INTRODUCTION

> *I believe that the Pacific Islands are, for my work, more future than present. Like the fisherman, when fishing, I am superstitious. For this reason, at this stage I prefer to fish rather than talk*.
> Jean Charlot[2]

This dissertation will examine the altar murals created by Jean Charlot at St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Mission, Naiserelagi village, Ra District, Fiji Islands (Illustration 1.1).[3] The mission is situated along the northern coast of the main island of Viti Levu, on Navunibitu Hill, overlooking Viti Levu Bay. The church, built in 1918, houses three of Charlot's frescoes, a triptych over the main altar and single panels over each of the two transept altars. A mature artist of sixty-five years of age, Charlot painted the frescoes between October 1962 and January 1963 (Illustration 1.2).[4] The central triptych, *The Black Christ and Worshipers*, measures ten by thirty feet. The two side altar panels, *St. Joseph's Workshop* and *The Annunciation*, each measure ten by twelve feet (Illustration 1.3).[5]

Charlot wrote, "I consider myself primarily a muralist, specializing in the technique of true fresco."[6] He worked in *buon fresco*, Italian for the wet fresco technique, whereby the pigments are applied to the wet mortar and dry as a permanent part of the wall.[7] The nature of *buon fresco* implies a monumental artwork that is an integral part of the architecture that houses it. During his lifetime, 1898-1979, Charlot refined his knowledge of this specialized technique through the creation of his fresco murals at forty-five different sites in Mexico, in the United States, and in the Pacific Islands of Hawai'i and Fiji.[8]

Charlot's Fijian frescoes are of great historic significance and are unique for several reasons, including being valuable as permanent works of art. The frescoes represent the furthest Western extent of the international twentieth century mural movement and are the only outstanding example of monumental public art created by a

French-American in the South Pacific Islands during the twentieth century. It is quite likely the murals are the only examples of the fresco technique in the South Pacific Islands, partly because, in the words of Samoan muralist Mataumu Alisa, "Pacific Islanders have no walls."[9] Additionally, the Fijian frescoes represent the only major treatment of Melanesians or Polynesians by any American artist in the twentieth century. They also inspired a great deal of Charlot's other art featuring Fijian culture, the only other non-Hawaiian-Pacific culture featured as major subject matter in his artworks.

Besides their historic significance, the frescoes play a prominent role in the devotional and secular lives of the people of Ra District, as well as the international community abroad. Locally, the altar murals serve as a focal point for religious ritual for the Catholic Church and congregation, who dwell amidst a predominantly Fijian-Methodist national community.[10] Regionally, they are one of the main tourist attractions for the area, generating revenue for the local church mission and businesses in the Ra District. A simple glance at the comments in the guest book illustrates how the Fijian frescoes have become a final destination for both art lovers and Catholic religious pilgrims from all over Fiji and around the world.[11]

Charlot set out to paint liturgical fresco murals in order to create a monumental art form in service to theology, architecture, and the viewing audience. He expressed the view that "art should be for all the masses...it is nourishment for the people, like food, like bread; when it becomes privileged, precious for the few, art is negative rather than positive."[12] His liturgical murals were intended to be viewed as aesthetic objects for contemplation and to serve as their own type of nourishment, "visual food," to promote fellowship and spiritual meditation. His attitudes expressed a particular interpretation of Catholicism that stressed an inclusive definition of the Christian community regardless of ethnicity, cultural background, or religion. Throughout his life, Charlot remained devoted to the creation of both liturgical arts and arts incorporating religious themes.

Based on his artworks, it is clear that Charlot's prolific artistic career drew inspiration from his faith, family, education, environment, travels, friendships, and life

experiences throughout the twentieth century. These factors intersected influencing his ideas and distinctly original approach to art-making. From a conventional Western art historical perspective, his artworks united often the major art genres of history painting, liturgical art, portraiture, landscape and still life. His work remained distinctly unconventional in his steadfast devotion to create liturgical art and representational subject matter during the peak of their unpopularity in the twentieth century tradition of modernism and abstraction. Charlot was unusual for his dedication to labor-intensive and popular mediums, for example, fresco murals, public artworks, and prints. He was unique in his ability to combine his broad knowledge of local cultures and creatively represent them through his visual and verbal arts. What stands out as possibly the most unconventional aspect of his life and work, however, is his original conceptual approach to subject matter, specifically his desire to create monumental, permanent, and public images of local, native, minority, colonized peoples, within an environment dominated by global, non-native majority, colonizer cultures. In the Pacific, Charlot's approach can be contrasted with other artists who created portable art for sale to Western audiences, such as Paul Gauguin.

Unlike other colonial artists, driven by profit and the need for recognition, Charlot appears to have been motivated by other factors. His decision to complete the Fijian triptych commission, as well as two additional frescoes, was not based on commericial profit in the art market; the monetary funds from the commission barely paid for his travel costs to get to Fiji. The isolated location of the Fijian murals reinforced the notion that Charlot was preoccupied with creating art for the local populace, far removed from the outside world. He labored to make his *Black Christ* triptych to appeal to provincial residents, for example, by featuring local people as models, and he reached out to national and international visitors by combining symbolism drawn from Fijian and Western-European culture and history.

Charlot's own position as a devout Roman Catholic allowed him to adhere to an ideology and belief system based in universal humanism.[13] The Church commisson provided him with a visual forum to articulate this view in his Fijian frescoes and to

present this idea within a local framework. Charlot's Fijian murals incorporated indigenous peoples, presentational objects from the local culture, and native flora. In these murals, he celebrated Fiji's diverse population, cultural heritage and natural environment from an indigenous, native, and, thus, nationalistic point of view. Charlot's portrayal of Jesus Christ, the only hierarchically dominant figure, who represented the head of the Church, as a Fijian "Black Christ," dark skinned and wearing native bark cloth, underscored the respect Charlot held for Fijians and his clear vision of their own independence and leadership. Charlot's visual statement in his Fijian murals foreshadowed the end of colonialism in Fiji, the formation of a Fijian democratic government during the 1960s, and Fiji's independence on 10 October 1970, after ninety-six years of colonization.[14]

In 1962, when Jean Charlot arrived in Fiji, the country was a British colony in search of independence. The population consisted of a majority of indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijian laborers, immigrants brought to work in the sugar plantations, as well as expatriates of European descent, and a scattering of Chinese, Vietnamese, and Pacific Island merchants, predominately Tongans.[15] Charlot arrived an outsider, a French-American, a devout Roman Catholic, and an artist with a liturgical commission for a Catholic altarpiece commissioned by Monsignor Franz Wasner. These facts suggest superficially that Charlot could be viewed as a representative and an agent of colonialism. I would argue, however, that within his own background and historic circumstance, Charlot's artworks expressed an attitude more characteristic of post-colonial values as exhibited in his public frescoes. His murals expressed a humanistic approach, his beliefs in and representations of the equality of all peoples, regardless of ethnicity, social class, or gender. His "universal" humanity was defined and rooted in the primary meaning of the word "catholic" and was expressed in his artworks through his representations of multi-ethnic communities. In the twentieth century, he was one of the only known artists to have created monumental public images inclusive of indigenous, minority and colonized peoples. For example, in the United States, Charlot's public murals featured Native Americans, African-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Asian-Americans.[16] In the latter part of his career, he illustrated his

Fiijian Black Christ triptych by painting a community of believers whose models included local men, women, and children of Fijian and Indo-Fijian descent. In the early 1960s, when Fiji was colonized still by the British, Hawai'i had been annexed by the United States, and the rest of the United States was listening to Martin Luther King speak on civil rights, deep in the heart of the Pacific Islands, Charlot was already painting a Fijian "Black Christ."

The purpose of this study is to begin to fill in some of the gaps of scholarship documenting Charlot's contributions to twentieth century art, particularly in regards to his late career and his fresco paintings, liturgical artworks, and public artworks in the Pacific Islands. This text is the first serious academic study to document the history, social contexts, and commission of any of his frescoes in the Pacific Islands. It is also the first study to show how his background with local cultures interacted with his theological beliefs, rooted in Catholicism, and how it influenced his artistic choices for his liturgical murals. Through my investigation, I demonstrate how biographical analysis is important to appreciating Charlot's artworks, not only in terms of his religious ideology, but also in how his later Pacific works expressed relationships with local cultures and drew from his earlier experiences in France and Mexico. I explore the relationship that developed among artist, artwork, and audience, how his ideas were received and perceived within their environment of local cultures. Further, I address another equally neglected area of study, the history of liturgical arts in the twentieth century, by offering the first scholarly text to document thoroughly a major art form in the syncretistic traditions of the Catholic Church as experienced in the Pacific Islands/Fiji, i.e., Charlot's *Black Christ*.

In Chapter One, I present an overview of the literature and related source materials that formulated the basis for this study. I outline primary source materials and important secondary sources, including published and unpublished materials, ethnohistoric documents, and visual records. I review additional sources outside of the literature, such as on-site research, interviews, and active investigations into Charlot's fresco technique. Throughout my review of sources I establish what has been

accomplished already through scholarship and what my goals and original contributions will be through the development of this text.

Chapter Two explores Jean Charlot's biography and how his life, religious ideology, and relationship to local cultures influenced his artworks, culminating in the Fijian frescoes. In France, Mexico and Hawai'i, Jean Charlot participated in the evolution of liturgical arts within the syncretistic traditions embraced by the areas missionized by the Catholic Church. In France, he traveled to Brittany where he was artistically inspired by local religious art forms and pilgrimage sites. In Mexico, he was again influenced by local cultures. He worked with contemporary artists, archaeological teams investigating ancient Mayan ruins, and even made his own religious pilgrimage, one that later inspired him to create his Fijian pilgrimage center deep in the heart of the South Pacific Islands.

Chapter Three investigates Jean Charlot's Pacific Period. In Hawai'i, Charlot continued previous patterns from France and Mexico by establishing relationships with local people, formally studying the indigenous language, and making valuable, although little-known, ethnographic contributions to Hawaiian cultural history. I focus on important examples of Charlot's artistic achievements in Hawai'i, particularly as they relate to his Fijian frescoes. Certainly by the time Charlot was working in the Pacific, and probably earlier, his concern with the communicative aspects of art and his interest in local cultures had begun to influence his artistic choices. I argue that, because he desired to create a public art form meaningful to its local community, Charlot intentionally developed a visual art form that integrated traditional forms of representational Western painting with subject matter that derived from local cultures, not as a mere visual record, but in order to signify greater meaning to the local community. There is evidence in Charlot's own words that articulates his theoretical framework of visual communication systems. I suggest that Charlot structured his artistic approach to develop a creative and an intellectual framework based on the communicative aspects of art and that he conceptualized his artistic works as "signs" that operated cross-cullturally within both aesthetic and communication systems. In my analysis of these systems, it is useful to consider Charlot's ideas about "signs" in the

framework of semiotics, the study of signs, as applied within the discipline of art history. Analysis within a semiotic framework allows the possibility of discussing the multivocality and inter-textuality of the imagery in the Fijian frescoes, the aesthetic and communicative systems encoded in the pictorial images, how they are received by their viewing audience, and how this information can inform the historical relationship of the artist and the audience with the Fijian frescoes.

In academic studies dealing with Pacific arts, there has been a tendency to ignore art created within the geographic region of the Pacific, with limited exceptions in anthropological texts focusing on indigenous material goods and art history's fascination with Paul Gauguin. The comparison between Charlot and Gauguin is difficult to avoid, if for no other reason than Gauguin dominates art historical studies of Pacific scholarship and themes. For this reason, I include, in my discussion of Charlot's Pacific Period, a brief comparison of the life and works of both artists, in order to identify and appreciate Charlot's unique contributions to Pacific Art. In Chapter Three, I provide a preliminary comparative analysis of Charlot's work with that of his predecessor Paul Gauguin; this topic is, however, worthy of its own study. In the last section of Chapter Three, I explore how Charlot's experiences in Hawai'i began to shape his creative responses to liturgical themes and local cultures. Charlot featured these themes throughout the last three decades of his life where he regularly treated Pacific Island culture as major subject matter.

Chapters Four and Five examine Charlot's mature technical approach to the creation of fresco murals through index-signs. In Chapter Four, I identify Charlot's solutions to the unique technical and aesthetic problems associated with monumental frescoes. In this section, I investigate how the physical and formal elements function as index-signs and serve as a basis for the discussion of Charlot's artistic mural "style."

Chapter Five documents the historical context and commission of the Fijian murals. In this section, I review Charlot's index-signs in the form of ethnohistoric texts and visual records. I draw from Charlot's letters of correspondence from the patron, Monsignor Franz Wasner, in order to elucidate the historical context of the commission and to identify specific requests from the patron. I use Charlot's diaries to illustrate his

artistic process in creating the Fijian frescoes. I focus in more detail on his specific fresco technique in Fiji, the different procedures involved with the physical components of the art-making process. This material will serve to develop my ideas in Chapter Six, regarding Charlot's final choice of images, how they express his ideological attitudes towards the local people, and the syncretistic nature of the Catholic Church at Naiserelagi.

Chapter Six conducts a detailed visual analysis of Charlot's Fijian frescoes by identifying and analyzing signs as they manifest as icons and symbols. In my visual analysis, the icon-sign establishes relationships of formal elements in order to identify objects and events from the real world, while analysis of the symbol-sign establishes relationships between objects and events by giving them meaning according to the creator and interpretant's public knowledge of cultural systems, symbol systems, codes, conventions, customs, and institutions. In this section, I reconfigure Charlot's signs within their cultural contexts to determine meaning from the synchronic perspective of the artist, as well as from a diachronic perspective based on the three cultural groups who compose the major audience, European, Fijian, and Indo-Fijian. In the second section of Chapter Six, in order to gain a diachronic and multicultural perspective of Charlot's Fijian frescoes, I review not only ethnohistoric documents (newspaper articles, publications, and other public records), but I also present information from on-site interviews I conducted during 9 September-8 October 1999, 16-18 October 2000, 31 October-11 November 2000, and 2 June-27 July 2001. These materials serve as the basis for my conclusions as to how the different audience groups, European, Fijian, and Indo-Fijian, responded to Charlot's aesthetic and communication systems. To conclude my discussion of the Fijian frescoes, I highlight briefly his other contributions within the context of his Pacific portfolio. I must concede that the study of Charlot's Pacific period raises as many questions as it attempts to answer. While the scope of my study does not allow for a comprehensive examination of Charlot's Pacific Period or liturgical arts in the Pacific, I do index Charlot's fresco murals (Appendix A), Fijian paintings (Appendix B), Fijian prints (Appendix C), and the preparatory drawings for the Fijian frescoes that are not included in his sketchbooks (Appendix D).

Endnotes

[2] Stefan Baciu, "Jean Charlot," Américas, Volume 22, No. 7, July 1970, 29.

[3] Illustration 1.1. Map of Viti Levu, Fiji Islands. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

[4] Illustration 1.2. Jean Charlot in front of *masi* (Fijian bark cloth), Naiserelagi, Fiji. Courtesy of the Jean Charlot Collection.

[5] Illustration 1.3. Interior view of Jean Charlot's fresco murals, St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Church, Naiserelagi, Fiji. Photo by Jesse Ulrick, September 2002. Collection of Caroline Klarr.

[6] Jean Charlot, personal memo, October 1976, Miscellaneous Articles Folder 1960s+, Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection.

[7] Jean Charlot, Fresco Painting in Mexico, Articles Folder 1947, unpublished typescript, 510-511. Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection. This typescript was originally composed to be Appendix A in his book Mexican Mural Renaissance (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

[8] Zohmah Charlot, Jean Charlot Books, Portfolios, Writings, Murals (Honolulu: Private printing, 1986). Refer to Appendix A. Jean Charlot's Fresco Murals.

[9] Mataumu Alisa, interview by Nancy Morris, tape recording, Brigham Young University, La'ie, Hawai'i, April 2000. Private collection of Nancy Morris.

[10] Fijian-Catholics total approximately 8.5% of the indigenous population, in contrast to 78% Fijian-Methodists. The main religious groups in Fiji are Hindus (290,000), Methodists (265,000), Catholics (70,000), Muslims (62,000), Assemblies of God (33,000), and Seventh-Day Adventists (20,000). David Stanley, South Pacific Handbook, sixth edition (Chico: Moon Publication, 1996), 526.

[11] Refer to Appendix F. Extracts from the Guest Book (1962-2001), St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Naiserelagi, Ra District, Fiji.

[12] Jean Charlot quoted in "The Growing Legacy of Jean Charlot," by Ronn Ronck, Honolulu Advertiser (Hawai'i), 23 October 1979, B-1. Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection.

[13] In the following discussion, I will be henceforth using the term "Catholic" to refer to the Roman Catholic Church and faith.

[14] Robyn Jones and Leonardo Pinheiro, Fiji: A Lonely Planet Travel Survival Kit, second edition, (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 1997), 22.

[15] For a brief description of the settlement and demographics of Fiji, see Stanley, 510-531, and Jones and Pinheiro, 11-27 and 41-43.

[16] For example, Charlot's completed public murals in the United States include the W.P.A. project *Cotton Gin*, 1942, McDonough Post Office, Georgia; *Hopi Snake Dance, Preparing Anti-Venom Serum*, 1951, Arizona State College, Tempe, Arizona; and *Commencement*, 1953, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

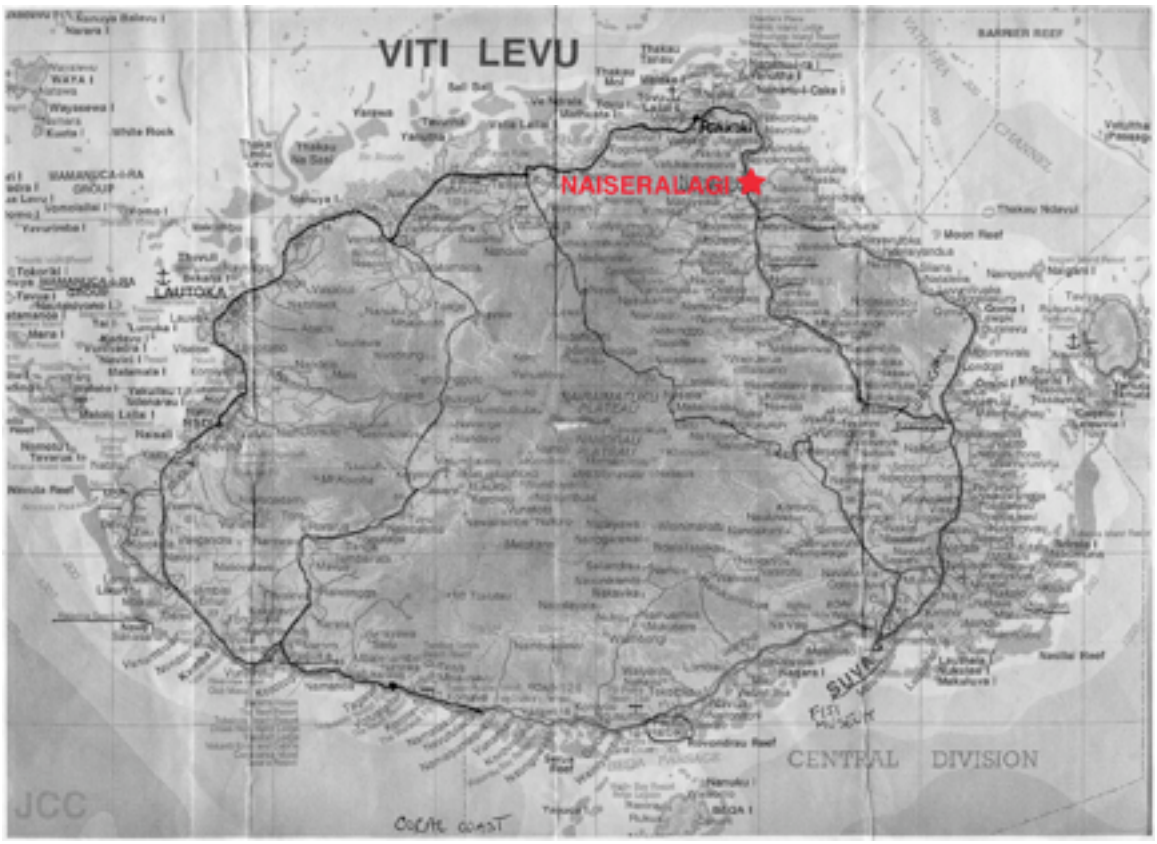

Illustration 1.1. Map of Viti Levu, Fiji Islands. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection, University of Hawai'I-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

Illustration 1.2. Jean Charlot in front of *masi* (Fijian bark cloth), Naiserelagi, Fiji. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection, University of Hawai'i at Manoa Library, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

Illustration 1.3. Interior view of Jean Charlot's fresco murals, St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Church, Naiserelagi, Fiji. Photo by Jesse Ulrick, September 2002. Collection of Caroline Klarr.

