désir violent de mes semblables...

et pourquoi ne pas parler de cela qui est le principal—cette petite poupée de soie et d'or, en chair, que vous avez mis à ma disposition—moi, Tantale. (September 1922)
So I turn a little away from you and towards creatures—and they appear immediately beautiful to me at my scale, with nothing of those things that disconcert me in you.—
and a frenzy comes over me for this possible, plausible possession—but your text holds me back...

Remember that evening in the little enemy village—the head of the canapé along the length of the door—at the tap of a finger, she came—at once docile and warm.—I think that by 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.

—...

—So you have rejected me from the abode of men—nonetheless, I have the soul of a man and the body of a man—and this violent desire for my fellow-creatures...
and why not speak of that which is the principal—this little doll of silk and gold, in flesh, whom you have put at my disposition—me, Tantalus.'

Charlot described his dreams of the time in *Premier Mystère: Le jardin des Olives: Nous, Dieu, débats de vos doctrines* of November 1922:

Faible est la chair, prompt l'esprit. Je dors
et tout le plaisir du siècle tord
ma paupière en voluptés cornues. (1920–1924 Civil)
The flesh is weak, the spirit quick. I sleep
and all the pleasure of the century twists
my eyelid in horned volupties.'

An indication of Charlot's strong sexual feelings at this time was his experiencing his nude models as a temptation. This had been a minor problem, if one at all, in France (Volume 1, Chapter 8, Section 1.3.2). In Mexico, he could write probably of Anita Brenner with a mixture of sexuality and proselytism:

Dans ce corps que je connais il y a un esprit que je voudrais connaître. C'est comme une veilleuse lointaine que les rafales sexuelles les vagues de chair me cachent à tout moment. Son corps est si lourd, si proche, si exigeant, l'animal gâté, si agréable blotti aux mains. Il faut me faire violence renoncer au contact proche, satisfaisant, et trappeur patient assiéger ce fœtus d'âme l'acculer au fond de son horrible édreton charnel l'élever à deux poings vers l'astre et ses petits yeux sans pupille, bleus et mats, les ouvrir, dédiés au Jour. (May 1927)

‘In this body that I know there is a spirit that I would like to know. It’s like a distant light that the sexual squalls, the fleshly waves, hide from me at every moment. Her body is so heavy, so close, so demanding, the spoiled animal, so pleasurable cuddled in my hands. I have to do violence to myself to renounce close contact, satisfying, and like a patient trapper, lay siege to this fetus of a soul and bring it to bay at the bottom of its horrible carnal eiderdown to raise it in my two fists towards that star and to open her little pupil-less eyes, blue and dull, dedicated to the Day.’

Several of Charlot’s drawings of Nahui Olin express his sexual attraction. Both Charlot and his confessor raised the problem during the sacrament, and Charlot mentioned it in his diary (1924: February 15, March 9, November 8?; 1925: February 25 [?], September 10). Charlot solved the problem at least partially by finding subjects where nudity was normal: the Chalma bathers, the Temascal ‘sweat bath,’ delousing, and so on. Despite possible temptations, he continued to defend his work from the nude as an essential part of his artistic vocation. On August 29, 1925, he wrote: “voir Lucy. elle refuse de poser grande colère” ‘see Lucy. she refuses to pose great anger.’ In Hawai‘i in the 1950s, he created a minor scandal by not rising to take the pledge of the Legion of Decency against movies and so on that included nudity and other forms of sexuality. I was asked about this by the shocked father of a school friend, so passed the question on to my father. He said that because he was an artist, looking at nudes was part of his work and he could not take the pledge.

The above themes appear often in Charlot’s poetry of the period: his strong desire, its conflict with his religion, the idea that God is putting temptations in his way, resentment towards the sources of temptation, and the fear that he is doing himself damage in the struggle.⁴⁶ A strong example is *On a beau les bourrer avec des connaissances* of September 1924:

Deux ans je l’ai dotée d’intentions sublimes,
Elle avait la peau douce et une odeur de foin,

Ça n’est pas rigolo surtout pour un esthète ;
La femme est ce qu’on trouve de plus près du beau ;
Sûr que ça n’était pas des peintres, les ascètes ;
d’être seul ça me mettra tout l’être en lambeau.

Mais elles ont si peu d’âme, ces belles chiennes (1920/1924 Civil)

For two years I imputed to her sublime intentions,
She had soft skin and a scent of hay,

It’s no joke, especially for an esthete;
The woman is what one finds closest to beauty;
I’m sure those ascetics weren’t painters;
to be alone would reduce my whole being to tatters.

But they have so little soul, these beautiful bitches.

On June 6, 1921, during his brief return to Paris, Charlot wrote the poem *Vivre charnel avec des lèvres sur ma bouche* (1920–1924 Civil). He wants to “live carnal,” come down from the religious heights to the sensuous plain, and free himself from “la voix de ta grâce” ‘the voice of your grace.’ Let him be a Phallophore ‘phallus bearer’ rather than a Christophore. In *Débile proie à mes mâchoires de Tantale* of January 14, 1922, he wants to be freed from Christ to enjoy his sensuality and “oublier ne fut-ce qu’une heure, votre dû” ‘and if only for an hour, forget your due’ (1920–1924 Civil).

Besides religious objections to affairs, practical obstacles presented themselves to marriage. Charlot had a heavy, even oppressive, sense of family responsibility, which he had experienced after the death of his father, Henri, taking care of his grandfather, mother, and sister. He had the impression he had failed them, and he was still the primary support of his mother. My mother told me that when my sister Ann got married, her bridegroom looked extremely serious. Charlot said it was because he was thinking of all the responsibilities he was assuming. Charlot once told me that behind the romance of engagement and marriage was the hard work of washing diapers, a theme of his painting (1958 *Mary and Art*). Anita Brenner recorded another worry, common at the time:

how many women marry and then somehow let go, in some kind of self-indulgence, as if marriage were the end of the trail and no more self-discipline or enthusiasm were necessary. Is it biological? Jean says it is. I won’t allow myself to do the same.
(Glusker 2010: 747)

Most obviously, Charlot was extremely poor. He mentions this factor in his correspondence with Brenner, below, and in his personal notes:

isol. dans l’amour : célibat forcé : cause : argent (19181923 Notebook C: “Son Etat Actuel,” probably early 1921)

‘isolation in love: forced celibacy: cause: money’

me marier. pour cela il faut argent. or (possession négative) je *ne peux pas en avoir* humainement. il faut donc croire que Dieu m’en donnera surnaturellement. il le DOIT. (19181923 Notebook C: “Son Etat Actuel,” mid-1922)

‘get married. for that money is needed. or (negative possession) I *cannot have any* by human means. it is necessary then to believe that God will give me some supernaturally. he OWES it.’

Charlot believed that poverty was a Christian virtue: “offre à Dieu mon absolue pauvreté” ‘offer to God my absolute poverty’ (Diary December 22, 1924). But he hoped that God would help supply the means to fulfill his responsibilities: “résolution fixe : espérance à Dieu pour le matériel coûte que coûte” ‘fixed resolution: hope in God for the material whatever the cost’ (Diary February 20, 1925).

The difficulty was that Charlot was passionately attracted to women and also needed comfort and support. He also craved authentic companionship: “qu’il ne suffit pas de l’union physique (l’avoir

dans ses mains) mais qu'il faut union spirituelle" 'that a physical union is not sufficient (to have her in his hands), but a spiritual union is necessary' (1918–1923 Notebook C: "Meditation," August 1921). He suffered from "l'isolement sentimental et social" 'his emotional and social isolation' (1918–1923 Notebook C: "Son Etat Actuel," September 1922). The conflict with religion hurt Charlot as he described in his "Essai sur mon Etat Actuel":

état anti-humain.

humainement, par expérience (et sans passion.) cette discipline m'a été mauvaise. volonté *éreinée*. abêtissement. irritabilité. pas d'issue pour le sentiment qui rancit d'où pessimisme. Mauvaise humeur instabilité. larmes continues.

Cercle vicieux : j'accepte une discipline. cette discipline (en demandant gros effort) affaiblit ma volonté. Cet affaiblissement rend plus difficile l'observance de cette discipline. (September 25, 1922)

'anti-human state.

humanly, by experience (and without passion), this discipline has been bad for me. *exhausted* will. stupefaction. irritability. no outlet for emotion, which sours, thus pessimism.

Ill humor. instability. continual tears.

Vicious circle: I accept a discipline. the discipline (in demanding a big effort) weakens my will. This weakening makes the observance of this discipline more difficult.'

So many of Charlot's diary entries for the period note his sadness that depression can be suspected. Weston described Charlot in such a mood on October 31, 1924: "Jean Charlot wandered into the exhibit at evening, rather woebegone and discouraged: that is Mexico, it either raises one to ecstasy [*sic*] or dumps one into depths" (Weston 1961: 100).

In Charlot's thinking, God had created him with all his desires. He had also created the beautiful women who were causing such a conflict in Charlot, a conflict that was doing him damage. Charlot can conclude: "Dieu directement responsable" 'God is directly responsible' (September 25, 1922). Charlot is allowed, therefore, to be angry at God for putting him in such a situation and can justly ask God for respite and help: "il le DOIT" 'he OWES it.' On November 12, 1924, Charlot writes: "je n'ai pas demandé la grâce. il peut définitivement la réviser" 'I did not ask for the grace. He can definitely revise it' (Diary). Rather than the duty of constant denial, Charlot should be given "la grâce de bon plaisir. quand est vrai" 'the grace of good pleasure. when it's true.' In *Je crois qu'il vaudrait mieux suivre la route droite*, his birthday poem of February 78, 1924, he writes: "j'ai...droit aux détentes...Puisque j'ai DROIT !" 'I have...a right to release...Because I have a RIGHT!'(1920–1924 Civil) In a meditation on Mary Magdalene, Charlot claimed:

Sa confiance paye avant l'acte. et *force* Notre-Seigneur au pardon. car il ne sait pas résister quand on affirme sa toute puissance...la foi l'a sauvée. (July 22, 1922)

'Her confidence pays [the debts of her sins] before the act. and *forces* Our Lord to

forgive. because he cannot resist when one affirms his complete power...faith saved her.’

Charlot sometimes deflected his anger at God and his situation towards the women involved. In *On a beau les bourrer avec des connaissances* of November 1924, he writes that we idealize women until we know them better:

Le conte est si vieux que nous, tourneurs de fétiches
issus d’un tronc, nous flairons le bois sous le dieu (1920–1924 Civil)
‘the tale is so old that we, turners of fetishes,
produced from a trunk, sniff the wood under the god.’

Charlot’s inconsistent statements about sexuality and marriage reveal his conflicting emotions. Positively, the human body, just like creation as a whole, is still in a pre-lapsarian state of grace, because Adam’s sin was essentially of the mind and used the human body only as an instrument:

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. (ca. 1926–1927 La création)
‘Original Sin was an intellectual sin of the thinking human being (to know good and evil), and the body was the instrument like the apple. It is thus virtually in the same state of holiness as before the fall but deviated to the corrupted human ends. When the end of the human being is identified with the ends of God, the virtual is realized: The body becomes the glorious body, *which is its true form*. realized partially in life in the Saints. Practically: Give to our body the holiest rule and bring ourselves near to its true condition of life, in no way mistreat it but make it rejoice.’

Negatively, Charlot could describe sex in terms extreme even for the Catholicism of his time:

que le péché originel se propage par la concupiscence des époux. Si 2 époux pouvait coïter sans concupiscence l’enfant naîtrait sans le péché originel.⁴⁷
‘that Original Sin propagates itself by the concupiscence of the married couple. If two married people could have sex without concupiscence, the child would be born without Original Sin.

Sex should be restrained in marriage (Diary July 27, 1925), and Charlot’s sexuality itself presented an obstacle to marriage: “tendance *au mariage catholique*. impossible jusqu’à ma purification sexuelle complète” ‘tendency to a *Catholic marriage*. impossible until my complete sexual purification’ (June 1925). Unable to think consistently about these problems, Charlot’s solution was to leave them in the

hands of God. He could only wait on events: “Attendre.”⁴⁸ This is the background for his statements to Brenner that some solution will present itself if they only wait long enough.

Throughout his Mexican period, Charlot was capable of having genuine friendships with women, as Brenner wrote: “It’s portraits he does best, & of those, women, undoubtedly due, he says, to the emotional quality connected” (Glusker 2010: 38; also 32). Women would confide in him and ask his advice, like Ella Goldberg, the wife of Bertram Wolfe (Tabletalk undated, mid-1970s). An apparently older woman to whom Charlot was close was Caroline Smith, whom Zohmah Day met and described:

I went this afternoon to see his friend Carolina (*sic*) Smith. She is a very kind person and although I like her our conversation was rather stiff. She gave me a nice tea of the mango jam that Jean likes... (Day Diary August 6, 1931)

Day was jealous not of his affection but his time: :

But I was furious because that Carolina (*sic*) person did take Jean aside and talked about generations and then patted me on the head...I absolutely will not have that woman come here and leave and take Jean’s time when there is such a little bit of it left for me. (Day Diary August 10, 1931)

A good example of Charlot’s turning an initial erotic attraction into friendship is his relationship with Tina Modotti, Weston’s lover at the time. Charlot mentioned to me how seductive Modotti was and remembered Vasconcelos describing the powerful effect of the attention she had focused on him during a car trip (1982 *Memorias* 2: 64 f.). Charlot developed a joking relationship with Modotti—caught in the Weston photograph of him writing on her bare shoulder⁴⁹—and treated her as a colleague as well as a friend. He supported and comforted her when Weston left Mexico and worked with her on photographs of Orozco’s murals and illustrations for Brenner’s *Idols*.⁵⁰ His portrait drawings of Modotti show his appreciation of her beauty, her strong personality, and her gaze, at once intense and dreamy (compare Albers 1999: 124). Charlot admired her work, writing Brenner on February 25, 1974:

It is nice to know that Tina Modotti can be recognized as the finest artist she was. To be in the shadow of Edward Weston is a difficult situation for a photographer.

In the case of Modotti, Charlot successfully transformed a potential flirtation into a fully human relationship. Modotti wrote: “Charlot walked home with me this morning—dear boy—he was so sympathetic!” (Stark 1986: letter 24.2, December 27, 1924). Later when Tina’s lover Julio Antonio Mella was murdered, Charlot wrote Brenner: “Lo de Tina me dio pena. Era amigo mio el comunista este y muy loveable” ‘The news of Tina made me sad. He was a friend of mine, this communist, and very loveable.’⁵¹ Tina at least once seems to have preached to Charlot: “chez Tina : gentille *mais* communiste” ‘at Tina’s: nice *but* communist’ (JC to AB December 2, 1927).

As in Germany, despite Charlot’s venting about women, his portrait drawings reveal his respect and sympathy for them as persons, as fully human beings. He also disliked the idea of fooling someone to gain their affections. When he and I saw the 1957 movie *Pal Joey*, he told me how odious he found the

hero's advice to treat a lady like a tramp and a tramp like a lady. Whatever his needs, Charlot could only be satisfied by truly human relations.

Charlot's romantic—as opposed to friendly—relationships were complicated by the general factors described above: he needed to satisfy some of his physical and emotional needs while avoiding sin. Charlot would be very attracted to a woman, and she would be charmed. They would see each other, but eventually the woman would be surprised that the relationship did not progress. Hurt and frustrated, she would quarrel and break off with Charlot, which inevitably puzzled him. Later they would most often reestablish friendly relations. Charlot would continue to put himself and his lovers through the same cycle until he finally broke through it to marry my mother, Zohmah Day, in 1939.

