

**DE-MYTHOLOGIZING RIVERA:  
Political Cultures and the European Years,  
1907-1921**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the period the Mexican artist Diego Rivera spent in Europe (1907-1909; 1911-1921), and with the works produced at that time. Rivera's European production, I propose, can be contextualized within two political cultures: French nationalism during World War I and the post-war era, and the Mexican Revolution. I propose that Rivera's European production accepts a plurality of meanings when contextualized in these distinct political cultures. This dual approach challenges previous readings which have mythologized Rivera's European period as unavoidably linked to the iconography, style, political ideology, and national identity that he manifested after his definitive return to Mexico in 1921.

In chapter 2, I contextualize Rivera's transition from Cubism to *la tradition* within the politicized interpretation provided by Kenneth Silver in Esprit de Corps. Between 1913 and early 1917, Rivera was a Cubist artist. Around March 1917, however, he renounced Cubism for a classicized manner of painting, which included Ingres-like portraits, academic drawings, Cézannesque landscapes, and "construction drawings." Relying on Kenneth Silver's politicized interpretation of the avant-garde shifts between Cubism and *la tradition* during World War I and the early post-war era, I situate Rivera's confrontational positioning in the midst of the right-wing oriented

discourse of French nationalism. This contextualization opens the question as to Rivera's political allegiances in the context of nationalist France.

In chapter 3, I analyze Rivera national, cultural, and political allegiances in relation to the Mexican revolution (1910-1921), and I conclude that Rivera's notion of national identity evolved between 1911 and 1921. This evolution, I argue, can be traced through a joint reading of Rivera's representations 'of Mexicans and of Mexico.' Representations of Mexicans encompass Rivera's portraits of Mexican emigrés, while representations of Mexico comprise depictions of Mexican *artesanía* and of the Mexican plateau. Before 1914 Rivera identified with the liberal, urban, educated class of Mexicans. He manifested this allegiance in two portraits he painted of a representative of this class, culture, and political ideology. Between 1914 and 1919 approximately, Rivera identified with an imagined community of uneducated and violent peasants. Around 1919, however, Rivera's national and cultural identity shifted once again, as he was invited to return to Mexico to collaborate in the "civilizing" of the uneducated Mexicans whom he had previously identified with. Rivera's renewed interest in the 'old masters,' I argue, favorably impressed Mexico's post-revolutionary intellectual elite, who thought his embrace of the classical tradition conducive to their "civilizing mission." In fact, Rivera's classicizing style, Western and Europe-centered as it was, paved the way for his official return to Mexico.

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## INTRODUCTION

The famous Mexican artist Diego Rivera (1886-1957) lived in Paris between 1911 and 1921, where he studied diverse languages and movements, including Cubism. Rivera's return to Mexico in 1921, however, put a definite end to his Cubist pursuits. In his murals, he returned to forms of representation which, if not academic, precluded his earlier radically modernist approach. Rivera's "mature style" has been described as an "idiosyncratic fusion of Renaissance, academic, modernist, and indigenous Mexican techniques, styles, and motifs."<sup>1</sup> Rivera envisioned didactic purposes for these murals and believed that they would play a significant role in creating a sense of pride and of national consciousness in the Mexican people.

Rivera's first murals in Mexico, such as those painted in the National Preparatory School (1922), the Ministry of Education building (1923), or the National School of Agriculture at Chapingo (1924), were commissioned by the Mexican government. The so-called Mexican mural campaign in which Rivera participated was part of the educational program led by the Minister of Education

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<sup>1</sup>The Dictionary of Art, 1996 Edition, s.v. "Rivera (y Barrientos Acosta y Rodriguez), Diego (María Concepción Juan Neponuceno Estanislao de la)."

José Vasconcelos. Upon his return to Mexico, Rivera began an intensive study of indigenous art and folk culture: he travelled to Yucatán in late 1921 and to Tehuantepec in early 1922. Because of his self-conscious participation in Vasconcelos's campaign, Rivera was soon regarded as a national hero.

Also upon his return, Rivera joined the Mexican Communist Party. When in 1929 this party was outlawed in Mexico, he was expelled because of his Trotskyist sympathies. In the late 30s-early 40s, in fact, Rivera was host to the exiled Leon Trotsky, who stayed for some time at the artist's house in Coyoacan, Mexico City. While Rivera maintained stormy relations with the Communist Party from then on, he outspokenly identified himself as a Marxist for the rest of his life. Yet, despite this self-conscious Marxism, he was repeatedly accused of participating in the capitalist economy and of maintaining the social *status quo* he so loudly criticized. These accusations owed to the fact that after 1927, Rivera started accumulating a personal fortune by accepting mural commissions in the United States (like the Detroit Industry Murals, 1932-3), and by painting portraits of celebrities and Mexican society women (like Portrait of Adalgia Nery, 1945).

Despite his self-proclaimed populist nationalism, Rivera had not been an active participant in the conflict which had provoked national awareness in Mexico's population. He had spent the entire duration of the Mexican revolution (1910-20) in Europe. After the first signs of revolt erupted in November 1910, Rivera left for Europe backed by the security of a government grant, and carrying

the money he had collected by selling his paintings to members of the Mexican 'aristocracy.' When the civil war became a national upheaval in 1913, Rivera, who was clearly informed of these developments, stayed in Paris. It was only in 1921 that he returned to his homeland. By then, a constitutional government had been consolidated and normal life had resumed its course in the major cities. Rivera, in fact, returned to Mexico welcomed by a government invitation.

When, after his return to Mexico, he was interrogated about his Parisian years and about his abandoned Cubism, Rivera consistently dismissed this epoch of his life as "wasted time." In the three versions of his dictated memoirs, he claimed that neither his Parisian experience nor his Cubism had contributed to his later Mexican muralism or his Marxist ideology.<sup>2</sup> He stated, for example:

Had I realized from the beginning that in literature, in art, and in everything else, nothing is individual more than in part, and that everything is produced because of the intimate communion of the artist with his people; then I would have saved an enormous amount of wasted time and I would have started expressing what I really had inside, which was, naturally, nothing but the voice of my country and my people.

Our roots deeply penetrate the soil of our homeland; our expression--so natural, so particular, so rooted, and so sensitive to the collective voice of the people--becomes human. That is the moment when it [our expression]. . . becomes universal. This process, so clear and so simple, would take me many, many years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Rivera dictated his memoirs on three occasions: Memoria y Razón de Diego Rivera: an Autobiography Dictated to Loló de la Torre, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Ed. Renacimiento, 1958); My Art, My Life: Dictated to Gladys March (New York: Citadel Press, 1960); Confesiones de Diego Rivera: Dictated to Luis Suárez (Mexico City: Editorial Era, 1962). Also, Rivera supervised the writing of his biography by Bertram Wolfe, Diego Rivera: His Life and Times (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1939).

<sup>3</sup>Suárez, Confesiones, 107. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Spanish are mine.

Rivera, I believe, came to perceive his Parisian experience as a threat to his Mexican national identity, to his public persona as a national hero, and to the legitimacy of his revolutionary ideals. Because he attributed no value to his Parisian epoch, specialized studies about this period appeared only after his death in 1958. In 1965, for example, María Cristina Flores Arauz devoted her thesis to "The Cubist Oeuvre of Diego Rivera." North American scholars soon became interested in Rivera's Cubism as well: in 1971 The Cubist Circle included Rivera in an exhibition held at the Art Gallery of the University of California at Riverside. Also in 1971, critic Florence Arquin published Diego Rivera: The Shaping of an Artist 1889-1921--a formalist interpretation of Rivera's early career. Olivier Debroise's 1977 article "Diego Rivera and the representation of space"--published by the Mexican art journal Artes Visuales--found common formal features in Rivera's murals and in his Cubist paintings. In 1979, Debroise also published Diego de Montparnasse which concentrated on Rivera's Parisian friendships. Ramón Favela's 1984 catalogue, Diego Rivera: The Cubist Years discussed Rivera's early art education and its formal influence on the artist's Cubist production. David Craven's recent book, Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist (1997), regarded Rivera's Cubism as an example of a modernist current he calls "alternative modernism." This branch of

modernism, according to Craven, had a leftist and revolutionary ideological outlook.<sup>4</sup>

A common assumption runs through all of these texts: Rivera's Cubist production and the lifestyle he led in Europe are consistently perceived to be at odds with the stylistic features of his Mexican muralism, with his self-projected image as a national hero, and with his loud assertion that he was a Marxist. Interpretations of Rivera's Parisian years, then, have assumed the existence of a schism between his European experience and his later nationalist and leftist rhetoric. Scholars have attempted to account for this break by proposing a variety of arguments. Most frequently, historians account for Rivera's radical shifts in style and ideological allegiance by claiming that some underlying theme motivated him throughout his whole life. In these narratives, the European years are seen as somehow forecasting Rivera's 'true' crusades: his Mexican muralism and his Marxism. Furthermore, such readings are invariably legitimized by statements extracted from Rivera's memoirs, though most scholars acknowledge that the same memoirs contain riddles and lies about Rivera's life in Paris.

Because all of these scholars have used Rivera's memoirs as historical documentation to some degree, they have not only avoided historical specificity but

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<sup>4</sup>María Cristina Florez Arauz, "La Obra Cubista de Diego Rivera" (Tesis Profesional en Historia, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965); The Art Gallery of the University of California, The Cubist Circle (Riverside: The Art Gallery of the University of California, 1971); Olivier Debroise, "Diego Rivera y la Representación del Espacio," Artes Visuales, no. 16 Supplement (Winter 1977): I-XVII; idem, Diego de Montparnasse (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1979); Ramón Favela, Diego Rivera: The Cubist Years (Phoenix: Phoenix Art Museum, 1984); David Craven, Diego Rivera: as Epic Modernist (New York: G.K. Hall, 1997).

have also aggrandized Rivera's own mythologization of his Parisian life. All of this--Rivera's memoirs and the scholarly arguments based on them--have contributed to construct what I have chosen to call 'the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad* (Mexicanness).'

In subsequent chapters, I hope to show that, during his European sojourn, Rivera manifested a plurality of styles and political ideologies as well as national and cultural identities. In chapter 1, I will contextualize Rivera's European production within the moralizing and right-wing-oriented discourse of French patriotism during World War I. In chapter 2, the same production will be evaluated in the context of the political, cultural, and class war known as the Mexican revolution. This dual contextualization will allow us to project a plurality of meanings on Rivera's European oeuvre. But before advancing these arguments, an initial critique of the literature which has supported the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad* is necessary. This is the task of Chapter 1.

## Chapter 1

### THE MYTH OF RIVERA'S EUROPEAN *MEXICANIDAD*:

#### A Critique

##### 1.1 Introduction

As he retrospectively narrated his European sojourn, Diego Rivera protected his identity as a national hero and as a communist. He filled his dictated memoirs and interviews with riddles and lies about this period of his life. These riddles not only allowed Rivera to refashion his own past but have also continued to be used as reliable information to buttress scholarly arguments. In the process, the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad* was constructed. Proponents of this myth argue that the styles and ideologies which Rivera pursued in Mexico after 1921 can be retrospectively 'projected' onto the work he had produced in Europe between 1911 and 1921.