CHAPTER ONE
REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND SOURCE MATERIALS

Jean Charlot's achievements testify to the diverse interests and complexity he brought to each individual project. He was a man of unique character who produced a prolific legacy of twentieth century art and writings. As a working artist, he devoted his career to the technical problems of art and played a major role in the revival of fresco painting and printmaking in the twentieth century. Charlot created over seventy public artworks including murals and monumental sculptures, over twelve hundred oil paintings, seven hundred and seventy-two original prints, and fifty illustrated books, in addition to all his final drawings, cartoons, watercolors, carvings, metal castings, and ceramics.[17]

There have been relatively few scholarly studies documenting Charlot's role in twentieth century art. One possible explanation is that twentieth century discourse in art history has often manifested itself in dichotomous categories, such as representational or abstract, liturgical or secular, insider or outsider, Western or non-Western. These categories lend themselves to a misleading view of history as one that is organized into a binary framework, too often with one category dominating the historic record, for example, the emphasis on abstraction in the previous century. Artists and artworks that defy convenient categorization may become neglected in literature.

Jean Charlot is an example of an artist who escapes easy classification because of the international nature of his life and art, i.e., his ability to draw cross-culturally from Western and non-Western influences, as well as across social, political and religious boundaries. Not only did Charlot feature local people and cultures as primary subject matter in his art, but he also developed complex imagery that combined cross-cultural symbolism. In the Pacific, he created aesthetic and communication systems by

combining his own creative imagination and knowledge of Western pictorial arts in order to represent local cultures within this framework.

In academic histories, the tendency has been to discuss Charlot's life, and therefore, artistic achievements, in relationship to fairly well established artistic and geographic "periods": French, Mexican, American (continental U.S.A.) and Pacific.[18] For clarification, I will henceforth use the term "period" to refer to the chronological and geographic frameworks that dominated Charlot's residence at each given location. Thus, while these "periods" roughly correspond to his geographic whereabouts at specific moments in time, it is important to bear in mind that Charlot continued to travel, research, and create art on themes inspired by different cultures and contexts regardless of time. For example, he created many artworks with Mexican themes while living in Hawai'i, during his "Pacific period." For lack of a better word, I choose the term "portfolio" to designate those artworks sharing related cultural themes, i.e., Mexican or Pacific, regardless of chronology or Charlot's geographic place of residence.

Charlot's muralism is perhaps best known in his work with the contemporary Mexican muralists. In Mexico, he completed ten fresco murals, including four monumental frescoes (one now destroyed), at three sites during the 1920s.[19] Outside of his contributions to Mexican modern art and printmaking, there is a surprising gap in documentation on his painted images and frescoes. There is very little literature on American muralism in general nor has there been any comprehensive study of Charlot's muralism in the United States. Mural scholarship is equally lacking in the area of the Pacific Islands, nor has there been any in-depth study of Charlot's artworks featuring Pacific subject matter.

The absence of literature on Charlot's Pacific Period, fresco murals, and public art is echoed in the void of literature relating to his liturgical works, and also indicates a more widespread apathy toward liturgical arts during the modern era in Western scholarship and also within the field of Pacific art. In modern art, the interest in the avant-garde has led to increasingly abstract art movements that dissolved first the narrative and then subject matter, until eventually even the object disappeared. To quote art historian Keith Moxey,

> It is sufficient for my purpose to note that our culture still tends to sneer at art that is "mere" illustration and to prefer that which is wholly autonomous and bears no relation to a text. This attitude which was part and parcel of the abstraction of high modernism, has gradually been called into question in recent years by artists working in what has come to be called a postmodern mode. [20]

I suggest this emphasis on abstraction correlated with the secularization of modern society. The trend away from representational art toward abstraction, away from liturgical art toward secular interests, is observable in art historical literature that often takes a blind eye toward religious influences when looking at art post-1850s and throughout the twentieth century. Rather, scholarship reserved for religious and sacred art in the West is too often confined to the periods of the Renaissance, Baroque, and even earlier, or to various geographic areas that define other fields such as Egyptian, Indian, or Asian.

Academic scholarship in non-Western art history has tended to be dominated by evolutionary models, especially during the first half of the twentieth century. The infiltration of evolutionary models often resulted in the view that many of these non-Western cultures had been assimilated or had disappeared entirely. The second half of the century gave way to a binary system of organization based on Claude Lévi-Strauss' structuralist method in anthropology, generating the desire to classify Western art along the same scientific basis.[21] Thus, the study of indigenous arts and their meanings has been largely neglected. Issues of identity and sovereignty have also had their effect in art history scholarship, which has been reluctant to address issues of Western artists working with non-Western themes, syncretistic traditions, or Christian liturgical arts in general because of their classification as "outside" indigenous traditions. This attitude can be observed to be slowly changing in the latter part of the twentieth century. Since the 1970s there have been attempts to shift interest toward non-Western arts by focusing more on indigenous aesthetic systems, artists, and the function of art within native contexts.[22] In Western art, similar issues are also being raised in postmodern art, thanks to seminal texts such as Debora Silverman's, Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art.[23]

These contributions, although significant, have yet to account for the void in scholarship that fails to take seriously non-Western, syncretistic, or liturgical arts in the twentieth century, holding fast to evolutionary models and, by implication, the ethnocentric mentality that characterizes them. This point is illustrated when one attempts to research the history and images of "Black" Christs. For the most part, Black Christs seem to be a colonial phenomena, and there are very few examples of Black Christs documented around the world. Although there is a Black Christ crucifix that has been in Krakow since 1384, there is no text that documents the existence of European images of the Black Savior.[24] In fact, if one looks up "Black Christ" in the Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art, 2001 edition, it may be a surprise to find that there is no entry at all.[25] Unfortunately, the literature in the New World is not much better. Black Christs have been known to exist throughout the Central and South American world since the sixteenth century; however, most texts focusing on the syncretistic traditions of the Christian churches fail to mention the existence of Black Christ figures.[26]

Although I can only speculate, it appears the majority, if not all, of the traditions of the "Black" Christs, as well as "Black" Madonnas, appear in the context of the Catholic faith, which perhaps accounts for the images being left out of Protestant (based) Christian texts. In A Catholic Dictionary, 1961 edition, for example, the entry on the "Black Madonna" reads,

> A statue or picture of our Lady which, either because of the material which it is made or the manner in which it is painted or on account of age, is black in color. The most famous is the statue of Notre Dame du Pilier in Chartres Cathedral."[27]

Notably, there are no entries on "Black Christs" in A Catholic Dictionary either. The discussions of Black Christs are limited even today and are confined to Black theological movements, particularly in association with the African American Church of the late 1960s.[28] Texts documenting any kind of liturgical arts in the Pacific are also scarce. For example, scholar John Garrett has authored three volumes on the history of Christianity in Oceania, but his focus is on the spread of the faith, with little attention

given to how indigenous artistic traditions were incorporated and modified in response to the introduction of the Christian religion.[29]

Charlot's awareness of the traditions of the Black Christ probably existed prior to his leaving Europe. Evidence for this is suggested by his first wood block prints, 1918-1920, *Stations of the Cross*, where he carved the printed design in relief, an effect that resulted in the dark color of the figures, including the figure of Christ.[30] It seems the majority of Charlot's direct knowledge of Black Christs, however, derived from his experiences living and working in central Mexico and Yucatán, where he traveled to the sacred pilgrimage centers of Chalma and Mérida to witness firsthand the worship of these revered images. Additionally, Charlot's work with local cultures in Mexico exposed him to popular beliefs associated with Black Christs, as evidenced in his collection of José Guadalupe Posada prints, and through his association with Mexican muralist Fernando Leal. It is likely that Charlot drew inspiration for his crucifixion images from experiences in France, especially Brittany, which culminated in his own creation of a crucified Black Christ in Fiji. I submit that Charlot conceptualized his Fijian frescoes, particularly the Black Christ icon, as sacred images intended to be the focal point of a pilgrimage site paralleling his own experiences in France and Mexico.

Primary sources provide an excellent foundation for understanding any artist and fortunately, in the absence of adequate published literature on Charlot, the quantity and quality of the primary source documents relating to the artist are astounding. His published and unpublished writings are housed in the Jean Charlot Special Collection at the Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i. The collection, which is open to the public, contains original artworks by the artist, his private Catalogue of Paintings, his sketchbooks, completed drawings, transfer drawings and mural cartoons. In addition, he authored twenty-seven books, hundreds of articles, manuscripts, and typescripts, both scholarly and creative writings, covering a wide range of topics on fine arts, art history, criticism, and theory. His unpublished writings consist of manuscripts, miscellaneous papers, letters, diaries, transcripts of speeches, and interviews. The collection also houses Charlot's personal library and art

collections, including original print collections by Honoré Daumier, José Guadalupe Posada, and *Images d' Epinal* or French folk penny prints. Other highlights are original artworks by Diego Rivera, photographer Edward Weston, and two collections of Mexican and Oceanic art. The entire collection illustrates the influential periods in his life, as well as his personal interests in art, faith, politics, and local cultures.

It is useful to highlight certain aspects of Charlot's earlier career, particularly experiences in France, Mexico and Hawai'i, in order to appreciate how he conceptualized the Fijian frescoes as a pilgrimage center that served both local residents and international visitors. In Chapter Two, I focus on Charlot's biography by identifying important points where his life and art intersected and influenced one another.[31] This information is useful in order to appreciate his pattern for interaction with local cultures that he established in France and continued in Mexico, as well as his contributions to twentieth century muralism in Mexico and the United States. As a muralist he is best known and documented within the context of his experiences in the Mexican mural movement. It is also from his Mexican Period that one finds the most available information in the secondary source literature documenting and critiquing his artistic contributions. In the United States, Charlot continued to paint public murals in a manner similar to that he had used in Mexico, as well as creating a number of liturgical frescoes. Unfortunately, this is another area that remains understudied, but I can offer here a brief review of his journey across the United States until his arrival to the Pacific Islands.

There are four major catalogues of Charlot's artistic career. The most outstanding is Peter Morse's study, Jean Charlot's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné, where Morse documents Charlot's artistic and technical innovations in relationship to lithography and printmaking; however, the text offers very little information relevant to the study of the Fijian frescoes.[32] Two other catalogues focus on Charlot's oil paintings and feature several short articles on his life and artworks. The first is a catalogue from the University of Hawai'I, published in conjunction with his 1990 exhibition, Jean Charlot, A Retrospective.[33] This text provides a general chronological time line for the artist's life and is a good source of information for his French Period. A second

catalogue emphasizing Charlot's work in Mexico is titled *México en la obra de Jean Charlot*.[34] This text is an excellent source for Charlot's work in and about Mexico, and is also important for its revisionist perspectives relating to the history of twentieth century Mexican art. There has never been any comprehensive text nor any serious in-depth study of either his frescoes or public art in the United States. Short newspaper articles comprise the majority of published information, the only exception being the text entitled Charlot Murals in Georgia that includes Charlot's personal comments on "mural styles" based on technical process, as well as technical information on his Georgia murals of 1942 and 1944.[35]

The author who has published the most on Charlot's artwork is his eldest son, Dr. John Pierre Charlot.[36] His articles discuss a wide range of subjects from the formation of the artist, his relationship to local cultures, and even his death and burial. Two of his most significant articles in terms of this study, as they are the only scholarly reports that relate to his father's work in the Pacific, are "Jean Charlot and Local Cultures," and "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays."[37] These two articles form the foundation of my discussion of Jean Charlot's relationship to local Pacific Island cultures and how these relationships became part of his creative vocabulary and inevitably his artworks.

In the Jean Charlot Collection, I reviewed important ethnohistoric documents that relate to the Fijian frescoes. These include personal correspondence between Charlot and Monsignor Franz Wasner that documents and outlines the mural commission. These letters form the basis for my discussion of the commission in Chapter Five. In addition, Zohmah Charlot, the artist's wife, published several short articles about the Charlot family's experience in Fiji. The accounts draw largely on her correspondence home during her stay in Fiji and include important information about the artist's fresco-making process.

Other primary source documents in the Jean Charlot Collection important to this study are Charlot's own diaries and visual records. His diary entries during the time he was in Fiji are in English. This is unusual, as Charlot's interests in creating language systems led him to develop a unique type of shorthand that only he could read and one that he used predominantly in his personal records, especially his diary entries. In

terms of visual records, he completed two sketchbooks in Fiji that are currently in the Jean Charlot Collection, along with a number of mural cartoons, completed full-size drawings, and several rare transfer drawings. The Fijian sketchbooks and cartoons illustrate his approach to subject matter, his facial portraits of individuals, detailed sketches of expressive hand gestures, and still lifes. The rare mural cartoons and transfer drawings are important sources for the discussion of Charlot's unique technical approach to fresco painting. Other important visual documents include the Charlot family photo albums and scrapbooks, as well as about forty or so slides of the Fijian murals' progression and the completed works. There are also about thirty slides of oil paintings that, while rendered later, depict Fijian subject matter derived from his original sketches. His Catalogue of Paintings provides a comprehensive list of all his oils post-1955, accompanied by rough sketches, dates, and sales information, although the sales' information is approximately forty years outdated (Appendix B).

In addition to reviewing the published articles and primary source materials available in the Jean Charlot Collection, as part of my investigation I traveled to Fiji to conduct on-site research during four periods: 9 September-8 October 1999, 16-18 October 2000, 31 October-11 November 2000, and 2 June-27 July 2001. In Fiji, I was able to view and photograph the frescoes. I conducted interviews with five of Charlot's models for the mural figures and with local clergy, members of the congregation, residents, and visitors to the site, as well as with friends of the Charlot family. I located and interviewed one of the men who assisted in gathering the raw materials for the frescoes. I photographed and read the original guest book that had been placed there when Charlot completed the frescoes. I also traveled to Suva to conduct research at the Catholic library at Nicolas House, the Fiji Museum, and the Suva Archives. These interviews and ethnohistoric sources contributed to my interpretation and discussion of the visual images as "signs." In Chapter Six, I review the responses to the frescoes in the historic record and analyze the role of the murals in a contemporary context to evaluate Charlot's success in his creation of a multivocal visual language in his Fijian frescoes.

A restoration project, to clean Charlot's Fijian frescoes and partially repair the church that houses them, was undertaken in June-July 2001. This project, in which I participated, heightened my awareness of the tedious and laborious nature of fresco painting, and this knowledge contributed to my discussion of Charlot's fresco technique in Chapters Four and Five. Our work required climbing high on scaffolds where we worked long hours in the dust and heat. One reward was that I was able to observe and photograph "up-close" Charlot's masonry, brushwork, coloring, and relief-like approach to fresco technique. Additionally, I was able to learn the fresco technique first-hand from Martin Charlot. The second son of Jean Charlot and an accomplished artist in his own right, Martin Charlot accompanied his father to Fiji and assisted him with the creation of the Fijian frescoes in 1962-63.

I learned a great deal through my work experience in Fiji about local culture, indigenous ceremonies, and syncretistic rituals and traditions of the Catholic Church at Naiserelagi. Many of my experiences in Fiji paralleled those documented by Charlot in his own diaries, particularly the presentation of the whale's tooth (*tabua*), *yaqona* ceremony, and other offertory goods such as mats (*ibe*) and indigenous bark cloth (*masi*), all ritual items that are featured as subject matter in Charlot's Fijian frescoes and later related artworks. These firsthand experiences enabled me to comprehend the nature of the symbolism encoded in the fresco images from an indigenous perspective. This material also served to develop my ideas in Chapter Six regarding Charlot's final choices of images as signs, icons and symbols, and how, as artistic signs, they expressed his ideological attitudes towards the situation of the indigenous Fijians and the Catholic Church.

In structuring my methodological framework for my visual analysis of Charlot's Fijian frescoes, I draw from semiotic theory, the study of signs. I accept the premise that the application of sign-systems to the analysis of visual arts is a valid methodology. There are many challenges, interpretations, and arguments that arrive when borrowing from the sciences and working within humanities-based disciplines. This fact, when "revealed" and placed in the consciousness of art historical discourse, allows for recognition of the difficulties in situating one's theoretical position of semiotics within the

study of non-Western arts. Throughout history the study of non-Western arts has been primarily the domain of ethnography and anthropology, where "art" is considered a cultural product, "artifact," or material object to be classified by function, class, gender, etc. In anthropology, one of the first scholars to challenge this position, advocating an acknowledgment of non-Western "art" as a distinct category of culture, was the American anthropologist Franz Boas, in his seminal text, Primitive Art (1927). The cognitive structures of non-Western peoples were later explored by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss in his book, The Savage Mind, first published in 1962, in recognition of indigenous classifications systems. Today, most scholars reject the notion of "universals" associated with early theoretical models, as they have expanded and deconstructed Lévi-Strauss' binary model of classification in the era of post-structuralism.

In the twenty-first century, while the situation is improving, the majority of scholars doing research in the non-Western arts must still rely primarily on ethnohistoric and anthropological texts. This is particularly true in the field of Pacific Island art history. Similarly, the majority of interest in Pacific art continues to be maintained by anthropologists who are often critical of the lack of objectivity and positivist approaches that characterize art historical studies firmly rooted in the humanities. I see one resolution to this situation in the proverbial "middle path." To me, it seems an obvious fact that art communicates and serves as a conveyer of culture. The "what" and "how" it communicates is open to a variety of interpretations through the process of individual reception. In the words of theorist Keith Moxey, "Just as linguistic or visual signs are involved in a process of endless semiosis, so the interpreters of signs are involved in a never-ending cycle of interpretation."[38] While the artist/author or the viewer/interpretant may receive differently what information is being conveyed, the majority of them experience visual images as communicating and/or expressesing something, even if the "something" varies for each individual.

My initial motivation for applying a semiotic analysis to the study of Charlot's Fijian frescoes derived from the artist's own awareness and interest in the communicative aspects of art as revealed in his own art, writings, and interviews. I

would argue that communication theory is particularly relevant to the study of his public artworks. Further, as Moxey asserts, "Ideological sign systems represent the interests of all races, classes, and genders, not just those in positions of power."[39] This is particularly significant when discussing Charlot's murals in the context of the multicultural and social environment in Fiji, an environment characterized by indigenous chiefly hierarchies, imported Indo-Fijian caste systems, and a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

In my visual analysis of the Fijian frescoes I apply a tripartite definition of a sign to Charlot's visual imagery or signifiers. In the Fijian frescoes, I examine how he created and structured signs. I investigate how this structure guided his artistic choices in order to evoke aesthetic responses and to convey information to a multicultural audience. My interpretations and applications of a tripartite model are based in art historical visual analysis. Outside of art history, a triad definition of a sign is associated with semiotician and philosopher Charles S. Peirce. Peirce wrote extensively on semiotics and the theory of signs. In his article, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," he outlined three divisions of logic, three trichotomies, and ten classes of a sign.[40] For the purposes of analyzing visual arts, art history has drawn from Peirce's second trichotomy of a sign, defined as "index," "icon," and "symbol."[41] Peirce wrote

> The icon...happens that its qualities resemble those of that object, and excite analogous sensations in the mind for which it is a likeness....The index is physically connected with its object….The symbol is connected with its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using mind, without which no such connection would exist.[42]

In art history, this tripartite model is applied to visual objects in order to analyze artworks as signs that relate both to the artist and audience, however, in most art historical studies, the reception of the sign is treated secondarily, if at all. One of my objectives in this study is to provide a balanced perspective of Charlot's Fijian murals by examining the artist's intentions and investigating the audience's reception to the paintings through time.