Mexico was full of sexual opportunities, and Charlot was always very attracted to Latin women and even nineteenth-century and silent cinema type vamps. In a curious meditation, Charlot reports noticing a woman in the street (Notes Détachées au Mexique: “Sujet Religieux,” September 1923):

voir souvent passer une femme dans la rue. La suivre sans qu'elle le sache. Elle est *inconnu[e]* mais on ne peut douter ni de son existence, ni de sa beauté, ni de son “amabilité.”

‘often see a woman passing in the street. Follow her without her knowing it. She is *unknown* but one can doubt neither her existence, nor her beauty, nor her “amiability.”’

As he continues his meditation, the relationship with the unknown woman represents ordinary piety, whereas the relationship with a woman whom one actually knew and conversed with represents extraordinary piety: visions, communications from God, and so on. The background of this meditation might be Charlot's study of John of the Cross, who used the erotic imagery of popular Arabic songs for his descriptions of mystical experiences.

The romantic and sexual relationships of some of the artists were largely uninhibited, and the affairs of Rivera, Siqueiros, and Weston have attracted the attention of biographers. Several of the women artists were equally notorious, such as Tina Modotti, Nahui Olin, and Frida Kahlo. A proper young woman, Anita Brenner, often felt pressured by seducers. According to my mother, Charlot's resistance to sexual attraction made him an interesting challenge for some of his women colleagues. Charlot also felt pursued by daughters of good families looking for respectable husbands, “ces trop jeunes vierges, harpies” ‘these too young virgins, harpies’ (*Soliloque: Dans ce pays, aux saints et aux gueux redoutable* ; 1920–1924 Civil). In a poem of March 16, 1925, he writes:

Ce qui m'embête, c'est qu'on
m'étéquète “bon jeune homme.”
...
D'où de moi les mères rêvent ;
Pour moi leurs Èves soulèvent
l'affreux soupir des pianos. (1925 1925)

‘What annoys me is being
labeled “a good young man.”

...

So the mothers dream of me;
For me their Eves rouse
the ghastly sigh of pianos.’

Charlot was clearly vulnerable to such attractions and aware of their dangers for him. During the Occupation of the Rhineland, he had been surrounded by beautiful and willing women and had held them off with banter. However, he had experienced his weakness when, to his surprise and anger, a German woman had finally succeeded in having sex with him. He was still feeling guilty, bitter, and disappointed in himself and connected his current transgressions back to that earlier one: “D’une accidentelle putain j’appri quelques trucs futiles que j’essayai par jeu sur l’enfant que j’aimais. J’en suis là—” ‘From an accidental whore I learned a few futile tricks that I tried as a game on the child I loved. I reached that point—’⁵² Charlot was, therefore, very much on his guard in Mexico and was using the same protective devices he had adopted in Germany:

j’ai su la passion et la flamme et d’extérieur j’étais de glace—avec ce pauvre sourire que j’ai adopté pour qu’on ne voit pas mes dents qui sont laides.—un baiser leur aurait fait tant de bien ; si petite, une caresse.—moi, pour elles, la pluie froide des paroles et la morale en douche.

il me souvient de cette gravure où on voit un saint mexicain—repoussant une fort belle femme nue.—Cela est vraiment comique. (September 1922)

‘I knew the passion and the flame and from the outside I was made of ice—with this poor smile I adopted to hide my ugly teeth.—a kiss would have done them so much good; such a little thing, a caress.—I had for them the coldest words and a cold bath of morals.

it reminds me of that engraving where one sees a Mexican saint repulsing a beautiful nude woman.—It’s really comic.’

Despite such statements, Charlot’s diary reveals that he was attracted to many women in Mexico, and they reciprocated his interest. Sometimes Charlot would see more than one woman in a single day.⁵³ Charlot’s family and friends would sometimes get involved with his relations: “Simone refuse me voir (merci mon Dieu) j’apprenne par Rachel et Doly” ‘Simone refuses to see me (thank you, God) I learn this from Rachel and Doly [Mexican cousins]’ (Diary July 12, 1923); “Federico me réconcilie avec N” ‘Federico [Marín] reconciles me with Nahui’ (March 15, 1924).

As seen in several quotations of this section, Charlot rationalized his conduct by arguing that his relationship offered positive benefits to the woman involved, like mentoring, teaching, and religious counseling, which he did for friends as well: “Elena...me parle religion. je lui réponds” ‘Elena...talks religion with me. I answer her’ (Diary May 27, 1925). But he and his confessors were aware that he was

putting himself in occasions of sin. He writes “mon confesseur me défend de voir steno...je pleure” ‘my confessor forbids me to see stenographer...I weep’ (Diary April 21, 1922). On September 30, 1922, he reports “Père Lejeune me conseille me déclarer à Simone” ‘Father Lejeune counsels me to make a declaration to Simone’ (Diary). In both cases, Charlot ignored his confessors’ advice, which probably explains why he avoided the sacrament for long periods: he could not promise to change his behavior in order to receive absolution (e.g., 1925: March 2, 5; compare January 17, 1925). A religious life required steady practice: “résolution : communion 3 fois la semaine je confesse tous les 15 jours” ‘resolution: communion three times a week, I confess every two weeks’ (Diary September 29, 1923).

Charlot felt his own emotions as acute and dangerous, but seems to have been unable to recognize how much difficulty he was creating for the women involved. This was especially true because he was indulging in sexual activity that did not include actual intercourse, like bundling, lying or sleeping together without having actual sex. Zohmah Day Charlot described an unsuccessful attempt on August 16, 1931:

I want very much to sleep the night with him and wake up in the morning on his arm
but he got excited and I got excited so we made little jokes and then I went to bed
with Berta [her cousin]. (1931)

On April 26, 1924, he notes: “resté couché avec N.” ‘stayed in bed with Nahui’ (Diary). On the 28th, he writes “me confesse à bon” ‘confess for good.’ As seen above, for his own needs, Charlot was trying to separate full sexual conduct from a romantic or even a conjugal relationship. Thus he was guarding himself against sexual temptations but not against emotional ones: the non-physical emotions of such a relationship were permitted and even prized. He then applied this practice to women, that is, he avoided placing them in the occasion of sexual sin: e.g., “attention de ne pas donner de désire à dactylo” ‘be careful not to give any desire to the typist’ (Diary May 14, 1924). The women, however, were not operating under the system Charlot had created for himself. They were not separating foreplay from sex or from emotion, and Charlot apparently understood little if any of the emotional trouble he was causing them. He particularly underestimated the pain that ending a relationship would cause both the woman and himself (e.g., December 20, 1925). In his poem of January 9, 1922, *Matière: Ayez pitié, Seigneur de cette chair sans but*, he recognizes that his desire is twisting his thinking:

Phalliques nous vaquons parmi les apparences,
adorateurs de jarretières et de bas (1920–1924 Civil)
Phallic, we wander vacant among the appearances,
adorers of garters and stockings

Apparently connected to these romantic problems was that of drinking too much: “retour à N. me bois folâtre” ‘return to Nahui. drink myself into a lively mood’ (Diary August 7, 1923); “ne plus m’enivre. | résolution : ne plus toucher Anita” ‘no more getting drunk | no more touching Anita’ (Diary September 26, 1925). Charlot recorded a hard-drinking party where he woke up at seven in the morning

in the living room and returned home for two days of painful recuperation. Anita told him on the second day how he had acted.⁵⁴

Charlot described the problems of his early or minor relationships in Mexico in two journal entries, probably of 1923: “Analyse de sa Relation avec une Femme” and “Pensées sur Quatre Femmes.” In the former, he discusses a mature woman—“la femme plus âgée que moi, plus mondaine” ‘the woman older than me, more worldly’—whom he possesses completely in “morale” but not in body. She obeys him to the point of embarrassment, posing for him nude and semi-nude out of friendship, although doing so is difficult for her, because she is not physically attractive. He has refused her offer of sex, which differentiates him from “*tous ceux qu’elle a connu*” ‘*all those she has known*’. This refusal gives him his ascendancy over her, the ascendancy over a needier person of someone who can dominate his desires:

Si je ne lui dois rien elle me doit beaucoup.

Le jour où je demande *récompense*, mon rôle s'effondre. Pourtant elle accordera de très grand cœur mais je serais compréhensible, détrôné. (ca. 1923 Analyse)

‘If I owe her nothing, she owes me much.

The day I ask for *recompense*, my role collapses. However, she would agree very willingly, but I would be comprehensible, dethroned.’

Charlot was continuing a practice that he had started with German women during the Occupation and that often provoked him to frustrated anger. Charlot’s poem *On a beau les bourrer avec des connaissances* of November 1924 could have been written years earlier:

Elle fut pour moi jusqu’à ces jours, bonne fille
à m’offrir son honneur. Moi de le décliner,
car cette moisson l’avaient faite tant de faucilles
que je ne me sentais pas d’humour à glaner. (1920–1924 Civil)

‘She was for me up to know a good young woman
to offer me her honor. For me to decline it
for so many sickles had made this harvest
that I didn’t feel in the mood to glean.’

Charlot would use humor also to defuse a sexual situation. Weston recalls Charlot and Federico Marín teasing Modotti about an admirer: “One way to kill a person is to ridicule” (1961: 62; 61).

Charlot’s “Autre supériorité *cruelle*” ‘other *cruel* superiority’ over the older woman is that he no longer feels strong emotions for her whereas she does for him. Finally, he has to submit the relationship to his moral judgment. He finds it dangerous, because he has in fact accepted a certain responsibility for her. This was a principle of Charlot’s thinking that he expressed in his later letters to Brenner: he could not enter into any human relationship without feeling the weight of the responsibility that it imposed. This feeling was the counterweight to the selfish bravado of the seducer that Charlot assumed as a pose; the pose provided, I believe, some relief from that burden of responsibility. Besides “quelque orgueil” ‘some pride’ in his conquest, Charlot feels “grande pitié” ‘great pity’ for her, as if she were a fragile vase,

a beaten pet, or an expensive, complex toy. He divines that in her maturity she can defend herself. In fact, as in all relations, he cannot escape his appreciation of the full human being: “La richesse mentale si on additionne toutes les vies intérieures est un affolant infini réel” ‘The mental richness, if one adds up all the interior lives, is a maddening real infinity’. In the short journal entry, Charlot moves from willfully supercilious to involuntarily wonderstruck.

The four women in “Pensées sur Quatre Femmes”—their names are written in shorthand—illustrate the variety of Charlot’s acquaintances. The first is too caught up in the flesh, so Charlot could not pursue the relationship because of the “prohibition catholique” ‘catholic prohibition.’ The second added the diabolism of her milieu. The third relationship developed almost accidentally; in the end, in Charlot’s cryptic expression, the woman seems to have chased him away angrily because of his refusal to have sex. However, she still thinks about him and might return. The fourth case, Nahui Olin, is the most complex, and Charlot feels himself too involved in it to be its judge. In the cases described in this note, Charlot enters into relationships that he knows will be frustrating for the women involved. He does not regard the women as marriage possibilities nor does he seem to be searching for human warmth. He is finding his satisfaction in his sense of conquest, in becoming the object of interest to the women.

5.1.1.1. NAHUI OLIN

Charlot’s longest and most intense early relationship was with the temperamental and extravagantly beautiful Nahui Olin (1893–1978). She is in all likelihood the person Brenner refers to when she writes that Charlot “fell in love with a gorgeous friend of the Syndicate.”⁵⁵ His 1923 drawing of Olin nude steams with sexual attraction (Garduño et al. 1992: 172). Besides being a model and personality, Olin wrote poetry in Spanish and French. In his diary of August 20, 1923, Charlot wrote: “avec Alfaro et Amado chez N. elle nous donne son livre nouveau” ‘with Alfaro and Amado to Nahui’s. she gives us her new book.’ The book of French poems (1923) may have been in manuscript because Charlot noted on September 25 and October 1, 1923: “corrigé livre N. O.” ‘corrected book Nahui Olin.’ Nahui also made primitivistic paintings; “Jean, who knows her well, defined Nahui as genius opposed to talent” (Weston 1961: 100). My mother was enthusiastic about her paintings when she saw reproductions of them late in life.

Charlot’s and Olin’s relationship was tempestuous. Charlot was smitten: “je l’adore” ‘I adore her’ (Diary October 23, 1923). They were both physically attracted to each other: “été tentation avec N.” ‘was temptation with N.’ (July 17, 1923); “nous faut absolument faire attention à ne pas exciter N.” ‘we must absolutely pay attention not to excite Nahui’ (February 24, 1924); “attention à ne pas retoucher N. ? !” ‘be careful not to touch Nahui again?!’ (February 11, 1925); February 26, 1925. Each could anger the other: “elle me fâche. (merci mon Dieu)” ‘she angers me (thank you, God)’ (September 13, 1923); “elle insupportable” ‘she’s unbearable’ (August 20, 1923); “elle se fâche : retour douceur total” ‘she gets angry return total sweetness’ (March 7, 1924). He found her conversation limited (February 28, 1924), and she exploded at his talking religion to her (December 16, 1923). He would gather all his religious courage to break with her (e.g., January 6, 1924), and she would boil over: “grande tristesse pour ce qu’elle m’a dit” ‘great sadness about what she said to me’ (May 24, 1924). But they were miserable

apart: “fatigué et de mauvais humour d’avoir rompu avec N.” ‘tired and in a bad mood to have broken with Nahui’ (May 1, 1923). Usually Nahui would return: “N vient me chercher” ‘Nahui comes looking for me.’⁵⁶ He would often fight his scruples: “Nahui vient et se fait chez elle...sans péché autre retourner au tout au tout avec N.” ‘Nahui comes and makes herself at home...without sin except returning to the whole thing with Nahui’ (September 26, 1924).

At times, Charlot and Olin could meet with friends and family and be friendly to each other: “AM dîné avec N. O et sa sœur le soir est très amical” ‘Morning lunched with Nahui Olin and her sister the evening is very friendly’ (September 6, 1923); “N. à Tlalpam. elle est très camarade” ‘Nahui at Tlalpan she is very comradely’ (November 11, 1923); “convenu amitié” ‘agreed upon friendship’ (October 25, 1924).⁵⁷ Charlot’s mother was “pas contente” ‘not happy’ with the relationship, but continued to see Nahui (January 29, 1924; March 1, 1925).

Charlot’s earliest surviving writing on Olin is contained in his major poem *XX proses suivant la Psychoplastie de D. M. Rivera*, written for the inauguration of *Creation* on March 9, 1923. Olin had posed for Rivera’s figure of *La poésie érotique* ‘Erotic Poetry,’ and Charlot’s poetic commentary seems based on his own knowledge of her as well as Rivera’s depiction. She offers her whole self to the Other, but especially her will and her flesh. She thus has little life of her own, but draws on the energy of others. Thus she is placed on the male side of the mural: “Elle s’est range du côté de l’homme, parce qu’elle est née du désir viril et de la volupté satisfaite” ‘She is placed on the male side, because she is born of virile desire and satisfied voluptuousness.’ She uses make-up and artifice, like an artist, but she is too knowing. She no longer believes in love the way she did when she was a girl but knows “que la volupté réside dans la souffrance” ‘that voluptuousness resides in suffering.’ Thus the bitterness of her smile and the “effroi des yeux qui dénudent” ‘the fear in her eyes that strips’ away the dissimulations of her lascivious on-lookers. She offers “ivresse au gout de cendre” ‘rapture with an aftertaste of ash.’ This description accords with drawings done of Olin as prematurely old and encrusted with make-up.