In the constructed 'myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*,' the term "European" has a specific temporal and spacial implication. It addresses the years Rivera spent in Europe (1907-1909; 1911-1921) and the works he produced during

this period. In contrast, the term "*Mexicanidad*" has a mythological and ahistorical implication. It refers to the essentialized connection scholars have produced between Rivera's so-called 'true' crusades--his leftism, his mature style and iconography, his muralism--and his Mexican national identity. According to this line of thinking, Rivera's Mexican national identity could only emerge fully formed after he returned to Mexico from Europe in 1921. At the same time, proponents of *Mexicanidad* argue that Rivera's future identity as a Mexican revolutionary was already prefigured in his European production. In doing so, they exclude the possibility that Rivera may have identified with national, cultural, and political "imagined communities" (to use Benedict Anderson's expression) which do not correspond with his later politics.<sup>1</sup> The whole process has a mythologizing effect.

De-mythologizing Rivera's European *Mexicanidad* will require two processes. It will be necessary, first, to disclose the operative assumptions and argumentative fallacies that have supported this myth and, second, to propose historical arguments which map a plurality of meanings. In this first chapter, I will address four of the arguments which have sustained the myth of Rivera's Parisian

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<sup>1</sup>In his ground-breaking book on the problematic of nations and nationalism, Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an "imagined community:" "[the nation] is imagined because communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity and genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined." Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflexions on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1983), 15. How and why Rivera imagined himself as part of different communities during his European sojourn, and the reasons why he retrospectively denied these past identities is one of the 'general problems' addressed in this thesis.

I am thankful to Dr Lynda Jessup for bringing Anderson's work to my attention.

*Mexicanidad*. I will conclude by acknowledging the operative assumptions which I believe underline this thesis.

## 1.2 Florence Arquin: Diego Rivera: The Shaping of an Artist (1971)

Florence Arquin's 1971 book was the first timid endeavor to rescue Rivera's European period from oblivion. This formalist review and interpretation of the artist's early production proposed to recover his formative period. Arquin, however, remained attached to Rivera's own testimonies. In the introduction to her book, she legitimized her judgements with a facsimile of a letter written in Spanish and sent to her by the artist. Rivera's letter praises Arquin's text as "excellent, so much more because it is entirely objective."<sup>2</sup> That Rivera responded so effusively is surely related to the portrait Arquin paints of him: a superhuman artist capable of emulating every style. She sees Rivera as cultivating each and every one of the avant-garde movements: Monet's Impressionism, Seurat's Pointillism, Cézanne's Neo-impressionism, Picasso's Cubism, Delaunay's Orphism, and Matisse's Fauvism.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Rivera is characterized as a sponge who can absorb every aesthetic trend, yet expel it just as quickly. In this context, the paintings are regarded as signifiers of "influences"--from Cézannesque influences to Mexican references.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Arquin, The Shaping of an Artist, XII. English version appears in *ibid.*, XIII.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 62. The term "influence" is initially used in relation to Cézanne, but is repeatedly used in other contexts.

Arquin, in any case does not read Rivera's influences as a disordered mishmash; she rationalizes them in a "logical"--indeed, teleological--manner.<sup>5</sup> To legitimize her argument about Rivera's logical progression, she reproduces the artist's self-mythologizing tale about his European "plan:"<sup>6</sup>

I wanted to carry out my revolution in painting stepping through the different epochs of modern art--with accelerated speed, because of my analysis and my perspectives--in order to reach my own perspective inside the society of my time. But already in 1911, my neo-impressionism had been constituted in a special understanding of structure and composition. This neo-impressionism, strictly speaking, was already parallel to and passing by cubism, and it was called "organized naturalism." It had a kind of geometric rigor of space not yet present in cubism or in Seurat, which came, in my case, not from El Greco but from Cézanne, from the Dutch masters, and from the pre-Cortesian architecture of Anahuac. This architecture was connected to the cosmological functions of the universe, and it carried a type of knowledge which I had already incurred in Mexico even before travelling to Europe.<sup>7</sup>

What Rivera saw as a systematic "process" guiding his development, Arquin transforms into "influences" encompassing a teleological exploration which guided Rivera to find his true identity.<sup>8</sup> This leads her to state at some point, for example,

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 96. A clear example of this form of reasoning is Arquin's discussion that "once Rivera was satisfied he understood the limitations of Analytic Cubism," he was "free to concentrate on the techniques of the Synthetic phase of the movement." Ibid., 72.

<sup>6</sup>Rivera, paraphrased by Loló de la Torre, uses this term in the following context: "a working plan that [Rivera] thought was indispensable so that he could reach at some point the possession of his self. . . . [This] plan. . . consisted not in avoiding the influences that surrounded him but, on the contrary, in openly and deeply receiving them so that. . . he could skip through these influences everything that was not his own." Torre, *Memoria y Razón*, 1: 342.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 2: 7.

<sup>8</sup>Rivera uses the term "processes" in the following context: "My process continued. I now felt an unstoppable imperative. It was necessary to reach the most complete depuration of the elements of expression, to get to use with freedom and cleanliness each of them without interference. In this way,

that "as the next step in the logical progression of interests, Rivera turned to the exuberant painting of the fauvists."<sup>9</sup>

In constructing an organized succession of Rivera's European styles, Arquin constructs a teleological argument. This argument denies the possibility that Rivera's styles may have signified anything more than steps leading to the artist's so-called true destiny as a Mexican muralist. By constructing such systematic progression towards a pre-determined goal which was realized only in Mexico, Arquin's argument perpetuates the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*.

### 1.3 Olivier Debroise: Diego de Montparnasse (1979)

Olivier Debroise's 1979 book paints the romanticized picture of a bohemian Rivera. He inserts the artist in the cultural heterogeneity of the Parisian milieu, paying significant attention to Rivera's relationship with Picasso, Modigliani, and the dealer Léonce Rosenberg. Debroise claims, in any case, that Rivera's "closest friends" were Russian emigrés "because of his ideological position." He states, for example:

[b]ecause of Angelina [Rivera's Russian common law wife], but also because of his ideological position, Diego's closest friends were the Russians, and among them, the great majority were exiled bolsheviks: [Ilya] Ehrenburg, [Maximilian] Voloshine, and also Anatoli Lunacharsky, who would later be People's Commissar of Culture in the

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they would be ready to receive the human content that was increasingly urgent" Suárez, Confesiones, 122.

<sup>9</sup>Arquin, The Shaping of an Artist, 96.

USSR; Mejinsky, who would later be First Chief of the GPU. In contact with them, and maybe also with Trotsky himself and his wife Natalia who, with Lenin, prepared from Paris the future revolution, Diego educated himself politically and shared the revolutionary ideas of those who were the heroes of the aborted insurrection of 1905 in St. Petersburg, and would be the leaders of the October revolution in 1917. Diego started manifesting the revolutionary radicalism he would profess throughout his life.<sup>10</sup>

With these words, Debroise arbitrarily links Rivera with 'would-be-s' and 'maybe-s.'

The writing serves to distort the historical record: clearly, the objective is to forecast Rivera's future as a bolshevik revolutionary with roots in his early European years.

Debroise also devotes some pages to Rivera's associations with Mexican emigrés from the revolution.<sup>11</sup> Some of these were members of the Porfirian aristocracy who had fled Mexico for Paris when the Mexican revolution broke in November 1910. Debroise suggests that Rivera would never seek to profit from his presumed political enemies. He suggests that the artist only compromised his artistic and ideological integrity in cases of extreme financial need. He comments that: "[h]unger and the need to pay his studio's rent and buy coal to warm it caused Rivera to look for some kind of patron."<sup>12</sup> This assertion is immediately followed by the following reference to Rivera's relations with Porfirian emigrés:

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<sup>10</sup>Debroise, Diego de Montparnasse, 36-7.

<sup>11</sup>Concurrent with Rivera's stay in Europe, his country went through a long bloody civil war which started with the overthrow of the twenty six-year old dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz in 1910.

<sup>12</sup>Debroise, Diego de Montparnasse, 38.

As the [Mexican] revolution exploded in 1910, numerous Mexican emigrés had reached Paris together with Porfirio Díaz [the former dictator]....So far, it has not been clearly determined what were Diego's links with the Mexican refugees. Familial and friendly links united the Rivera Barrientos family to the Porfirian aristocracy; it is possible that as they coincided in Paris, Diego may have had contact with some of them, even if only occasionally. Except for his friendship with Alfonso Reyes, who held an official post in Mexico's legislation, Diego never commented, for obvious reasons, on his political relations with the exiled compatriots that were part of the most reactionary group of his country. In spite of this, it is known that the Bringas sisters [probably, members of a wealthy family of Mexico] bought one of his paintings.<sup>13</sup>

Debroise also refers to Rivera's contacts with exiles from the bloody revolutionary civil war. After Porfirio Díaz was overthrown, a new democratic president, Francisco I. Madero, was elected in November 1912. In February 1913, Madero was assassinated by a reactionary coup d'état, and this gave way to a civil war among partisan factions which continued until 1917. Between 1912 and 1917, Mexicans of different political affiliations fled to Europe for diverse reasons. Out of all the emigrés who Rivera befriended in Europe, Debroise strongly associates him with Martín Luis Guzmán, the former secretary of the peasant revolutionary leader Pancho Villa:<sup>14</sup> Guzmán, Debroise asserts, brought to Rivera "new mythologies which excited him about the new heroes of his homeland."<sup>15</sup>

Debroise sentimentally bonds the artist to the peasant revolutionary cause and removes him from partisan discords. He states that the "internal debates

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Pancho Villa was the leader of the *División del Norte* (Northern Division): one of the peasant armies which formed fairly spontaneously among the warring factions of the revolution.

<sup>15</sup>Debroise, Diego de Montparnasse, 73.

between Porfirians, Huertistas, Reyistas, and supporters of Felix Díaz, and some Maderistas...worried Rivera very little...."<sup>16</sup> He also omits the artist's Madrilean fellowship with members of the Mexican upper-middle class such as Alfonso Reyes and Jesús Acevedo. Debroise's account of Rivera's relations with Mexican emigrés is, in fact, extremely biased: he minimizes Rivera's participation in the Mexican political debate; he omits the artist's documented connections with middle-of-the-road refugees; and he romanticizes Rivera's shared moments with Martín Luis Guzmán. In the process, Debroise overstates Rivera's support of the peasant revolutionary cause, and denies his participation in any other political debates.

It is without a basis of fact that Debroise describes Rivera's relations with soon-to-be Soviet communists and undermines the artist's contacts with Mexican emigrés from the revolution. From Debroise's construction, Rivera emerges as a wholehearted leftist from his early European epoch. Because he indulges in this romanticized yet unproven version of a leftist Rivera in Europe, Debroise perpetuates the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*.