To begin my discussion of semiotics and for the purposes of illustrating how Peirce's second trichotomy has been appropriated and applied at a fundamental level, I

provide the following definitions. In Art History and Its Methods: A Critical Anthology, semiotic study

> contains three categories of signs: the iconic, where the sign resembles what it stands for, as with a picture of an object; the indexical, where the sign is related to what it stands for by association...and the symbolic where the link with the referred is purely conventional.[43]

This definition is elaborated upon by Vernon Hyde Minor in his text, Art History's History: "Peirce's first type of sign, the icon, refers directly to its object. The image of the U.S. half dollar pertains iconically to the historical personage of John Fiztgerald Kennedy. It looks like him."[44] Minor goes on to write,

> The indexical relationship "points" to or results from something...A brushstroke can be the tracks or index of an artist's hand...The symbol... rather than looking like its object, it alludes to it by virtue of a tradition, a rule, a compact. The dove is a well-established symbol of the Holy Spirit; the First person of the Trinity...Symbols are closely bound to language....[45]

In conclusion, Minor stated, "fairly common terms such as 'iconic,' 'indexical,' and 'symbolic' are now doing duty in art history. They assist us in our encounters with images and with our own language of art history."[46] Another art historian, Margaret Iverson, reinforced Minor's assumptions in her article on "Saussure versus Peirce: Models for a Semiotics of Visual Art."[47] In her article, she defined icon, index, and symbol as follows:

> The icon signifies by virtue of a similarity of qualities or resemblance to its object. For example, a portrait iconically represents the sitter. The index signifies by virtue of an existential bond, in many cases a causal connection, between itself and the object...The symbol signifies by virtue of a contract or rule...there is an intrinsic dependence on the mind for there to be any relation at all.[48]

Not to be left out, non-Western art study has also adopted these definitions. In Art and Small-Scale Societies, Richard L. Anderson, in his Chapter Three, entitled "Iconography and Symbolism," wrote,

> The common denominator of many of the current usages of symbol derives from the work of...Charles S. Peirce...[who] went on to make a useful distinction between three types of signs—index, icon, and symbol...An index, according to Peirce's definition, is a sign that emerges from some natural phenomenon rather than being an arbitrary convention

> of culture….Both icons and symbols, however, derive from human convention; they are products of culture rather than nature. The difference between icons and symbols is that icons bear some resemblance to the thing for which they are signs; symbols, by contrast, bear no resemblance to their referents.[49]

Another notable study in semiotic theory in art history includes Meyer Schapiro's "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image-Signs," where he addresses non-mimetic sign-elements including frame, field, directedness, size, sign-bearing matter such as painted lines or spots, lines, contrasts, and boundaries.[50]

My analysis draws from art history's understanding of this tripartite definition that originally derived from Peirce's model. A sign has three possible manifestations that may occur individually or together depending on context: index, icon, and symbol. In my application of semiotics, I interpret index-signs as those individual, constructive, visual elements that consist of physical (concrete, mortar, pigments) and formal (form, line, color, space) properties. Collectively, these properties refer to the artwork as a whole, while simultaneously serving as the foundation for discussing the artist's "style." Index-signs also incorporate ethnohistoric texts and related visual records, such as sketchbooks. An analysis of index-signs provides for a greater understanding of the relationship of artist to artwork by decoding signs and by revealing the structure of the artist's technical and formal framework.

In Charlot's Fijian frescoes, analysis of icon- and symbol-signs permits a discussion of the inter-textuality of the imagery as it relates to the artist and participates in a multivocal narrative. Significantly, this methodological approach also allows borrowed signs to be investigated within their own cultural contexts, enabling a multicultural perspective and thus avoiding a strictly ethnocentric interpretation. I demonstrate how Charlot constructed and manipulated signs to communicate a narrative of a universal community in Christ, an idea which he presented in culturally appropriate ways, in order to be understood by the different ethnic groups that defined the audience. Instead of a colonial view of monocultural domination, Charlot presented a Black Christ that is placed on the same level as the processional figures, all on a single groundline to suggest the social and religious equality of ethnic difference.

In my final section, I evaluate the relationship of the artwork to the viewers, establishing how the frescoes participate in an on-going dialogue with their contemporary audience. To aid in my quest of gaining a multicultural and diachronic perspective, I draw from the work of anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Geertz wrote that culture, and, by extension, art, is most effectively treated as a purely symbolic system "by isolating elements, specifying internal relationships among those elements, and then characterizing the whole system in some general way according to expression or the ideological principles upon which it is based."[51] He stated that to commit oneself to a semiotic study of culture requires an interpretive approach to the study of it.

> To look at the symbolic dimensions of social action-art, religion, ideology….The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is...to make available to us answers that others...have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said.[52]

By recontextualizing signs within Fijian culture, I reunite with the goals of semiotic investigation that seeks to investigate how works of art are made intelligible to those who view them, the process by which viewers make sense of what they see. This type of approach is described by Hans Jauss who, in his discussion of reception and the visual arts, wrote that one purpose of art history is to seek out and describe “the canons and contexts of (art) works, rejuvenating the great wealth of human experience preserved in past art, and making it accessible to the perception of the present age.”[53] This aspect of my investigation addresses, in the words of Jauss, “the immortality of the artwork through the aesthetic activities of mankind...the constant reenactment of the enduring features of (art) works that long since have been committed to the past.”[54] I analyze the frescoes through time from within their cultural context and from the perspective of audience responses through an examination of ethnohistoric documents (newspaper articles, publications, and other public records), supplemented by on-site interviews. I discuss the role of Charlot’s Fijian frescoes in contemporary Catholic ritual and in the local economy, as tourist attractions. I evaluate current audience responses in terms of how they interpret and assign meaning to Charlot’s frescoes in their contemporary environment and social milieu. The resulting information reveals how the

murals, particularly the triptych, are highly relevant in the context of the struggle for democracy and social solidarity through a single, albeit multi-ethnic, Fijian national identity.

Endnotes

[17] Zohmah Charlot,1986; Jean Charlot, Catalogue of Paintings, unpublished manuscript, Jean Charlot Collection; and Peter Morse, Jean Charlot's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press and the Jean Charlot Foundation, 1976). Refer to 1) Appendix B. Jean Charlot's Fijian Oils and 2) Appendix C. Jean Charlot's Fijian Prints.

[18] The author who has published the most on Charlot's own art is his eldest son, John Pierre Charlot. His articles discuss subjects that range from the formation of the artist to his views on Rivera, and even his father's death and burial. John P. Charlot sets up a chronology of his father's artistic career based on the geographical areas of France, Mexico, and the continental United States, in his article entitled, "Jean Charlot and Local Cultures" in Jean Charlot, Paintings, Drawings, and Prints Georgia Museum of Art Bulletin University of Georgia, Volume 2, Number 2, edited by Ethel Moore (Fall 1976): 26-35.

[19] Zohmah Charlot, 1986.

[20] Keith Moxey, The Practice of Theory: Poststructuralism, Cutlural Politics, and Art History (Ithica: Cornell University, 1994), 93-93.

[21] Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

[22] For example, in Africa, Robert Farris Thompson's ground-breaking work in the 1960s on the indigenous aesthetic systems of the Yoruba, Nigeria. In the Pacific Islands other scholars who have contributed to the study of indigenous aesthetic systems include Adrienne Kaeppler and Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk.

[23] Debora Silverman, Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000).

[24] Currently this Black Savior image is housed at Poland's National Shrine, the Wawel Cathedral, located adjacent to the Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow, Poland. "Black Christ." In Krakow information, n.d. [cited 20 January 2003],1-3. Available from http://www.krakow-info.com/krucyfix.htm, INTERNET.

[25] Peter Murray and Linda Murray, editors, Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[26] Carlos Navarrete Cáceres, *"El Cristo Negro de Tila Chiapas*," in Archaeología Méxicana:Siere Tiempo Mesoamericano IV, *Volumen VIII, Número 46* (*Noviembre-Deciembre de 2000*): 62-65. This is not the case for black Virgins or Madonnas. For example, the Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art does have a single entry on "Black Madonnas," an ethnocentric definition that states, "Several representations of the Madonna, especially Icons, which have become blackened by time and dirt, but are claimed to be venerable." Murray, 62.

[27] Donald Attwater, editor, A Catholic Dictionary (New York: The Macmillan Company,1961), 58.

[28] On Black Theology see for example Kelly Brown Douglas, The Black Christ (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999) and Dwight N. Hopkins, Introducing Black Theology of Liberation (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001).

[29] John Garrett, To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania (Geneva: World Council of Churches in Association with the Institute of the Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1985); Footsteps in the Sea: Christianity in Oceania to World War II (Suva: Institute of the Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, in Association with the World Council of Churches, 1992); and Where Nets Were Cast: Christianity in Oceania to World War II (Suva: Institute of the Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, in Association with the World Council of Churches, 1997).

[30] Morse, Illustrations 11-25, 9-18.

[31] I use the term "biography" here in the most simplistic sense of the word as an alternative to "artistic development." I am not using the term to refer to the methodololgical debates of "biography" as a method dating back to Vasari. I choose the term "biography" as a conscious rejection of the alternative "artistic development" because of the pejorative connotations of the term "development" through its association with evolutionary theory and imperialist policies. Further, the term gives rise to a model that arrives at a point of climax or culmination and the associative decline, a model I also reject in relationship to Charlot.

[32] Morse, 1976 (full reference note 17).

[33] Tom Klobe, editor, Jean Charlot: A Retrospective (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Art Gallery, 1990).

[34] Javier González, editor, México en la obra de Jean Charlot (*Ciudad de México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes,* 1994).

[35] Jean Charlot, "Public Speaking in Paint," in Charlot Murals in Georgia (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1945), 455-468.

[36] John Pierre Charlot is currently a Professor of New Testament and Polynesian Religions, Department of Religion, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

[37] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot and Local Cultures," 1976: 26-35 (full reference note 16), and "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," in Rongorongo Studies, Volume 8, Number 1 (1986): 3-24.

[38] Moxey, 51.

[39] Ibid., 50.

[40] Charles S. Peirce, " Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology, edited by Robert E. Innis (Bloomington: Indiana Press University, 1985), 4-23.

[41] Ibid., 7-19.

[42] Ibid.,18.

[43] Eric Fernie, Art History and Its Methods: A Critical Anthology (London: Phaidon Press,1995), 359.

[44] Vernon Hyde Minor, "From Word to Image: Semiotics and Art History" in Art History's History (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994),175.

[45] Ibid.,176.

[46] Ibid.,181-182.

[47] Margaret Iverson. "Saussure versus Peirce: Models for a Semiotics of Visual Art" in The New Art History (London: Camden Press,1986), 82-94.

[48] Ibid., 89.

[49] Richard Anderson, Art in Small-Scale Societies, second edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989), 54-55.

[50] Meyer Schapiro, "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image-Signs" in Theory and Philosophy of Art: Style, Artist, and Society (New York: George Braziller, 1994).

[51] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 17.

[52] Ibid., 29-30.

[53] Hans Jauss, "Art History and Pragmatic History," in Toward an Aesthetic of Reception: Theory and History of Literature Volume 2, translated by Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982), 75.

[54] Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

JEAN CHARLOT AND LOCAL CULTURES: THE FORMATION OF A RELIGIOUS AND ARTISTIC IDEOLOGY

> *There is a still deeper contact with the Church wherein all geographical and racial dissimilarities become reconciled, a common denominator or nucleus that binds together laymen and clerics all around the earth.* Jean Charlot[55]

Biography is crucial to understanding the art and life of Jean Charlot and to appreciating the contributions of the artist. The author who has singularly produced the most writings about Charlot's artworks is his son, John Pierre Charlot. In his article, "Jean Charlot and Local Cultures," John P. Charlot presented the "basic pattern of Charlot's relationship to local cultures," arguing that this pattern was established in France and was characterized by

> broad and detailed study of language, literature and the arts; personal contacts with the people; and assimilation and utilization in his own creativity in literature and the visual arts.…The basic pattern established in France continues very clearly in Mexico and the Pacific.[56]

John P. Charlot portrayed his father as a humanist motivated creatively to investigate culture through an intellectual methodology and to recreate culture through actions and images.

> As Charlot deepened in his art and life, he saw a spiritual commonality between the cultures that absorbed him...[and] a vision of, and personal identification with, a basic humanity. That he then devoted himself to expressing that vision through images of those cultures indicates his view that humanity, just as art, does not exist in the abstract, but in actions that are culturally formed of its infinite richness.[57]

Through the development and application of his own intellectually structured method of investigation into culture and art, Charlot the elder created naturalistic pictorial images

of local culture, establishing both a visual and a verbal dialogue in multivocal narratives directed to multicultural local audiences.

Jean Charlot's life experiences contributed to the formation of his Catholic-based theological attitudes which expressed themselves naturally in his art. It was in France that Charlot received his formal artistic training and formulated his initial ideas on liturgical art: the belief that art should be for the masses, and the correlative relationship that making art was equivalent to sanctified labor for God. As a youth, the artistic orientation of the art scene in Paris provided him with a diverse background in European art. Charlot received also an important introduction to Mesoamerican art through his families' own art collections.

Later on, during the 1920s in Mexico, Charlot's personal ideology led to his association with the early mural movement, which sought to establish a nationalistic art form for the Mexican people. As the movement became more politically rooted in Communist ideals, commissions were denied to the non-nationalist, Catholic, Charlot. During this time he and fellow artists experienced artistic repression, and as a result he began to immerse himself in local Mesoamerican cultures from both the ancient and more recent historic past. He travelled the mountainous countryside on pilgrimages to sites associated with Black Christ figures; he created artworks featuring indigenous models at tasks associated with daily life and local culture, and he worked intermittently as an amateur archaeologist with the Carnegie Institute on excavations of ancient Mayan ruins, including their fresco murals.

Charlot's experiences in France and Mexico formed the foundation for his future attitudes and ideas towards art-making, ideals that remained consistent throughout his life. His work in the United States continued to express a particular interpretation of Catholicism that stressed the "universal" definition of the word and increasingly focused on the creation of liturgical arts. It was not until his arrival in the Pacific Islands, however, that his art again began to synthesize his ideas with those of local cultures, infusing his art with the same passion observable in his Mexican portfolio.

Jean Charlot's French Period

Jean Charlot was born in France in 1898 and lived the first twenty years of his life there, with the exception of two years spent in Germany during World War I. A Frenchman by birth, Louis Henri Jean Charlot (1898-1979), son of Henri and Anna Charlot, grew up in the international city of Paris prior to the onset of World War I. His father, Henri Charlot, born and reared in Russia, was a French businessman, free-thinker and Bolshevik sympathizer who regularly hosted Russian revolutionaries in his Paris home.[58] Anna Charlot, an artist and devout Catholic, was the daughter of Mexican-born Louis Goupil, of French and Mexican-Aztec descent, and Sara Louise (Luisita) Melendez, a Jewish woman of Spanish descent.[59] Another important figure in Charlot's early years was his great-uncle, Eugène Goupil, who was an avid collector of Mexican art.[60] As a teenager, Charlot undertook the study of the Aztec codices in the *Bibliotheque Nationale* that had been previously donated by his uncle.[61]

Charlot began drawing at an early age, and his mother, who recognized his talents, hired an art tutor for him.[62] In Paris, he trained with established artists, studied internationally renowned collections, and attended exhibitions of modern masters.[63] His French Period is important for the formation of the artist's ideas about art and his artistic style, which from the beginning was influenced by both European and Mesoamerican traditions even before arriving in Mexico, a fact often obscured in the literature. In his own words, Charlot stated, "Though I was born and bred in Paris, and did pass through [the] *École des Beaux Arts*, my rattles and hornbooks were the idols and Mexican manuscripts from my uncle Eugène Goupil's collection. They were also my ABC of modern art."[64]

As a youth, Charlot enjoyed the French countryside, traveling on several occasions to Brittany.[65] The powerful liturgical art in Brittany that inspired Paul Gauguin's *Yellow Christ* made a profound impression on the young Charlot, who had early on established for himself the fundamental tenets of his artistic objective: to create an art of the people and for the people, based on the foundations of Catholicism. Writing of himself in Born Catholic, Charlot stated, "As I grew up, the making of liturgical

art became the common ground between my devotion and my vocation."[66] In his teens, Charlot joined a group of young Catholic artists who called themselves *La Gilde Notre-Dame*. This group consisted of painters, sculptors, stained glass-makers, embroiderers, and decorators, who regularly held meetings in Paris.[67]

> *Ca 1916*, a group of Parisian adolescents used to gather in a crypt, under the name of "Gilde Notre-Dame." Besides our Catholicism, we had in common a vocation to graft the fine arts onto the sturdy stem of the applied arts; also ours was a desire to take contemporary art out of the category of studio experiment and to restore it to its full dignity as the servant of theology and, incidentally, of architecture.[68]

Modeling themselves on medieval guilds, the artists appear to have been motivated by the belief that prayers take their best form in the physical and tangible labors of love, of craftsmen devoted to the glorification of God and his creation. Charlot's initial artistic contributions for *La Gilde* were the creation of crucifixions modeled on Breton images he had observed while in Brittany.[69] These early sculptures helped to establish his formal technique for representing the naked body of Christ crucified, as can be observed in his later images, particularly in the figure of the Fijian Black Christ.

Charlot began his formal artistic education at the *École Hattemer*, *Lycée Condorcet,* and later studied informally at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris.[70] With the arrival of World War I, however, and he was drafted, at age eighteen, to serve with the French army against German troops. In 1918-1920, Charlot created his first prints in France and Germany, a woodcut series featuring *Chemin de Croix*, *Stations of the Cross*. These prints may have been a response to viewing German master works, especially Grünewald's *Isenheim Altarpiece*, combined with his own prior interest in prints, including his collection of liturgical folk prints from Èpinal.[71]

After the war, Charlot returned to France only to have his first church mural commission canceled. Despite his participation in artistic developments of the time, most notably Cubism, Charlot complained of his dissatisfaction over realizing himself as a mural maker in an environment with no access to painting walls.[72] In 1921, for a variety of personal and financial reasons, Charlot traveled with his mother to Mexico to live with relatives there.[73] In Mexico the artist at last received his first successful mural

commission and finally began to realize his dream of becoming a muralist.