The relationship prompted Charlot to write also two long examinations of conscience. The first, “Son Etat Actuel” in Notebook C is dated Christmas Day 1923. On the day of Jesus’ birth, Charlot wants to recover his “pureté enfantine” ‘infantile purity’, his pre-sexual state. He will later speak nostalgically about Brenner’s innocence when he first met her. He has loved women for himself and for their physicality and animality. He laughs at the women who have chased him confidently, met frustration, and ended in tears. He seems here to direct towards women a bitterness that arises from his anger at having to resist them. Indeed, he confesses the falseness of his pose: he is really tired and alone. He would like a toy, but no woman will play the toy to the end. He used to have lots of toys; “j’ai été un enfant riche.—et aujourd’hui je n’ai même plus assez pour étrenner une fille” ‘I was a rich kid—and today I no longer have enough even to give a present to a girl.’ The theme of his poverty is constant in Charlot’s discussions of women; another result of his view that relations entailed responsibilities. Moreover, “j’ai un caractère si bizarre” ‘my character is so bizarre.’ He has known Nahui several years. She keeps making advances to him and wondering when he will respond: “mais j’oublie toujours ce but possible, anatomique—jouissant que je suis de son attente exaspérée—” ‘but I always forget this possible goal, anatomical—enjoying as I

do her exasperated waiting—'. This same attitude was seen in Charlot's relationship with the older woman, described above: he wants to retain control of himself and dominance over his partner. Beyond the religious problem, Charlot has difficulty imagining a physical relationship in all its complexity. Moreover, he does not know how he would react mentally in such a relationship: "Et puis il y a l'esprit, l'esprit qui loin d'être possédé se rétracte et observe" 'And then there is the mind, the mind, which far from being possessed, retracts itself and observes'. Charlot feared that a physical relationship—especially one that was predominantly physical—would overwhelm his intellectual as well as his emotional control. On all the evidence, his desires and emotions were unusually strong. He recognizes that Nahui did not stimulate him intellectually: "Elle me dit qu'elle m'ennuie et m'ennuie en effet" 'She tells me that she bores me and in fact does bore me.'

Nonetheless, the relationship continued and prompted another examination some three months later, "De Nahui Olin" (March 1924). Nahui took the initiative for their relationship, and after two years, the two have established "la parfaite confiance physique" 'perfect physical confidence,' that is, an agreement on how much physical activity they allow. He had broken with her several times for moral reasons, though he desired her greatly. Charlot then abandoned his own efforts and left the continuation of the relationship to God: "grande tristesse pour N. et forte prière résolution : laisser à Dieu initiative de reprise de l'émotion" 'great sadness for Nahui and strong prayer resolution: leave to God the initiative for the resumption of the emotion' (Diary March 9, 1924). Their reconciliation was, he concluded, God's will. Nahui appears to have taken the initiative again. They now follow rules: she sets no sexual limits; he does. His rule: "Le permis s'arrête où commence l'excitation sexuelle" 'Permission stops where sexual excitement begins.' Since he has greater powers of resistance than she does, the stopping point is when she gets excited. They pet, try to stay calm, and pray. Charlot recognizes the irregularity of this arrangement: "Qu'en apparence cela soit blâmable : possible mais tout cas moral est un cas individuel" 'That in appearance that could be condemned: possible, but every moral case is an individual one.'

Charlot now submits this casuistry to examination. The advantage of the arrangement for him is to:

Supprimer mortification physique qui n'est qu'un moyen d'épuiser ma force et qui me déséquilibre, la remplaçant par une joie simple qui me repose et m'équilibre.
influence sur mon travail professionnel.
'Suppress physical mortification, which is a means of exhausting my strength and which unbalances me, replacing it with a simple joy that rests and balances me.
influence on my professional work.'

On the other hand, he must be cautious about the possible disadvantage that the relationship distance him from God. One device will be to let her take all initiative for their meetings. The advantage for Nahui is a higher type of love than in her usual relationships, a love that orients her towards chastity and God. The disadvantage is the possible excitement that must be suppressed by his rules of conduct. Although he has come to the formal end of his examination, Charlot continues to write. The situation is abnormal, but he himself is not responsible for it. He should get advice from his confessor and his mother. He sets criteria

to judge the relationship. It is bad if it obscures love; good if it helps it or is at least indifferent. Does it help his work or hinder it? He wants to judge this tree by its fruit.

Charlot's relationship with Olin is an extreme result of the conflict between his religion and his need for love. That conflict caused pain to the women who loved him and threatened to unbalance Charlot himself. Olin was not a woman to acquiesce in such a relationship for long. After their break-up, they continued to be friends, with Nahui sometimes initiating contact and sometimes Charlot.⁵⁸ But Charlot was increasingly disturbed by her behavior, as he wrote to Brenner:

Nahui returned... Me causo gusto, though she is more apparently stupid than ever : jazz, fox, and nude photos made by aficionados. Something espantoso. Pero que quieres....⁵⁹

'Nahui returned... It pleased me, though she is more apparently stupid than ever : jazz, fox, and nude photos made by aficionados. Something frightening. But what do you want...'

Though few seem to have recognized it at the time, Olin's erratic behavior was a symptom of the mental instability that intensified as she aged. My father took my mother to visit her in 1968: "with Z to see Nahui : cats 'phenomenos del sol', etc." 'with Zohmah to see Nahui: cats "phenomena of the sun", etc.' (Diary April 9, 1968). My mother described her to me as a markedly ugly, very aged woman with a lined face, who acted with a mad energy in a house full of cats.

5.1.1.2. ANITA BRENNER

Charlot's most important romantic relationship—second only to that with his later wife—was with Anita Brenner. Indeed, many of the problems of Charlot's relationship with Brenner would reoccur while he was courting Zohmah Day. Brenner preserved Charlot's letters, which are now among her papers at the Harry Ransom Research Center, University of Texas. On his marriage, Charlot destroyed hers along with most of his early correspondence. Charlot's numerous letters make possible a detailed study of their relationship, which ended in a separation. This unhappy ending is prefigured in the anxious, querulous tone of most of the correspondence, a mood aggravated by the depression Charlot was suffering at the time.

Anita Brenner was born on August 13, 1905, and returned from the United States to live in Mexico City in September 1923 at the age of eighteen (Glusker 1998: 33). She soon entered the circles of artists and writers where she met Charlot. Charlot's first diary mention of Anita is for June 7, 1924: he walks her back home from a party at the Proals and stays with her until two o'clock in the morning. He begins to see her often and to use her as a model for drawings.⁶⁰ They often meet with other family members, but their initial sexual attraction grows ever stronger.⁶¹ On June 26, 1924, Charlot writes: "elle me pose. prie confesse" 'she poses for me. prayer I go to confession.' He begins to sleep overnight at Anita's (July 14, 17 [?]; September 19). Their meetings are often followed by Charlot's confessing (July 10, 11, 30; August 7; September 19, 20; October 17, 18). He begins to note that their contact is exciting.

On August 3, 1924, he writes for the first time: “trop près d’Anita ?” ‘too close to Anita?’ He continues on August 7: “Anita de trop près” ‘Anita from too close’; and November 3, 1925: “faire attention avec Anita pour elle” ‘be careful with Anita for her own sake.’ Sometimes Anita wants to reduce physical contact (September 26, 1924), sometimes Charlot does (October 27, 1925). Charlot was duplicating the development of his relations with other women, whom he continued to see (1924: July 19, 30, 31; 1925: December 20, 24). But his interest in Anita seems to have calmed his relations with other women.

Brenner was a little more than seven years younger than Charlot, young enough for his attitude towards her to be “the kindly affectionate fatherly interest (it was always fatherly...)” (Glusker 2010: 752). Charlot assumed also the role of mentor: “I think I can be a constant factor in the fact that your acquisitions through me are permanent. You would not change as much from now on as you did from 18 to now” (JC to AB “A long nice letter”). Indeed, mentors were always an important part of her career (Glusker 2010: xxv, 736), and Charlot would continue in the role until some time after her marriage to David Glusker in 1930. Even when their relationship became romantic, Charlot still offered her avuncular advice and even some preaching: e.g., he criticized one of her poems “because you call race sorrow what is most probably a physiological uneasiness common to both Jewish and Catholic girls of your age.”⁶² When she was accused of being self-centered, she wrote: “I think I got the habit from talking with Jean, who was always most interested in me, or at least so I thought” (Glusker 2010: 639). Brenner could find Charlot’s roles confining and feel freer when separated: “Have come to the conclusion that Jean has a bad effect on me.”⁶³ Another disadvantage is that people gave Charlot credit for her work: “Tina said about me that I was nothing in myself, but that Jean had created an idealized version” (Glusker 2010: 309).

Their romantic relationship is expressed in Brenner’s diaries and in Charlot’s letters and diaries. He dreams about her, keeps a lock of her hair, and reads her letters to himself on romantic nights at Chich’en Itza. He is so absorbed in her that he cannot even flirt “à la française” (JC to AB June 1925); “You are the only woman I love deeply and totally, body and soul” (“Enfin une lettre de toi”); “I miss a woman in my actual life, but I am afraid this woman *has* to be you. Mis ensayos for ‘ersatz’ are unsuccessful” ‘My attempts at substitutes are unsuccessful’ (“Your last letters are something sad”). Charlot’s instinct was monogamous; once he was married, my mother told me, he never looked at another woman. He is depressed and even physically ill without Anita. Charlot’s devotion became something of a joke among the couple’s friends. Federico (Marín) wrote Brenner probably during her 1925 stay in New York:

Charlot se consuela con la virgen. Desde que te fuiste, no se ha bajado del andamio, pasando el día acariciándola con el pincel, con el que además le unta un poco de carmín para emparejar el rubor..... Desde el día fatal, no le he visto ni el polvo, por lo que tú te imaginarás lo inquieto que estoy.

‘Charlot consoles himself with the Virgin. Since you left, he hasn’t come down from the scaffold, passing the day caressing the wall with his brush, which he anoints with

a little carmine as well to match his blush.....Since the fatal day [of Brenner's departure], I haven't seen him even a bit, so you can imagine how worried I am.'

An indication of Charlot's attachment is that he writes to Brenner so openly and demonstratively: "Don't laugh at my style : I have never written like that to anyone before and of course it must be a little primitive" ("When Orozco said he was going to New-York"). Their communication is important for him: "la comunicacion contigo es mi unico deseo *vital*, en el plan natural" 'communication with you is my unique *vital* desire on the natural plane' (January 1, 1928). Charlot complains that Brenner writes so rarely and unaffectionately for fear of falling into clichés: "El que ama es atontado, no goza de las pequeñas cosas y quiza sea un espectáculo ridiculo" 'He who loves is turned into a fool, doesn't enjoy the least little things and is probably a ridiculous spectacle' ("Tus dos cartitas"). He is joyous when her letters are warm: "Tu ultima carta es casi de enamorada (de mi.). Me dio gusto porque es muy raro cuando te descuidas..." 'Your last letter is almost one of a woman in love (with me). It pleased me because it is very rare when you are not over-careful...' ("Los cambios libro V. Arroyo").

Charlot's openness of expression reveals a rare closeness. They were true intellectual companions, even sharing prejudices. Like Charlot, Brenner could write: "Rich people I do not like" (Glusker 2010: 440). She belonged to no political party but had "a drive to defend the underdog" (xxvi [Glusker]). Like Charlot, she connected good art to morality (500). Unlike Charlot, she was "afraid of money" and felt "Geometry, it is not sensual" (440). Her knowledge of Charlot was important to him: "You have certain responsibilities towards me, inasmuch as you are the only person who knows me thoroughly, now."⁶⁴ When she is absent, "La solitud mental es peor que la physica" 'The mental loneliness is something worse than the physical' ("Received the visit"). Brenner makes very interesting remarks about Charlot:

Discovered some of Jean's vulnerable points. (Glusker 2010: 290)

Spiritual position of Delacroix, like Charlot. Storm inside and mind holding the ruins [author: reins?]. Delacroix consummated, however, Charlot perhaps not yet—no, not yet. (312)

Jean's tendency to "understate," that is, his almost vice of hiding much behind something very simple. (700)

[In courting], the refinamiento malicioso [mischievous refinement] of Jean. (451)

Brenner understood she had a special affinity for personalities like Charlot's:

There are two kinds of men inevitable for me. One is the kind that needs me, the spiritual suffering ones. Because I can give them the rest of understanding. It just is that way. Always has [been]. Since I was fourteen people have confided in me. I always know just what they mean and just how they feel. The other kind is the physical beauty and strength which attracts me. I should like to be dominated, but completely. (Glusker 2010: 439; also 451)

On her side, Brenner felt Charlot understood her, though he could describe her as a sphinx (Glusker 2010: 452, 468).

The couple formed a close and productive collaboration in their writing, and Charlot often expressed his admiration for her work:

I told him I was rather frightened and discouraged by the thing because I have always been hoping that I was a normal person. So, said Jean: “Artists occur about one in a thousand...of these, some carry on traditions, others vary them, either in thought or form...and in varying strengths...but the creators are the rarest of all...maybe one in [a] million, and much apart in time...and I am sorry to tell you that it looks as if you were one of them.

Which didn’t please me at all, because it is just a load and a responsibility and always too much emotion and pain and suffering for one’s poor frame. (Glusker 2010: 757; November 3, 1929)

When Katherine Anne Porter spoke negatively about *Idols*, “Jean says that she resents not having written it herself” (Glusker 2010: 739). Even when Charlot was worried about Anita’s growing apart from him—indeed even after they broke up—he continued to help her with her research and to express his support and admiration for her progress (“Your beautiful poem”):

And then probably you won’t care as much for me-present as for me-memory, I am afraid. You’ve made such big progresses, Anita dear; I could sense that in your articles, the balance of thoughts, the poise. There really is going to be a moment for you w[h]ere you are going to be able to surround me totally, take my measure from up down. This is not anything I try to insinuate, so don’t be angry at me. Bigger, equal or smaller than you, does not change anything to the way I like you.

As will be seen in the next volume, Charlot did not write thus to the much younger Zohmah Day, whom he explicitly described as smaller than he was. Anita herself felt smaller: “I know the measure of myself and who is bigger. For example, my mother, David, and Jean” (Glusker 2010: 784). Charlot felt their mental closeness went beyond intellectual collaboration into unconscious communications and dreams (May 1926). Collaboration could also provoke anger (e.g., Diary May 26, 1927).

Their attraction was physical as well. Brenner wrote: “Jean kisses beautifully” (Glusker 1998: 123). A letter from her “m’a permis quelque temps de sentir à nouveau le cher poids de ta tête sur mon épaule” ‘let me feel again for a while the dear weight of your head on my shoulder’ (“Enfin une lettre de toi”). Charlot’s drawings and paintings of Brenner reveal how much he was attracted by her stereotypically Jewish looks.

They were not, however, having sexual relations:

Quizas falte yo bastante del espiritu heroico, dear, porque de estar tan unido contigo espiritualmente, me crea un deseo tan grande de unidad física. Combatir eso es

doloroso porque son todas mis fuerzas towards this end y no tengo mas que una parte chiquita de mi para oponerse, y sufro intensamente. (January 1, 1928)

‘Maybe I’m missing a lot of heroic spirit, dear, because being so united with you spiritually creates in me such a big desire for physical unity. Fighting against this is painful because all my strength is directed towards this end, and I have no more than a little part of me to resist myself, and I suffer intensely.’