#### 1.4 Ramón Favela: Diego Rivera: The Cubist Years (1984)

In 1984, the first challenge to Rivera's accounts of his European period appeared. Ramón Favela's thoroughly documented text traces Rivera's immersion in Cubist circles and submits the paintings to detailed formal analyses. Joint use of

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 54. He makes only one explicit connection between the exile Ernesto García Cabral and Rivera, soon clarifying that García Cabral preferred the company of other Mexicans to Rivera's.

documentation and minute visual scrutiny allow Favela to reject many of Rivera's self-mythologizing tales, such as the artist's so-called miraculous discovery of Cézanne in Ambroise Vollard's gallery.<sup>17</sup> Favela recovers Rivera's Cubist work from obscurity by contextualizing the artist's style and activities in the Cubist milieu. Rivera emerges as a "major figure" of the Classical Cubist group in 1916 wartime Paris--a group which included Gino Severini, André Lhote, Juan Gris, Jean Metzinger, and Jacques Lipchitz.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the sophistication of Favela's arguments, his book does not depart from earlier attempts to create a continuity between Rivera's past and present, which Favela establishes through a reading of Rivera's stylistic changes. Favela establishes Rivera's stylistic continuity on the basis of what he believes to be a permanent condition: Rivera's early art education. He suggests that Rivera's stylistic changes were--from his early Mexican landscape painting to his Spanish academicism, from his Cubism to his Ingresque drawings, from his Cézannesque landscapes to his Mexican muralism--different expressions of Rivera's internalized Mexican art education. Favela states, for example, that Rivera's early academic course work "must have predisposed [him] toward his later perceptual

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<sup>17</sup>Rivera mythologized his encounter with Cézanne's paintings at Ambroise Vollard's gallery, which he described as "a marvelous delirium." In his memoirs, he declared that after avidly looking at Cézanne's paintings from eleven in the morning till late at night, he reached his studio with a fever of 104 F, which continued for three days. March, My Art, My Life, 65-6.

<sup>18</sup>Favela, The Cubist Years, 121.

rationalizations of Cubism."<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, Rivera's use of the golden section in his Cubist paintings emerges as an expression of the artist's early indoctrination in the universally valid laws of formal relationships.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the "carefully controlled technique" in Rivera's 1917 Ingresque drawings "suggests. . .[a] fundamental regression to his Academy days when he had been a pupil of the Mexican Nazarene and follower of Ingres Santiago Rebull."<sup>21</sup> In this light, Rivera's Cubism is just another classicized instance which confirms Rivera's classicizing character and his Mexican roots. Favela, in fact, regards the Cubist years as a time when the artist "rediscovered the inherent properties of his classicizing temperament."<sup>22</sup> While Favela does not argue that Rivera was a born-classicist, he constructs the artist's classicizing education as a permanent condition. In doing so, he essentializes Rivera's artistic "temperament" as a classicized one.

Another essentializing argument is present in Favela's book. He arbitrarily identifies the formal features and pictorial effects of Rivera's Cubism as "Mexican." He claims, for example, that Rivera "appears to have discovered his *Mexicanidad* (Mexican national identity), the plastic qualities of his country and its *artesanía* (arts and crafts) in Paris."<sup>23</sup> In addition, he localizes Mexican plastic

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 9.

qualities in Rivera's wartime Cubism as he describes the artist's Cubist style during the war in the following way:

Rivera's Cubism during this period is imbued with a certain "*Mexican-ness*" that is metaphysical and arcane. In his most austere, crystalline, Cubist works there are dark foreboding elements. In their drab, enamel-like surfaces, they appear epoxied, sealed in time and evoke a dusky classicism that is ponderous and heavy like the physical persona and intellectual complexity of their creator.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, despite the fact that Favela acknowledges the need to dismiss Rivera's declarations about his Parisian years, he still relies on the artist's memoirs on occasion. With relation to the artist's so-called Cubist "masterpiece," Zapatista Landscape (1915) (Fig. 1), Favela reproduces a telling statement by Rivera--words which announce the artist's desire to retrospectively mythologize his populist nationalism :

The clearest revelation. . . [about Rivera's national identity] came from a Cubist canvas, "The Zapatistas," which I [Rivera] painted in 1916. It showed a Mexican peasant hat hanging over a wooden box behind a rifle. Executed without any preliminary sketch in my Paris workshop, it is probably the most faithful expression of the Mexican mood I have ever achieved.<sup>25</sup>

Favela's arguments point at stylistic continuities and iconographical interests in Rivera's production. He traces classicizing formal elements, such as the use of the golden section and of balanced composition, throughout Rivera's production up to 1921. In addition, Favela traces "Mexican iconography" and forms

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 121.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 108,

"imbued in a certain Mexicanness" in Rivera's Cubism--objects and depictions which, he rightly observes, fully engaged Rivera later. In other words, Favela locates classical as well as Mexican elements in Rivera's production prior and subsequent to the Cubist epoch. It is from these trans-historical findings that Favela constructs the permanent condition which, he believes, defines the character of Rivera's work and of his personality: Mexican nationality and classical art education. Despite the wealth of documented information that serves to justify Favela's claims, the essentializing characteristics of his argument perpetuate the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*.

### 1.5 David Craven: Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist (1997)

The self-declared purpose of the most recent study on the life and work of Diego Rivera, by David Craven, is "to reestablish the common threads that link . . . most of [the] diverse tendencies and divergent positions [regarding Rivera]. . . so as to provide at least a provisional coherence to them."<sup>26</sup> Craven calls these diverse tendencies the "many Riveras" constructed by scholars: "the child prodigy," "the modernist," "the *indigenista*," "the greatest interpreter of the October Revolution," "the culpable [bourgeois] Rivera of the Stalinist," "the interpreter of the people," "the internationalist," "the contested Rivera of feminist scholars," "the people's

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<sup>26</sup>Craven, Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist, 5.

revolutionary," and "the elitist revolutionary."<sup>27</sup> With regard to all of these interpretations, Craven acknowledges that he "shall try to articulate a certain type of historical cohesion" that "should permit us to appreciate the rich legacy produced by an artist of enormous artistic achievement and compassion for humanity. . ."<sup>28</sup> For Craven, this purpose is valid since, he argues, "there was a 'poetics or aesthetic ideology constructed by Rivera with notable consistency throughout the many phases of his career."<sup>29</sup> In other words, Craven sets out to find a single theme that will bind together Rivera's artistic production.

The second chapter of Craven's book deals with Rivera's European period. In this chapter, Craven discusses a number of Cubist paintings in which Rivera addressed the Mexican revolution of 1910-20. These works, which included certain colors, patterns, and themes characteristic of Mexico's *artesanía*, stood out from the rest of Rivera's cubist production (1913-1917). In view of this, Craven refers to this particular group of paintings as "Anahuac Cubism" and proposes two arguments in relation to them.<sup>30</sup>

Craven first claims that Rivera appropriated the decentering pictorial strategies of collage for his Anahuac Cubist paintings in order to suggest his

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<sup>27</sup>In the introduction to his book, Craven details the specific characteristics of these "many Riveras" constructed by scholars. *Ibid.*, 1-5.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>"Anahuac Cubism" was a name originally invented by the Mexican critic Justino Fernández.

identity with a "non-Eurocentric and post-colonial" Mexico.<sup>31</sup> Cubist vision would serve Rivera's aims because Cubism contested the hegemony of Western mainstream culture.<sup>32</sup> This reductive statement is based on a formalist reading of Rivera's Anahuac Cubist works--particularly, the artist's so-called Cubist masterpiece: Zapatista Landscape (1915) (Fig. 1).<sup>33</sup>

A formal analysis of Zapatista Landscape along the lines of Rosalind Krauss allows Craven to state, first, that Rivera's Cubism contested Western vision and, in the immediate next paragraph, that it operated within the "Cubist contestation of Western cultural hegemony."<sup>34</sup> Rivera's Anahuac Cubism, he suggests, was unequivocally revolutionary because it addressed an anti-Western, post-colonial national identity with an equally anti-Western, post-colonial pictorial language:

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 51.

<sup>32</sup>The first problem with such an interpretation of Rivera's "Anahuac Cubism" emerges as Craven explains his conceptual framework: a de-historicized (or rather, over-theorized) notion of collage and of modernist space. Craven holds a so-called postformalist notion of Cubism, in which he adopts Rosalind Krauss's ideas about the confrontation between collage and "Western pictorial logic." From this notion, he proceeds to generalize Thomas Crow's argument that Cubism represented a critique of Western mainstream art, and that, in doing so, it contested the hegemony of Western culture. Without further explanation, he transfers this conceptual framework to Rivera's version of Cubism, and inserts it into an artistic current he calls "alternative modernism."

<sup>33</sup>Craven states that: "In one of the most incisive postformalist discussions of modernism Rosalind Krauss has illuminated further how a Cubist collage, with its distinctive use of modernist space, addresses the standard mechanic of pictorial logic in the West. As Krauss has rightly observed, two of the formal strategies that developed out of Cubist space are those of figure/ground reversal and of the continual transposition between negative space and positive form, thus there is no visual sign without the eclipse or negation of its material referent. Rivera's Zapatista Landscape is exemplary in both these respects." Ibid., 50.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

The Cubist contestation of Western cultural hegemony is precisely what allowed Diego Rivera to recruit Cubist collage and modernist space on behalf of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20, with its unequivocal commitment to constructing a non-Eurocentric and post-colonial identity.<sup>35</sup>

This argument has many flaws. Not only it is reductive, but it is also erroneous with respect to the relationship between the Mexican revolution, Western cultural hegemony, and above all, the "non-Eurocentric and post-colonial identity" which Craven proposes. Since the Mexican revolution was a class, cultural, and political war, it cannot be regarded as having had a "unequivocal commitment." The critique of this particular argument will be elaborated in chapter 3; suffice it to say for now that the Mexican revolution generated a plurality of identities and that, as chapter 3 will show, Rivera identified not only with the project of a "non-Eurocentric" nation.

Craven's second argument states that Rivera's "Anahuac Cubism [was] part of an emergent post-colonial discourse that was affiliated with the left, most notably with anarchism."<sup>36</sup> This argument, in fact, seeks to categorize Rivera as a leftist revolutionary during his European sojourn and, furthermore, to associate him with a specific form of leftism: the cause of anarchism. Craven, however, provides neither a particular definition of anarchism nor a convincing proof to justify a link between Rivera and this ideology. In fact, he merely deduces Rivera's putative

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 42.

anarchism from the artist's sympathy with the *Zapatista* movement. Rivera manifested this sympathy by painting a single 'portrait' of Emiliano Zapata, the peasant revolutionary of the southern state of Morelos (Zapatista Landscape, 1915)

(Fig. 1). Without further explanation, Craven proceeds to claim that:

Much like the pictorial logic of Rivera's all-over, decentering, and non-narrative Cubist paintings, Zapata's plan was anti-hierarchical and decentralized, as well as radically democratic. Zapata's project was distinctly anarchist in character and it was, in many ways, the heir to the earlier anarchist insurgency led by Enrique and Ricardo Flores Magón of the P.L.M. Of course, Rivera's own politics before 1916-17, and the impact of the Russian Revolution, were more anarchist than Marxist. Just as the Ayala program [the Plan of Ayala, a manifesto signed by Emiliano Zapata on November 28, 1911] saw the future largely as one of redemption for the indigenous campesino past, so Rivera's painting was already, in some respects, also about a revalidation of the indigenous and popular cultures that had been devalued by the Díaz dictatorship's neo-Western project of modernization [the dictatorship overthrown by the Mexican revolution.]<sup>37</sup>

Craven's categorization of Rivera's politics as anarchist is simply unjustified. There is not a single convincing suggestion--neither in this book nor in any other source--that Rivera considered himself an anarchist during this period. With regard to Zapata's own anarchism, Craven states that:

...the state of Morelos where Zapata lived, was in some ways analogous to a Russian Soviet or the Paris Commune of 1871. The plan "therefore contained the principle of military organization in territorial (popular) militias linked to the point of production" and was

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 40.

fundamentally opposed to a professional army and to any national government.<sup>38</sup>

It is not the focus of this critique to discuss whether Craven is justified in defining Zapata's plan as anarchist. Suffice it to say, however, that the Zapatista movement initially joined the liberal middle class revolution led by Francisco I. Madero to overthrow the twenty-six-year-long dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Madero's own plan was to establish a national and centralized constitutional government. Zapata's rebellion against Madero--documented in the *Plan de Ayala*, signed by the Zapatistas on November 1911, after Madero became constitutional president--did not state that the Zapatistas were "fundamentally opposed to a professional army and a national government."<sup>39</sup> The Zapatista movement, in fact,

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid. Craven quotes here from Adolfo Gilly, *La Revolución Interrumpida*, trans. Patrick Camiller, London, Verso Press, 1971), 72.