Jean Charlot's Mexican Period

The artistic activities of Jean Charlot during his Mexico Period are perhaps the best known and recorded of all his work, even though these studies often conceal the artist's role as much as they reveal the biases of historic documentation. For example, the history of Mexican Muralism is marred by accounts favoring "the big three," Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siquieros. This situation is described by Mexican critic and writer Octavio Paz, who writes how the history and criticism of Muralism remains distorted, as "(A)n attempt has been made to cover up the meaning of the initial phase, and the participation of certain artists, such as Jean Charlot...has been disparaged and efforts made to conjure it away."[74] Gradually, the history of Mexican modern art has begun to recognize Charlot's role. Blanca Garduño, director of the Diego Rivera Studio Museum in Mexico City, stated that "Charlot was an important artist for Hawai'i, but he also belongs to Mexico. He was and remains a major figure in the rebirth of modern Mexican art."[75]

In 1923, Charlot completed the first true fresco of the modern era, *The Massacre in the Main Temple* at the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria,* Mexico City (Illustration 2.1).[76] He joined forces with a group of artists and intellectuals participating in what would become known as the Mexican Renaissance. His participation is well documented by the artist himself in his seminal text, The Mexican Mural Renaissance.[77] In Mexico, he worked not only on his own frescoes, but also assisted other artists, including Rivera. Unfortunately, this situation did not favor Charlot, who often ended up being overshadowed by a jealous Rivera. After the retirement of Vasconcelos, who was initially responsible for the government-sponsored mural commissions, Rivera took an active role over the commissions, contributing to the shift away from the international character of the early Mural Renaissance toward the distinctly nationalist overtones of the later period. This proved a problem for the French-born Charlot, who not only had his governmental commissions canceled, but also suffered the destruction of one of his completed fresco murals at the hands of Rivera.[78]

Despite his Mexican-Aztec ancestry, Charlot was French-born, not a Mexican national, a fact that probably contributed to the suspension of his governmental commissions. Simply stated, in the early 1920s, Mexico identified nationalism with *indigenismo*, "Indianism," indicating the interest in indigenous culture.[79] Artists became concerned with *Mexicanidad*, defined by scholar Donald McVicker as "the search for common ritual and aesthetic denominators which would establish a racial aesthetic tradition."[80] As newspaper critics raved about the murals of Rivera, Charlot was characterized as a "French painter" whose identity remained anonymous.[81] Veronica Rascon de Alvarez, wife of the governor of Tlaxcala, said of Charlot, in 1996, "for many years there was a nationalistic feeling in my country that blinded art curators to his achievements."[82]

Another difficulty was that while Charlot did have socialist leanings, he was a strict Catholic. As an expression of his faith, Charlot's devotion to the masses was no less than his devotion to God. Rivera once commented,

> Jean Charlot is French by birth and soundly forged as Catholic; if he had been born less intelligent he would have been a Saint Luis Gonzaga. He could have been the future General of the Jesuits if the moral and physical courage hidden in his little angel face and light as a fly boxer's body had not been made into an artillery man in the European war at an age when most boys play at being soldiers.[83]

In a similar observation, Carlos Merida, surprised by the news of Charlot's marriage announcement, commented, "I thought one day we would hear that he had committed himself to a monastery."[84] During his stay in Mexico and through the decades to come, Charlot was received as a pious Catholic amid a political and social environment sympathetic to Communism and nationalism. As stated by Stefan Baciu, "humanity and 'Mexicanity" are the poles between which Jean Charlot's art can be placed during his first phase."[85]

Charlot began his artistic activities in Mexico at the Open Air School of Coyoacán where he shared a studio with the artist Fernando Leal. Leal and Charlot experimented with art-making in different media, such as oils, frescoes and woodcuts. Remarking on

this experience in The Mexican Mural Renaissance, Leal recalled Charlot's first attempt at monumental oil painting,

> Charlot...began an enormous picture with a religious theme, in which he boldly used the anathematized black. This orientation of our works in the impressionistic surroundings of Coyoacán soon created such a hostile feeling among our companions that day after day we found insulting words scrawled on our studio door.[86]

Charlot's monumental painting was entitled, "Art in the Service of Theology," and the subject matter featured a native, dark-skinned, crucified Christ figure surrounded by artists and intellectuals.[87] This early painting, a prototype for Charlot's later crucifixions, no longer exists, as it was unfortunately destroyed by the artist.

The composition for Charlot's first mural commission for the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria* was part of a program planned with Leal, who painted *Feast of our Lord of Chalma* on the wall opposite Charlot's mural.[88] An unfortunate consequence of their shared experience was that the two artists eventually had a falling out because of artistic differences; Charlot decided to paint his mural using the fresco technique while Leal decided to use encaustic, thus altering the original color scheme.[89] In his article on Charlot's Mexican frescoes at the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria,* John P. Charlot described the subject matter of the mural program:

> The six murals thus present a chronological sequence: the atrocity of the Conquest, the murder of Cuauhtemoc, the introduction of Christianity to Mexico, and the syncretistic religion developed in Mexico, which enabled the Mexican Indians to perpetuate essential elements of their culture: in Leal's mural, the image of a native god is revealed under a Crucifix. The destruction of the invasion is thus balanced by the positive, generally pro-Indian element of Christianity and by the cultural creativity of the native population. Charlot's *Massacre* is designed to descend its staircase; Leal's to ascend towards the Crucifix. They express a cultural and emotional descent and ascent as well; the viewer looks down Charlot's mural and up Leal's.[90]

It is interesting to note that Leal's mural included a crucified Black Christ figure. Leal described the subject matter as "a modern scene of a ritual dance inside a church, assuring myself that such a scene was a symbol of the survival of native modes within the Catholic Church rites and thus a complement to the one adopted by my neighbor,"

referring to Charlot's mural.[91] Leal wrote that he based his artistic interpretation on a story told to him by his brother,

> a curious incident which took place in a village church in the mountains of Puebla, a story later transmitted by Charlot to Anita Brenner, and which served as the leitmotiv of her book Idols behind Altars. During the course of a religious dance around the statue of the Virgin, the concussion caused the image to fall down its glass case, leaving exposed a small figurine carved in stone of the goddess of water, which had been hidden since time immemorial under the rich mantle of Our Lady. True or not, this incident became an ideological justification for my picture.[92]

Leal does not explain his choice of a Black Christ figure in his encaustic mural, however, the source of his inspiration may have been Doña Luz Jiménez, a model who regularly posed for Leal and Charlot at Coyoacán, as well as other artists including Rivera. In an article by Jesús Villanueva, "Doña Luz: Inspiration and Image of a National Culture," he wrote,

> Charlot would paint her many times, and she repaid him by introducing him to the traditions of Milpa Alta and the Nahuatl language...Her face appears in The Festival of Our Lord of Chalma, an encaustic done by Leal in 1922...She worked at many different trades: model, storyteller, tour guide in Milpa Alta and Chalma, cook and even maid.[93]

I believe it is plausible the idea of a native, dark-skinned, Christ in a crucifixion scene, such as that represented in Charlot's monumental oil and in Leal's first encaustic mural, originated with Doña Luz, through her stories told in their studio and based on her experiences as a guide to Chalma.

In the years 1922-1924, Charlot, along with Leal, participated in an avant-garde movement known as *Estridentistmo* (stridentism)*,* led by the poet Manuel Maples Arce.[94] The literary group was influenced by contemporary art movements, such as dadaism, and they became known for their publications of *Horizonte* and *Irradiador (Radiator*).[95] They gathered at the *Cafè Europa,* which they renamed *Cafè de Nadie* (Nobody's Cafe), on whose walls hung paintings and drawings by Charlot, among others.[96] From 1924-26, Charlot served as art editor of the influential periodical Mexican Folkways.[97] Artistically, his murals from this time often rendered portraits and "folk" scenes from daily life, such as *Cargadores* (*Burden Bearers*, 1923)*, Lavanderas*

(*Washer Women*, 1923), and *Danza de los Listones* (*Dance of the Ribbons*, 1923).[98] In retrospect, Charlot stated, "I always go back to folk art."[99]

In 1925, Charlot made his pilgrimage to Chalma, a Catholic shrine at an ancient Indian cave site sacred to the God of the Caves, accompanied by the Aztec model, Doña Luz.[100] This single incident was perhaps one of the most profound influences of the artist's life, an experience that I believe contributed to Charlot's conceptual ideas for his Fijian frescoes. Charlot briefly commented on the pilgrimage experience:

> 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 to Chalma. The Virgin, the statue of the Virgin with the seven swords in her heart, is being carried along the shoulder of the people.[101]

Charlot drew profound personal and artistic inspiration from the folk-religious activities he observed on his pilgrimage, in much the same way he had been inspired by Brittany's liturgical art. Several works from his Mexican portfolio include paintings and graphics of Chalma, a theme also used throughout his career. It seems probable that the syncretistic nature of the Mexican-Catholic Church enhanced his desire to create his own pilgrimage center in the Pacific. It is also likely that the dark-skinned Christ at Chalma, as well as one at Mérida, served as prototypes for the Fijian triptych's main icon, the Black Christ, a topic I will examine further in Chapter Six.[102]

Rejuvenated by his recent acquaintances with indigenous natives and local rituals, as well as motivated to remove himself from the unfavorable mural scene in Mexico City, Charlot accepted a seasonal position in 1926-28 to work with the Carnegie Institute, of Washington, D.C., serving as a draftsman and archaeologist for their excavations at Chichén Itzá, Yucatán. As part of his duties during the expedition, Charlot copied in oils, watercolors, and line drawings the bas-reliefs in the Temple of the Warriors and frescoes in the Temple of the Jaguar and the Temple of Chacmool, buried beneath the Temple of the Warriors.[103] He was initially hired to provide only a visual documentation of the excavations, but his broad knowledge of ancient Mesoamerican

culture led him to become one of the three main authors of the final report, as well as for a subsequent report on the site of Cobá, Quintana Roo, Mexico.[104]

Charlot's first retrospective was part of the celebration of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, an exhibition entitled *Jean Charlot: Programa Cultural de la XIX Olimpiada,* which was one of a wide array of special events to celebrate the occasion.[105] Twenty-six years later, a traveling exhibition*, Return to the Land*, marked a turning point in the Mexican attitude towards the artist, as revisionist historians advocated the international, versus national, influences of the Mexican mural movement and artistic renaissance. This 1994 exhibition represented Mexico's first and only retrospective to celebrate Charlot's lifetime artistic achievements in various media.[106] One of the purposes of this exhibition was to contribute to the scarce bibliography on Charlot. As described by Milena Koprivitza, "It is surprising to find an empty void around one of the most decisive artists on the Mexican art scene in the early twentieth century."[107] In the introduction to the exhibition, David de la Torre clearly stated that Charlot as "painter, lithographer, muralist, writer, philanthropist...has been very important for the development of modern European and American painting, as well for the history of Mexican art in the twentieth century."[108] In this 1994 retrospective, the artistic heritage of Charlot in Mexico is summarized by José Antonio Alvarez Lima, *Gobernador Constitucional del Estado de Tlaxacala*, in the following:

> The role the artist fulfilled through the Vasconcelos program, in Estridentismo, in the research of the Academy of San Carlos, in the incorporation of "high" art within the popular arts, in the revitalization of the wood block print as an independent art form, in the active participation of archaeological expeditions, in the illustration of books and in the endless editorial work through the periodicals Forma, Horizonte, Irradiador, the Machete, Mexican Folkways, and other publications where he put the work of the team, the guild, in motion, based on research.[109]

Jorge García Murillo*,* Director of the *Museo de Monterrey*, credits Charlot as "not only a plastic artist but also as the greatest promoter of the art of our country that has ever been."[110]

Also in 1994, another relatively small exhibition, *Jean Charlot: Prints of Mexico*, featured a selection of Charlot's original prints and illustrations on Mexico as part of the

Mexic-Arte's Tenth Anniversary Gala fundraiser held in conjunction with the Mexican Consulate in Austin, Texas. The conflictive attitudes in the literature regarding Charlot's contribution to Mexican art history can be observed in several unapologetic articles in the Mexican newspaper*, Excelsior,* which ran the headline, "Mexico does not owe anything to Charlot; it has revived his fame." [111]

Jean Charlot's American Period

Charlot moved to New York in 1928, where his work was shown in several major exhibitions. The first show was a Mexican government-sponsored group exhibition at the Art Center in 1928. Around this same time he participated in Mexican group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Fogg Museum. In 1930, he was featured in a retrospective at the Art Students' League.[112] These exhibitions helped to establish Charlot as an international artist and muralist.

Charlot wrote, "the complex of government commissions, mural technique, social subject matter and oratorical style that one meets after 1920 in United States art is patterned after Mexico."[113] Charlot's reputation as an artist gained him private and public commissions that took him across the United States. He worked on numerous frescoes, liturgical, private, and public commissions, including several Work Progress Administration (W.P.A.) projects.[114] He traveled to Los Angeles in 1933, where he met the printer Lynton R. Kistler, who worked with him to produce a number of prints, notably Picture Book II.[115] He returned to New York in 1934, where he held his first solo exhibition in America and completed a W.P.A. commission to paint a fresco for the entrance hall of Strauben-Muller Textile High School.[116]

During the years 1935-38, Charlot became very involved with teaching art, particularly fresco and lithography. He was at various times a member of the faculties of Smith College, Black Mountain College, and the Universities of Iowa and New Jersey, as well as being a visiting artist at the Florence Cane School of Art at the Rockefeller Center in 1936.[117] He accepted a position with the New York and London publishing company Sheed and Ward in 1938, producing many book covers and illustrations for them over the next thirty years.[118] While living in New York, Charlot continued to make

brief trips to Mexico, and it was there, in Mexico, in 1931, that he met Dorothy Zohmah Day, whom he married in 1939. Also in 1939, he published a collection of articles, Art from the Mayans to Disney. Charlot applied for and received American citizenship in 1940, at which time he forfeited his French citizenship, only later becoming a dual citizen of both the United States and France.[119]

Charlot was Artist in Residence at the University of Georgia, Athens, from 1941 to 1944, where he taught and created three fresco murals. In 1943 and 1944, he finished what was then the world's largest pencil sketch, in preparation for the 700-square foot fresco, in the School of Journalism building, which he completed with the help of his students.[120] During this same time period, Charlot painted the 1942 W.P.A. project, *Cotton Gin*, a monumental oil on canvas located at the McDonough, Georgia, Post Office. The subject matter featured two generations of African-Americans. In the background, a man from an older generation labored on what ended up being the last operational cotton gin in the South, while the younger generation stood in the foreground holding books, signifying their education and transition into a white-collar world.[121] Charlot's subject matter, which addressed the situation of African-Americans, must have been considered quite controversial at the time. Soon thereafter, he was rejected for another proposed project that featured similar subject matter, a series of twelve murals depicting "The History of Blacks in the United States."[122]

In 1945, Charlot received a Guggenheim Fellowship for his book, The Mexican Mural Renaissance.[123] This Fellowship required him to travel back to Mexico for two years.[124] Charlot then returned to the United States, and, in the summer of 1947, he accepted a position as director of the School of Art at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center.[125] In Colorado in 1948, he created the only existing prototype of a "Black Christ" in *First Fall*, Station III of a planned *Ways of the Cross*, conceptualized as part of a color lithograph print series on zinc with printer Albert Carman. Charlot was dissatisfied with the color of the proofs, and the prints were never finished.[126] On examination of one of the extant proofs, it appears that Charlot requested a dark-skinned Christ figure whose flesh coloring was composed of a mixture of black and blue

pigments, in clear anticipation of the coloring he later used for his Fijian Black Christ (Illustration 2.2).[127] In 1948, Charlot also returned to the villages of Mexico, publicly debuting his play, *Mowentihke Chalman: Trilingual Puppet Play: Nahuatl-Spanish-English*.[128] The subject of the play, the Pilgrims of Chalma, drew on the artist's own personal experiences and was created for use by the Mexican government in educating non-Spanish-speaking village people.[129]

Working his way west in America, Charlot painted ten frescoes in New York, Illinois, New Jersey, Iowa, Georgia, North Carolina, and Colorado, before moving to Hawai'i in 1949.[130] While living in Hawai'i he continued to receive commissions in the continental United States throughout the next three decades. In 1951, at Arizona State University, Tempe, Charlot created his first and only fresco featuring North Amerindian subject matter, *Hopi Snake Dance, Preparing Anti-Venom Serum*, where he combined native rituals complemented by the science and technology of the west. In 1955, Charlot finished a program of fourteen fresco murals symbolizing the fine arts at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. In the same year, he painted an additional fresco at the University of Notre Dame and a liturgical fresco at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Lincoln Park, Michigan. In 1958, Charlot completed the monumental liturgical fresco *Calvary* at St. Leonard Center, Centerville, Ohio. He painted a series of murals in Atchison, Kansas, in 1959, followed by another liturgical commission in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Charlot's liturgical frescoes at St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas, include *St. Joseph's Workshop*, a fresco very similar to his later Fijian fresco of the same title. In the following year, 1960, he completed the fresco *Village Fiesta* at Syracuse University, New York. In 1961, Charlot created his most monumental liturgical fresco, *Our Lady of Sorrows and Ascension of Our Lord*, measuring 1300 square feet, painted over the ceiling and apsidal wall at the Church of Ladies of Sorrow in Farmington, Michigan.

In total, Charlot completed thirty-six frescoes at more than twenty locations throughout the continental United States. Charlot has been described by mural historian Francis O'Connor as "the last master of true fresco in the United States."[131] As an immigrant and a French-American citizen, Charlot's artwork displayed an

extraordinary sensitivity toward the cultural diversity of the United States. His public artworks documented a populace of native Amerindians, Europeans, African-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Asian-Americans. I submit that Charlot was the only American artist of the twentieth century who created public, monumental artworks that represented such a diverse and inclusive perspective of the demographics of the United States.

Endnotes

[55] Jean Charlot, "Jean Charlot," in Born Catholic, edited by F. J. Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), 112-113. Jean Charlot Collection.

[56] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot and Local Cultures," 27.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Karen Thompson, "Jean Charlot: Artist and Scholar," in Jean Charlot: A Retrospective, edited by Tom Klobe (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Art Gallery,1990), 10. Charlot's first dated drawing was completed at age two. John P. Charlot, "The Formation of an Artist: Jean Charlot's French Period," in Jean Charlot: A Retrospective, edited by Tom Klobe (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Art Gallery,1990), 37.

[59] K. Thompson, "Jean Charlot: Artist and Scholar," 5.

[60] Ibid., 6-7.

[61] John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr, June 1998, Honolulu, Hawai'i. Another prominent figure in Charlot's youth was his grandfather's neighbor and good friend Desiré Charnay, the French archaeologist of ancient cities of Mexico. David McVicker, "The Painter-Turned-Archaeologist: Jean Charlot at Chichén Itzá," in Jean Charlot website, 1999 [cited 7 June2003], 2. Available at http:/libweb.hawaii.edu/libdept/charlotcoll/J_Charlot/charlotmcvicker.html, INTERNET.

[62] John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr. My formal interviews with John P. Charlot were supplemented by many informal conversations about his father's life and art during the period I was doing research at the University of Hawai'I-Manoa.

[63] K. Thompson, 7-8, and John P. Charlot, "Formation of the Artist: Jean Charlot's French Period," 48.

[64] Jean Charlot, Mexican Mural Renaissance (New Haven: Yale University Press,1963), 9-10.

[65] K. Thompson, 8, and John P. Charlot, "Formation of the Artist: Jean Charlot's French Period," 53.

[66] Jean Charlot, "Jean Charlot," in Born Catholic, 101.

[67] K. Thompson, 9-10.

[68] Jean Charlot, "Thirty Years at It," Liturgical Arts, Volume 21, Number 2 (February 1953), 36.

[69] Jean Charlot, Interview 16, by John P. Charlot, transcript, 6 November 1970, 4-5. Jean Charlot Collection.

[70] K. Thompson, 7.

[71] Ibid., 8.

[72] K. Thompson, 10, and John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr. See also John P. Charlot, "The Source of Picasso's *First Steps*: Jean Charlot's *First Steps*," Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, Volume 55, Number 2 (1992): 275-278.

[73] Charlot wrote of himself, "The first heartbreak at the realization that a born mural painter is helpless without a wall was not to be the last. The experience was instrumental, however, in inducing me to leave postwar France for Mexico." Jean Charlot, Mexican Mural Renaissance, 178.