At the beginning of their relationship, Charlot’s sexual abstinence was probably welcome to the young Anita, the target of many more aggressive men. Indeed, Glusker believed that Brenner was a virgin on her marriage in 1930 (personal communication, February 12, 1998). Anita wrote on May 10, 1927: “I could qualify for a cenote sacrifice, Jean assures me,” a virgin sacrificed at the sinkhole of Chich’en Itza (Glusker 2010: 409). As Brenner matured, however, sexual relations became a subject of disagreement in her relationship with Charlot.

In fact, contentiousness was a factor in their relationship probably from the beginning; when he returns to Mexico City, “Alla nos peharemos” ‘we’ll fight there’ (“Te mando la fotografia”). Charlot was known for his sarcasm and needed to joke about it to allay some of its effects:

“I think I wont find any thing disagreeable to tell you when I see you at last. And what are we going to speak of then.” (June 1925)

“We sometime disagreed on your dresses, but I always priced [*sic*: prized] very dearly your skin, your hair and you, dear.” (“A long nice letter”)

“and I’ll never make remarks about your ‘other’ friends ni nada, y nunca nos peharemos, etc, etc.. Esas son buenas resoluciones y estoy seguro de no observarlas nada cuando seras aqui – because I am muy celoso, you know, y cuando no digo nada, pongo una tal cara que es peor!”

‘and I’ll never make remarks about your ‘other’ friends or anything, and we’ll never fight, etc., etc. These are good resolutions and I am sure not to observe them at all when you will be here, because I am very jealous, you know, and when I say nothing, I put on such a face that it’s worse!’ (“Como que nunca escribes”)

Brenner was not always willing to be jollied, and Charlot wrote her more seriously:

The difference is that restlessness that comes of thinking of you while when we were together if, as you said “no tuvimos un momento de alegria” [‘we never had a moment of joy’] we certainly had moments of peace, of deep peace. (“Recibi cartas tuyas regresadas de Chichen”)

The two strong individuals formed such an unusual relationship that Charlot himself was puzzled:

I am going soon to Yucatan and I hope that this can change a little my mind and give me some sort of interest, would it be only by hard working. Here, since you went I feel really mutilated and now that Orozco is with you, there, I feel a little more alone.

I wonder if that long custom that I have of you, of your thinking and feeling with me, can be broken. Certainly not suddenly, and I would say, certainly not by separation. Since you are gone I need you still more. I have watched lovers lately, Anita, and they are very very different of what we are together : Perhaps we are not in love or perhaps we love better than they do. Quien sabe? [‘Who knows?’] (“When Orozco said he was going to New-York”)

Such problems were strongly outweighed by positive feelings of unusual closeness: “But the best politie would not be as good as the most absolute simplicity, that nakedness of you for me that is so essential for us two to be sure of each other” (“More than three weeks”). Consequently, marriage was discussed at some length. From Charlot’s correspondence, Brenner appears to be the one promoting the marriage and Charlot the one hesitating:

so strong is my security in our “entité.” I like that gift of yours because I cannot repay it by the same attitude. Being myself and my own chaperon and struggling all the time with myself I could never explain to you all that at once but only parts of it and this distorted by inhibitions. So the only thing I can do is to be very grateful to you for your total confidence in a man that could not explain himself totally and receive you and guard you as a best part of me. (“More than three weeks”)

Their ultimate break-up in 1929 surprised Charlot and many of their friends.⁶⁵ My mother told me they had separated because Brenner would not convert to Catholicism, as my mother herself did sincerely. Susannah Glusker, Anita’s daughter and biographer, told me she was certain that Charlot and Brenner did not marry because she would not convert to Catholicism. Glusker told me that she felt her mother was more a cultural Jew than a religious one. She had not been raised Jewish and knew little of the religion. But she felt she would be betraying her people and their history if she converted: “I have a kind of racial feeling about desertion” (Glusker 2010: 687; also xxiii). Glusker writes: “Anita identified as a Jew. She did not practice her religion within an orthodox tradition, nor did she join a Zionist movement...”; she was, however, active in Jewish causes (Glusker 1998: 35). Anita could state: “I am the most Jewish person I know” (Glusker 2010: 410).

Roman Catholic policy required a potential non-Catholic spouse to consider conversion and even submit to instruction in the teachings of the Church. If Charlot broached this subject to Brenner, he would have been following Catholic practice. But Charlot also felt that people should develop in their own way and not be forced into a foreign mold. He felt that Nijinsky went crazy because his wife tried to cure his homosexuality. In his letters to Brenner, Charlot encourages her Judaism as a way for her to develop. Her religion is part of her identity that she should cultivate rather than abandon. Charlot’s Jewish grandmother instilled in him an appreciation of that religion that influenced his Christianity: it always had an Old Testament edge. He fills his poems with Job-like complaints and chooses the most drastic subjects, like the Sacrifice of Isaac. Charlot’s God made both the tiger and the lamb.

Charlot is aware of the social problems of a mixed-religion marriage, especially into a Jewish family. In a letter with several reasons against their marriage, he can go so far as to write: “We could not

marry because our parents and children would be unhappy” (“Enfin une lettre de toi”). At first, he wrote only “our children” and later added “parents and.” My sister Ann told me that he had a serious talk with her about the problems she might have being part Jewish when the time came for her to marry. But Charlot himself was a quarter Jewish, and he had the example of the extremely happy mixed marriage of his grandparents. Charlot’s half-Jewish mother would certainly not have objected. In any case, in his letters, Charlot is not requiring or expecting Brenner’s conversion. I conclude that Charlot is grasping for excuses for not marrying, as he does in several letters of the correspondence. On the other hand, in his writings both before and after, Charlot did include religious unity when he described the ideal marriage. Susannah Glusker suggested that Anita’s conversion may have been an unspoken topic.

As stated above, Charlot’s letters contain nothing that suggests he was trying to convert her to Catholicism, although he answers her questions on his religion. On the contrary, any religious advice he gives her is applicable to both religions, and he constantly appreciates and encourages her Judaism:

[on her story about a Menorah] Me gusta su 100% judío. (“The few days you stayed here”)

‘I like its 100% Jewishness.’

Muy contento that you study Jew history. Un besito de mi parte a Rabbi Stephen Wise.⁶⁶

‘Very happy that you study Jewish history. A peck from me to Rabbi Stephen Wise.’

I am glad que las cosas Jewish sean un exito. *Lo mereces*. (March 19, 1925)

‘I am glad the Jewish things are a success. *You deserve it.*’

Brenner on her side recognized the breadth of Charlot’s religious sympathies; he writes in appreciation of one of her poems: “the human expression in it is deeper, more ‘catholic’ to use the word as you used it once towards me” (“I received your answers and poem”). Charlot was attracted to Anita’s Jewishness:

[Paul Claudel] wanted to know something about me, so Jean told him the important thing, which was that I was a Jewess. Important to both himself and Claudel.

(Glusker 2010: 741)

On her side, Anita was impressed by Charlot’s religious devotion. Comparing him to Carlos Chavez, she wrote:

he has the same *savoir of passionné* [FR: flavor of passion] and cold calculation when he approaches his work. He had the same look, utter, thorough, complete submission and absorption, while listening to some music, that I saw in Jean once when he was kneeling in front of the confessional. (Glusker 2010: 585)

Other friends made similar statements, like Weston (1961: 79 f.). Anita felt a longing for the comfort of religion: “I wish I had someone to pray to”; “I knelt gladly” in a church.⁶⁷ But she had serious criticisms of Christianity in contrast with Judaism:

[Christianity] is a religion especially concocted for making strong men weak... Judaism, was precisely this energy, potentially in every branch of human endeavor and life—And that this came from their strong sexual heritage. Stronger than in anybody else and a thing, of course directly creative. Not that all Jews are artists—tho in point of view they are—but that Jews are always doing something and that something to the nth degree, more so than anybody else. (Glusker 2010: 153)

For Anita, being Jewish was not an absolute criterion for marriage. When Manuel Hernández Galván proposed, Anita “Refused on the ground of not being a Jew” (Glusker 2010: 38; also 11). On the other hand, she found that her only connection with another suitor was “a Jewish bond” (645). But the problem was acute with Charlot: “I shall be forced to make a decision about religion” (7; November 21, 1925). Whatever Charlot said or wrote to her, Brenner felt that:

Way back in his mind I suppose he hoped...hardly articulately—that I would become a Catholic. That would have in his mind solved all difficulties. But not in mine. (Glusker 2010: 720 f.)

On September 1, 1929, Brenner reported “a very intimate talk” in her journal:

It crystallized that *en el fondo* [deep down] Jean had always hoped for my conversion; and this would have implied, almost surely marriage....So that to him the relationship between us never looked as hopeless, as irrational, perhaps, as it did to me....And the sensation he had was passed over to me, so that always we both had the feeling that we were building something.⁶⁸

Other problems were real and serious, most obviously, Charlot’s poverty. His letters often mention the obstacles created by his lack of funds and the difficulties of getting paid.⁶⁹ Brenner was poor herself, and each helped the other financially when they could. In fact, Charlot thought she was more practical than he was: “Well, you know better than I do about those business questions” (JC to AB May 17, 1925). Charlot would later leave business matters almost entirely in his wife Zohmah’s hands. Nonetheless, in Charlot’s traditional view of marriage, the economic well-being of the family would be his responsibility, and as seen above, he felt acutely that he had failed in that duty after his father died and he himself had received his mother, sister, and grandfather as his charges. Charlot also experienced facing and solving financial difficulties as an impediment to his artistic vocation. A choice, therefore, had to be made:

Another thing : You seem muy impresionada by dinero. I *know* that I can ganar dinero in many ways *but* la obra que tengo que hacer me impide emplear los mejores medios. So, no pudiendo ser de los primeros en esta fight for money, lo mas logico es renunciar. Ganar lo indispensable and to suffer the less possible, impedirme los deseos de cosas que se venden como se impide uno pensamientos obscenos, etc....

This is my discipline. (JC to AB “Your drawings from the subway”)

‘Another thing: You seem very impressed by money. I *know* that I can earn money in many ways, *but* the work that I have to do impedes me from using the best means. So not being able to be among the first in this fight for money, the most logical thing to do is to renounce. Earn the indispensable and to suffer the less possible, stop myself from desiring things that are sold as one stops obscene thoughts, etc.

This is my discipline.’

He does not ask her to do as he does, but she can adapt his attitude to her different case:

Lo importante es tener *finalidad unica*. eliminando las otras en todo lo que tienen de incompatible con esta, totalmente si necesario.

‘The important thing is to hold to a *unified objective*, eliminating all other, incompatible objectives, totally if necessary.’⁷⁰

Charlot realized the practical difficulty of this position. He responded to her description of a businessman:

Estos ultimos son admirables por el esfuerzo orientado a un solo fin. Es lastima que ese fin (en si) sea tan tonto porque el dinero, en mas de lo necesario, es un estorbo mas que otra cosa. Pero cada uno en nuestro fin particular debemos emplear el metodo businessman o fracasar. (March 29, 1925)

‘These businessmen are admirable for their effort oriented toward a single end. It is regrettable that this end (in itself) is so foolish, because money—in quantities more than necessary—is an encumbrance more than anything. But each one of us in our particular end should use the businessman’s method or fail.’

Charlot also saw the danger for any romantic relationship of trying to replace economic benefits with intellectual ones:

Dos cosas leídas a las [‘Two things read at the’] moving-pictures. “A man, to please a woman, must have a car, know how to dance, and be afraid of nothing” y [‘and’] “A mind-reader never satisfied any woman.” (March 29, 1925)

A factor in Charlot’s decision finally to marry my mother was that he was assured of a little money by his contract for the illustrations of Prosper Mérimée’s *Carmen* (1941).

Charlot’s family worries were aggravated by the fact that he was still responsible for his mother and would continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Although he never brings this up as an excuse against marriage, he reacts with his only openly angry letters when he feels Brenner has been disrespectful to his mother:

Anita, what happens.

Mother sends me a desperate letter with a rather insolent letter from you to her enclosed. I cannot discuss facts being far from them, but whatever they are you know that acting like that with mother is a thing that hurts me deeply. She is 56 and

accepted to work hard work to let me free time to paint. I admire that and if there was no other reason, and there are, I would like her as I do...

I received from you a letter nearly as strange as the one you sent her. I did not mind from Francis [Toor] though it was psychologically [*sic*] monstrous, but from you I mind. I wanted some news I have them perhaps too soon.

I wait for an explanation.⁷¹

When she writes without explaining, he reacts again angrily:

Dame tiempo de digerirlo que me dio mucha pena, sobre todo por lo incomprehensible... Me mando ella secunda carta tuya que tambien me parecia no tuya. Dices por ejemplo "La hygiene es para mi religion moral y physica." Que te has vuelto idiota o es que como siempre he tenido de ti una idea demasiado subjectiva que no corresponde. Estoy completamente desorientado y disgustado con esto. ("Recibi cartas tuyas y dices")

'Give me time to digest that which gave me much pain, above all because incomprehensible... She sent me a second letter of yours which also does not seem to me to be yours. You say for example, 'Hygiene is for me a moral and physical religion.' Is it that you have turned into an idiot or is it that as always I have held of you an overly subjective idea that does not correspond to reality. I am completely disoriented and unhappy about this.'

Brenner felt that Charlot's mother was hostile: "I dreamt I was a prostitute and that Jean's mother ordered me out of her sight and Jean's" (Glusker 2010: 278, 280; October 24, 1926). This impression continued throughout their relationship:

Madame Charlot also there. I've done my best to win her over, but she won't be won. Yet she is old and has suffered so, I put up with all the subtle *piquetes* [jabs]. I think she thinks I'm too dumb to notice them. (Glusker 2010: 352; April 3, 1927)

This evening Madame Charlot came with some things for Jean. How she does dislike me! (372; April 21, 1927)

Madame Charlot was also here. How she hates me! (419; May 21, 1927).

Charlot's mother could be nice to Brenner (Glusker 2010: 428), but Brenner disliked what she considered her ascendancy over Charlot:

When we returned his mother came, having been here once before. This made him angry because it was not arranged, and also it broke up the evening and there are so few left...It rather amused me about his mother, though. Naughty little boy, come home before you get your fingers burned... (506; August 31, 1927)

When Brenner listed friends and enemies, she labeled Charlot's mother as "Actively Both" (Glusker 2010: 354).

A final mental obstacle for Charlot may have been a factor, although he never mentioned it either to Brenner or to my mother in his correspondence. He once told me that he had hesitated to marry my mother because he was worried that he would never be able to work again as an artist. That is, the responsibilities of marriage would occupy him so much that he would not have the necessary mental freedom for creative work.⁷² He said that if one looked at his check-list of paintings, one would see that his production declined greatly in the year after his marriage. This is hard to establish because of differences in size and the 1939 Peapack mural, *The Life of St. Bridget*, so the statement is interesting primarily as a record of Charlot's impression. On May 12, 1972, he told me that for twenty-five years, he had been working outside of his field (Tabletalk). He was a painter, but was forced to work as a teacher. As a result, he could only be a "Sunday painter." My mother dismissed this point when I mentioned it to her; she felt that he had been able to work very well as a married man. I do, however, remember several periods of family difficulty during which my father found it impossible to paint. In any case, Charlot's fear was a factor in his decision whether to marry or not.

A solution adopted by many of Charlot's colleagues was to enter into a sexual relationship without marrying. His own Catholicism rendered this impossible along with his view that it would be disrespectful towards his partner. Nonetheless, they were faced with a dilemma that Brenner found frustrating:

Of course the situation is unnatural! ... We could not have only sexual relations because I like you better than that. It would be something to hide, and momentaneous
Of course we cannot speak of platonic love, because our bodies need more.