<sup>39</sup>The *Plan de Ayala*, signed by Emiliano Zapata and his followers on 28 November 1911, does not oppose the national state as an institution: instead, it rejects the person in charge of it, Francisco I. Madero. The most significant clauses of the Plan de Ayala read as follows:

1st. . .we declare that Francisco I. Madero [then constitutional president] is unable to realize the promises made to the revolution, promises which he made himself. He betrayed its principles and mocked the people's faith. . .he is incapable of governing since he has no respect for law or justice of the people; he is a traitor to the Fatherland because he is humiliating with blood and fire the Mexicans who deride their rights; he is pleasing the *científicos* [one of the social 'casts' of Mexico], the landowners, and the bosses who enslave us. From today, we begin a revolution started by Madero himself, till the dictatorial powers that exist have been wiped out.

2nd. We do not acknowledge the name of Francisco I. Madero as that of the President of the Republic of Mexico, for the reasons stated above. We will proceed to overthrow this administrator. . . .

6th. As an annexed part to this plan, we state that: the fields, mountains, and waters that the landowners, *científicos*, or bosses have usurped. . .these goods will be assigned to the peoples and the towns that have titles for these properties, from which they were robbed by oppressors. . . .

Mexican people: support these plan with arms in your hands and you will ensure prosperity and happiness to the Fatherland.

Justice and Law"

Reprinted in Córdova, *La Ideología de la Revolución Mexicana: la Formación del Nuevo Régimen* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1973), 435-439.

had been formed because the peasants of Morelos reclaimed their rights to repossess lands which had been taken away from them. In attempting to reclaim these lands by force, the Zapatistas necessarily confronted the law; yet the fact that they confronted the national army and, consequently, the national government, did not necessarily mean that they opposed it in principle. The fact that the Zapatistas did not have state-level ambitions owed more to their parochialism than to a putative opposition to a centralized state.

In the second chapter of his book, Craven constructs a revolutionary Rivera with an anarchist outlook. Rivera's revolutionary characteristics are deduced from certain decentering stylistic qualities found in Anahuac cubism. In subsequent chapters of his book, Craven continues to find similar non-hierarchical characteristics in Rivera's murals. These formalist findings allow Craven to argue for stylistic continuities throughout Rivera's career. These continuities appear, in turn, as imbued with an anarchist revolutionary vision. Craven concludes that:

Rivera never completely broke with Cubism, much less the formal impetus of an alternative [leftist and revolutionary] modernism, so he never forgot Zapata and his compelling vision of the future--a vision of the future that was the most progressive one of the period. The fact that Rivera would paint Zapata's portrait almost forty times. . .after 1920, alerts us to an important strain of ideological continuity in Rivera's long career.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Craven, Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist, 41.

By way of this uneasy merger of styles and ideologies, Craven continues to establish de-historicized continuities and, in the process, to further perpetuate the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*.

## 1.6 Conclusion

In critiquing these texts, I have tried to pin down aspects which I consider problematic, such as the notion of teleological artistic development, confusing and reductive argumentative techniques, and essentializing argumentation. Because these texts de-historicize (in different ways and degrees) Rivera's European production, they have perpetuated the myth of Rivera's European *Mexicanidad*. This thesis will attempt to demolish this myth. To do so, it will contextualize Rivera's European production within two distinct political cultures: French nationalism during World War I, and the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). This dual contextualization will allow us to re-evaluate Rivera's wartime production. The remaining chapters of this thesis will delineate the two political cultures, situate Rivera's European imagery, and suggest contextualized meanings.

In Chapter 2, I argue that Rivera's withdrawal from Cubism in favor of classicizing techniques signified his affiliation with French wartime and post-war patriotism. In Chapter 3, I propose that the same classicized aesthetic helped Rivera to appeal to Mexico's post-revolutionary elite--a fact which eventually facilitated his

return to Mexico as an official artist in 1921. Chapter 3 will also deal with representations of 'Mexicans and of Mexico,' i.e., with portraits of Mexican emigrés and with depictions of Mexican folk arts and crafts. These representations will be discussed as politicized images in the context of the Mexican Revolution.

Debroise, Craven, as well as many other scholars not discussed here, assume that Rivera's representations of Mexican folk arts and crafts, and of objects such as a rifle, peasant gourds, or a Mexican *sombrero* signified Rivera's sympathy with the peasant class, to its culture, and to its political cause. While I will subscribe to this reading, I will propose that other pictorial icons of Mexican culture surface in Rivera's European production. Signifiers of a Mexican educated middle-class of liberal political outlook do appear in Rivera's portraits of Mexican emigrés. These portraits have never been discussed as a group before because, in the retrospective accounts of his European sojourn, Rivera minimized his relations with Mexican exiles from diverse political factions.<sup>41</sup> Rivera's portraits of Mexican emigrés together with his representations of Mexican arts and crafts are the 'visual sites' where I will construct Rivera's changing allegiances in the confrontational political context of the Mexican revolution.

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<sup>41</sup>No portraits of Mexican emigrés, except that of Martín Luis Guzmán, are significantly mentioned in Rivera's memoirs. When he does allude to his contacts with them, only their names and a brief reference to the reason for their presence in Paris or Madrid are provided. Rivera's accounts contrast with those of other emigrés' letters, however. The latter are far more specific about the circumstances of their connections. Further information regarding this issue is upcoming in chapter 3.

**Chapter 2**  
**PAINTING *POUR LA PATRIE*:**  
**The War Years of Diego Rivera,**  
**1914-1921**

**2.1 Introduction**

Accounts of the Parisian avant-garde's attitude towards *la Tradition* during World War I and the post-war have dealt with well-known Cubists, such as Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Georges Braque, or Fernand Léger. Diego Rivera's case, however, remains an unexplored example of avant-garde oscillation between Cubism and the notion of French tradition officially proselytized during this period. Between 1914 and 1921, Rivera's production alternated between Cubism, Ingres-like drawings, academic nudes and still lifes, and Cézannesque landscapes. Concurrently, he engaged in artistic scandals which brought his name to the fore and implicated him in the confrontation of modernism against tradition. In this

chapter, I will discuss why and how Rivera submitted to contemporary notions of the French tradition.<sup>1</sup>

A rich account of French wartime culture has been presented in Kenneth Silver's ground-breaking book Esprit de corps (1989).<sup>2</sup> Silver dramatically narrates the biographical, ideological, and stylistic transformations within the avant-garde between 1914 and 1925. He positions avant-garde artists, critics, poets, and dealers around the following poles: the home front and the war front, French and German culture, and French and Greco-Latin culture. French-born combatants and foreigners fighting for France make up the war front, while the home front includes all non-combatants who supported the French war effort. At the war front, Silver shows, the regimentation of military life precluded the construction of subtle discourses; the home front, however, remained ideologically overcharged: an atmosphere prone to strain and discrimination which scrutinized every aspect of life searching for

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<sup>1</sup>These scandals have repeatedly been addressed to support arguments dealing with plural tendencies. For example, "*L'affaire Rivera*"--an episode of verbal provocation and physical violence between Rivera and the art critic Pierre Reverdy--is regarded by Kenneth Silver as a preliminary sign of the upcoming dispersion of the wartime Cubist group. Another scandal, which involved a conspiracy between Rivera and the retrograde critic Louis Vauxcelles against the Cubist art dealer Léonce Rosenberg, has been deemed by Christopher Green as a false alarm of the supposedly imminent death of avant-garde art. In his 1987 book, Green contested the implied argument in Silver's 1981 dissertation. The debate revolved about the extent to which avant-garde art was overwritten by painterly traditionalism during the First World War and the post-war. By tracing modernist tendencies in great detail, Green defied Silver's claim that the Parisian avant-garde was co-opted into right-wing-associated nationalist propaganda. Against Silver's map of artists emulating classicizing and quintessentially French styles, Green opposed a picture of avant-garde flourishing. Christopher Green, Cubism and Its Enemies: Modern Movement and Reaction in French Art, 1916-1928 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987); Kenneth Silver, Esprit de Corps: The Great War and French Art, 1914-1925 (PhD Diss., Yale University, 1981).

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth E. Silver, Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-25 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989).

signs of treason to *la patrie*.<sup>3</sup> In this context, he identifies various popular perceptions. Cubist artists were said to be "boche" by virtue of the dominance of the movement by foreign artists practicing an anti-French aesthetic, while adherents of neo-classicism were said to embody the cultural heritage of France. By interlacing artworks formally resembling *la tradition* with compelling textual sources, Silver reveals that avant-garde circles experienced mixed sentiments of fear and morality in relation to the French war effort. These tenets, indeed, echoed the conservative cultural policy officially promoted during the war.

Drawing on the parameters established by Silver in Esprit de Corps, I will attempt to provide a politicized context for Rivera's wartime experience. Rivera's status as a non-combatant foreigner, I propose, bore heavily on his conscious choice to part with Cubism and to comply with French patriotism during World War I. The artist insistently indicated his French patriotism at various times: he volunteered in 1915, he self-consciously remained in Paris during the war, he included on occasion outright patriotic words and motifs in his painting, he imitated the archetype of the French neo-classicist, and, last but not least, he actively associated his name with these neo-classical credentials. In addition, Rivera

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<sup>3</sup>Descriptions of military life and of its abortive effect on the formation of competing ideologies are contained in a letter sent by the conscripted sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon to the American collector John Quinn on 8 April 1916: ". . . you cannot imagine the effort necessary to evade by the mind, even for a moment, the world of the war. In fact, it is a world, really, which is complete in itself, in its ways and in its ends....we are as far away from Paris, where some friends are working now, as from New York. Any connection between intellectual life and us is broken." Raymond Duchamp Villon to John Quinn, from a translation of a lost letter, from the New York Public Library, published in Knoedler and Co., Raymond Duchamp Villon, 1876-1918, ed. George Heard Hamilton and William C. Agee (New York: 1967), 119, quoted in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 82.

repeatedly signified his disassociation from Cubism: he avoided contributing to Cubist journals such as L'Elan, he returned to traditional representation with a classicizing look, and finally, he sided with the newly conservative Louis Vauxcelles--a powerful critic who publicized and legitimized his repudiation of Cubism. In Esprit de Corps, Silver also demonstrates that the debate between the defenders of modernism and its detractors bore partisan as well as nationalist overtones. The fact that Rivera repudiated Cubism in favor of the French tradition in 1918, consequently, opens the question of his political allegiance in the context of patriotic and conservative discourses pervading France during World War I.