[74] Octavio Paz. Essays in Mexican Art, translator Helen Lane (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993),132-133.

[75] Ronn Ronck, "Charlot to get his due in 'Return to the Land' show" Honolulu Advertiser (Hawai'i), 24 February 1994, C-1.

[76] "Charlot...painted the first mural in the Preparatory School, which was also the first fresco." Anita Brenner, Idols behind Altars (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1929), 304. This point was contested among other muralists, particularly Fernando Leal and Alva de la Canal. Tatiana Flores, personal communication to author, May 2004. Illustration 2.1. *The Massacre in the Main Temple*, Jean Charlot, fresco painting, 1923, *Escuela Nacional Preparatory,* Mexico City, Mexico. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

[77] In this book Charlot alluded to difficulties that developed in Mexico, such as his ironic Chapter entitled, *Dieguitos*, translatable to "little helpers of Diego [Rivera]." In another, unpublished text, Charlot wrote: "This inscription, which landed me unwittingly in the thick of future controversies, read, 'This fresco is the first to be done in Mexico since colonial times. Painted by Jean Charlot and plastered by master mason Luis Escobar.' The next stage in the evolution of the fresco technique related to the start of Rivera's murals in the Ministry of Education, early in 1923. Because Luis Escobar was his mason and I was Diego's helper, the first two panels were executed with the same procedures that I had used in my Preparatoria fresco." Jean Charlot, Fresco Painting in Mexico, unpublished typescript, 1947, 520. Jean Charlot Collection.

[78] K. Thompson, 14. Charlot's mural, *Danza de los Listones* (Dance of the Ribbons), was destroyed by Rivera in 1924 to make space for his triple panel composition, *Market Place*.

[79] Jean Charlot, Mexican Mural Renaissance, Chapter One, "Indian Roots" (1-12), 7.

[80] McVicker, 2.

[81] El Universal, 19 June 1923, quoted in Jean Charlot, Fresco Painting in Mexico, typescript, 523-524. Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection. The article stated, "At a date not so remote, a French painter allegedly applied the fresco technique in Mexico, such as the Italians had known....(T)he painter Diego Rivera used the same technique that the Frenchman had used."

[82] Ronck 1994, C-1.

[83] Diego Rivera, En Social, Cuba (1923) as quoted in Milena Koprivitza, "Jean Charlot en el trato con sus contemporáneos," in México en la obra de Jean Charlot, edited by Javier González (*Ciudad de México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes*, 1994), 81.

[84] Koprivitza, 81.

[85] Baciu, 23.

[86] Fernando Leal, "Reminiscences: Fernando Leal" in Mexican Mural Renaissance, Jean Charlot, 166.

[87] John P. Charlot, Interview 3, by Caroline Klarr, April 2000, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

[88] Leal, 166.

[89] Ibid., 171.

[90] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's First Fresco: *The Massacre at the Main Temple,*" n.d. In Jean Charlot website [cited 7 June 2003], 17. Available at http://libweb.hawaii.edu.charlotcoll/J_Charlot/charlot mcvicker.html, INTERNET.

[91] Leal, 167.

[92] Ibid., 167-168.

[93] Jesús Villanueva, "Doña Luz: Inspiration and Image of a National Culture" in Voices of Mexico, Number 41, October-December 1997, (19-24) 20-21.

[94] Luis-Martín Lozano, editor, Mexican Modern Art (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1999), 27, 64, and 115. See also Baciu, 23.

[95] Baciu, 23, and Lozano, 64.

[96] Lozano, 27 and 115. Writing on the printmaking revival in Mexico, Sofia Rosales identifies the key figures of the movement as Revueltas, Alva de la Canal, and Charlot, whom she calls "the other *Estridentista* ground breaker." Lozano, 127.

[97] K. Thompson, 15.

[98] Ibid., 14.

[99] Morse, viii.

[100] In her comments on miracles and apparitions, Brenner noted that the Lord of Chalma had been said to appear in the place of the Cave God [Ostocoteotl] and that the Lord of Chalma was still considered a master of sorcery who must be danced to. Brenner, 145.

[101] Jean Charlot, An Artist Looks Back, Lecture notes from Honolulu Art Academy, March 1972. Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection.

[102] Prior to coming to Mexico, however, Charlot could have easily been familiar with other dark-skinned deities associated with Indian religious art, or Black Virgin icons popular in medieval Europe, in Spanish and/or in Russian cults.

[103] McVicker, 4.

[104] Earl H. Morris, Jean Charlot, and Ann Axtell Morris, The Temple of the Warriors at Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institute, Publication Number 406, 21 May 1931, Two Volumes); Eric J. Thompson, Harry E. D. Pollock, and Jean Charlot, A Preliminary Study of the Ruins of Cobá, Quintana Roo Mexico (Washington DC: Carnegie Institute, Publication Number 424, March 1932); and Donald McVicker, "The Painter-Turned-Archaeologist Jean Charlot at Chichén Itzá," Jean Charlot website (full reference note 61).

[105] Exhibition catalogue, Museo de Arte Moderno: México, 1968. Jean Charlot Collection.

[106] Ronck 1994, C-1. The exhibition was held at the San Ildelfonso Museum, part of Mexico's National Institute of Fine Arts. This building was the former *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria* and houses Charlot's first true fresco mural, *Massacre in the Main Temple*, completed in 1923.

[107] Kopravitza, 77.

[108] David de la Torre, "*Reconocimiento a Jean Charlot*," in México en la obra de Jean Charlot, edited by Javier González (full reference note 83), 16.

[109] José Antonio Álvarez, *Lima Gobernador Constitucional del Estado de Tlaxcala, "La Herencia Artística de Jean Charlot*" in México en la obra de Jean Charlot, edited by Javier González (full reference note 83), 15.

[110] Jorge García Murillo, Director of the *Museo de Monterrey*, "*Jean Charlot en el Arte Mexicano*" in México en la obra de Jean Charlot, edited by Javier González (full reference note 83), 17.

[111] *Excelsior El Periodico de la Vida Nacional*, Mexico, D.F., Wednesday, 13 April 1994.

[112] K. Thompson, 17.

[113] Jean Charlot, The United States and The Renaissance, unpublished typescript, Articles Folder 1947, 544. Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection. This typescript was originally intended as Appendix A in Charlot's book, Mexican Mural Renaissance (1963).

[114] Zohmah Charlot, 1986.

[115] K. Thompson,18, and Picture Book II: 32 Original Lithographs and Captions (Los Angeles: Zeitlin and Ver Brugge, 1973).

[116] Alma Reed, The Mexican Muralists (New York: Crown Publishers, 1960) 67, and K. Thompson, 19.

[117] Reed, 70-71.

[118] K. Thompson, 20.

[119] Ibid., 21.

[120] Reed, 71.

[121] John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Jean Charlot, Mexican Mural Renaissance (full reference note 7).

[124] K. Thompson, 22.

[125] Ibid., 23.

[126] Charlot stated, "Received proofs….Very bad because of color." Morse documented that the original colors were unknown and his text illustrated only a line drawing. Morse, Illustration 521, 286.

[127] Illustration 2.2. *First Fall*, Jean Charlot. Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Caroline Klarr. Line drawing published in Morse, Illustration 521, 286.

[128] *Mowentihke Chalman* (Honolulu: Mele, 1969). This play was presented in villages in Mexico in 1948.

[129] K. Thompson, 22-23.

[130] Zohmah Charlot, 1986.

[131] Francis V. O'Connor, "A History of Painting in True Fresco in the United States: 1825-1945," in Fresco: A Contemporary Perspective, edited by Robert Bunkin (New York: Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1994), 9.

Illustration 2.1. *The Massacre in the Main Temple ,* Jean Charlot, fresco painting, 1923, Escuela Preparatory, Mexico City, Mexico. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

Illustration 2.2. *First Fall*, Jean Charlot. Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Caroline Klarr. Line drawing published in Morse, Illustration 521, 286.

CHAPTER THREE
JEAN CHARLOT IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND HIS CREATION OF A VISUAL LANGUAGE

> *I consider art as communication. I think I like mural painting because so obviously a mural in a building has to answer the purpose of communication. I've decorated many churches, where communication is a must. I've also decorated universities and banks and such, but the principle is the same.* Jean Charlot[132]

In this chapter during what is known as Jean Charlot's Pacific period I highlight important events that illustrate the intersection of Charlot's life and art with local cultures in Hawai'i and Fiji. Charlot's work with Hawaiian cultures will be established as an important precedent for his work in Fiji. Further, the following biographical excerpts illustrate how Charlot interacted with and was accepted by indigenous Pacific Islanders, i.e., their view of and receptivity to the artist and, by extension, his artworks. In considering the idea of "receptivity" in art analysis it is important to consider not only the art object, but also the artist in relationship to how he/she was received within their corresponding historic, geographical, and social environment.

In any discussion of Western artists and Pacific art history, one figure, Paul Gauguin, remains dominant in the historic record. Gauguin's art rendering late nineteenth and early twentieth century Polynesian culture is well documented by scholars and well known among art aficionados. For this reason, it is important to compare the lives and artworks of the two artists, Gauguin and Charlot. In my section entitled "Jean Charlot and the *Tupapa'u* (Ghost) of Paul Gauguin," I will compare the similarities and differences between the two artists.[133] I suggest that it was the two artists' common experiences of artistic, geographic, and cultural influences, combined with a synthetic attitude towards art-making, that account for a certain number of

similarities between Charlot's Pacific artworks and the Polynesian works of Paul Gauguin. Despite observable formal similarities and their shared goals of creating a spiritual art form, there remain significant differences between the two artists. Charlot's Fijian frescoes and other permanent public artworks can be contrasted to the works of Gauguin, who catered primarily to a Western audience by capitalizing on the West's fascination with exoticism and who featured local cultures as potential magnets for sales to Western patrons. This contrast is illustrated through the example of Charlot's Fijian murals, which are permanently housed in a remote island mission and directed to a local audience.

Jean Charlot's frescoes in the Pacific Islands represent the work of a mature artist. In Hawai'i and Fiji, Charlot had not only mastered his fresco technique, which began in Mexico as virtual experiment, but his formal choices (i.e., light, color, composition) were also refined to articulate his artistic vision more effectively. In addition to his experimentation with technical and formal matters of art-making, after arriving in the Pacific, Charlot's choices for subject matter increasingly tended to reflect his personal interactions with local cultures. In keeping with his scholarly approach to studying local cultures, which he established in Mexico, Charlot pursued a systematic study of language, culture, and arts upon arrival in the Hawaiian Islands.

Charlot created monumental frescoes at twenty different sites throughout the Pacific Islands of Hawai'i and Fiji. The majority of Charlot's murals in the Pacific Islands are public artworks, with approximately half of these being liturgical murals. Charlot created public frescoes in the Pacific that incorporated aesthetic and communication systems directed to the local, multicultural, populations that composed the major audience of viewers. More than once Charlot articulated his belief that art should communicate to and be available for viewing by the general population, i.e., the "masses." His public frescoes were the means for him to realize these goals. In his Pacific murals, Charlot created his own visual language by combining his knowledge of Western pictorial arts, his experiences with local cultures, and his own creative imagination. Keeping these ideas in mind, it is appropriate to consider Charlot's efforts

in comparison to contemporary communication theory, i.e. semiology, the study of "signs," as applied to the visual arts. This framework is discussed in the closing section of this chapter.

Jean Charlot's Pacific Period

In 1949, when Charlot arrived in Hawai'i, the Hawaiian Islands were still a territory, not yet annexed to the United States.[134] Charlot went to Hawai'i, along with his wife and children, to fulfill a fresco commission at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa, at Bachman Hall, where he painted *Relation of Man and Nature in Old Hawaii*. This fresco marked the beginning of his career and residence in the Pacific Islands. After the mural was finished, Charlot was offered and accepted a teaching position in the University's Art Department, where he served for the next three decades.

Charlot quickly became fascinated with Hawaiian culture and devoted himself to learning its history, language, music, and art. These interests prompted him to undertake a formal study of the Hawaiian language. He is reputed to have been the only person to repeat the most advanced Hawaiian language class five times.[135] He pursued his study of Hawaiian history, customs, and religion through scholarly research in native Hawaiian texts and active collection of oral histories from Hawaiian elders, as well as immersing himself in local cultures and communities. He eventually authored five plays on the subject of ancient Hawai'i, including two bilingual plays in English and Hawaiian.[136] Charlot also illustrated one of the few major Hawaiian language texts, Spoken Hawaiian, by Samuel Elbert, co-author of the leading Hawaiian-English Dictionary.[137]

Charlot's first Hawaiian fresco commission, *Relation of Man and Nature in Old Hawaii*, depicted Hawaiian culture and history as the central subject matter. A few years later, in 1956, Charlot received a commission for and completed a series of frescoes originally installed in the Hilton Hawaiian Village's Catamaran Cafe, *The Chief's Canoe*, *Hawaiian Drummers*, *Conch Players*, *Male Hawaiian Swimmer*, and *Female Hawaiian Swimmer* (Illustration 3.1).[138] These frescoes are now featured artworks in the *Pa Kalo*, Charlot Courtyard, in the Honolulu Convention Center.

Describing the significance of the frescoes in an interview with the Honolulu Advertiser, Peter Morse, a former Smithsonian graphic arts curator who compiled and published Charlot's prints, stated that *The Chief's Canoe* mural "is important to Hawai'i's artistic history....It portrays early Hawaiians in a way no other artist ever has."[139]

Charlot created two other monumental fresco murals that featured Hawaiian cultural themes. The earlier mural*, Early Contacts of Hawaii with the Outerworld*, was finished in 1952, at the Bishop Bank in Waikiki. The mural was destroyed in the same year but was redone in 1966 at what is now the First National Bank in Honolulu. Charlot's fresco mural, at Leeward Community College, Pearl City, painted in 1974, shares the same title and theme as his first Hawaiian mural at Bachman Hall, *The Relation of Man and Nature in Old Hawaii*. This later version is monumental in size, measuring 2,275 square feet. The Leeward mural marked Charlot's final example of public art and fresco technique created during his lifetime.[140]

Between the years 1958 to 1961, Charlot increasingly began to create murals using the ceramic tile format. During this time period, he finished four sets of ceramic tiles featuring the subject matter of the Stations of the Cross, now located at various chapels on O'ahu and Kaua'i. In 1961, Charlot created *Night Hula*, a ceramic tile mural that depicts Hawaiian dance and performance arts (Illustration 3.2).[141] Again using the ceramic tile format, Charlot spent over five years, from 1970-1975, working on the six panels that compose the murals for the United Public Workers building in Honolulu. The subject matter of the panels illustrated scenes of groups of local people at work and on strike.

Charlot's ability to create art in different contexts and media is demonstrated by his other public artworks in Hawai'i which include the media of fresco, ceramic tile, champlevè enamel sculpture, copper plate and repoussé, as well as styrofoam reverse sculpture cast within a cement wall. In 1966, at age sixty-eight, Charlot held a retrospective exhibition at the Honolulu Art Academy, which was accompanied by a small publication. At the East-West Center, in 1967, Charlot finished his mural entitled *Inspiration, Study and Creation*, in association with the Indonesian artist Affandi, who completed a second fresco. Charlot produced a large number of oils and prints that

feature Pacific cultural subject matter. His first major catalogue published in Hawai'i was in conjunction with his 1990 exhibition, Jean Charlot: A Retrospective, held at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Art Gallery, in Honolulu.[142]

In Honolulu, Charlot met Monsignor Franz Wasner, who later commissioned the Fijian tripych, *Black Christ and Worshipers*, painted in 1962, at St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Mission at Naiserelagi, Fiji. Also at Naiserelagi, Charlot painted two additional frescoes, one located over each of the transept altars, *St. Joseph's Workshop* and the *Annunciation*, one each located over the transept altars, which were completed in January 1963. The discussion of Charlot's Fijian frescoes, including technique, commission, and visual forms, are discussed in Chapters Four, Five, and Six. Upon his return to Hawai'i, Charlot made personal contact with Fijians, particularly undergraduate students of the East-West Center at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa and the newly arrived Fijian group at the Polynesian Cultural Center in La'ie. The Charlots were said to have opened their homes to the Fijians, often hosting parties with *lovos*, Fijian earth ovens used to prepare traditional Fijian foods, music, dance and even *yaqona* drinking.[143] After a short stay in Fiji, Charlot returned to Hawai'i, where he eventually completed at least twenty-six original prints and eighty-eight oils featuring Fijian subject matter. It appears that he first debuted his Fijian inspired oils in a one-man exhibition at Gima's Gallery in Ala Moana Center, Honolulu, in May 1963.

Charlot's first two prints featuring Fijian subject matter were created in 1971, in Valencia, Venezuela, and were color linoleum cuts. The first print, *Fiji War Dance*, illustrated a men's club dance (Illustration 3.3),[144] while the second print shows a bird's-eye perspective of a man mixing *yaqona* in the *tanoa* wooden serving bowl. In 1975, Charlot completed *Fiji*, a set of eight color serigraphs, of eight different Fijian subjects, as part of a commission for a new hotel in Fiji. Inspired by his Fijian frescoes, Charlot illustrated the presentation of the *tabua* and the woman with the mat, as well as the Indo-Fijian woman with the garland and the Indo-Fijian man with two yoked oxen. Charlot added two new subjects to his repertoire of Fijian subject matter: the mixing of the *yaqona* (Illustration 3.4), a spear thrower, and men's *meke*, music and dance.[145] Once again, these same Fijian themes were featured in his 1976 publication with Lynton

Kistler, Picture Book II, which included ten color lithograph prints with accompanying text commenting on his Fijian subjects.[146] In Picture Book II, Charlot depicted the presentation of the *tabua* (whale's tooth), *yaqona*, and mat, as well as men's *meke*, a spear thrower, and a single print of an Indo-Fijian, a nun, "on her way." In 1978, he finished his print series *Kei Viti: Melanesian Images: Five Lithographs in Color* (Illustration 3.5).[147] Around this time, Charlot printed at least one other lithograph featuring Fijian subject matter, *On the Go Fiji*, an edition of thirty prints that featured a profile of a local nun with a walking stick and a ceramic pot (Illustration 3.6).[148] The Fijian paintings are more difficult to discuss because many were not photographed or properly documented prior to sale, and for the most part their whereabouts are unknown. As a group, Charlot's Fijian oil paintings developed these same native Fijian themes of the *tabua* presentation, *yaqona* mixing and serving, mat making and presentation, and men's *meke*, including music and dance.[149] Charlot lived and worked in Hawai'i for thirty years, painting Pacific Island people and culture, until his death in 1979. During his lifetime, Charlot created over twenty frescoes at various different sites in Hawai'i, while he continued to create other murals and liturgical artworks in the continental United States and Fiji.

Art History and Pacific Scholarship: Jean Charlot and the *Tupapa'u* (Ghost) of Paul Gauguin[150]

In art historical studies addressing Pacific arts, the tendency is to focus on indigenous artists, with little interest in Western artists working in the Pacific Islands. The major exception to this rule is Paul Gauguin, who popularized images of Polynesian culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There have been numerous studies on Gauguin's work in the Pacific, including his own publications, numerous, that is, in comparison to the relatively little published on other Western artists working in the Pacific. While other artists, such as Henri Matisse, John La Farge, and Emil Nolde, made brief trips to the Pacific, it can only be said of Jean Charlot that he lived and worked in the Pacific Islands for three decades. Thus, a comparison between Charlot and Gauguin is difficult to avoid given the continuing fascination with Gauguin's

Polynesian work and the artistic hierarchy that ranks him as the primary or premier Western artist to have featured Pacific Island themes as major subject matter. Also, Gauguin was the first Western artist to live and work in the Pacific. The challenge is to assess the differences between Gauguin and Charlot, given the lack of scholarship documenting Charlot's Pacific Period and portfolio. Nevertheless, I will attempt to compare their works to highlight some of the shared elements and influences of the two artists, while simultaneously distinguishing Charlot's unique artistic contributions.