So there is no way of getting out of it now. We must be patient and wait. Some day new elements can solve the problem, so easily that we wont even notice it. I asked you not to fight against facts but it would be even worst to fight for them.

... Why would you be ashamed or fight like a trapped beast. Human love contains animal love but is so much more than it. It is about the noblest thing one can feel, if not the most agreeable. ("Enfin une lettre de toi")

The prejudices of the time entered occasionally into the discussion: "Jean and I decided tonight that if we became lovers I should be humiliated" (Glusker 2010: 680).

Charlot proposed a relationship in which their progeny would be their art work and writing rather than children:

Answers : You are not and I am not, dear, of the type of people that would bear gladly many children because we have our own spiritual children (writing. painting) and the heavy responsibility of their creation— ("Why do you ask so many questions")

He could write of this playfully: "Te mando el ultimo niño, que no necesito de ti para ser padre, pero mira que mal conformado esta!" "I send you the latest child, that I don't need you to be a father, but see how badly shaped it is!" ("Otra cartita tuya"). Even after their break-up, he wrote:

We can still have a unity of thought and a unity of work, which is much, as for the rest you can trace me my new limits. I understand our poor physical contacts were not enough or too much—and however backed by real passion, a most unhealthy and unnatural attitude. (“I wrote you this morning”)

Charlot connected this proposal to his view of Brenner as a person: “Tu salvacion sera la actividad cerebral y el desarrollo (me escribes a este proposito) de tu sentimentalidad espiritual o sea religiosa” ‘Your salvation will be cerebral activity and the development (you write me on this subject) of your spiritual, that is, religious feelings’ (February 2, 1925).

Children seemed to represent for Charlot the responsibilities that resulted from romantic attraction. He wrote a caption for an image of a young Indian couple sitting by their nuptial mat:

Tonight little do they dream that
Babies will shove them off their mat. (1933 *Picture Book*: 17, The Petate)

Charlot certainly felt new responsibilities when he had children, but he was a happy father of his young brood and came to realize the melancholy of a childless love relationship. In 1968, my parents were saddened when the Tamayos referred to their dogs and Rufino’s paintings as their children.

If Charlot’s problem was supporting children, the solution would then be to marry and use birth control. Brenner wrote of “My unwillingness of have children” (Glusker 2010: 605; also 606). Again Charlot’s Catholicism interfered:

Catholic only idea of marriage is that of procreation, this is to say, the only man-to-woman relationship is the triangle father-mother-child, even when, at first, only potential. You and me are not types for catholic marriage, could not even materially, accept the consequences involved by non-limitation of birth. You grew up so much, lately that you probably found out for yourself that marriage is the only possible mold for love, true love. As I cannot give you that, anything else would be to twist and vulgarise that very beautiful feeling that, at least, *is* mine for you.

So that the next logical step would be to cut all physical contacts with you as they lead to that—or would be meaningless— (“Why do you ask so many questions”)

His problems are religious rather than psychological, as she argued:

You see that I have no inhibitions, just barriers. Dont hate me nor my Church, for it please, I would suffer. I would like you to see a priest and make everything clear with him, speaking of me. You see, for “exceptional” people the logical place is a cell, an excellent ambience for work—but I am a bit coward. (ibid.)

Charlot did, however, use the word *inhibitions* elsewhere and was aware of the difficult position he was leaving for Brenner: “P.S : Do you still allow me to love you? Please do to put yourself in harmony with facts.” She says she will force him to love her, but he reminds her how timid she can be (“J’ai reçu une jolie lettre de toi”). Charlot followed Catholic teachings on contraception in his marriage. When my sister

and I complained as children to him that he had had our two younger brothers instead of just us, he said with some exasperation: "I didn't make you with a measuring rod."

As the problem of sexual abstinence grew, Charlot regretted Brenner's outgrowing her pre-sexual stage of their first meeting:

Et tu m'aimes aussi parceque quant tu te fatigues d'être femme tu as le droit de redevenir avec moi la toute jeune fille que j'ai connu. Nos corps et nos pensées ont grandit ensemble et cela est une union très forte et unique. ("J'ai reçu une jolie lettre de toi")

'And you love me also because when you get tired of being a woman, you have the right to become again with me the complete young girl whom I have known. Our bodies and our thoughts have grown together, and that is a very strong and a unique union.

In the five years they've been together, he has loved watching her grow, like an opening flower:

As for the diary it is just like when I was watching you writing with your glasses and eye-shade on and knew that you were a little more mine than, all yourself for myself, than when in that make-up of dresses and rouge that made men fall in love with you. ("Why do you ask so many questions")

As with Nahui Olin, he hopes that his dispensing with sexual claims will provide a respite from more aggressive suitors.

Charlot wanted Brenner to find a solution to the physical problem in the uniqueness of their relationship and not try to understand it according the psychological theories that interested her: "I am just 'inquieto' of the way you bother about our relations, and you would like to make everything clear giving them names":

it is very real, sometime a suffering, sometime a pleasure, but I don't think it requires explanations. You speak to me as if you think I had a sense of guilt, or sin, when thinking of you. This is not true; you are essentially an element of beauty, of harmony, of fitness. The only question is how to bring that beauty out, how to realise it without belittling it, Our few gestures, our few contacts are only very poor translations of that, they are so loaded with animality; not that I forget my body and yours (you know my true position) but sex is not the best, nor the strongest, between you and me. You are going to dislike this letter, dear, but I had to write you, and could not write about anything else. ("Your beautiful poem")

The uniqueness, however, was based on him more than her. In "A long nice letter," he begins by speaking generally: "You know our position, dear, and how it seems impossible to equilibrate it physically and socially." But he goes on to find the main obstacles in himself:

I think also that some day you will retire from me as a person just because you cannot find in me durable elements of physical happiness and you need them. When would it be? I don't know. On the other hand the peace that you feel when with me I could not give it to you if I had loose it. You could force me to abandon my spiritual unity and be "normal" but remember the tale of the hen with the golden eggs. We would gain a physical stability perhaps, but surely loose our spiritual unity! and I prize it most dearly. Our love is probably greater and so, less classifiable. Let us not complain of it. We are sure at least that it is not egotistical and that we don't consider each other as pleasure-machines. And we suffered to prove it.

Brenner described both her suffering and Charlot's in her journals:

the sensation of a deeply felt kiss (Glusker 2010: 7)

A sex-obsessed day. J morose and quivering. I perplexed and partly drunk. (11)

Then Jean & mother. *Me da pena* [It embarrasses me] to see him so tense. It is mostly physical, of course. If he had money— People tell me he should marry. There are many women. With me, it is not a question of money. It is temperaments. What a mess. (11)

Jean here all P.M. Somewhat erotic moments. (15)

Conversation with Lucy about relations with Jean. Thinks them strange, as indeed they are. His religion forbids physical relations out of wedlock; which are a necessity to him, and would be of tremendous value to both—but more especially to him who is tight, taut and at the strident point—But marriage impossible, because of mutual bad tempers and consequent impossibility of divorce—religion again. I would just as soon as not render him the little favor of ameliorating his condition somewhat—One could with him. But one can't because of him—I expect one will, eventually. (17)

Jean kisses beautifully. (22)

He is passion-sick these days—Some ten or fifteen years of chastity on account of religion, on a background of power temperament, is indeed enough for nausea—and no visible way out—a matrimony for life, as forcibly it must be for him, would find few co-respondents of such caliber as would be necessary to avoid worse annoyance than the present. (25)

A good thing J [Charlot] is not here tonight. He'd lose his '*virginité*' [FR: virginity] and I would too. (26)

Their strong sexual attraction for each other did not diminish. On her 1927 visit to Charlot at Chich'en Itza, April 17May 8, Anita noted on May 5, 1927:

Jean and I alone with the moon, therefore it could not have been otherwise. He made me rather angry because he kissed me, by force, on the porch [with others present]... But withal, I liked it. The anger had a tremendous effect on him and it makes me hurt

to see him suffer...He says that with me he is like a man who is, or rather has been, thirsty for a long time. He kisses me like that. He cannot restrain himself more than somewhat, and here he is with thirty years' accumulation, so that even a dribble has a sweep and a drive that stops my breath... (Glusker 2010: 401 f.)

Intense nostalgia overtakes me for Jean—a physical need of him of which I've felt scarcely a touch before.”⁷³

Charlot and Brenner did place themselves in tempting situations, like bundling:

Jean is very bitter about this. He takes me in his arms and his temperature begins to rise, but as a rule I am so tired and it is so warm that I fall asleep, and he says I answer his ardent speeches with a snore! (489)

Even when Brenner was planning to marry David Glusker, she felt with Charlot “a general atmosphere of tension and some sexual excitement.”⁷⁴

All the above factors made their relationship an unusually complicated mix of love, collaboration, jealousy, fear, anger, and frustration.⁷⁵ Susanna Glusker emailed me on December 12, 2004:

Their relationship was complex... they were friends, I believe they were in love, but they were incompatible... in lots of ways...a true tangle of emotions, intellectual sharing and collaboration... I think she learned a lot from him and she relied on his opinion on a lot of stuff she wrote...but then again, she did the same for him...

Brenner's journal records her strong love as well as her problems. Jean really cares for her, runs errands, and gives advice (7). She respects his talent and takes care of his paintings (233, 603):

Why do I think of J[ean] so much? (Glusker 2010: 8)

J[ean] only one who has convinced. After more than two yrs [*sic*] he proves the truth of that Aztec witches' [saying] “If you want to be loved—love.” (8)

After leaving Charlot in Chich'en Itza, she feels “Heartache” (405):

I have a brand new need for Jean. Now that really was unnecessary. (412)

I'm in a curious state, never experienced to this degree, of *enamoramiento* [being in love] with Jean. Oh dear! (414)

With Jean, I pivot on myself. (442)

[Jean] is always in my subconscious. (445)

With Jean, it is an enormous deep bond—mental, spiritual, and not so much, physical. (451)

On November 24, 1927, she writes:

I am full on the crest of realizing how much I care about Jean. And I think that, notwithstanding the Pope, my family, his family, and no money and the inconveniences of children, I shall eventually or next winter, marry him. (552)

She will accept poverty and even having children. She dreams of Jean being angry (612). She has a happy dream of being with him at Chalma (614). She identifies “the three things closest to my heart: Jean, the Jews, the Indians”:

if I do not live with Jean, I do not want to, I cannot live with anyone else. All these days and nights I have thought and dreamt of only him.

...

I spent about two hours reading Jean’s letters and writing to him. Even though I am little by little getting closer to being able to express precisely what I mean, still to Jean I cannot give more than a shadow of how deeply, painfully, gladly I love him. (631)

If I regard myself with respect for anything, it is that I am capable (which I never thought I could be) of loving so greatly as I do him. (652)

She “felt fully enveloped by the thought of Jean” (633) and feels “an impulse to write Jean: ‘Come and take me now, or you never shall!’” (674).

On the other hand, Brenner was troubled by the problems described above as well as lesser ones: “he dresses so badly as to be conspicuous on the street, and I just hate that” (458):

My program of alienation with Jean fell through. He wouldn’t alienate. But I am convinced he is bad for me. When I am with him, I can’t even look at the ceiling without being asked what is there, and this is highly irritating. (281)

Charlot keeps writing her that she will marry someone else: “out of nothing we are eternally making terrible struggles, and trying to accept the possibility of renunciation,” which all suggests a painful future (651 f.).

Despite his awareness, Charlot was surprised when Brenner began to express serious disagreements with his ideas about their relationship: “are you again in one of your moments of seeing me in the past. You asked me questions, I answered them; perhaps you are displeased with the answer —”:

You see how restless it makes me to know that you are unsatisfied with my attitude : I would like to please you dear; I know I can do it a little by helping you professionally, but so little; also when I am with you and you sit with your head against me and sleep, or dream or think what you want—I know that, at those moments, at least you enjoy being with me perhaps because my presence is not an imposition—I don’t know, I thought I was useful to you, and yet, when I analyse, facts escape me.

Perhaps you have no real need of me or I don't know how to answer your needs, but even so, I would like so much not to lose [sic] you. I write you silly or pedantic letters, but they all mean the same thing and you must not be displeased because in spite of all my brain work around you and all my excuses and explanations you are my very dearest Anita and soon I am going to be with you. (JC to AB "Your beautiful poem")

He seems surprised that she might draw different conclusions from his statements:⁷⁶

I wrote you all what I could about our incompatibilities and now I am very much afraid all this could become practically true. I did not think necessary to speak very much of this great affinity between us because it is so evident.

Charlot's letters become increasingly aware that Brenner is growing distant from him:⁷⁷

Your cards show algo cambiado en ti. Tu evolution es tan rapida que me da algo de miedo. No se si te das cuenta? But I knew you a few months before quite a little girl sin experiencia ni pasado y me gustabas like that. Me parece ahora que hay un elemento de complicacion. No tratas de crecer demasiado a prisa, please.

'Your letters show something changed in you. Your development is so rapid that it makes me afraid. I don't know whether you're aware of it. But I knew you a few months before quite a little girl without experience or a past and you pleased me like that. It seems to me now that there is an element of complication. Don't try to grow up too quickly, please.'

Charlot complains that Brenner is not writing and, when she does, is restless and unconfiding: "your life is full of secrets you don't want me to know" ("Why don't you write me"). Charlot's already strong jealousy becomes acute and illogical:

I have known Orozco better since you went. He is extremely sensitive and delicate and feels deeply and *loves* you. So I fear very much : not being there what can I do but beg you not to be too nice with him or with anybody, and it must be full of nice young boys in New-York. Well you see how illogical I am : I don't want to do anything to keep you bound to me because it is painful and "sin salida." So I better shut up and retire.⁷⁸

Brenner was flattered by the number of interesting men who courted her and at times felt "Ripe for a love affair"; "I'm about ready for the long-prophesied love affair" (Glusker 2010: 49, 92, 489). She had romantic feelings for Lowell Houser (86, 88, 292) and Bojidar Vidas (e.g., 451). General Galván proposed marriage, and when he was murdered, Anita noted, "There is no one left but Jean" (212). Anita's relation with Charlot inhibited serious interests as well as flirting (8, 622, 631 f., 658). But she was impressed by her friendships: "I am so proud when I think that the best of Mexico are my closest friends...Orozco, Charlot, Goitia. I really love those. Different in each case, of course" (327).

Charlot promises to fit himself to her newly developing self: “I just will have to widen a little my love to your new size” (“Recibi cartas tuyas regresadas de Chichen”). Looking forward to seeing her again, he knows they will “need a few days to be one again, but if you give me that same full confidence you had in me, dear, I don’t think there is going to be any effort in moulding my old love to your new self” (“Hoy te mando el ejemplar de Forma”). He is often aware of acting like a fool: [he did not write] “para no estar siempre en la actitud de uno que pide limosna” ‘so as not to be always in the posture of someone begging alms’ (“Me hubiera gustado”).

Even more confusingly, Charlot would often pull back when Brenner moved towards him. When she writes him one of her most overt expressions of love, he responds:

J’ai peur pour toi si tu m’aimes vraiment. Tu as grand faim et soif, physiquement, et je te donnerais bien peu. (“J’ai reçu une jolie lettre de toi”)

‘I am afraid for you if you really love me. You have great hunger and thirst, physically, and I would give you very little.’