## **2.2 Between neutrality and patriotism: Rivera's choices**

During the war years, Diego Rivera repeatedly signalled his support of the French war effort. In the spring of 1915, for example, he attempted to enlist even though he was exempt from military service. Besides being automatically protected by his status as a foreigner, he was fortuitously absent from France in August 1914.<sup>4</sup> He first heard of the declaration of war as he was vacationing with

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<sup>4</sup>Rivera was one of the hundreds of foreign artists who studied in Europe early in the century. Funded by the provincial Government of Veracruz, he arrived in Madrid in January 1907. During the next two years, he travelled through France, Brussels, and England. In late 1910, he returned to Mexico city to briefly visit his family and renew his grant, but was back in Paris in late 1911-early 1912. He would remain in the French capital for the next ten years, until his definitive return to Mexico in 1921.

The outbreak of the war found him vacationing in Majorca with the artists Angelina Beloff, Jacques Lipchitz, Berthe Kristover, and Maria Gutierrez Blanchard. Rivera later explained in his memoirs that, as it became evident that the conflict would be long-lasting, "Tony," the group's host, offered free and permanent shelter to his visitors inviting them to peacefully share the produce of land and sea until the war was over. Torriente, Memoria y Razón de Diego Rivera, 2: 46-47.

friends in the Spanish island of Majorca, from where, upon realizing the growing magnitude of the conflict, he moved to Madrid. Despite the fact that his Madrilean milieu supported neutrality, he volunteered for the Allied cause in the spring of 1915. He was rejected, but nevertheless decided to return to the hazards of wartime Paris.<sup>5</sup>

Rivera's social, intellectual, and artistic life in the Spanish capital had not been an impoverished one. Just like Paris before the war, Madrid had granted him an international circle of friends including an important portion of the Parisian avant-garde that had arrived in Spain seeking refuge from the war. This group included Robert and Sonya Delaunay, Marie Laurencin, Otto Waetjen, Foujita, and Kavashima.<sup>6</sup> Added to the camaraderie and intellectual stimulation provided by this circle, peace and relative security were the crucial compensation for relinquishing the Parisian broth of creativity. Other artists--the Delaunays being the best known case--would not so easily give away such an opportunity.<sup>7</sup> Against all odds, Rivera

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<sup>5</sup>In her autobiography, Marevna, Rivera's lover during the war, reports that: "[t]he French and foreign artists who were not sent to the front were exempted for various reasons: one had flat feet, another had a finger or two missing; Modigliani was predisposed to tuberculosis, Soutine had a stomach ulcer, was subject to fits, and had a defective left eye." Marevna, Life with the Painters of La Ruche (London, Constable and Company Ltd., 1972), 55. Marevna then confirms in pages 78, 101, and 129, that Rivera had flat feet. In his memoirs, Ilya Ehrenburg, a close friend of Rivera during the war, also commented that the artist's flat feet were the cause of his rejection as a French soldier. Ilya Ehrenburg, People and Life, 1981-1921, trans. A. Bostock and Y. Kapp (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1961), 169 and 193.

<sup>6</sup>Favela, The Cubist Years, 90-1.

<sup>7</sup>Like Rivera, Robert Delaunay was in Spain with his wife Sonya in August 1914, and chose to remain in the Iberian peninsula for the duration of the war. Silver, Esprit de Corps, 5.

chose to return to the uncertain future that Paris reserved for foreigners, where he soon found himself a member of the home front.

Upon his arrival, Rivera found among other foreign artists of the Parisian avant garde a patriotic spirit akin to his own. The Spaniards Juan Gris and Pablo Picasso, and the Italian Gino Severini, for example, had anxiously grabbed the choice not to fight that they were granted,<sup>8</sup> but they still rallied in support of the French. Throughout the war years, as we shall see, this sentiment would assume multi-faceted appearances and reach various degrees of ardor. Yet by early 1916, every artist had either publicly or privately showed signs of French patriotism. Juan Gris, for example, expressed self-demeaning sentiments in a letter to the art critic Maurice Raynal, who had written to him complaining about the hardships of the front. As he attempted to cheer his friend up, Gris lamented that “[w]hen it is all over, you’ll be able to rest peacefully without the pangs of egoism and remorse which those of us who haven’t taken part in the campaign will feel. For my own part, I assure you that I am continually ashamed of that peacefulness you envy.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Since they were Spaniards, Gris and Picasso were exempted from serving at the French front. Gris was in Collioure (near the Spanish border) when the war was declared, and stayed there until the end of October. Returning to Spain was not an option for him: he faced criminal charges for having evaded military service. He would remain in Paris during most of the war. Christopher Green, *Juan Gris*, with contributions by Christian Derouet and Karin Maur (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1992), 301-2. August 1914 found Picasso vacationing in Avignon with Georges Braque and André Derain. In spite of the emotional strain involved in seeing his two French-born friends enlist, Picasso did not volunteer, and would spend the next four years in Paris as well. Silver, *Esprit de Corps*, 3. Gino Severini had been born in Cortona, Italy. He was in Rome at the outbreak of the war, but he returned to Paris at once. Gino Severini, *Life of a Painter: an Autobiography by Gino Severini*, trans. Jennifer Francina (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 145.

<sup>9</sup>Juan Gris to Maurice Raynal, October 1916, in Douglas Cooper, ed., *Letters of Juan Gris*, collected by D-H Kahnweiler (London, Privately Printed, 1956), 41.

Picasso, Rivera, and Severini, in the meantime, displayed their French patriotism by including words and motifs that revealed it in their Cubist paintings. A 1914-15 Cubist still life by Picasso contains a white cup bearing the words “vive la” followed by two crossed French flags. Because of this, the painting is now known as the “*Vive la France*” Still-Life (Fig. 2). In the same vein, Rivera’s Sailor at Lunch (1914) (Fig. 3) shows a fragmented and geometrized figure of a sailor having a meal at leisure. Rivera identified the sailor’s allegiance by inscribing the word “PATRIE” in large orange letters on the marine’s hat. By January 1916, Severini’s “First Futurist Exhibition from the Art of the War” loudly promoted his pro-France sentiment as well <sup>10</sup> Since Italy had joined the Allied cause on May 1915, Severini was automatically a French ally. He nevertheless chose to orient his message to a French-speaking public. Not content with wording the sensory bombardments of his 1916 canvas Cannon in action (Fig. 4) in French, he specifically alluded to French patriotic references: from the depicted cannon stepped a visual rhythm which read “arithmetical perfection/geometrical rhythm/POWER/LIGHTNESS/FRANCE.”

Self-imposed patriotism among avant-garde foreign artists, in any case, cannot be understood as a ‘natural’ reaction to the wartime spirit. Pro-France images and statements such as those described above, in fact, operated in a

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<sup>10</sup>Severini’s “First Futurist Exhibition from the Art of the War,” where he showed thirty-seven works, was held at Galerie Boutet de Monvel, January 15-February 1, 1916. Donald Gordon, Modern Art Exhibitions, 1900-1916, 2 vols. (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1974), 2: 885-6.

controversy regarding the national identity and wartime political allegiance of modern art. On the one hand, mainstream and popular culture accused Cubist art of being pro-German; on the other, Cubist artists outspokenly proclaimed their French allegiance. Silver has traced the popular perception that Cubism (which stood at this time as the chief signifier for modern art) was primarily a German art. He suggests that any objects mythologized as “German culture” were also imagined to be poisonous like the “asphyxiating gas” of the Germans.<sup>11</sup> This notion was clearly exemplified by a satirical wartime illustration by a well-known cartoonist, Willette. The cartoon, called “It’s not new” (“*Ce n’est pas nouveau*”) (Fig. 5), provided in one stroke stereotypes of the generalized notion that German cultural icons had assaulted French culture before the war: a German beer-hall waitress stands on a keg named *Munich*, books by prominent German philosophers and poets, a violin (representative of German music), a toilet (symbolic of German industrial manufacturing), and a large painting. The latter shows a baby and a bowl rendered in a “Cubic” manner: the crudely geometrized motif was meant to represent modern art.<sup>12</sup> Another example is an image by an illustrator by the name of Leka, who created a series of “Cubistic” portraits of the German Royal family in his 1914-15 “The Boche Imperial Family Kubified” (“*La famille imperiale boche Kubistée*”) (Fig. 6). The facial features of a portrait (which presumably depicts the German

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<sup>11</sup>Silver, *Esprit de Corps*. This issue is thoroughly discussed in Chapter I, “In the nightmare through which we are passing,” 3-27.

<sup>12</sup>“It’s not new!” is discussed on these terms in Silver, *Esprit de Corps*, 9-10.

kaiser) have been geometrized with the result that his expression seems militaristic and merciless. Silver discusses the word *Kubistée* printed in the painting: while clearly written in French, the spelling of 'Cubisme' with a "K" attempts to identify it with a German word, since the letter "K" is almost non-existent in French.<sup>13</sup> The mingling of typos might be read as a metaphor for the generalized belief that Cubism had German roots which had borne poisonous fruits on French soil. Silver himself accepts the multifarious meanings that examples of popular culture such as "It's not new!" and "The Boche Imperial Family Kubified" may hold, as he concludes that:

Whether this is supposed to mean that the Germans invented Cubism, or simply that they are attracted to Cubism is not made clear [in the cartoons] and it hardly matters. The point was to indict modern art as being somehow, in some way, Germanic.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, blurry perceptions could easily generate concrete consequences: the modern art collections of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler and Wilhelm Uhde were confiscated as enemy loot by the French government. The German nationality of these dealers was clearly a factor creating suspicion; yet, Silver claims, images such as the aforementioned contributed to the correlation of Cubism with German culture.<sup>15</sup>

What was the origin of this poisonous campaign against Cubism? And on what grounds did this campaign pervade French culture and society since the

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

beginning of the war? These are the questions that Esprit de Corps initially seeks to answer. The virulent campaign against German culture and its essentializing association with modern art, Silver explains, had been launched since the Dreyfus affair by the French ultra right-wing party, Action Française. A politicized opposition between French neo-classicism and German romanticism, indeed, was being proposed in French right-wing circles since the Franco-Prussian war. By 1915, Léon Daudet, an active member of Action Française, argued in Out From Under The German Yoke that German culture had weakened the Greco-Roman tradition. The latter, Daudet believed, was the true artistic heritage of France. In turn, he politicized his cultural argument by predicting an invigorated German march on France. This upcoming invasion, he argued, was being fostered in part by cultural factors such as the popularity of German art--epitomized by Richard Wagner--among the French.<sup>16</sup>

When the war started, popular perception viewed products of German origin with suspicion. It was easy enough for French society to adopt the ready-made set of prejudices constructed by Action Française against modern art. As we saw, Silver shows that Cubism came to be deemed as "boche" in the process. This popular perception, which had been, originally launched by Action Française, was now officially legitimized by the concept (and practice) of the *Union sacrée*: the improvised French coalition of politically discordant groups pressed to subordinate

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<sup>16</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 208-209. This issue is discussed throughout Esprit de Corps.

their partisan ambitions for the urgent cause of defeating the Germans.<sup>17</sup> Esprit de Corps traces the various pictorial strategies ways which avant garde artists found to avoid being labeled "boche;" these strategies, as we shall see, also enabled the artists to demonstrate their sincerely felt French patriotism.