The most obvious similarities between Paul Gauguin and Jean Charlot are that they were both French-born and Catholic-bred. Both artists came from a multicultural family of mixed French and, arguably, Amerindian blood on their maternal side, with Gauguin having claims to Peruvian descent and Charlot's established lineage of Spanish-Mexican-Aztec descent. Each artist spent a good portion of his life in Paris absorbing and studying both the ancient and modern art masters available in galleries and museums, as well as traveling the countryside to study the folk cultures of France.

Influenced by Theosophy, Gauguin participated in his own quest for a spiritually based art, eventually becoming the most prominent artist associated with the Symbolist movement. In 1885, he traveled to Brittany, where he came under the influence of the Breton folk culture and religion which he soon began to feature as subject matter for his paintings, such as *Jacob Wrestling with an Angel* or *Breton Peasant Women*. Based on images he observed in local religious rites, he created his famous *Yellow Christ* (Illustration 3.7), as well as his less known *Green Christ*, both emerging from the local landscape and culture.[151]

Like Gauguin, Charlot also traveled to Brittany and was greatly moved by the local culture, art, and traditions, particularly those inspired by religious faith. Recall, in Paris, that as an active member in a group of young Catholic artists, *Le Gilde Notre-Dame*, Charlot carved crucifixes based on the Breton Calvary images.[152] He drew upon these early artworks as prototypes for his later images of Christ in Fiji and elsewhere. In a similar manner, Gauguin and Charlot independently arrived at the idea of creating crucifixions of an attenuated and nearly naked Christ figure set in natural landscape and

surrounded by worshippers, based on their observations of local art and religious ritual in Brittany. Charlot himself noted these parallels:

> Some of Gauguin's Brittany pictures incorporate totally without really much modification, with a great humility, some of the elements of the Breton folk sculptors….There is of course, the famous *Yellow Christ*, which is a transposition with minimum changes of one of the crucifixes in the country churches of Brittany. I had, myself, a similar contact, and I would say a similar reaction, and it is a parallel with Gauguin.[153]

The inspiration of Breton Calvary images, therefore, accounts for the shared themes, subject matter, context, and even some of the formal elements that can be identified in both Gauguin's *Yellow Christ* and Charlot's *Black Christ* crucifixion images. It is important to note that these influences developed independently in each artist, in response to the social, religious, and natural environment of Breton, not as some may be tempted to assume, that Charlot's inspiration and ideas drew directly from his encounters with Gauguin's earlier paintings. This is not to say Charlot was unaware of Gauguin's work. Charlot lived in Paris at a time when Gauguin's art was beginning to be appreciated, and his books were widely circulated.[154] The fact that Charlot did admire Gauguin's achievements and art is evident in his personal library, which included most of the original works authored by Gauguin.[155]

The French influences of Paris and Brittany were absorbed into the artistic imaginations of both Gauguin and Charlot. In Paris, both artists were influenced by the Symbolist movement.[156] The French critic Albert Aurier, writing a manifesto of Symbolism, *Le Symbolisme en Peinture*, identified Gauguin as the movement's leading exponent of the Symbolist movement, concluding that it was his "masterful paintings" that best exemplified these Symbolist qualities, especially works such as his *Yellow Christ*.[157] Aurier outlined the five defining characteristics of Symbolism:

> 1) Idea-ist, since its sole ideal will be to express Ideas;
>
> 2) Symbolist, since it will express those ideas through forms;
>
> 3) Synthetic, since it will present those forms, those symbols, in a generally intelligible way;
>
> 4) Subjective, since an object in a work of art will never be looked upon as an object, but as the sign of an idea

perceived by the subject; and, consequently,

5) Decorative, for decorative painting per se, as the Egyptians and quite probably the Greeks and Primitives understood it, is none other than a manifestation of art that is at once subjective, synthetic, symbolist and idea-ist.[158]

Aurier wrote that "the normal and final goal of painting, as of all arts...is to express Ideas by translating them into a special language. To the eyes of the artist...(t)hey can appear only to him as signs."[159] Based on these ideas, Gauguin developed a language of visual parables to evoke ideas that related closely to those expressed in Symbolist writings, and later to Polynesian culture and mythology.[160] While Charlot was interested in some of the Symbolist ideas, notably those relating to language, spiritualism, and art, he differed significantly from Gauguin and the earlier Symbolists in terms of his view of the function of art. Specifically, Charlot would have disagreed strongly with the basic Symbolist doctrine that art is meant for the chosen few and not for the masses, as evidenced by the fact that Charlot spent a lifetime creating public and popular arts.[161]

As part of Gauguin's spiritual journey, he traveled to Polynesia to fulfill his desire to seek out a Paradise in the Neoclassical and Romantic sense of living close to nature, and, as such, close to God.[162] Leaving his wife and children in Denmark, he moved to Tahiti in 1891 to paint for two years before he returned to Paris in 1893. He stayed in France another two years before returning to Tahiti in 1895.[163] He painted in Tahiti for six years, and then he resettled in the Marquesas Islands in 1901, where he died in 1904.[164] His eventual demise was believed to have been caused by a combination of alcoholism and syphilis.[165]

In Polynesia, Gauguin's artworks drew upon his physical and cultural surroundings. After a brief residence in Papeete, Tahiti's capital, the artist chose to live in the more rural areas of the main island of Tahiti. While I would not disagree that Gauguin's interpretation of Polynesian themes differed from earlier Neoclassical interpretations, I would argue that regardless of the lay-anthropological interpretations of the subject matter, Gauguin adhered to a Western-centric desire to perpetuate the myth

of Polynesia as a lost paradise.[166] As an artist reliant upon Parisian art dealers to sell his paintings, Gauguin's artworks were portable and were directed primarily toward his potential European audience of private collectors. Therefore, he capitalized on the exotic aspects of Polynesian culture made known to the Western public by novels such as Pierre's Loti's, The Marriage of Loti (1880).[167] During this stay in Tahiti, Gauguin created a large portfolio of oil paintings that often featured Polynesian women as subject matter. Many of these women are depicted partially or entirely nude, situated within their native environments. In some paintings, Gauguin captured more sensitive portraits of local women, such as *Vahine No Te Tiare* (*Woman with a Flower*) or *Mehari Metua No Tehamana* (*The Ancestors of Tehamana*).[168] In other examples, such as *Te Ari'i Vahine* (*The Noble Woman*) or *Te Nave Nave Fenua* (*The Delightful Land*), his portraits served to reinforce the European stereotypes of the exotic islanders.[169] While much has been said of Gauguin's featuring half-clad women set in a tropical paradise (and it is not my intention here to comment on this per se), there can be no denying that these exotic images of women were painted for and directed to be sent and sold in a European marketplace of private patrons, i.e., those people "outside" the local Pacific Island cultures. This is in marked contrast to the intention of Charlot's Polynesian art, which was created for native audiences in Polynesian locales.

In Polynesia, Gauguin created art throughout his period of residence working predominantly in oils, although he also produced watercolors, pen and ink sketches, ceramics, and both wood sculptures and block prints. Gauguin's so-called quest for Paradise was motivated by his own desire to become a Noble Savage.[170] Fascinated with his surroundings, both physical and cultural, Gauguin began to engage in another quest, to study about old Polynesian society, especially art and religion. He partially learned the native language by living and talking with local people. He became fascinated with oral history, as well as with Jacques-Antoine Moerenhout's *Voyages aux îles du Grand Ocean*, an ethnographic survey published a half-century earlier. These sources served as inspirations for his visual artworks and his writings, especially *Ancien*

Culte Mahorie (1892-1893).[171] Gauguin's integration of verbal and visual arts is evident in his publications, artistic titles, and even encoded in his visual images.[172]

While working in Hawai'i, Charlot certainly did sell his artwork, however, significantly, as he stated in his own words, he considered himself "primarily a muralist."[173] Fresco murals, by nature integral to architecture, are permanent and are usually located in public buildings. I argue that Charlot's public works, featuring Pacific cultural subject matter, are directed towards viewers with an "insider" perspective, members of the local culture being represented. I would even suggest that to a certain extent "outsiders," or nonmembers of the local cultures, may not be able to recognize some of the symbolism encoded in the imagery. Charlot's distinctively scholarly approach to both local culture and language can be contrasted to Gauguin's relatively informal approach to learning about Polynesian culture and language. This fact inevitably endowed Charlot's art with a complexity of deeper meanings available only to native speakers, i.e. "insiders," the local Polynesians themselves.

Another distinction between Gauguin and Charlot lies in their attitudes towards religion and religious ideology. Influenced by Theosophical syncretism, Gauguin's artworks often drew upon the artistic iconography and religious ideals of Christian, Hindu-Buddhist, Polynesian, and even Egyptian art, culture, and faith.[174] An excellent and well-known example of this is his *Ia Orana Maria*, where the artist renders a Tahitian Mary and Jesus situated in an exotic tropical environment (Illustration 3.8).[175] Gauguin organized the composition in a receding diagonal, with the title in the near lower left against a backdrop of native bananas, plantains, and mangoes. Moving back in space, halos identify a nude baby Jesus and a Mary who wears a bright red floral body cover or *pareu*. Further back, two local woman move along a path, their poses recalling Buddhist relief sculpture from Borabador.[176] The figures are placed in a tropical paradise of native vegetation, while a volcanic mountainous ridge descends diagonally across the upper background portion of the painting, framing the scene.

Charlot, while he clearly respected other faiths, was decidedly Roman Catholic. In his own life he rarely drew clear lines between the secular and the sacred and

remained deeply involved with the Catholic Church and its related organizations throughout his life. By 1950, he had been appointed faculty adviser to the Newman Club, the Catholic student organization at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. He regularly created cartoons for The Sun Herald, a Catholic weekly newspaper, and later The National Catholic Reporter.[177] An anthology of these cartoons was published in Cartoons Catholic: Mirth and Meditation from the Brush and Brain of Jean Charlot.[178] Charlot's talent and his devotion to his faith resulted in numerous commissions for liturgical art, including his frescoes: *Nativity at the Ranch* (Illustration 3.9)[179] at Kahua Ranch, Kohala, Kamuela, Hawai'i, painted in 1953; the 1956 series *Way of the Cross*, consisting of fourteen fresco tiles for St. Sylvester's Church, Kilauea, Kaua'i, and in 1957, *The Compassionate Christ* (Illustration 5.6), a fresco mural for St. Catherine's Church, Kapa'a, Kealia, Kaua'i, Hawai'i, to name a few.

In comparison, Gauguin, before moving to the Marquesas in 1901, delivered a speech on behalf of the Catholic Party and as a standard bearer on anti-colonialism.[180] Later, Gauguin aligned himself with a group of Marquesan natives in court and in a feud with members of the Catholic mission. He eventually authored *L'Esprit moderne et le catholicisme* (1902), which although it remained unpublished, spoke out strongly against the activities of the contemporary Catholic Church.[181]

Among the most fundamental differences between Gauguin and Charlot were the religious ideological attitudes that each artist held towards themselves as art-makers, which they expressed in their art. Both artists were partly influenced by the late nineteenth century Symbolist concept that art was a religious activity to awaken man to the divine, therefore, the artist played the role of a divinely enlightened creator, both priest and prophet."[182] Gauguin created a number of self-portraits where he depicted himself as Christ.[183] In these portraits, such as *Christ in the Garden of Olives*, he positioned himself as the suffering savior and described himself as such in his commentaries.[184] Thus, he had taken on the role of suffering individual, like Christ, who sacrificed his own life for the pursuit of his artistic ideals, be they apprehended, appreciated or not.[185]

Charlot, although he may have to some degree perceived himself as a priestly artist involved in service to God through his sacred labors of art-making, certainly never presented himself in either his verbal or visual works as God himself. Rather, he viewed his role as an artisan, literally a laborer, who created, through artistic means, access to the spiritual realm. He expressed these ideas in an interview with his son, John P. Charlot, when he stated,

> Liturgical art is sort of relation of man to God...for me with my background, as being Christian, Catholic art, church art, but of course all the people who have dabbled, I would say in establishing a bridge between God or the gods and themselves, have had themselves had to go through such things....So it goes very far in touching other points than storytelling. I suppose one of them is really the relation of the artist and God.[186]

Charlot's liturgical murals, monumental in scale, manufactured through an "heroic technique," often housed in holy sanctuaries, and depicting images of Christ, allowed the artist to express and experiment with his own acts of creation, not as God himself, but rather as a servant of God.[187] Granting that Gauguin and Charlot both may have disagreed with certain colonial policies, Gauguin's anti-clerical attitudes, his affairs with young native women, and his alcohol consumption negatively affected his relationship with the Catholic Church, and, as a consequence, he never completed any liturgical commissions in the Pacific Islands. Gauguin's situation can be clearly contrasted with that of Charlot, who lived an extremely pious life as a strict Catholic and thus was often invited by various churches to complete liturgical commissions which today account for roughly half of all of Charlot's public murals in the Pacific Islands of Hawai'i and Fiji.

Charlot conceptualized his approach to art-making methodologically, and, in the same manner that he approached studying local cultures, he created an intellectual framework to articulate form, image, and idea. In his liturgical artworks, Charlot's imagery often presented a specific ideology associated with the Catholic Church. In contrast, Gauguin presented his imagery using a religious iconography and symbolism that represented his own specific ideological interpretation, but certainly did not articulate a strict interpretation of any single recognizable faith. While Gauguin feuded with the Catholic mission in the Marquesas and wrote abusive prose against the

activities of the Church, Charlot was an active liturgical artist, aligned closely with the Catholic Church through his artistic activities and writings, throughout his entire life.

Charlot's devotion and vocation to create liturgical arts for the Catholic Church began in Paris with his association with *Le Gilde Notre-Dame*, and it became a lifetime association that characterized many of his artworks and writings. Perhaps influenced by his own interpretation, the need for art to have an aesthetic and intellectual/spiritual function, Charlot rejected the Modern notion of "art for art's sake." Experimenting in early Analytical Cubist art prior to leaving France, he quickly rejected abstraction in art except as a mechanism to reiterate form and meaning. The results are evident in the majority of Charlot's artworks throughout his life, which inevitably feature recognizable forms, subject matter, and narratives.

We can conclude, then, that there are a number of historic parallels that help clarify the relationship between Gauguin and Charlot in Pacific art history. Both artists shared a pluralistic background that included both French and Amerindian heritage. Both grew up in Paris, spent time painting in Brittany, and were a product of their French artistic heritage. Each adhered to aspects of Symbolist doctrine, were deeply spiritual, and had a destiny that involved painting around the world. They both shared interests in local cultures, although Charlot's methodological approach to the study of indigenous cultures and languages distinguished his efforts and achievements in the verbal and visual arts. Both artists worked in mixed media, although each favored painting, Gauguin preferring oils and Charlot preferring fresco. Gauguin created smaller-scale, portable art that was directed largely to a European audience, capitalizing on the West's fascination with exoticism and featuring local cultures as potential magnets for sales to "outsider" patrons. Charlot preferred working in public commissions that included large scale, monumental, fresco murals directed largely to an audience comprised of local "insider" cultures. Today, while Gauguin's works are housed in museums and private collections around the world, the majority of Charlot's murals remain available for public viewing. These murals, in addition to his other public artworks, are receiving increasing attention by the art world.

While both men earned a living as working artists, Charlot also had a passion for teaching throughout his life. In Hawai'i alone, he taught Fine Arts and Art History at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa for almost thirty years, training literally hundreds of students who today are part of a second generation of muralists working in Hawai'i.[188]

In comparing their achievements in the verbal and visual arts, it is clear that in certain areas Charlot's efforts surpass those of his great French predecessor. Even though Gauguin did author several books on his experiences with and knowledge about Polynesian cultures, Charlot's publications are more numerous, scholarly, and far-reaching. Firstly, Charlot could read primary source material and even published original texts in the Hawaiian language. Secondly, he actively engaged in ethnography, for example, documenting oral histories from Hawaiian elders, such as Jennie Wilson and I'olani Luahine.[189] Thirdly, he worked extensively conducting original research with the renowned Hawaiian art collection at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (Illustration 3.10).[190] There were many Hawaiian, Fijian, and Pacific Islanders who contributed to his social circles, many of whom were even models in his frescoes and other artworks.

Finally, despite their shared French heritage, Charlot was distinctly a French-American artist. As such, he is the only American artist who worked and produced a major body of art located in the Pacific Islands, including his public murals which featured local/native cultural themes. Charlot was the only French or American artist who devoted himself to mastering the fresco technique, helping to re-popularize it in the twentieth century, throughout North America and in the Pacific Islands. Besides fresco, Charlot also helped to popularize the format of ceramic tile murals. Today, this art form is carried on by Samoan muralist Mataumu Alisa, who also has artwork featured in the Honolulu Convention Center. Despite all the verbal and visual works Charlot produced in and about Pacific Island culture, many of his artworks are immobile, and many of his texts are now out of print. These facts, in addition to the limited documentation on his Pacific Portfolio, mean that it will, unfortunately, be some time before it is possible to evaluate his entire contribution to Pacific Art and scholarship in the twentieth century. Even though the whole story is yet to be told, it is evident that few figures can even begin to claim such a diverse and distinguished legacy.

Jean Charlot's Artistic "Style"

In his article, "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," John P. Charlot described his father's activities in Hawai'i, stating, in retrospect, that he produced "a large and multi-genred body of work on Hawaiian history and culture."[191] He commented that the publication of Charlot's plays was "...an event in Hawaiian literature as it made available the first extensive modern prose and the first published plays in the Hawaiian language (Illustration 3.11)."[192] He also commented on the intersection of the verbal and visual arts in Charlot's Hawaiian works, tracing this tendency back to Charlot's childhood, when "he learned drawing and writing simultaneously":[193]

> An important purpose of the plays was the presentation of Hawaiian art forms within their traditional settings: individual storytelling, dance, chant and puppet hula, as well as the visual arts in the staging....A visual parallel can be found in Charlot's Leeward Community College mural, in which all the natural forms— human, plant, rock and water— are informed by the Hawaiian arts included in the picture: bowls, poi pounders, tapa beaters, gourds, surf boards, and petroglyphs. A genuine stylistic unity is thus achieved in both the plays and the mural.[194]

In most, if not all, of his artworks, Charlot took a combined approach to word and image, exemplified in the Hawaiian-English plays. To begin to understand Charlot's knowledge of Pacific, and thus Fijian, culture, it is useful to examine it within the framework of Charlot's methodology, as established by John P. Charlot. Although his article focused on Hawai'i, the author indicated clearly the broader application of his father's methodology to his "Pacific" portfolio.

One of the primary features that characterizes the art of Charlot derives directly from his active pursuit of personal relationships with members of the local and native cultures. While ethnically always remaining an "outsider," Charlot fostered these personal relationships to gain an "insider" view, socially and culturally. I argue that it was exactly these close personal relationships that provided artistic inspiration for Charlot and that he expressed these aspects of his interactions with individuals and native cultures in his artworks not as a mirror or mere document but as a vision of those

general principles of humanity made meaningful to the local cultures to whom the murals were directed.