After their happy visit together at Chich’en Itza, he writes:

I would like so very much to be for you what you would like me to be. I am so very much afraid of your having to suffer from our love. Dear, dear, why did you ever found such an awkward and serious person as me and not think it the silliest thing that it is.” (“The few days you stayed here”)

Charlot was putting Brenner in a push-pull situation. When she got too close, he would worry and push her away. He would then miss her and pull her back. He would do the same to Zohmah Day in the 1930s. Whatever his economic, vocational, and emotional excuses, he was imposing great suffering on his partner. Brenner dreamed of the pattern:

the image of us is about like this: Him static, wanting to come to me but doesn’t. Me static, and changing at times into going toward him, whereupon he recedes, faster and faster...in dream, he receded so fast that finally he disappeared and this made me desolate. (Glusker 2010: 641)

Both Brenner and Day would on occasion explode, which Charlot found puzzling: “Recibi carta tuya muy enojada conmigo que me dio pena porque no lo he merecido” ‘I received your letter, very angry with me, which caused me pain because I did not deserve it’ (“Recibi carta tuya muy enojada”).

Shortly before their final break-up, Charlot sketched his view of their situation in a poem dated June 1928, which he sent to Brenner with the words:

I was since I received your letter, occupied with the thought that we were not two only anymore. As always when I am very sad I wrote a little poem. I want to share it with you, first because you are the reason for it, 2^o) because you asked me something in french. Technically the form is our most classical, so the “tour de phrase” and

choice of words have to be of common use. Mentally, you must forgive a certain harshness, because I was suffering. (“I was since I received”)

In *Voici fini, Seigneur, l'entracte à mon échelle*, Charlot begins by describing the period of their relationship as a restful intermission on his journey (1926–1928). He was very happy: “C’était si doux, voyez-vous, d’avoir un autre être pas plus beau, pas plus haut que moi” ‘It was so sweet, you see, to have another being no more beautiful or high than me’, who shared the same ideas about living. She had “cette peau fine, si douce à l’épaule” ‘this smooth skin, so soft at the shoulder’, and he so thirsted and hungered for a relationship in which he would be the objective and end purpose of the other person. He finds it painful to have her move beyond him to someone else. At twenty, he belonged entirely to God. He was stupid about women and did not think they could abandon someone. Now the last woman has left him. He opened her eyes to so much, taught her and loved her so much: “Ce ne fut pas la plus belle, mais ce fut certes la plus aimée” ‘She was not the most beautiful, but she was certainly the most loved’. He loved her so much that he forgot her inevitable leaving and tried to stop time. She wanted acts, not words, and he should have given her something of the fire he felt. Now he is alone. She was right to leave: “Dieu m’a doué d’une sottise unique” ‘God has given me a unique stupidity’. Go on then, have a good marriage with this man of good looks and good morals! Have children and an ordinary prosperous life! Or divorce, make poems, and take lovers. We laughed at old people trying to be young when we were young together. But remember that you owe me what I love in you. You cannot escape me because I have formed you: “De tant bercer ce corps j’ai modelé cette âme à mon identique reflet” ‘By lulling so much this body, I modeled this soul to my identical reflection’; “je vous ai créé par mes caresses” ‘I created you with my caresses’. She will realize this even if her husband does not. So speaks Pygmalion before the abandoned pedestal.

Despite all the warnings from their correspondence, Brenner’s decision to marry David Glusker came as a shock. They met shortly before March 19, 1929, and by June 28, Brenner found herself in love with him (Glusker 2010: 674, 690). Glusker belonged to the second type of man that was “inevitable” for Brenner: “physical beauty and strength” (439). Charlot caricatured himself as a tiny David confronting David Glusker’s giant Goliath (692). In comparison to Brenner’s first type of “inevitable” man—“the spiritual suffering ones”—the second had an easier personality. When a problem arose, Brenner and Glusker would address it in an American rather than a European way: “the solution generally arrives with extremely frank analysis, both personal and mutual” (728). Even when he married an American, my mother, Charlot would find such family discussions disagreeable.

A series of letters on their break-up detail his feelings. He had started a letter to her when he received hers, asking “my opinion,” and so is writing another (“I wrote you this morning”). They have discussed this eventuality often before, and she knows “I am not ‘marriageable’ at least in the near future.” She is, therefore, free to choose:

Independently of that, dear, I feel more and more that I cannot have a family now, my work being the only creation logical with myself. You know all what this implicates for me, and however painful, I am going to try to hold to it. Since some time ago I doubt even very much if I’ll ever marry.”

He will always be ready to help her in any way he can. He writes her soon after: “It was a hard blow” and a surprise (“Te quiere lo de siempre”). But he feels he can understand her: “that it was logical and inescapable—that I have seen it for you and spoke of it with you, but anyhow the *fact* is something different.” His personal feelings are very involved: “It just changes a situation that was very dear to me because we are not anymore two but there is your escape towards the third which is for me an unknown quantity.” Characteristically, he tries to discount those feelings: “it is just egoism to feel unhappy.” He will not let her soften the blow: “P.S. Please don’t excuse yourself or say I misunderstood your letter. Ya sufrí lo que había que sufrir [‘I have already suffered what I had to suffer’] and I think you act right.”

The few later letters of the time continue these themes:

I am not inhuman enough to think that you enjoyed the kind of relation we had, and I understand well your desire to look for something better, or at least natural. I even hope you could succeed. (“I am not inhuman enough”)

He writes on sending her materials for her work:

It is in two days that I was planning to go and in a week I would have been with you. I feel it deeply especially adding that knowledge (new for me) of your independence—You put, as you say, my pain “in place and proportion[”] and there is nothing more to be done—or it would be insincere. I think anyhow that being near you and speaking with you could have made me less uncomfortable.

I love you very dearly. (“I send you the Niño Fidencio photographs”)

Brenner described Charlot’s anger and suffering at the time:

I fell asleep on Jean’s camp cot and he read detective stories and watched over me, as he loves to do. These days he is ill-tempered, snappish, and much enamored. I feel a despair at ever coming out of it all. The bond with Jean pulls and pulls, and the relationship is very beautiful but very unnatural.⁷⁹

Jean is all on edge, just curled up like an armadillo and determined to stay in the painful dark. Says after all this year was difficult for him...that in it he lost the only two people he cared anything about, that is, his mother and me...But it is damn hard on him...And one after another the things that tie him to the ordinary world are cut. So now he’s a typical dementia precox possibility. Well, more than possibility. But I never saw a person so lost in the world as he. There never was one. (Glusker 2010: 719)

He, on the other hand, seems to have lost some kind of life-giving hold...He is getting thinner and thinner and is very irritable and will hardly answer me civilly. Of course it is clear that it is a very hard blow to him, and that it is a kind of hopeless break with the only intense or the only real bond he had left, to the world...I hope the exhibits are wildly successful. It would be the only thing that would bring him

back... (725)

he says he just must work up an interest in something, but that he lacks patience, or enthusiasm. (729)

Brenner was exasperated by a character trait of Charlot's that annoyed his friends and my mother as well: his unwillingness to fight for himself or her:

All the things which irritated me before...which can be summed up vulgarly as *gutlessness* in daily details, and which I before put up with, now seem to me unusually unforgivable. Yet he is by no means a coward. By no means! (719)

There are so many other things to put up with, also for his sake because indeed he is worth the strain, but nevertheless it is a strain. Another thing is his mother's hostility. It is really awfully bad for my morale...Of course it is nothing and there is reason, and it is her privilege, but it hurts. Finally, Jean is so depressed and needing of comfort and consideration all the time that it breeds impatience. This *pobre-diable* [self-pity] bred by too much humility is an awful load for a friend to carry, and I always have the sense of carrying a load, and at the same time a feeling of being exploited, violated and taken possession of, all of which turns me against art and intellectual books and the rest of it. This motivated an explosion this evening, though most of it within. Nevertheless, I did blurt that he had a bad effect on me and he just froze to silence and a sort of wilted sadness and this irritated me more than ever. It is not fair to anybody to be so goddamn defenseless. Makes you feel like a dog, or rather like one who has beaten an affectionate and confiding animal.

Horrible!⁸⁰

On saying a final goodbye to Charlot:

I was horribly affected by the look in his eyes. It seems to be constant there, and it is impossible to describe: a depth of suffering, a quintessential pain. I don't think a hurt dog, even, could look quite like that. All his life is in his eyes, and what it says is that all his life is gone.⁸¹

Brenner was entirely frank with Charlot about her relationship with Glusker: "I have told Jean as much as I know about the matter. He seems in his mind relieved, but as to his emotions" (Glusker 2010: 690). She allowed both Charlot and Glusker to read her journals (663). To some extent, Charlot felt he could maintain his exceptionally close relationship with Brenner, despite her "escape towards the third." On her side, Brenner was not entirely disengaged from Charlot and asked his advice about her marriage. Charlot responded in a letter that had much of his old pull. She should achieve some "mental unity" first, especially since she would not have Charlot to rely on:

Of your plans as you tell them now, dearest, I could not say that they satisfy me entirely. I understand your bodily needs and their strength and your perfect right to do what you think most fitted as to your health and peace. I know also a strong

jealousy in me, something animal and male, increased by this fact that between your body and mine the barriers are only mental and on my side. and they resist so feebly against the fact of our otherwise full unity. (“I received your answers and poem”)

He does not write this to influence her, but she should know that physical relations with the man will give him “a certain right of him on *all* of you.” Charlot sees here that his relationship with Brenner will be essentially changed. She on her side has begun to hesitate: “Whatever thing you decide to do, or did, may I ask you the right to know it.” He seems to be asking her whether she has in fact started sexual relations with her fiancé, a worry he expressed later in his letters to Zohmah Day. Moreover, as Brenner threatens to return to him, Charlot applies a decided push:

You see how silly I am dear. I thought I had loose you all and now that you come back to me I find myself with an hesitation and uncertitude and that feeling that there is a little bit of pity in your attitude, yet not enough to be mine without restriction.

Charlot ends with a statement that made his attitude clear. He was suffering but could offer Brenner nothing more than he had before:

There is something broken in me. I would like to be with you, near you and just watch you and understand and cease to criticise. But I don’t know now *when* I am going to be with you.

Throughout the long break-up, Brenner was trying to accommodate Charlot, Glusker, and herself (e.g., Glusker 2010: 782). She prays for a solution with Charlot (Glusker 2010: 721). She is happy when he is attracted by someone else (731 f.) or is cheered by his work with Paul Claudel (741). She tries to understand the situation by finding a philosophical goal:

Question: But what exactly must I do with my abilities?... Answer: Pick up the thread of uncompromising spiritual and ethical thought...which means fight against nearly everything in modern thought around you...which also means keep yourself as pure and lofty of mind as you can...

For the first time too, I understood what Jean meant when he said most of my stories are immoral. Unmoral is what he meant. And therefore to him, immoral. (755)

She writes down a program of work (763 f.). She tries to understand her suffering in terms of her mission:

The chief attribute of an artist is an active desire for perfection.

...

One thing troubles me. I know that pain is the source of great art, as it is of all creation—and I seem t be headed for complacent pastures. If my bovine bliss is to be tempered into something human by grief, let that grief be a loss of anything—anything—rather than David. (782)

Brenner’s emotional strain “led to her collapse in a nervous breakdown after a mystical experience” (Glusker 2010: 663). Brenner herself wrote: “A psychiatrist might call what I had a

‘paranoid panic,’ and a theologian would call it an ‘intellectual vision’” (754; also 759). When Charlot put Zohmah Day through these same travails, her close friend Prudence Plowe advised her not to let herself be entangled in Charlot’s “complication.” Brenner opted for a relationship with a future. Charlot then decided to try a celibate vocation, but he was in fact made for marriage, which he realized once he could bring himself to try it.

Charlot continued to help Brenner—as she did him—through the publication of *Idols Behind Altars* and collaborated with her on books, but their correspondence ceased when they were both living in New York and after her marriage (e.g., Glusker 2010: 732, 738, 786). Charlot burned her letters along with most of his correspondence on marrying Zohmah Day, a decision my mother strongly opposed. Charlot and Brenner maintained positive feelings for each other and began to correspond again most cordially in the 1960s. She helped him with his business in Mexico, and they collaborated on other books. When we were living in Mexico in the mid-1940s, my father took me along on a visit to Brenner in her office. She gave me a smile and a nod but was radiant looking at my father.

Charlot’s next serious relationship was with Zohmah Day, starting at the same point as he had left off with Anita Brenner:

Charlot and I went for a walk and while we were sitting on an old stone bridge watching the lightning in the night this is what he told me: that he didn’t love me; that he had sort of an affection for me; that he needed someone to rub and kiss and smell; that it was fair enough that I should be satisfied with this because in turn I needed a man, and help to straighten out my new emotions, and besides he says he will be good to me if I fall in love with him.

I think the situation might be very interesting if there was of danger of my liking him, but he certainly isn’t a person I would like to be serious about... (Day Diary July 19, 1931)

Zohmah noticed Charlot’s general need for female affection, but also its frustration:

(I think Jean needs a woman friend with him I think that is why he has been so attentive to me). But it makes me furious. (Day Diary August 20, 1931)

She summarized the situation acutely:

Jean is the sweetest nicest man in the whole world. He is my father, my uncle, my mother and I only wish he was my lover. (Day Diary August 16, 1931)

Charlot’s religion complicated his romantic life, but the latter also influenced the former. Charlot felt keenly the potential embarrassment of his position as Brenner did of hers: “these people are mystified by my apparent chastity... They almost think I’m a pervert” (Glusker 2010: 171). Brenner reports an example of the macho humor that could target Charlot:

Carlos Mérida came, and Jean childishly in a tantrum because we teased him “You paint only bottoms” (in reference to his *Temazcal*) “but only in paint”—*le pudo*

[which got to him]. He is sensitive about his virility. He appears in a sorry role usually. I wish he did not. (Glusker 2010: 30)

At this time Charlot began his special devotion to St. Joseph, a man also condemned to sexual continence because of his peculiar situation. Charlot told me how embarrassing and even humiliating his predicament would have appeared to others if it had been known. In a poem on the situation of a young, celibate man, *Unis, l'homme et la femme éclosent androgyne* of September 1922 (1920–1924 Civil), Charlot uses the words androgyne and eunuch. Charlot's earliest mention of Joseph is in his poem *Présentation* of February 16, 1918, a narration of the Biblical story in the naturalistic style Charlot learned from Anne-Catherine Emmerich (1917–1920). Though dressed in their best clothes, "Joseph est lourd d'aspect, et Marie peu belle" 'Joseph seems heavy and Mary little beautiful.' Joseph is merely an awkward peasant, filling his usual role in the Presentation of the Child in the Temple. Though "je ne vois rien qu'un couple et son enfant, timides" 'I see only a couple and their son, all timid,' faith reveals the enormous spiritual significance of the event: the child will guide the elders who hold him. Ordinary life can hold cosmic significance.

In *Je te veux chanter Marie*, a long poem of October 9, 1919, based on the Golden Legend, Charlot discusses Joseph's role more extensively, including all the episodes in which Joseph appears (1919 Manuscrit Brun). Joseph's image is more positive: "Majestueux comme une nef" 'majestic like a nave.' When she indicates she is pregnant, he suspects she has sinned and offers to send her away secretly out of kindness. Unable to sleep in his anguish, he has a vision of an angel who clarifies the miraculous situation. Joseph comforts Mary and promises her that he will fulfill his protective role as her husband. He will be "bon père nourrice" 'a good father (wet-)nurse.' The word *nourrice* has no masculine form, but Charlot defines it as a masculine trait and applies it elsewhere to Jesus to express his nurturing character. Charlot accepts the traditional means of easing the situation for Joseph by making him old, "de barbe vénérable" 'with a venerable beard.' He loves the child and obeys the will of God:

Disant "Faut que j'obéisse
A celui divin-humain
Que je tiens dedans ma main."
'Saying, "I must obey
this divine-human
whom I hold in my hand.'"