### 2.3 Rivera and the defense of Cubism

Modern artists and poets soon reacted to the politicized condemnation of their art, and attempted to clarify their situation. Such was the self-appointed task of L'Elan, a "little journal" which started publication on April 1915.<sup>18</sup> It was run by Amedée Ozenfant, who was a minor avant-gardist during the pre-war but after 1916 designated himself the spiritual leader of the avant-garde--a role once performed by Guillaume Apollinaire and Albert Gleizes.<sup>19</sup> L'Elan presented itself as the living proof that avant-garde French spirit and thought--*élan*--had not been extinguished

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 25-7.

<sup>18</sup>L'Elan (Paris) (1 April 1915-1 December 1916).

<sup>19</sup>Between 1907 and 1910, Apollinaire had been the main critic writing in defence of the Picasso-Braque pair and of Matisse. He regularly wrote for L'Intransigeant, produced a column called "*Echos*" for the Paris-Journal, and collaborated on several other periodicals. Born in Germany, he changed his nationality so that he could fight for France. Albert Gleizes had been the main voice of the Puteaux Cubist group, which included Jean Metzinger, Henri Le Fauconnier, Marcel Duchamp, and Rivera, among others. In 1911, he had co-authored Du Cubisme with Metzinger). During 1912-13, he also published a series of articles which outspokenly politicized Cubism and modernist aesthetic, linking it with anarchist and syndicalist ideas. "Le Cubisme et la Tradition," the best known of these manifestos, was published in Montjoie! in February 1913. A Frenchman, Gleizes was called to arms as soon as the war started, and was at the front by the first winter of war. Mark Antliff, "Cubism, Celtism, and the Body Politic," The Art Bulletin 78 (December 1992): 655-668.

by the war.<sup>20</sup> The 8th. issue contained a statement written by J. Granié and addressed “To the Cubist Comrades.”<sup>21</sup> The manifesto was a response to the charge that Cubism was an extension of German culture and a foreign incursion into France. Granié made clear that the indictment “CUBISM IS GERMAN PAINTING” was nothing but a defamation invented by conservative critics such as Camille Mauclair. Instead, he argued that Cubism expressed “THE BRIGHT GENIUS OF OUR [the French] RACE.” He furthermore denied the German origin of modern art on the basis that no “German precursor” of Cubism was to be found. Towards the end of his statement, Granié argued that the claim “CUBISM IS GERMAN PAINTING” was a contradiction in terms: it could not be, he contended, that the same soldiers who were fighting the Germans were “OBSTINATE--OH PARADOX!--IN PERPETUATING OR TEACHING *BOCHE* PAINTING.”<sup>22</sup> The selection of drawings published in L’Elan reveals that they were intended as a proof that Cubism was the most appropriate art language to describe the war. A hybrid modern visual language was employed in the depiction of war sites and their situations. André Favory, for example, illustrates a military aerostation (Fig. 7), while “In Repose” (Fig. 8) by Dunoyer de Segonzac renders soldiers in uniform

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<sup>20</sup>“*Elan*,” Silver explains, “was one of the most patriotic words that could be spoken in wartime France.” The term had been popularized by Henri Bergson’s concept of *élan vital*, but during the war it came to express France’s “will to succeed. . . an ancient Gallic spirit. . . All French vitality and panache were concentrated in Ozenfant’s title.” Silver, Esprit de Corps, 52.

<sup>21</sup>J. Granié, “Aux Camarades Cubistes,” L’Elan no. 8 (1 January 1916): n.p.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. “*Boche*” was a derogatory term for “German” during the war.

relaxing around a large pot. The female nurse motif is repeated in two versions, one submitted by Metzinger (Fig. 9) and another by Derain (Fig. 10), while a print by Lespinasse (Fig. 10) depicts a wartime Penelope who knits and amorously glances at an open letter. Overall, the body of images published in L'Elan was clearly meant to glorify the war itself, the French soldiers, and Cubism, envisioned as a patriotic pictorial language.

Two aspects of the controversy regarding the wartime allegiance of Cubism were to affect Severini, Rivera, Gris, and Picasso personally. One was the glorification of the French combatant, and by extension, the reproach of the non-combatant. The other was French suspicion of foreigners. The French combatant was clearly celebrated both in mainstream culture and avant-garde circles. L'Elan, for example, made an evident effort to indicate the military role of its contributors. They were not called 'a poet' or 'a painter' any longer; instead, a brief description of their rank--no matter how minuscule this could be--was attached to their names. In this manner, the editorial statement of issue no. 8 announced that:

L'Elan publishes in this issue:  
a poem by Guillaume Apollinaire, soldier at the front;  
a poem by C. Eddie du Cotte, soldier at the front;  
a drawing by Derain, soldier at the front;  
a drawing by Lhote, discharged from the war.<sup>23</sup>

Another example is a poem by Apollinaire published in issue no. 9 and titled "April Night 1915" ("*Nuit d'Avril 1915*"). At the bottom of the page, a brief note informed

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<sup>23</sup>L'Elan no. 8 (1 January 1916): n.p.

the reader that “on March 17th, we have learnt that Apollinaire (Lieutenant G. de Koustrouwitzky), has received a head injury from a piercing shell. It is expected that his life will not be in danger.”<sup>24</sup> Apollinaire’s signature was again exalted, this time with the military appointment of “French Lieutenant of Infantry in campaign.”

The distrustfulness with which foreigners of any nationality and any profession were looked upon in wartime Paris has been repeatedly documented. Foreign artists were no exception. In a letter to his dealer dated May 1916, for example, Gris justifies himself for having turned down a drawing for L’Elan and also an invitation to exhibit in a coming exhibition at Madame Bongard’s. Commenting on this letter, Christian Derouet reports that “as a foreigner, [Gris] does not want to put himself forward during the war.”<sup>25</sup> Another foreign artist, Severini, provides a revealing account. Upon hearing loud explosions one night caused by the cannon known as Big Bertha, Severini ran outside to reassure his wife and daughter, who were not with him at that moment. Once in the street, he soon found himself surrounded by

... more and more people [who] began to gather in the street, regarding me suspiciously and somewhat threateningly. An accusation of “defeatism” at that time could cost someone his life, and just then everyone started muttering the word. I was well known and also well

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<sup>24</sup>Guillaume Apollinaire, “Nuit d’Avril 1915,” L’Elan no. 9 (1 February 1916): n. p.

<sup>25</sup>Christian Derouet, “Juan Gris: A Correspondence Restored,” in Green, Juan Gris, 288. Only the 1918 letters have been fully reproduced in this collection of Gris’s letters to his dealer Léonce Rosenberg. Previous ones are commented on by Derouet.

liked by everyone at that short street, but after all, I was a foreigner; in short, things were looking rather bad for me. . .<sup>25</sup>

Added to the indictments and distrustful scrutiny that all foreigners were subject to, foreign artists were doubly suspect if their art was avant-garde in nature. In addition, the “soldier at the front” was publicly honored and revered: this relegated healthy men at the home-front to an uncomfortable position.<sup>27</sup> In sum, it was their triple status as foreigners, non-combatants, and Cubists that made artists such as Gris, Rivera, Picasso, and Severini subject to suspicion and vilification as German sympathizers. This was a reputation they necessarily sought to avoid.

A fair number of Cubist artists including Gris and Rivera were invited to contribute to L'Elan. The editorial statement of the 8th issue of the magazine, for example, “assure[d] for future issues those [contributions] of madame Gontcharowa and messieurs Barzun, Galanis, Larionoff, Alexandre Mercereau, Metzinger, A. Perret, Picasso, G. Polti, Rivera, &c.”<sup>28</sup> However, most of these contributions including Rivera's, never appeared.<sup>29</sup> I would argue that Rivera and Gris never

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<sup>26</sup>Gino Severini, The Life of a Painter: The Autobiography of Gino Severini, 98.

<sup>27</sup>The French-born poet and cultivator of the avant-garde milieu, Jean Cocteau, for example, must have felt deeply uncomfortable as a non-combatant: he outfitted for himself a wardrobe of unofficial uniforms with which he went out in public during the war. Silver, Esprit de Corps, 113-31.

<sup>28</sup>L'Elan no. 8 (1 January 1916): n.p.

<sup>29</sup>The drawings Picasso submitted for publication in issue no. 9 were conspicuously remote from the typical trend of the magazine. He presented two nudes: the first was depicted in a geometrized yet fully integral form, the second showed a cubistically-rendered female sitting on a chair. These drawings sharply contrasted with other images appearing in L'Elan: neither represented themes of war or bore attached titles. Furthermore, their stylistic divergence allowed Picasso to avoid complete identification with a bold Cubist aesthetic. All these aspects of his contribution to L'Elan subdued his immersion in the debate concerning the German identity of Cubism, which the very action of contributing necessarily

contributed to L'Elan for fear of drawing attention to themselves and because-- unlike Guillaume Apollinaire--they remained non-combatants. The same situation explains why, with the notable exception of "Vive la France" Still-Life (Fig. 2) and Sailor at Lunch (Fig. 3), neither Picasso nor Rivera continued to include French patriotic icons in their Cubist oeuvre.<sup>30</sup> By keeping a low profile, i.e., by erasing their names from the very sites of the debate concerning the national allegiance of modern art, Picasso, Rivera, and Gris would more easily evade accusations. Some of these controversial sites comprised representations mingling Cubist form with outright patriotic messages, and texts such as those published in the 1916 L'Elan issues.

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implied. Further implications about Picasso's elusive involvement in this debate are discussed later.

<sup>30</sup>There is evidence that Rivera had openly manifested his French patriotism while in Spain. In writing to his friend Pedro Henriquez Ureña, Alfonso Reyes, who was in Madrid at the same time as Rivera, wrote that: "Rivera is all fired up to go to the war." Reyes to Henriquez Ureña, in Pedro Henriquez Ureña and Alfonso Reyes, Epistolario Intimo (1906-1946), 2 vols. (Santo Domingo: Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Ureña, 1981), 2: 89-93. About this letter, Ramón Favela comments that Reyes's observation "accords with recollections by other friends of Rivera about his French patriotism." Unfortunately, Favela does not provide specific references. Yet he goes on to describe a painting which Rivera painted while in Madrid: "This enthusiasm may have prompted Rivera to paint his paean to the beacon of French culture and strength in the face of war, his Eiffel Tower of November 1914. The combined view of a ghost of the Eiffel Tower looming above and within the rotating cars of the Great Ferris Wheel is seen behind what appear to be various views of an inclined ship's bow. . . . The building to the edge of this mysterious, grey industrial park may ambiguously symbolize both the basic colors of the Mexican flag and the French tricolor. That the work was painted not in France in November 1914, but in Spain, would place an entirely different meaning on the iconography of the painting." Favela, The Cubist Years, 91-92. Unfortunately, I have not found a reproduction of this painting.