I arrive, thus, at the paradox of Charlot as both “outsider” and “insider.” In his Fijian frescoes, Charlot draws strongly from conventional fine art genres of religious themes, historical paintings, and portraiture, as well as landscape and still life. His capacity to frame his creative ideas within conventional Western art historical modes of pictorial representation results in his classification as “outsider” in terms of media, process, and training. Further, the tendency of Pacific art history to focus on indigenous art and artists leaves little room for participation by “outsiders.” Perhaps this is why my investigation into the Fijian frescoes is the first major study of Charlot’s work in the Pacific. I would submit that Charlot’s use of signs, icons and symbols was founded in Pacific culture, as exhibited in the Fijian frescoes and his other public artworks in Hawai’i, and that these artworks were directed largely to an "insider," local, and native, audience. Further, much of the meaning is lost on “outsider” viewers unfamiliar with Pacific cultures. While such viewers may be familiar with the Western, Christian, symbolism of the Fijian frescoes, most could not comprehend the full symbolism of other icon-signs, such as the *tabua* (whale’s tooth), *yaqona* (kava root) or *uto* (breadfruit), much less the visual metaphors that are drawn from indigenous concepts and language. Charlot created and directed these images to viewers with a distinctly “insider” perspective. It is this dichotomy of “insider/outsider” that contributes to the importance of Charlot’s art from his Pacific period and also explains why his Pacific portfolio remains largely undocumented.

Evidence suggests that in the Pacific Islands, the local, indigenous audience that viewed the art and artist indeed did so from an “insider” perspective, recognizing Charlot’s contributions to their own histories. Charlot was recognized formally, in 1963, when he received top honors at the annual Roselani Award banquet of the Honolulu Chapter of the National Society of Arts and Letters. Charlot, along with Hawaiian author, educator, and composer Mary Kawena Pukui, was presented the award for his contribution to the community in the preservation of Hawaiian culture through the arts.[195] Later, in 1976, The State of Hawai’i Order of Distinction for Cultural Leadership

was awarded to Charlot in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the artistic and cultural life of the people of Hawai'i.[196] Charlot was only the fourth person and the first non-Hawaiian to receive this award. In Hawai'i, Charlot was also honored by Pacific Islanders according to their traditional customs. As a man identified with high rank and status, Charlot was given precious objects, such as *kapa* (Hawaiian indigenous bark cloth) and feather work.[197] Irmgard Aluli, Frank Palani Kahala, and Hailama Farden, Hawaiian composers, wrote a *mele inoa*, or name chant, entitled *Keoni Kalo* (Jean Charlot) dedicated to Charlot for his contributions to Hawaiian culture and thus immortalized him in the same tradition as a high chief.[198]

It is important to note that Charlot's experiences with art and culture went beyond library research and museum objects, which tend to decontextualize objects and divest them of their relationships to the living culture. Even though Charlot did not have the opportunity to study the Fijian language in depth, he arrived in Fiji with an advanced knowledge of the Hawaiian language. Both languages are Austronesian, and he could not help but notice their similarities in structure; indeed they even share some identical words and concepts.[199] In Hawai'i, Charlot was very familiar with the Polynesian concept of metaphor, *kaona* in Hawaiian language, which refers to various nuances and multilayered meanings of the language or even a single word. For example, in his *mele inoa* or name chant, *Keoni Kalo*,"[200] Charlot is referred to as a "*kupa o ka 'aina*," a "citizen/native of the land."[201] The term "*kupa*" specifically designates Charlot as a local person; the term implies a native of Hawai'i, versus other terms used to indicate non-natives, such as *haole* or *malihini*, both words meaning, "foreigner."[202] In many examples from his Pacific portfolio, one can easily observe the incorporation of *kaona*, metaphors, that characterize both his visual and verbal artworks.

As a professor at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Charlot had easy access to the Pacific Collections at Hamilton Library where he researched Fiji prior to his arrival in 1962. At the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in Honolulu, which houses one of the finest collections of Pacific art in the world, Charlot had established close personal relations with many of the staff and had participated in original research using their

collections and facilities.[203] Likewise, upon his arrival in Fiji, Charlot visited the country's main art museum, The Fiji Museum, in Suva.

Charlot made active contact with local Fijian people, providing him a first hand opportunity to analyze art and symbolism as it pertained to living culture. When he arrived with his family at the remote site of St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Mission at Naiserelagi, Fiji, Charlot was greeted with traditional welcoming ceremonies where he could not help but notice the role of tradition, custom and art. Based on the subject matter of his Fijian portfolio, Charlot clearly recognized the important manifestations of Fijian culture in the presentation of male and female arts in the form of the whale's tooth, *yaqona* root, and indigenous textiles. These became important images in his Fijian frescoes, as well as in his later paintings and prints. Additionally, all the figures in the Fijian frescoes except Christ and the two saints were portraits drawn from real life, individuals whom Charlot met and interacted with while in Fiji.

Charlot's philosophy of the interconnection of spirituality, art, and labor is developed through his presentation of figures and images. John P. Charlot writes of his father, "His own religiosity was so central to his life and thought he naturally looked to the religion of the culture for clues to its character.[204] Charlot seemed to view his own art creations as physical manifestations of his supernatural association with God: art as tangible, visual, prayers. In Fiji, this idea is reinforced by the church environment, the liturgical commission, the religious subject matter, and the function of the paintings as objects of ritual and spiritual contemplation.

In Fiji, as well as elsewhere in the Pacific, the traditional concept of "artist" was culturally defined in a manner closer to an English concept of a priest. In the Pacific, artists, paralleling the earlier Symbolist concept, often functioned in a dual role as both priests and art-makers because they retained special knowledge of both rituals and art-making technologies. These indigenous artists were themselves considered sacred, as they created abodes and images of the gods. Consequently, these priestly artists were traditionally placed at the top of the social hierarchy. Priests, like chiefs, were believed to be descended directly from indigenous gods.[205] Charlot was well aware of this concept in the Pacific, and, therefore, he would have been aware of the implications of

his reception in Fiji where he entered the social hierarchy as a high chief, a *turaga*, or priestly artist. During his entry into Fijian society, Charlot was publicly and properly received as nobility, a chief, and he was contracted in the traditional ceremonies that associated him with this rank. The Fijians presented him with the customary and appropriate offerings to reinforce this social position, including whale's teeth, the sacred *yaqona* roots, indigenous bark cloth, mats, food, and formal musical presentations and performances. From a native standpoint, these events were public declarations of Charlot's status. In this context, these goods also represented the contracting and partial payment for the frescoes, following culturally appropriate patterns. The local people likewise honored the artist with many parties and presentational goods throughout his stay.

The Artist and The Message

Language, whether verbal or visual, concrete or abstract, is the mechanism of communication. Formal art elements can be likened to a visual alphabet as they can combine to convey different abstract symbolic meanings. Artists control the presentation of signs in their art-making. They construct meaning through visual codes in order to represent images and ideas to an audience of perceivers who can comprehend, to various degrees, the artist's aesthetic and informational systems. For example, medieval art, besides being beautiful, often served as the "Bible of the illiterate."[206] In this case, artists selected subject matter and manipulated forms, displaying them within the conventions of the social norms; i.e., sculptors attenuated or exaggerated figures of angels in order to convey visually a spiritual presence and origin to a congregation of believers.

Charlot was drawn to this communicative aspect of art. At a young age, he studied Aztec picture-writing in the codices donated by his uncle Eugéne Goupil to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, as well as the art of medieval churches.[207] Charlot extended his study to artistic problems of visual communication. One of his solutions, found in many of his artworks, is his combination of verbal and visual signs. There is

evidence in Charlot's own words that articulated his belief in and theoretical framework of visual communication systems.

> Between the man applied to pure copying and the one who admits as forms only those engendered by his imagination, the middle doctrine ought to please you, that of good painters, which is to suggest external objects as sign and symbol in their turn of states of the soul and of ideas. The color, the sign of the object; the object, the symbol of the idea; such are the three factors that no one should neglect.[208]

In his fresco paintings, mortar and pigment were the constructive formal elements Charlot used to create signs that manifested the artist's vision. In painting, formal elements are index-signs that together compose individual signs in the form of icons and symbols, i.e., "color, the sign of the object...." The visual act of viewing these signs in unison constitutes the combined aesthetic and cognitive responses to the artwork. The various intellectual responses comprise the abstract meaning, the "symbol of the idea," the thematic narrative, subject matter, or "message." Throughout his life Charlot continued to refine his ideas about art and communication. As stated by John P. Charlot, "he would make the symbolic function less overt, integrating it more intimately with the subject matter, which in its turn was selected for its symbolic possibilities."[209] I argue that Charlot structured his artistic approach to develop a creative and an intellectual framework based on these principles and that he conceptualized his artistic works to operate as both aesthetic and communicative systems. Accepting this premise, it is useful at this point to consider Charlot's Fijian frescoes in relationship to semiology, the study of signs, within the visual arts.

Together, individual signs combine to create a unique new signifier, a whole sign, i.e., the art object, which operates within a self-contained system of signs that is self-referential, constructed and manipulated consciously by their signifiee (originator, creator, artist) in order to evoke an emotional response in and to convey information to the perceivers (viewers). Visual signs thus participate in two types of systems, "aesthetic" systems, which account for individual emotional responses to visual elements on physical and formal levels, and "informational" or "communication" systems, which account for intellectual responses to visual elements on iconographic

and symbolic levels. As a group, visual signs may participate in visual communication systems, each system unique to its parent system, the art object. With a certain amount of premeditated thought combined with technical know-how, artists create compositions, arrangements of visual signs that together articulate narrative discourses, elucidating ideologies and ideas that characterize relationships between artist and artwork, artist and audience, artwork and audience.[210]

I believe the analogy of art as signs is useful in art historical analysis because it allows for an objective visual analysis based on deductive reasoning. The analysis of Charlot's artworks as "signs" permits using technique and artistic process to define aspects of the artist's style. This method of interpretation offers a systematic approach to deconstructing the pictorial narrative. The isolation of individual signs provides the opportunity to explore their individual meanings within deeper levels of cultural context. This semiotic analysis contributes to the understanding of biography in the life of the artist because it enables identification of individual visual elements that can be traced back to specific moments in the artist's life that served as his source of inspiration. The second process of semiotic analysis, the reconstruction of the pictorial narrative, then returns the sign to its original context, where it takes on an enhanced meaning, allowing for a more insightful and comprehensive understanding of the original artistic intentions.

An analysis of art objects as sign systems may be particularly applicable to Charlot's monumental public works of art. "Public art," by nature, has certain implications, premises, or presumptions that differentiate it from most other art genres. "Public" implies intended access by the masses, in opposition to most other art, created for an art market composed of private collectors. Further, the nature of fresco painting, by being adjacent to or a part of the architectural structure, cannot be moved from studio/storage to display or from sale to private/public collections. Public art, therefore, implies greater consideration on the part of the artist to harmonize the art object with the physical and social environments surrounding it.[211]

In my analytical model, based on Peirce's tripartite definition, a sign has three possible manifestations which may occur individually or together depending on context: index, icon, and symbol.[212] An index-sign must have a natural referent and signifies

meaning by virtue of a similarity or existential bond between itself and the object. Analysis of index-signs provides insight into Charlot's creative and technical mastery of materials, as well as how he manipulated these material elements into signs, as icons and symbols, in order to construct his visual language. An icon-sign must bear a representational relationship to its signifier, such as a picture or a painting of Jesus Christ. In my analysis, icon-signs, or iconography, function as pure description. A symbol-sign, in contrast, has an abstract relationship, such as the picture of a cross or the written word "Jesus," which as signs refer to both the Savior and Christian religious ideology. The interpretation of symbol-signs requires two levels of analysis in order to establish meaning through time by examining the artwork from the perspectives of both the artist/creator and the viewers/receivers. Firstly, this model can incorporate the historic dimension of time by investigating meaning at a synchronic moment for the creator. Secondly, meaning can be investigated from the perspective of the interpretants who do not assign an absolute meaning; rather, their responses give insight as to the variety of possible interpretations. The various audience responses over time allow for a diachronic perspective of how the artwork is made meaningful at different moments in time.

I construct my semiotic analysis drawing from the work of anthropologist Clifford Geertz who wrote,

> As interworked systems of construable signs (what, ignoring provincial usages, I would call symbols), culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which...can (be) intelligibly—that is thickly—described...The whole point of a semiotic approach to culture is...to aid in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them.[213]

For my purposes in this study, one could easily substitute the word "art" for "culture," understand "subjects" to be "artist" and "audience," as well as their mutual relationships to the art object. My desire is to move beyond strict interpretations of semiotic analysis, an idea that is also supported by Geertz. In his discussion of art as a cultural system, Geertz stated,

> If we are going to have a semiotics of art...we are going to have to engage in a kind of natural history of signs and symbols, an ethnography of the vehicles of meaning...for turning the analytic powers of semiotic theory...away from an investigation of signs in abstraction toward an investigation of them in their natural habitat—the common world in which men look, name, listen and make….To be of effective use in the study of art, semiotics must move beyond the consideration of signs as means of communication, code to be deciphered, to a consideration of them as modes of thought, idiom to be interpreted....[W]e need...a new diagnostics, a science that can determine the meaning of things for the life that surrounds them. [214]

In the Pacific, Charlot created visual aesthetic systems by applying his knowledge of pictorial art in the Western tradition and by incorporating signs, icons and symbols of local indigenous culture within this framework. He used the formal constructive elements of art, when these elements are perceived in unison, to convey an idea, a system of ideas and a microcosm of his own ideological worldview. In order to convey this ideology in his frescoes, Charlot broke down the visual signs into fundamental components, and then reinterpreted and represented them with sensitivity, using the aesthetic and symbolic systems of the culturally diverse population that comprised his audience. The Fijian murals are a mature example of Charlot's ability to create monumental art that combines form and function in a visual dialogue with a multicultural audience. In Fiji, Charlot created a multivocal narrative intended for three cultural groups, native Fijian, those peoples indigenous to Fiji; Indo-Fijian, primarily laborers who immigrated from India; and those of European descent, expatriates who live in Fiji and those that represent the majority of the international audience of tourists. Together, these groups served as representative of the general "masses," to whom Charlot directed his visual signs and "haloed" message.

Endnotes

[132] A.E.P. Wall, "He's an Artist's Artist," 28 June 1964. *Focus* section, The Sunday Star Bulletin (Honolulu, Hawai'i), A-8.

[133] *Tupapa'u* may be translated as "ghost" or "spirit of the dead." My title is drawn from Gauguin's painting *Manoa Tupapau*, translated in the literature as "The Spirit of the Dead Watching." For a discussion of this in the literature see, for example, Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk, Paradise Reviewed: An Interpretation of Polynesian Symbolism (1975; reprint. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1983), 73. See also Nancy Mowll Mathews, Paul Gauguin; An Erotic Life (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 182.

[134] Hawai'i was annexed to the United States on 12 March 1959. For more information on the fiftieth state see Gavan Daws, Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1974).

[135] John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr.

[136] Three Plays of Ancient Hawaii (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press,1963); *Laukiamanuikahiki* (Snare that Lures a Far-flung Bird), Hawaiian-English (Honolulu: Jean Charlot private printing, 1964); and *Na Lono Elua* (Two Lonos) Hawaiian-English (Honolulu: Paradise of the Pacific, 1965).

[137] Samuel H. Elbert, Spoken Hawaiian (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1970).

[138] Illustration 3.1. *The Chief's Canoe*, Jean Charlot, fresco, 1956, Honolulu Convention Center. Photo Caroline Klarr.

[139] Peter Morse as quoted by Ronn Ronck, in "Charlot mural looking for a new home," Honolulu Advertiser (Hawai'i)16 December 1992, C-4.

[140] Charlot's final fresco, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*, was completed in 1978 at Maryknoll Elementary School, Honolulu, Hawai'i. The mural measures five by six feet, thus, the Leeward fresco was the last monumental public fresco Charlot completed during his life time. Zohmah Charlot, 1986.

[141] Illustration 3.2. *Night Hula*, Jean Charlot, ceramic tile mural, nine by fifteen feet. This mural was installed originally at the Tradewind Apartments, Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawai'i in October 1961. The original technician was Isami Enomoto. This mural was restored and reinstalled in 2003 at Saunders Hall, University of Hawai'i-Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

[142] Klobe 1990 (full reference note 33).

[143] John P. Charlot, Interview 2, by Caroline Klarr, and Martin Charlot, Interview 4, by Caroline Klarr, June 2001, Naiserelagi, Fiji. During the restoration of Charlot's Fijian frescoes, June-July 2001, Martin and I had many informal conversations about his father's life, artworks, and fresco technique.

[144] Illustration 3.3. *Fiji War Dance*, color linoleum cut, Jean Charlot, 1971 (Morse, Illustration 637, 364). Photo and collection Caroline Klarr.

[145] Illustration 3.4. *Kawa Ceremony: Pouring Water*, serigraph, Jean Charlot, 1973 (Morse, Illustration 700, 419). Photo and collection Caroline Klarr.

[146] Jean Charlot, Picture Book II: 32 Original Lithographs and Captions (full reference note 115).

[147] Illustration 3.5. *Qaravi Yaqona: Kava Ceremony, Kei Viti : Melanesian Images. Five Lithographs in Color*. By Jean Charlot, printed by Lynton Kistler, 1978 (Morse, Illustration 726, 10). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection Martin Charlot.

[148] Illustration 3.6. *On the Go Fiji*, lithograph, Jean Charlot, 1978 (Morse, Supplement, Illustration 750, 20). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection Martin Charlot.

[149] Refer to Appendix B: Jean Charlot's Fijian Oils according to Jean Charlot's personal Catalogue of Painting, and Appendix C**:** Jean Charlot's Fijian Prints according to Peter Morse, editor.

[150] For a discussion of *tupapa'u* see Teilhet-Fisk 1975, 73; Mary Lynn Zink Vance Gauguin's Visual Pantheon as a Visual Language (Dissertation submitted to University of California Santa Barbara, July 1983), 35; and Ziva Amishai-Maisels Gauguin's Religious Themes (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985), 191.

[151] Illustration 3.7. *Yellow Christ*, Paul Gauguin, 1889, as published in Debora Silverman, Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000), Illustration 118, 280. This figure is based on a statue in the little chapel of Trèmalo near Pont Aven. Its development can be followed through a pencil study and a watercolor sketch of the study of the wooden crucifixion at Trèmalo. Although Gauguin simplified his image, the figure is claimed to be faithful to the original. See also Amishai-Maisels, 41.

[152] Jean Charlot, Interview 16, by John P. Charlot, transcript, 6 November 1970, 4-5. Jean Charlot Collection.

153 Ibid., 4.

154 Memorial exhibitions for Gauguin were held in Paris in 1903 and 1908, but post-1919 with the end of World War I there was a flood of new literature that made Gauguin's life interesting to the general public, for example Noa Noa (Tahiti 1893; reprint, Paris: Crès, 1951) and Avante et Après (Marquesas1903; reprint, translated by O.F. Thesis, San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 1994). Mathews, 256.

155 These include copies of Paul Gauguin's published letters and texts such as Noa Noa and Avante et Après (full references note 154).

156 Maurice Denis, a young admirer of Gauguin, figured in the lives of both artists. Denis and Gauguin corresponded while Gauguin was in Polynesia; Denis had written to him and requested his participation in a Paris exhibition with the newly formed Nabis. Denis was also a guest speaker on liturgical art for *Le Gilde Notre-Dame*, and Charlot had ample opportunity to hear about Denis' relationship with Gauguin. Charlot also visited Denis' studio, where he once saw the artist's *Annunciation*. Jean Charlot, Interview 1, by John P. Charlot, transcript, 14 September 1970, 1-2. Jean Charlot Collection.

157 Mecure de France, 9 February 1891 in Symbolist Art Theories: A Critical Anthology, edited by Henri Dorra (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 202, and in Franciose Cachin, Gauguin: The Quest for Paradise (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 158-161. Based on these ideas, Aurier imagines Gauguin's artworks as "fragments of huge frescoes…ready to burst the frames that unduly confine them!" in Mecure de France, 9 February 1891, in Cachin, 161.