He proves a manly and intelligent protector of his family against Herod, fleeing with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. He is also a good provider through his manual labor, teaching carpentry to Jesus. After Joseph's death, Jesus supports his mother by continuing to work in the shop:

Jésus rouvrit la boutique
Et charpentier s'établit

Il n'avait grande pratique
Mais a petit appétit
Subsistaient Lui et sa Mère
D'une vie douce-amère
'Jesus reopened the shop
and established himself as a carpenter
He did not have much business
But with few needs
He and his Mother subsisted
In a bitter-sweet life.'

The story is a curious parallel to Charlot's own, with Joseph in the role of his deceased father Henri, and Charlot in the role of Jesus supporting his mother.

The above episodes appear in a list of biblical events written in the same manuscript as the poem, a list that could have been used for meditation, poems, or pictorial subjects. Indeed, a number of these subjects became regular in Charlot's visual art, and Joseph is always accorded a prominent, honored place.

Charlot focuses on a different aspect of Joseph's story early in Mexico:

Mexico 3–21 fête de St Joseph

a) patron des vierges : virginité acceptée par soumission et non par désir. délicatesse du rôle de nourricier.

b) intercesseur pour nous auprès de la S^{te} Vierge, elle-même voie à Jésus.

c) qu'il partage l'intimité de Marie, dans la connaissance par révélation du mystère de l'Incarnation.

Si Jésus a aimé Lazare par exemple, combien plus Joseph. (1920–1925

Ludwigshafen: "Journal des Méditations")

'Mexico, March 1921, Feast of St. Joseph: a) patron of virgins: virginity accepted by submission and not by desire. delicacy of the role of foster father.

b) intercessor for us with the Holy Virgin, she herself the way to Jesus.

c) that he shares the intimacy of Mary in the revealed knowledge of the mystery of the Incarnation.

If Jesus loved Lazarus, for example, how much more Joseph.'

The difficulty is that Joseph is a virgin in a non-virginal situation. On June 17, 1922, Charlot noted: “longue méditation sur St Joseph. mon patron plausible actuel, car: il avait la vocation du mariage.” ‘long meditation on St. Joseph. My plausible patron at this time, because he had the vocation of marriage’ (1920–1925 Ludwigshafen: “Journal des Méditations”). He wanted to possess Mary sexually, but found she was already pregnant: “rôle de cocu. douloureux et *ridicule* au contraire des martyrs : douloureux et héroïque” ‘role of a cuckold, painful and ridiculous in contrast to that of martyrs: painful and heroic.’ Joseph’s subsequent kindness to Mary is *niaiserie* ‘foolishness’ in men’s eyes. The angel’s revelation prevents him from marrying someone else although he would like to: “St Joseph *sans le désir* vit et meurt vierge” ‘St. Joseph *without wanting* to lives and dies a virgin.’ He cannot love Mary as his wife or Jesus as his proper child, but must devote his life to them as if they were. The other male relatives of Jesus have more glorious roles: “la vie de St Joseph humainement illogique. comique même” ‘the life of St. Joseph is illogical in human terms, even comical.’ But in true Christian fashion, this “doit constituer sa gloire toute spéciale au ciel” ‘must constitute his most special glory in heaven.’ Charlot ends by drawing the parallels to his own situation:

prière à St Joseph qu'il me protège dans ma situation parallèle à la sienne. (femmes non prises à cause du Texte, comme Lui à cause de l'Ange). (vocation impossible actuellement).

(ridicule) mais me mette au plus vite aux bras de St Joachim. prière à celui-ci pour femme

amour *charnel* (comme Anne) plénifié là-haut.

‘prayer to Joseph that he protect me in my situation parallel to his. (women not take because of the Text [Bible], like him because of the angel). (vocation [of marriage] impossible at this time).

(ridiculous) but puts me more quickly in the arms of St. Joachim [father of Mary and patron of marriage]. prayer to him for a wife

carnal love (like Ann [the mother of Mary]) completed above.’

On the feast of St. Joseph of March 19, 1924, Charlot compared him to the Joseph of the Old Testament (1920–1925 Ludwigshafen: “Journal de Méditations”). Just as that Joseph was hidden in a well, so St. Joseph lived a hidden life. But both were first mocked and then received a glorious reward.

Charlot elaborates these themes in several poems, like *J'ai joué au Joseph chez bien des Putiphars* of July 24, 1922 (1920–1924 Civil). In *Saint Joseph* of September 1922, he meditates on the saint’s *frustration* in his perpetual virginity, a word with a clear sexual connotation in French (1920–1924 Civil). That is Charlot’s own “douleur actuelle” ‘present pain, and he feels the “fracas de ma vocation” ‘the crash of my vocation.’ He thought he could enjoy this creation and educated himself and kept himself pure for his future marriage. Joseph also thought he would enjoy a human marriage and took his bride to their bed. His recompense was to die holding the hands of Mary and Jesus. May Charlot, living

the life of Joseph, also die his death. Charlot alludes here to the Medieval idea of the good death. The poem is also relevant for understanding his depictions of the marriage mat, such as his 1933 lithograph *The Petate* (M137).

In *Elle a beau être jolie, et très, bon Dieu* of November 14, 1922, Charlot adopts his world-weary mode to resist a beautiful temptress (1920–1924 Civil). He asks God to exorcize her demons and insert them into the nearby pigs, a funny biblical reference. He would like to conquer her for God. God would be pleased to have a convert so much prettier than the usual ones that offend the splendor of His temple. Beyond its bitter humor, the remark reveals how deeply Charlot felt female beauty. Resigned, he himself seeks only “de Joseph la tutelle” ‘the tutelage of Joseph.’

In Charlot’s statements about Joseph is seen his focus on normal humanity rather than mystical heroism. Joseph is an ordinary man caught in a miraculous situation: he has no vocation to be celibate but is placed in a position that requires it, just as Charlot himself. Charlot generally sympathized with the normal people in religious stories. For instance, the father of St. Francis of Assisi is usually portrayed as a villain for resisting his son’s vocation. But Charlot felt he naturally had hopes and plans for his son and should not be condemned from the perspective of a heroic Christianity. That is, Charlot’s thoughts about Joseph can be seen as another step in his development of a religion of the parishioner. In a 1958 lecture series on *Mary and Art*, Charlot articulated the nub of his relation:

Towards Saint Joseph I feel a very special devotion. Any man who is head of a family, who has responsibility not only for the children, as his wife has, but for the children and his wife as well, should have a great devotion to Saint Joseph. (1958 *Mary and Art*: lecture II)

Fulfilling one’s group role—whether as family member or parishioner—helped solve the problems of the individual. In the nineteen-thirties, Charlot would develop an even more disturbing theme: the Sacrifice of Isaac. God can make demands that contradict the order of His Creation.

¹ Chávez Sánchez 1998: 17, 36 ff., 74, 107, 176. Church writers used the word *organic* for an integralist view of society; Rutherford 1971: 283. On masons and Protestants in government, see Meyer 1976: 26 ff.

² Facius 1958: e.g., 249, 277. Bailey 1974: 20 ff., 30, 301 f. Meyer 1976: 9 f., 21–24. Curley 1997: 1347 ff. Krauze 1997: 444 f. Chávez Sánchez 1998: 2, 17, 74 ff., 93 ff., 99, 164 ff., 176 f., 182 f., 218. Garner 2001: 119. The encyclical could be used also to keep the workers in their place (Rutherford 1971: 281; Krauze 1999: 138; Meyer 2006: 282 f.).

³ Rutherford 1971: 167, 173, 279–292. Krauze 1997: 419. Chávez Sánchez 1998: 99 f., 103, 110 f., 116 f., 121, 140–143, 150 f., 175–182. Meyer 2006.

⁴ Rutherford 1971: 286 f. Chávez Sánchez 1998: 183 f., 187–193, 195–215, 267–276.

⁵ Génin 1908–1910: 115. Meyer 1976: 187 ff., 193 f. Rutherford 1971: 289 ff. Krauze 1999: 383. Chávez Sánchez 1998: 27. Weston 1961: 174.

- ⁶ Facius 1958: 321. Meyer 1976: 32, 37.
- ⁷ Krauze 1997: 421, 423. Weston 1961: 150, 174 f., records the resulting tensions (Lew Andrews provided me with the reference).
- ⁸ Meyer 1976: 197. Diary May 7, 1928, although at Chich'en Itza, Charlot notes "église et confessé" 'church and confessed' (Diary May 7, 1928). Was a priest exceptionally in Pisté ?
- ⁹ Diary September 18, 1927. See also, e.g., 1926: January 5, April 1, 4 ("joie" 'joy'), June 20; 1927: January 30, March 13, 20; 1928: April 3.
- ¹⁰ E.g., Bailey 1974: 36 ff., lists violent incidents. Meyer 1976: 16.
- ¹¹ 1920–1925 Ludwigshafen: "Journal des Méditations," August 16, 1920. Charlot later put this idea to a use more consistent with his general views :
- The fact of the Incarnation has been turned around to his own praise by man's pride. Instead of emphasizing the fix the Second Person found Itself in, suddenly caught in a fleshy cell, we greet God's enlistment in our ranks as if it were a favor we granted Him. Only too much of our brand of pious art amounts to a slap on the back of the newcomer. We deem it flattery to represent him pretty. The Infant of Prague dolled up in baby clothes according to seasons, the curls and locks on our Lord's head adorned with ribbons, are there just to prove to him, in case he had any doubts, what an easy lot it was then, his incarnation. (ca. 1970 Rácz)
- ¹² As seen in the Ludwigshafen Notebook. Charlot refers often to the feast day in his Diary 1922: August 15, September 8, December 8; 1923: August 15, September 8, 18, November 21; 1924: January 6, February 5, April 13, May 29, June 24; 1925: May 10 (Joan of Arc).
- ¹³ Sicilia 2007: 260, 283. Charlot admired many of the French clerics but could find them factious and gossipy (e.g., Diary May 4, 1925)
- ¹⁴ Sicilia 2007: 250, 254, 478. Charlot mentions the "église française" 'french church,' Diary 1922: June 30, August 15 (?); 1923: March 29; 1924: May 2, 26, 29, July 27; and the "collège français" 'french college,' September 1, 1922. Scherer 1996: 104, Siqueiros mentions the Marists and the Colegio Franco-Inglés. Charlot met a "provincial et le père général" 'provincial and father general' on a social occasion, but does not identify them (October 25, 1927).
- ¹⁵ Génin 1908–1910: 6. Charlot mentions it in his diary of November 19, 1923.
- ¹⁶ Charlot's translation of an unpublished manuscript by Siqueiros, "Autobiografía," in the JCC.
- ¹⁷ Facius 1958: 7 ff., 25–31, 44 ff. 1913 has also been given as the founding date.

¹⁸ Bloy: Diary: July 21, 1922. Charlot usually writes *ACJ* or the mistake *AJC*, but the addition of *F* for *Française* is frequent: Diary 1922: June 30; 1924: August 29, October 3, 15, December 17; 1925: February 4, 6, March 18, 19, June 14, October 4. Both organizations sponsored lectures, and the ACJM did have contact with the Colegio Franco-Inglés (Facius 1958: 71 f., 240).

¹⁹ Facius 1958. The ACJM attended the 1921 conference of Roman Catholic youth groups in Europe, meeting with the officers of the French organization, but apparently the Mexico City ACJF was not included and is unmentioned in Facius (1958: 199 f., 206, 211). A priest associated with the Gilde Notre-Dame was also named Cadart. Charlot calls the one he met in Mexico “mon autre Cadart” ‘my other Cadart’ (Diary March 25, 1925). A Fr. Rafael Martínez del Campo is reported as an advisor to the ACJM (Facius 1958: 328; Bailey 1974: 145). He was probably a relative of Charlot’s but is never mentioned by him or others around him.

Charlot mentioned Turin most frequently, who owned a factory and died suddenly (Diary 1922: August 14 (?); 1923: May 27, September 28, October 17; 1924: May 28, August 15, September 7, December 28; 1925: March 22, 26, 31). Charlot had met his sister and drawn a portrait of him (August 15, September 7, 1924). On priests, e.g., Fathers Lejeune and Rougier visited the ACJF (August 16, 1922; September 27, 1923).

²⁰ Diary 1922: June 30, July 9; 1924: January 6. Charlot may have helped distribute communion (July 15, 1922). Retreats mentioned by Charlot may have been held by the ACJF (1925: April 6, 7, 8).

²¹ Another topic, undecoded, is: “sur BRS hispanique” ‘on Hispanic BRS’ (September 4, 1925).

²² Diary 1922: August 16, 18; 1923: July 29, September 27, October 17; 1924: February 1, 6, 27, March 26, October 15; 1925: February 4, March 18.

²³ Sicilia 2007: 351–353, 361–365, 621. Boulagnon 2002.

²⁴ Charlot 1918–1923 Notebook C: “Méditation,” ca. August 1921: “Eloge de la femme forte appliqué à la T. S. Vierge,” “Marie cœur de l’Eglise. (cf. : Ste Hildegarde),” “Présentation de la Très Sainte Vierge.” Charlot 1920–1925 Ludwigshafen: “Journal de Méditations”: “Assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge,” ca. 1920, “St^e Hildegarde Liv II Vision III, parallèle entre Marie et l’Eglise,” “Mexico 3–21 fête de St Joseph” (“intercesseur pour nous auprès de la St^e Vierge, elle-même voie à Jésus” ‘[Joseph] our intercessor with the Holy Virgin, she herself the way to Jesus’), “10–12–21 Fête Immaculée Conception.” All references are in *TF*.

²⁵ 1920/1925 Ludwigshafen: “Journal des Méditations.” Also Diary July 27, 1925.

²⁶ Sicilia 2007: 167–173, 623. Rougier adhered to the opinion that the Second Coming depended on the prior conversion of the Jews (623 f.). Charlot described this view to me without endorsing it or attributing it to Rougier.

²⁷ Sicilia 2007: 163; also 167. Rougier’s negative views of skin color may have influenced his controversial choice of a successor (643 f.).

- ²⁸ Diary 1923: August 25. In his March 24 note “De Nahui Olin,” Charlot writes “Le conseil du P. Rougier serait utile—” ‘The advice of Father Rougier would be useful—.’ Charlot’s regular confessor was a Father Lejeune (e.g., Diary 1922: August 14, October 10, November 10; 1924: April 24, 30, May 29). Charlot could use other priests, like Hilliet (Diary July 20, 1923) and Élie (July 25, 1924; 1925: April 26, May 4, 5, June 10).
- ²⁹ Own initiative: Diary 1923: August 22, November 21; 1925: March 26, 28, November 10. Invited: Diary 1923: September 26; 1924: April 28. Not all diary references to Tlalpan concern La Fama, e.g., 1923: September 4, September 28, November 11; 1924: March 18.
- ³⁰ Koprivitza 1994: 81. I thank Caroline Klarr for this reference.
- ³¹ In the early 1950s, in a period of discouragement, Charlot wondered whether the spiritualist view of Christianity was not higher than the physical.
- ³² Facius 1958: 306–311. Meyer 1976: 34. Curley 1997: 1349. Ramírez Rancaño 2006: 67, 191–195, the schismatic church did not follow Leo XIII’s direction towards social reforms.
- ³³ Génin 1908–1910: 115 f. Zantwijk 1960: 16, 26, 51–63, 70, 76. Chávez Sánchez 1998: 10–14; 117 ff., in 1914, the Apostolic Delegate criticized Indian religiosity, which was then defended by a Mexican bishop. Farfán Caudillo 2008: 218 f., 247. Weston 1961: 37.
- ³⁴ Jiménez, Horcasitas, and O. de Ford 1979: 7; e.g., 9–67. Rodríguez Carretero 2014.
- ³⁵ Glusker 2010: 16, 58 f., 307 f., 355 f. Tabletalk March ? 17, 1977. A mistake on this subject was included in my published 2008 “Jean Charlot and Luz Jiménez.” The 2007 Spanish and posted English versions are corrected.
- ³⁶ Tabletalk March ? 17, 1977. Diary 1925: September 22, “reçu chez mère Luz” ‘received at Luz’s mother’s.’
- ³⁷ Marchais: Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 7. Meyer: personal communication; also Interviews November 25, 28, 1970. Wilson: John Charlot 2006 Classical Hawaiian: 65. Mrs. Gupta, personal communication; Charlot’s description (ca. 1970 Rącz).
- ³⁸ John Charlot 1990–1991: 70. See the difference between the inscriptions by Charlot and Claudel in M148.
- ³⁹ Diary March 9, 1928. Charlot made a beautiful drawing of the roping for transporting the mosaic (JCC D1927.15; A. A. Morris 1931: 253, 266).