## 2.4 Rivera as a wartime Cubist

By 1916, modern art languished at the home-front. Cubism not only ran against the ideological wind of wartime France: it also lacked any financial support. The most aggressive promoters of Cubist art before the war, the German art dealers Kahnweiler and Uhde, had been exiled. In addition, the wartime art market remained stagnant--a situation that would continue until early 1918.<sup>31</sup> Home-front Cubism nevertheless survived thanks to the economic intervention of the dealer Léonce Rosenberg and his gallery *L'Effort Moderne*.<sup>32</sup> From 1916 onwards, Severini tells us, Rosenberg started signing contracts with "over a dozen artists. . . : Herbin, Gris, Laurens the sculptor, Metzinger, Haydn, Rivera, María Blanchard, Lipchitz the sculptor, Braque, Valmier, Zárraga, Lhote, Picasso, Severini."<sup>33</sup> Cubist artists would find these arrangements extremely advantageous, since Rosenberg agreed to buy every painting produced during the term of their contracts. In Rivera's case, this period would be two years. Under these conditions, Severini, Rivera, and Gris

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<sup>31</sup>In his pioneering work, Malcolm Gee has devoted attention to the wartime art market. His dissertation demonstrated how commercial factors were crucial in the 'purely artistic' development of avant-garde art. In a later article, Gee explains how the Parisian art market was stagnant during the first two years of war. Only in 1917, it showed timid signs of coming to life again, in spite of which selling painting remained difficult until the spring of 1918. Malcolm Gee, "The Avant-Garde, Order, and the Art Market" *Art History* II, no. 1 (March 1979): 95-106.

<sup>32</sup>In a 1919 letter to Jacques Emile Blanche, Rosenberg retrospectively projected himself as "the adoptive father of abandoned Cubism, and when the war was over, its promoter." Though his gallery, *L'Effort Moderne*, only opened after the armistice, Rosenberg was buying Cubism systematically as early as 1915. In later years, his writings for the *Bulletin de L'Effort Moderne*, the gallery's periodical, denote his commercially-interested yet sincere belief that Cubism was a revolutionary movement, and that he proudly considered himself a part of it. Derouet, "A Correspondence Restored," 286-7.

<sup>33</sup>Severini, *The Life of a Painter*, 207.

signed contracts with the dealer around the fall of 1916.<sup>34</sup> As a result of this commercial link, these artists developed a fairly homogeneous stylistic and theoretical Cubist tendency which kept many pre-war Cubist tenets alive. Between early 1916 and the end of the war, this movement involved Severini, Gris, Moise Kisling, Ossip Zadkine, Franz Josef Haydn, Maria Blanchard, and Rivera.<sup>35</sup>

Rivera and Severini wrote statements about their theories and pictorial experiments of this time. Severini's article, "La Peinture d'Avant-Garde," published by the Mercure de France on June 1, 1917, was originally a lecture that the artist had given earlier that year.<sup>36</sup> With the same illustrative purpose, Rivera sent a letter to Marius de Zayas commenting on the works shown at his Cubist exhibition at the Modern Gallery, New York, on October 1916.<sup>37</sup> Both manifestos argued that painterly surfaces--"plastic ensembles," as Rivera calls them--create a unified reality.<sup>38</sup> In Rivera's case, this unified reality is called a "derived force," which is

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 184. Rosenberg acquired all of Gris's paintings between April 1915 and March 1920, and compensated the artist with a regular sum of 700 francs per month. While it was not much, Derouet reminds that such a sum allowed Gris to pose as "the master of his own house." Derouet, "A Correspondence Restored," 287-9. The conditions offered by Rosenberg were apparently convenient from a financial point of view. Rivera's contract was probably signed on the same premises.

<sup>35</sup>Severini, The Life of a Painter, 76.

<sup>36</sup>Gino Severini, "La Peinture d'Avant-Garde," Mercure de France (Paris), CXXI (1 June 1917): 451-68.

<sup>37</sup>Untitled "declaration" written by Rivera to Marius de Zayas in 1916. In Marius de Zayas, "How, When, and Why Modern Art Came to New York," Arts Magazine, LIV (April 1980): 96-126. Rivera's Untitled "declaration" appears in page 119.

<sup>38</sup>... [the] plastic ensemble. . . makes it possible for the expression of the most visible and tangible thing and the most inner feeling to be within the UNITY." Ibid.

conceived as the painter's joint expression of "accidental" reality and "pure" reality.<sup>39</sup> Severini, in turn, defines unified reality as the "physical continuum" or "fourth dimension" which merges "object and subject," "time and space," "matter and energy."<sup>40</sup> Severini argues that while the "physical continuum" does exist in the material world, only the artist can intuitively take possession of it.<sup>41</sup> Rivera, in turn, claims that a "derived force" (form-derived force, color-derived force, and matter-derived force) is a "super-physical dimension" that exists "in direct ratio to the importance that its existence has in the spirit of the painter."<sup>42</sup> While Severini wants to intuitively grasp a reality which is elusive but nevertheless actual, Rivera intends

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<sup>39</sup>"In the picture, the accidental form carries with itself a mechanical taxation, its measure in relation to the other forms that accompany it and the space that surrounds it; pure form does not carry in itself any relative dimension." Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>"Thus, this fourth dimension is, finally, only the IDENTIFICATION OF OBJECT AND SUBJECT, OF TIME AND SPACE, OF MATTER AND ENERGY. The parallelism of the physical continuum, which for the geometer is only a hypothesis, is realized in the miracle of art. Severini, "La Peinture d'Avant-Garde," 464. In her book The Fourth Dimension and non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art, Linda Henderson, addresses Severini's notion of the fourth dimension around 1917; she argues that while Severini continued to believe in the fourth dimension, he now associated it with a balanced sensibility and with Platonic essences. Henderson also comments on Rivera's conception of the fourth dimension around this time, and arrives at the conclusion that Rivera remained closer to his pre-war theory than Severini. Henderson explains that the fourth dimension was a symbol of liberation for modern artists, and that this revolutionary aim was often combined with the more utopian idealist views which called for a new "language." A concept such as the fourth dimension, in fact, was able to accommodate different proportions of geometry and mysticism as well as of space and time. Linda Henderson, The Fourth Dimension and non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1983), 300-310.

<sup>41</sup>"All arguments aside, there is no doubt that the three dimensions of ordinary space have never entirely satisfied the desire of a painter to take possession of the real. He has always had the intuition of an undermined fourth dimension expressed either by colors or by deformations, and which makes the immediate sensation received from the exterior world pass into the domain of "representation." Severini, "La Peinture d'Avant-Garde," 463-4.

<sup>42</sup>"In plastic space, things have a super-physical dimension which grows or diminishes in direct ratio to the importance that its existence has in the spirit of the painter." Rivera, Untitled "declaration."

to create a personalized reality which is “the [joint] expression of the most visible and tangible thing and the most inner feeling.”<sup>43</sup>

Despite their apparent differences, the statements written by Rivera and Severini do not diverge fundamentally beyond terminology and some subtle conceptual twists. They are comparable, indeed, because both deconstruct the duality of empirically perceived reality and imagined, fabricated reality. In other words, ‘what is real’ does not contradict ‘what is not real;’ instead, ‘real reality’ is the sum of empirically perceived reality plus imagined or elusive reality. Severini and Rivera postulated that “form,” “color”, and “matter” (by which Rivera probably meant volume) were to be “dislocated” (to use Severini’s term), i.e., removed from the place in visual reality where they accidentally belonged and positioned in a different place.<sup>44</sup> This new place was intuitively perceived according to Severini and spiritually imagined according to Rivera. For both of them, however, the reality of the painting was the summation of empirical perceptions and dislocations.<sup>45</sup> This

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> . . .If we sometimes place color, for example, outside its local form, it is solely in order to preserve the sensation of it in all its force. . . .

As with everything in our aesthetic, this separation is extremely logical; because. . .we do not want to represent the accidental, the momentary, but the essential, the eternal, and, for this reason, when an object presents itself to our mind, it is above all, its essential qualities that we see, that is to say, the different perspectives which constitute its total form or its color.

On the subject of the latter, the fact of seeing it apart, of projecting it, so to speak, outside its form, does not decrease its importance; on the contrary, it does become a dimension.” Severini, “La Peinture d’Avant-Garde,” 461.

<sup>45</sup>Severini argues that the purpose of his new painterly aesthetic is to represent “reality in itself, more alive, more intense, more true than the real objects it represents and reconstructs.” Ibid., 455-456. That Rivera conceives this reality as subjective rather than beyond his conception of it emerges from the statements quoted in notes 38 and 42.

1916 “classical Cubism” (as Christopher Green has called it) clearly presented itself as the sign that modern art was “alive and well” at the home front.<sup>46</sup>

In their paintings of this epoch, Severini, Gris, and Rivera signified the unity of physical and metaphysical realities with a number of representational strategies. Recognizable objects were depicted to indicate the physical, observed world. In Portrait of Maximilian Voloshin (1916) (Fig. 12), for example, Rivera carefully rendered the sitter’s beard. Equally discernible are objects such as a box, a bowl, and a bottle in Severini’s Still Life with Quaker Oats (1917) (Fig. 13), and playing cards, a siphon, a table, a folded newspaper, and a glass in Gris’s Playing Cards and Siphon (1916) (Fig. 14). Bizarre organizations of space were meant to signify the artists’ opposition to rationalism, to constructions of empirical reality, and particularly, to Renaissance perspective. In Portrait of Maximilian Voloshin (Fig. 12), a non-rational space is generated by including contradictory space markers. Voloshin’s leaning position suggests a diagonal line which indicates, if synthetically, the composition of a traditional space. The twisted perspective of the table, however, soon contradicts this perception: its receding lines do not follow Voloshin’s position. In sum, the overall space of the painting is uncannily non-

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<sup>46</sup>This homogenizing tendency was first identified by Christopher Green, and it is now known as “classical Cubism.” John Golding and Christopher Green, Léger and Purist Paris (London: Tate Gallery, 1971), 32-37, and Green, Cubism and its Enemies, 25-38. A central aspect of “classical Cubism” was that artists would “attempt to base their intuitions in actual research.” Severini relates that he went to the library every day “to consult architects and architectural theoreticians from Vitruvius to Leon Batista Alberti. . . . In all of them, I found the confirmation of what we, painters, had often discussed . . . ; I found that there were geometric and numeric laws fundamental to architecture that served as its backbone.” Other artists, he explains “enjoyed discussing geometry and mathematics, even non-Euclidean geometry and spherical trigonometry.” Severini, The Life of a Painter, 210.

rational by traditional standards. Severini's Still Life with Quaker Oats (Fig. 13) neglects perspective: the rectangular table, which could have easily hinted at traditional space, diminishes in size toward the foreground and enlarges toward the background. Severini, therefore, has simply inverted traditional space markers to signify his modernity. Gris, in turn, ignores the possibility of Renaissance perspective completely. In Playing Cards and Siphon (Fig. 14), the objects appear to be floating in an unearthly capsule. The table and the objects on it appear shaky, as if sliding inside the oval shape that contains them. No signs of a rational space are present in Gris's work.