158 Mecure de France, 9 February 1891, in Dorra, 200-201.

159 Mecure de France, 9 February 1891, in Teilhet-Fisk 1975, 17.

160 For a discussion of Gauguin's visual language drawing from Symbolist ideas see Vance. For a discussion of Gauguin's visual iconography in Polynesia see Teilhet-Fisk 1975.

161 For the discussion of the Symbolist doctrine that art is for the few see Amishai-Maisels, 416. Recall Charlot's statement presented earlier: "Art should be for all the masses...It is nourishment for the people, like food, like bread; when it becomes privileged, precious for the few, art is negative rather than positive." Jean Charlot as quoted in Ronck 1979, B-1.

162 Teilhet-Fisk 1975,143-146.

163 Cachin, 105.

164 Ibid., 172.

165 Mathews, 223 and 254.

166 See Teilhet-Fisk 1975 for a discussion of Gauguin's breaking with earlier nineteenth century Neoclassical interpretations and his lay-anthropological perceptions and perspectives. For a discussion of Gauguin's work in Polynesia as perpetuating the myth of a lost paradise see texts on Gauguin by Vance and Mathews. See also Gauguin's Skirt, Stephen F. Eisenman (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997).

167 See Mathews, 145 and Eisenman, 40.

168 *Vahine No Te Tiare* discussed in Eisenman, 62-63, and *Mehari Metua No Tehemana* in Eisenman, 68-70, 134, 201.

169 *Te Ari'i Vahine* discussed in Cachin,107-109; *Te Nave Nave Fenua* is described as an example of "large paintings of Polynesian nudes." in Mathews, 217. See also Eisenman, 66-68, 71, and 201.

170 For example, Teilhet-Fisk 1975, 143-146.

171 For example, Paul Gauguin Ancien Culte Mahorie (full reference note 154).

172 For example, Teilhet-Fisk 1975 or Vance.

173 Jean Charlot, Personal memo, October 1976, Miscellaneous Articles 1960s+ Folder, Jean Charlot Collection.

174 "Theosophy sought to establish a universal brotherhood based on spiritual principles common to all religions and a study of the occult sciences which...held the secret of these principles." Vance, 13. For a

discussion of the religious synthesis observed in Gauguin's paintings see for example Vance, 134; Teilhet-Fisk 1975, 167-174; and Eisenman, 130-133.

[175] Illustration 3.8. *Ia Orana Maria*, Paul Gauguin, 1891, as published in Franciose Cachin, Gauguin: The Quest for Paradise, 75.

[176] Eisenman, 66 and 68.

[177] John P. Charlot, Interview 3, by Caroline Klarr, April 2000, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

[178] Jean Charlot and F. J. Sheed, Cartoons Catholic: Mirth and Meditation from the Brush and Brain of Jean Charlot (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1978).

[179] Illustration 3.9. *Nativity at the Ranch*, Jean Charlot, fresco, 1953, Kahua Ranch, North Kohala, Hawai'i. Photo Caroline Klarr. See also Illustration 5.6. *The Compassionate Christ*, Jean Charlot, fresco, altar panel, 1958, St. Catherine's Catholic Church, Kapa'a, Kaua'i, Hawai'i. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

[180] Cachin, 116-17.

[181] Amishai-Maisels, 421, and Eisenman,172-175.

[182] Vance, 72-73.

[183] Amishai-Maisels,74.

[184] In reference to this painting Gauguin stated, "I painted my own portrait…." cited in Gauguin, Michael Howard (London: Dorling Kindersley, 1992), 35.

[185] See Silverman for a discussion of Gauguin's portraits as Christ, especially "Gauguin's Miseres," 267-313. See also "Self Portrait (with Halo), 1889" in Mathews, Figure 48, 143.

[186] Jean Charlot, Interview 2, by John P. Charlot, transcript,15 September 1970, 3. Jean Charlot Collection.

[187] "Fresco painting, I would say, is a heroic kind of painting because you have to build up your wall day by day and on the fresh mixtures of lime and sand paint as long as the mortar is wet. When the mortar dries, your pigment will not adhere anymore to the mortar and it will be useless to go on painting." Jean Charlot, Address to Social Science Association, Steedman House, Honolulu, 4 February 1952, typescript, Jean Charlot papers, Jean Charlot Collection."

[188] For example, artists such as Martin Charlot, Evelyn Giddings, and Betty Ecke.

[189] Jean Charlot's research documenting Hawaiian culture and history is part of the Jean Charlot Collection.

[190] Illustration 3.10. Jean Charlot with Hawaiian drum, *hula pahu*, at Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawai'i. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

[191] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," 3.

[192] Ibid. Illustration 3.11. *Hula Ki'i*, Jean Charlot, cover illustration of Two Hawaiian Plays (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1976). Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

[193] Ibid., 5.

[194] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," 8-9.

[195] "Roselani Award Banquet Fetes Artist and Author," 28 May 1963, Honolulu Star-Bulletin (Hawai'i), 32.

[196] "Special Awards of Recognition." In Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts [cited 6 April 2004], 2. Available at http://www.state.hi.us/sfca/specialawardsofrecognition.htm, INTERNET.

[197] John Pierre Charlot, "The Death and Burial of Jean Charlot, February 12,1898—March 20, 1979," Honolulu Magazine, Volume XIV, Number 6 (December 1979), 87.

[198] Jean Charlot informational pamphlet (Honolulu: Jean Charlot Foundation). The complete lyrics to the *mele inoa* are listed on the back cover. See also Appendix E. A *Mele Inoa: Keoni Kalo*.

[199] For example: *mana*, *tabu*, *momona*, *manu*, *ike*. Please refer to Fijian and Hawaiian Glossaries (xiv-xvi).

[200] *Keoni Kalo*, as printed in the Jean Charlot Foundation informational pamphlet, University of Hawai'i-Manoa. See Appendix E. *A Mele Inoa: Keoni Kalo*.

[201] Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel Elbert, Hawaiian-English Dictionary (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 184.

[202] *Haole* may also be translated as "white person," "Caucasian" or "European," while *malihini* may also be translated as "stranger," "tourist," or "guest." Pukui and Elbert, 58 and 233.

[203] At the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (Honolulu, Hawai'i) Charlot was known to have worked with Kenneth Emory, Mary Kawena Pukui, and Samuel Elbert, among others.

[204] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," 18.

[205] Paul Scranton, "Tohunga-the Artist as Ritual Master," and Jeryl Copp, "Religion" in Dimensions of Polynesia, edited by Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk (San Diego: Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego, 1973), 34-38 and 69-83.

[206] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's Hawaiian-English Plays," 5.

[207] Ibid.

[208] John P. Charlot, "Jean Charlot's First Fresco: *The Massacre at the Main Temple*." In Jean Charlot website [cited 7 June 2003], 10. Available at http://libweb.hawaii.edu.charlotcoll/J_Charlot/charlotmcvicker.html, INTERNET.

[209] Ibid.

[210] These ideas are based on those discussed by Jan Mukarovsky, "Art as Semiotic Fact," in Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions, fourth edition, edited by Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Tinunik (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), 3-11.

[211] Lucy R. Lippard, "Towards a People's Art," Foreword in The Contemporary Mural Movement, edited by Eva Cockcroft, John Pitman Weber, and James Cockcroft (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), xi-xv.

[212] Iverson, 89.

[213] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," 14 and 24.

[214] Clifford Geertz, "Art as a Cultural System, " in Local Knowledge; Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology, third edition (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 118-120.

Illustration 3.1. *The Chief's Canoe,* Jean Charlot, fresco, 1956, Honolulu Convention Center, Honolulu, Hawai'i. Photo Caroline Klarr.

Illustration 3.2. *Night Hula*, Jean Charlot, ceramic tile mural 9 X 15 feet. This mural was installed originally at the Tradewind Apartments, Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawai'i, in October 1961. Technician: Isami Enomoto. This mural was recently restored and re-installed at Saunders Hall at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

Illustration 3.3. *Fiji War Dance*, color linoleum cut, Jean Charlot, 1971 (Morse, Illustration 637, 364). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Caroline Klarr.

Illustration 3.4. *Kawa Ceremony: Pouring Water*, serigraph, Jean Charlot, 1973 (Morse Illustration 700, 419). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Martin Charlot.

Illustration 3.5. *Qaravi Yaqona: Kava Ceremony. Kei Viti: Melanesian Images. Five Lithographs in Color*. By Jean Charlot, printed by Lynton Kistler, 1978 (Morse, Illustration 726, 10). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Martin Charlot.

Illustration 3.6. *On the go Fiji*, lithograph, Jean Charlot, 1978 (Morse, Supplement, Illustration 750, 20). Photo Jana Jandrokovic. Collection of Martin Charlot.

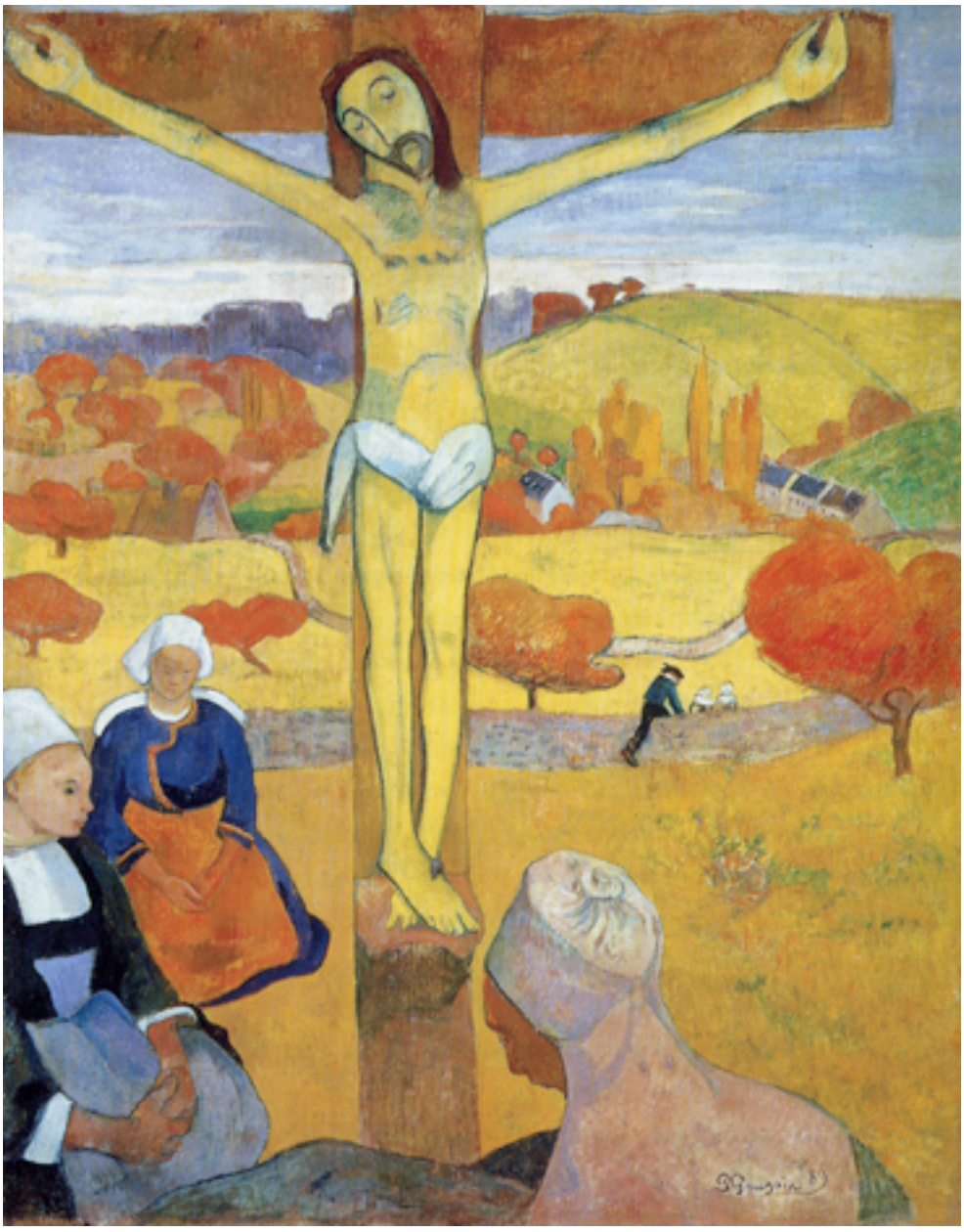

Illustration 3.7. *Yellow Christ,* Paul Gauguin, 1889, as published in Deborah Silverman ,Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 2000), Figure 118, 280.

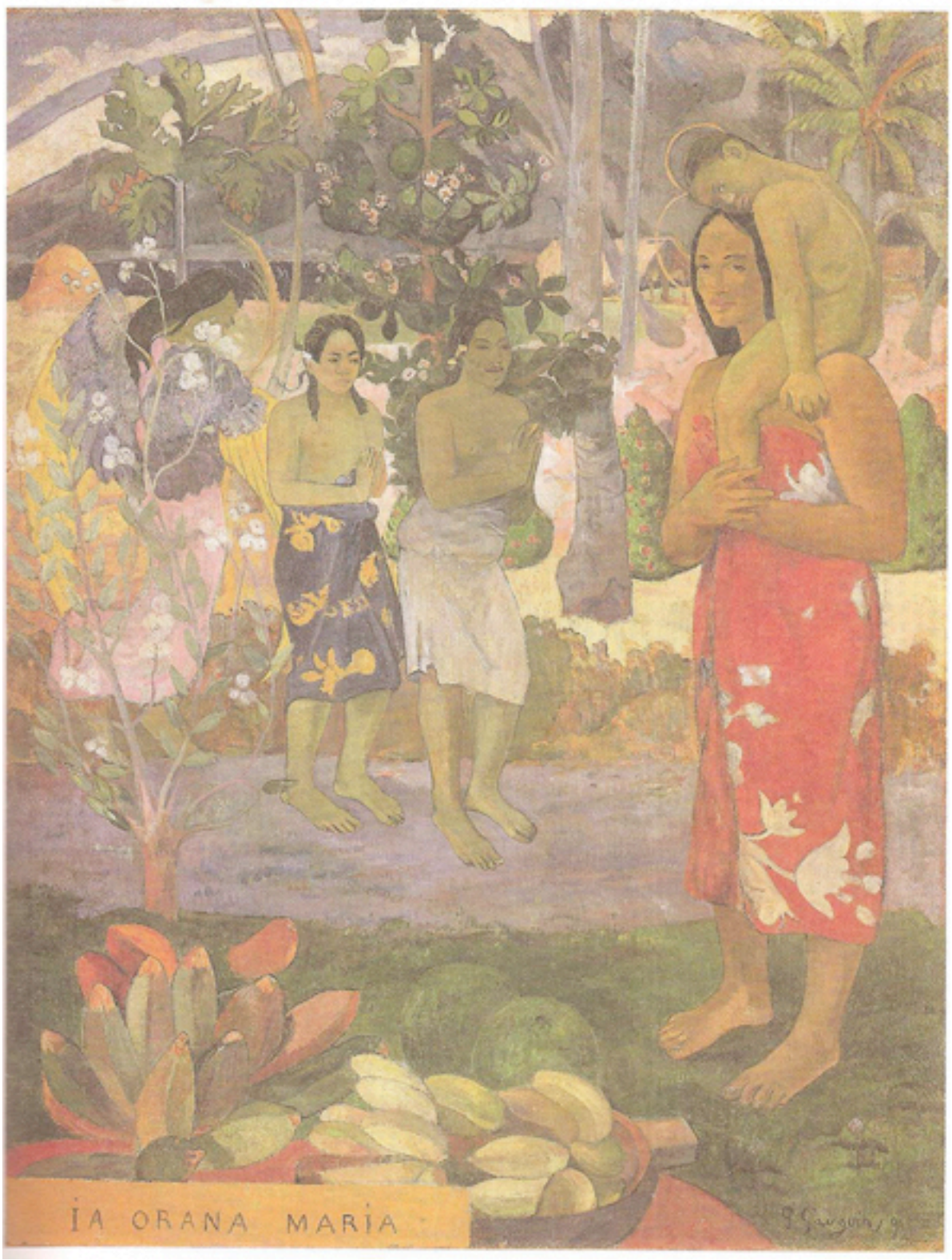

Illustration 3.8. *Ia Orana Maria,* Paul Gauguin, 1891, as published in Franciose Cachin, Gauguin: The Quest for Paradise (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 75.

Illustration 3.9. *Nativity at the Ranch*, Jean Charlot, fresco, 1953, Kahua Ranch, North Kohala, Hawai'i. Photo Caroline Klarr.

Illustration 3.10. Jean Charlot with Hawaiian drum*, hula pahu,* at Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawai'i. Courtesy of Jean Charlot Collection.

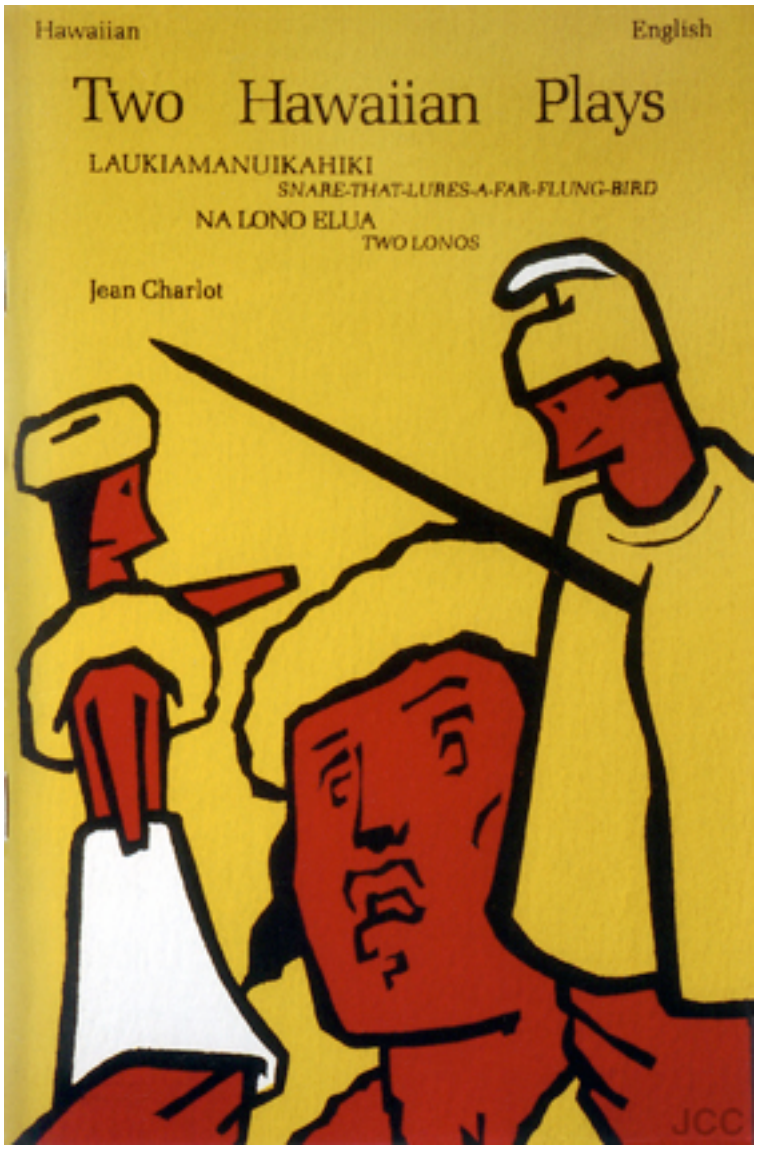

Illustration 3.11. *Hula Ki'i,* "Puppet Hula," Jean Charlot, cover illustration of Two Hawaiian Plays: Hawaiian English (Honolulu: privately published, 1976).