⁴⁰ Tabletalk March ? 17, 1977. Charlot may be referring to the same ceremony in a letter to Brenner: “Y busco detalles sobre ceremonia del ‘señor de las colmenas’ del cual trata uno de las tres codices mayas existentes” ‘And I’m looking for details on the ceremony of the “lord of the columns” which one of the three surviving Maya codices treats’ (“Nothing from you ni de nadie”).

Charlot met Thomas Gann (1867–1938), British medical doctor and amateur archeologist, about whom he wrote to Brenner: “Ceremonia actual hecha por sacerdotes mayas para ofrecer premicios [*sic*] a los dioses. Gann dice que es el uno de los pocos que ha asistido” ‘A ceremony still practiced by Maya priests to offer first fruits to the gods. Gann says that he is one of the few who has attended it’ (“Estas un poco demasiado”). Charlot thought positively of Gann (“Recibi tu carta estupida Francis”), and Gann used a drawing of Charlot’s as an illustration in one of his books (“Ya no escribes, verdad”). Also, E. H. Thompson at Chich’en Itza claimed to have been “made chief of a secret society of Indians who perpetuated ancient rituals” (Brunhouse 1971: 34).

⁴¹ Génin 1908–1910: 116. Callahan 1981. Nebel 1992. Charlot said some additions had been made to the image, but these had disappeared. However, additions are still evident on the *tilma*.

⁴² ca. 1926/1927 Obligation. Also 1920–1921 Charité.

⁴³ E. g., Diary 1922: April 30 (written above date), May 27 (“me confesse beau” ‘Confession beautiful’), June 5 (“fait étrange sorte de pesanteur est vivre justifié ! grand joie et liberté spirituelle” ‘strange fact sort of weight to live justified! great joy and spiritual liberty’), July 9 (“très beau” ‘very beautiful’); 1923: March 30 (“très beau Ch. de +. ; merci mon dieu” ‘very beautiful Way of the Cross. Thank you, God’), November 19 (“très beau” ‘very beautiful’), November 21 (“communion spirituelle et méditation très bonne merci mon Dieu” ‘spiritual communion and meditation very good Thank you, God’), December 2 (“beau” ‘beautiful’), December 16 (“me confesse beau” ‘Confession beautiful’); 1924: February 5 (“très bon” ‘very good’), March 5 (“confesse très bon” ‘confession very good’), March 9 (“forte prière” ‘strong prayer’), June 24 (“communion bon esprit de prière” ‘communion good spirit of prayer’), June 25, July 5 (“bonne prière” ‘good prayer’), August 24 (“je jouis de grand liberté physique et moral” ‘I enjoy a great physical and moral liberty’), November 9, November 16 (“messe prière très fervente” ‘Mass very fervent prayer’); 1925: February 9 (“confessé et longue prière” ‘confessed and long prayer’), April 10 (“grande émotion en touchant la relique de la st +.” ‘great emotion on touching the relic of the Holy Cross’), May 11 (“messe communion très bien” ‘Mass Communion very good’), May 17 (“canonisation S^r Th. merci mon Dieu. grande émotion” ‘canonization of Sister Thérèse [de Lisieux]. Thank you, God. great emotion’), May 18 (“très bonne communion” ‘very good Communion’), May 27 (“messe communion avec grand difficulté très bon” ‘Mass Communion with much difficulty very good’), June 17 (“messe communion très bon” ‘Mass Communion very good’), July 12 (“écouté 2 messes. communion. bon” ‘heard two Masses Communion good’), September 25 (“très bon” ‘very good’), September 26 (“grande tristesse et prière” ‘great sadness and prayer’), September 27 (“prière / grande tristesse et résolution” ‘prayer / great sadness and resolution’), September 28 (“très complexe prière à Tlalpam / j’affirme résolution / grande prière / confirme résolution” ‘very complex prayer at Tlalpam / I affirm resolution / big prayer / confirm resolution’), October 9 (“très bon” ‘very good’), November 6 (“grand sentiment après la communion” ‘big feeling after Communion’), November 19, December 17 (“très bon” ‘very good’), December 18 (“très bon” ‘very good’); 1926: April 2 (“Ch de + très beau” ‘Way of the Cross very beautiful’), April 3 (“messe. communion grande consolation” ‘Mass, Communion great consolation’), July 31 (?), August 1 (?), December 12 (Guadalupe); 1927: June 24 (“grande joie d’avoir de paix attribué à S^t J” ‘great joy to have peace credited to St. J[ohn the Baptist]’), October 2 (“grande tristesse grande prière messe fervente” ‘great sadness great prayer fervent Mass’), December 4 (“j’étais pour confesse et messe mais il n’y a rien. *le faire spirituellement.* lu messe” ‘I went for confession and Mass but there was nothing. *do it spiritually.* read Mass’); 1928: July 4 (“bonne prière” ‘good prayer’), August 25 (“prière même excitation” ‘prayer, even excitement’ [perhaps related to his preparations for departure to the United States]), September 3 (“joie spirituel” ‘spiritual joy’).

Charlot can also note negative experiences: Diary 1922: August 11 (“tâche de me confesser sans pouvoir” ‘try to confess without being able to’); 1925: October 8 (“triste et désire de confesser” ‘sad and desire to go

⁴⁴ Charlot 1918–1923 Notebook C: “*Méditation*,” ca. 8–21. See also “Rêve d’Anne” (May 1926). Volume 1, Chapter 7, Section 7.2. Summer 1951 Apologia:

[Angels] Their taste of a man must be first of the soul, its vastness, illness, or idiosyncrasies becoming a clue as to the man’s height, weight, the color of his eyes and hair.

⁴⁵ Charlot July 22, 1922. See the longer discussion of this subject in Volume 1, Chapter 7, Section 7.2.

⁴⁶ E.g., 1920–1924 Civil: *Qu’est ce que je vais devenir* of February 2, 1922, *Débile proie à mes mâchoires de Tantale* of January 14, 1922, *Je le sais bien mon Dieu, ce n’est pas épatant* of February 2, 1922, *Seigneur, prenez pitié de ma chair sans contrôle* of February 4, 1922, *celle-ci chaste avec sa nuque de panthère, Saint Sebastiano de Apparicio: Sebastiano, des bœufs, de leur tiédeur cornue* of November 14, 1922, *Pourquoi faut-il, Seigneur, que vous glissiez la vitre* of September 1923.

⁴⁷ Charlot December 1922. Also December 10, 1921.

⁴⁸ Charlot September 25, 1922. Also, e.g., June 1925.

⁴⁹ E.g., Albers 1999: 123. When asked what he had written, Charlot answered, “I will never tell.”

⁵⁰ Comforted: Stark 1986: letter 24.2, December 27, 1924; Albers 1999: 138. Work: Albers 1999: 157 f., 191 f.; Argentero 2003: 93 f.

⁵¹ Charlot to Brenner “*Todavía no estoy bien.*” On February 12, 1998, Susannah Glusker told me that she did not think Charlot was in love with Modotti but that she might have been attracted to him, as Charlot was very attractive to women. Glusker felt that Modotti was faithful when she had a serious relationship as with Weston and entered into affairs only after the relationship was no longer sexual.

⁵² May 1927 *Jusqu’il y a 10 ans catholique enfant*. See also 1918–1923 Notebook C: “*Essai sur mon état actuel*,” September 25, 1922.

⁵³ E.g., Diary 1922: May 24, June 28, July 12; 1923: October 29; 1924: December 15; 1925: January 12.

⁵⁴ Diary September 14–16, 1926; also June 17, November 2, 1926; 1927: March 19, June 5, October 24.

⁵⁵ *Idols* 304. Susannah Glusker told me she had heard nothing of such a model or of Charlot’s relationship with Olin and did not think she was Charlot’s type (February 12, 1998).

⁵⁶ Diary November 22, 1923. Also October 29, 1923; May 10, 1924; May 30, 1925.

⁵⁷ See also Diary 1923: October 2, 30; 1924: February 14, 21, March 4, May 17, December 15; 1925: March 1.

- ⁵⁸ Charlot Diary 1926: January 3 (“N vient me demander me voir et confesser” ‘Nahui comes to ask to see me and confess’), June 24 (“Nahui téléphone” ‘Nahui telephones’), June 30 (Nahui is included in a list of people to be alerted to Charlot’s return).
- ⁵⁹ “Como que nunca escribes.” Also “Mi direccion hasta que me vaya (?).” See also Charlot Diary September 27, 1927; October 13, 1928 (“allé chez N. elle montre ses photos de nu et écrits” ‘went to Nahui’s. she shows her nude photos and writings’). Glusker 2010: 135.
- ⁶⁰ Diary 1924: June 9, 12, 18, 21 [missed connection], 25, 26; July 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 30, 31, etc.
- ⁶¹ Diary 1924: July 19, 20; August 3. Weston 1961: 90, 95.
- ⁶² “Que dirección tienes?” Many examples can be found: she is young and must not be too impressed by New York City; “Recuerdas (o ya te parece anticuado eso.) que la belleza y el orden son sinonimos y has esfuerzos para conservarte mental y físicamente en el orden” ‘Remember (or maybe this already seems old-fashioned) that beauty and order are synonymous and make efforts to preserve yourself mentally and physically in order’ (“Your drawings from the subway”). Glusker 1998: 122, Charlot was “teacher, father, and mentor,” then “frustrated admirer.”
- ⁶³ Glusker 2010: 225; also 725, 736, 779. Also 645 f., Brenner dreams someone buries an ice pick in her head and says: “‘Now you’ll have a fine time curing that.’ (Jean?)”
- ⁶⁴ “Asuntos: The maya drawings.” Charlot expresses this point often, e.g., “I send you fotos Fidencio.”
- ⁶⁵ E.g., Glusker 2010: 408, 420, 744, 748; also 11.
- ⁶⁶ February 12, 1925. Charlot sometimes mistook *Jew* for an adjective, e.g., “Business : *I know*.” Brenner did the same: “Finished the Jew series...” (Glusker 2010: 18); 42, “‘Jew faults,’” in quotation marks; 289, “Lafosse, the French Jew philosopher.” On Wise, see Glusker 2010: 39.
- ⁶⁷ Glusker 2010: 27, 105. Anita was also experiencing Indian religion, fearing she was being attacked by a spirit; Charlot agreed with her (31). Her interest in magic was also part of her religious quest (46, 58, 61, 62, 65). Charlot may have felt she was looking for religion in the wrong places.
- ⁶⁸ Glusker 2010: 725. See also 618, 620, 663, 683, 685, 687.
- ⁶⁹ E.g., “Me hubiera gustado”; “Why don’t you write me”; “21 July Desde el 28 de Junio”; “J’ai reçu une jolie lettre de toi.”
- ⁷⁰ Susannah Glusker felt *unified*, *agreed upon*, *clear*, were better translations for *única* than *unique*.
- ⁷¹ “Anita, what happens.” The letter is undated but may be connected to several diary entries: August 6, 1925 (“Anita grossière avec maman” ‘Anita rude to mama’), August 7; March 5, 1926 (“reçu lettre de maman que me plaint gravement d’Anita” ‘received letter from mama that complains to me gravely of Anita’).

- ⁷² Susannah Glusker told me that Brenner had a similar fear: she thought her creativity came from her virginity and so was worried about losing it if she started sexual activity (February 12, 1998). See also Glusker 2010: 20.
- ⁷³ Glusker 2010: 419. When Brenner cooled down, she began to feel resentment (421).
- ⁷⁴ Glusker 2010: 707. Also 23, 27 (“my sexual desires aroused and unsatisfied”); 55 (“sex being the big generating creative energy”), 153 (“the strongest force in the world is sex”), 171 (“these people are mystified by my apparent chastity... They almost think I’m a pervert”), also 180, 200 (“We have the same philosophy, which recognizes sex as the key to things, and the plane upon which woman’s position is placed—and should be”), 735 (Charlot objects to her provocative dress).
- ⁷⁵ E.g., Glusker 2010: 23, 27, 38, 39, 45, 46, 188, 198, 209, 210, 218, 225, 247, 255, 271, 272, 275, 278, 421, 424, 442, 447, 449, 469, 551, 556, 558, 580, 612, 616, 631, 651 f., 678, 687, 712, 719 ff.
- ⁷⁶ “I did not write you for a little while.” My mother said Charlot wrote students such strictly objective letters of recommendation that they were misunderstood as criticisms by the recipients.
- ⁷⁷ “Don’t accuse me.” See also, e.g., 6–25 [June 1925]; “Why do you ask so many questions”; “You never, never write.”
- ⁷⁸ “When Orozco said he was going to New-York.” See also, e.g., 12–2–25. January 1, 1928. “Los cambios libro V. Arroyo.” “Received your letter where you speak of the sketches”: “P.S. : Even if you are nice with young Matisse, don’t be *too nice*.” “Ta lettre en français”: after signature: “jaloux, comme toujours.” “Recibi cartas tuyas regresadas de Chichen.” “A decirte la verdad”: “Pero no creo que vengas porque ya tienes mucha consolacion con los estudiantes y Alfaro sobre todo (tu borracheria con el me puso muy furioso y melancolico)” “But I don’t think you are coming because you already have a lot of consolation with the students and Alfaro above all (your drinking session with him made me furious and melancholy)”; “Casate pronto con algun señor para acabar de una vez con las pretensiones que tengo de tener derechos sobre ti” “Marry some gentleman soon to put an end finally to the pretensions I have to have rights over you”. “Tus dos cartitas”: he imagines her with her students playing guitar and teaching her new songs “o bien con Gruening hablandote paternalmente. Excepcion hecha de Orozco y de goytia, todos tus amigos me dan mucha rabia y dolor de cabeza” ‘or else with Gruening, talking paternally to you. With the exception of Orozco and Goitia, all your friends give me much anger and head-ache’; he signs “Un idiota” ‘An idiot’.
- Glusker 2010: 455, on Orozco; 413; “As Jean predicted,” Gruening courts Brenner; 418, “I wonder how Jean knew.”
- ⁷⁹ Glusker 2010: 700. Also 695, another painful meeting; 723, “He says I am behaving abominably, and I suppose I am”; 745; 752, Charlot being “abrupt ironic”; 760, February 20, 1930, “Jean now thinks that he hates me.”
- ⁸⁰ Glusker 2010: 458 f. On Siqueiros, see Diary April 26, 1923. For Orozco’s opinion, see below.

⁸¹ Glusker 2010: 784. Also 721, “when things get too much for him he protects by immobility.”