In their paintings, Rivera, Gris, and Severini connoted the existence of metaphysical reality by dispersing and distorting integral forms. These strategies were to indicate for Rivera, spiritually important objects, and for Severini and Gris, the fourth-dimension that they wanted to apprehend intuitively. Rivera's Woman in Green (1917) (Fig. 15), for example, portrays an emotionally-involved subject: his pregnant wife who bore his first child. The roundness of her belly has been highlighted with a pair of 'arms.' These, however, have been dislocated from the body and confusingly emerge from either a chair or the background. This method employed by Rivera successfully infuses the pregnant belly with "matter-derived form," and turns it into a spiritually-perceived volume. Other parts of her body, in contrast, have been understated. For example, her dress mingles unclearly with parts of the chair where she is sitting, and her head is proportionally minuscule.

Severini's Still Life with Quaker Oats (Fig. 13) alludes to intuitive perception of the fourth-dimension in the peculiar rendering of a white tablecloth: as it folds, it generates multiple layers of transparency which appear elusively real. The same intention to signify metaphysical dimensions surface in Playing Cards and Siphon (Fig. 14), in which local color has been separated from local form--a process specifically described in Severini's article. Negative forms which might symbolize shadows are projected by the objects. For example, the table has been cut out from a black void while the siphon and glass silhouettes protrude onto the wooden surface of the table.

For Rivera, Severini, and Gris in 1916, as for the Puteaux Cubists in 1911, the painterly surface could hold a unified reality which was the identity of the two formerly contradictory realities. In their critique of Renaissance perspective, Rivera and Severini's 1916 statements also echo the philosophy which pre-war avant-garde Cubist artists had utilized to justify their art: Bergsonism.<sup>47</sup> Bergson had attacked Cartesian rationalism and the modes of representation that rational thought entailed, such as Renaissance perspective. Because quantitative depictions of space were rooted in rational processes, Bergson argued, they were unable to signify the whole self. To Cartesian rationalism, Bergson opposed "intuition." He defined

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<sup>47</sup>Mark Antliff, "Bergson and Cubism: A Reassessment," Art Journal 47 (Winter 1988): 341-49. Antliff has argued that in writing Du Cubisme, Gleizes and Metzinger were informed by "Bergson's methods of invoking intuitive states." Accordingly, he constructs a historicized comparative analysis between Bergson's writings--particularly, Creative Evolution (1907) and Time and Free Will, (1889)--and Gleizes and Metzinger's Du Cubisme. This analysis leads him to perceptively argue that Gleizes and Metzinger incorporated a Bergsonian conception of a viewer's intuition in Du Cubisme.

intuition as the mode of enquiry in which intellectual powers were conjoined with non-rational capacities: “empathy” rather than intellect would allow the artist to intuitively grasp the world.<sup>48</sup> Bergsonian intuition would organize the perception of objects in terms of an “extensive,” “qualitative” space. Therefore, a work of art created with the powers of intuition would show disparately interrelated images which had been organized after the dictates of feeling.<sup>49</sup>

It was from the Puteaux Cubists that Severini and Rivera had inherited their Bergsonian approach to creativity. Rivera’s link with the Puteaux Cubist circle can be documented from the fall of 1913. Around this time, he was attending the Sunday gatherings at Puteaux and frequenting the group of neo-symbolist poets and modern artists who met at the offices of Montjoie!. Rivera’s work The Adoration of the Virgin and Child (1912-13) (Fig. 16) had been reproduced and reviewed by André Salmon in this journal, and in February 1914 Rivera had also contributed a drawing.<sup>50</sup> Rivera’s pre-war emulation of the Puteaux Cubist style (particularly that

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 342-3.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>According to Favela, Rivera maintained friendly relations with the Puteaux Cubists. The details of their relations, however, remain rather obscure. There is no evidence to suggest, for example, that during the pre-war period Rivera might have been involved in the cultural/political discourses regarding the Celtic roots of the French tradition. As Mark Antliff has shown, a theory of Bergsonian classicism was proposed by Albert Gleizes, among the Puteaux Cubists, and by Roger Allard and Henri Martin Barzun among the neo-symbolist circle during the pre-war period. This Bergsonian classicism self-consciously opposed the Helleno-Latin cultural tradition that Charles Maurras and Action Française rescued as the true heritage of France. The opposition also confronted modes of thought: as Antliff explains, Gleizes’s valorization of Bergson implied the rejection of intellectualism, Cartesianism, and logic, while he rescued the “French Celtic esprit, whose “classical” legacy was seen to reside in the French Gothic and Romantic eras.” Gleizes’s criticism, which he voiced in his “Le Cubisme et la Tradition” (published by Montjoie! on 10 February 1913), had a political import because it was

of Albert Gleizes) is visible in Two Women (Fig. 17), from early 1914.<sup>51</sup> Gleizes and Metzinger had provided a comprehensive explanation of their Bergsonian philosophy of art in Du Cubisme (1912). In 1915, Rivera could still recommend Du Cubisme to his friend, the journalist, Martin Luis Guzmán who planned to write an essay on the artist's new painting. Because Guzmán was uninitiated in the intricacies of Cubist language, Rivera suggested that he read Du Cubisme as a suitable introduction to the new art and its theory.<sup>52</sup> The 1916-17 written

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associated with the Celtic League's agenda. Robert Pelletier, who had founded the French Celtic League in the spring of 1911, associated the French past with the Gallic *peuple*, and criticized the tradition of French monarchy. This discourse was associated with the left because the critics of the French monarchy identified the proletariat of France as the Gallic people who had been first subjected to Roman rule. Antliff, "Cubism, Celtism, and the Body Politic," The Art Bulletin 78 (December 1992): 655-668.

Rivera's connection with these groups, however, is not as clear as to point to an involvement of the artist in these politicized discourses. Rivera's only contribution to Montjoie!, was a drawing commissioned by Riccioto Canudo to illustrate an article "Les Danses sud-américaines" by Jean-Paul D'Alie. The drawing was published on February 1914. That the artist occasionally visited the offices of Montjoie! and that he attended the Sunday gatherings at Puteaux was retrospectively confirmed by Madame Gleizes in a personal conversation with Favela in 1979. Favela, The Cubist Years, 68. Clearly enough, Rivera was informed of Poincaré's theories and of Bergsonian concepts of *la durée*; yet, while the idea cannot be excluded, it remains to be explored whether he shared Gleizes's and Barzun's ideas about Celtic nationalism.

<sup>51</sup>Rivera had made his way into Cubism slowly and in an unorthodox manner, finding Cubist implications in the work of El Greco. By 1913, works inspired by that artist such as Old Hamlet, Toledo and Landscape of Toledo show growing concern for planar and abstract geometric organization. Natural forms are also reduced to simple geometric volumes and shapes in Women at the Fountain (1913), which already reflects awareness of Cubic panoramic landscape, such as that of Fernand Léger, Gleizes, Le Fauconnier, and other Epic Cubists. Affinity with Epic Cubism is also evident in Rivera's predilection for large figures, which he draws mostly from a repertoire of Spanish costumbrismo, and for human rather than inanimate subjects. Favela, The Cubist Years, 23-89.

<sup>52</sup>Martin Luis Guzmán, "Diego Rivera y la Filosofía del Cubismo," in Obras Completas de Martín Luis Guzmán, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Compañía General de Ediciones, 1961), 1: 83-87. Guzman's article, written shortly after a visit he paid to Rivera's studio in August 1915, was published in a major New York journal early in 1916. (Unfortunately, the first source of publication is not mentioned in the edition of Guzmán's Complete Works). In his article, Guzmán refers to Gleizes and Metzinger: "The theorists of Cubism express themselves in parables, with images or with vague phrases: "We do not intend to define: we only want to suggest that the happiness of surprising indefinite art in the limits of

declarations of Rivera and Severini presented ideas such as the “fourth” or “superphysical” dimension, and opposed rationality with spiritual and intuitive processes. In painting fragmented realities and publicly echoing pre-war Cubist art theory, Rivera, Gris, and Severini publicly projected themselves as modern artists.

As we discussed earlier, the association of Cubism with German culture was part of a conservative campaign to label wartime Cubists as enemies of *la patrie*. Non-combatant foreign artists like Rivera were not, in fact, willing to take the risk of such an indictment. Consequently, as the war developed, Rivera, Severini, Gris, and Picasso were to find alternative ways to detach themselves from the distressing charges associated with their Cubist production.

## 2.5 Rivera as a wartime Classicist

In his memoirs, Gino Severini made the following comment about the Parisian avant-garde of the late war years:

in the Paris art world, the current focus was on order, classical tendencies, and their opposites, an unlimited lyricism that led to a sort of pictorial romanticism. . . . Some, Picasso, and even Braque, for instance, were ambivalent, with one foot in each stream. . . . Other valid artists searched for an orderly form of art, but the results they obtained often seemed out of tune with the spirit of modernism that sparked our labors. In fact, they were particularly discordant with it.<sup>53</sup>

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a painting is worth the effort it demands. [This is a literal translation of Guzmán's own translation, presumably from French.]” Favela also claims that “Guzman had prepared himself for his trip to Cubist Paris in 1915 by reading Gleizes and Metzinger's On Cubism, and Apollinaire's The Cubist Painters, undoubtedly recommended to him by Rivera.” Favela, The Cubist Years, 110.

<sup>53</sup>Severini, The Life of a Painter, 208.

Severini's claim can be ratified with a merely cursory look at wartime and early post-war art production: a large number of artists painted in two clearly distinct styles. The Cubist current encompassed depictions detached from the visual and rooted in the intuitive--for example, Rivera's Angeline and Baby Diego--Maternity (1916) (Fig. 18), Picasso's Harlequin Playing Guitar (1918) (Fig. 19), Severini's Mother and Child (1916) (Fig. 20), or Gris's Guitar and Fruit Dish (1918) (Fig. 21). Concurrent with these works, we find representations indicative of an anti-modernist approach to art, such as Severini's Maternity (1916) (Fig. 22), Rivera's Portrait of Angelina Beloff (1917) (Fig. 23), Gris's The Tobacco Pouch (1918) (Fig. 24), or Picasso's Portrait of Riccioto Canudo in Uniform (1918) (Fig. 25). While the proportion of traditionalism to modernism and the specific moments when each painter favored each style varied from artist to artist, Paris at this time was characterized by dual stylistic production--"with one foot in each stream," to use Severini's words.<sup>54</sup>

Esprit de Corps implicitly questions the reason for this stylistic bifurcation, which periodically recurred in the painting of most avant-garde artists at the Parisian home front. Silver notices that, despite having been strong advocates of a Cubist language and of metaphysical theories, many artists including Henri Matisse, Roger de la Fresnaye, Amedée Ozenfant, Fernand Léger, Georges Braque, Robert Delaunay, Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, and Gino Severini, among others

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<sup>54</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 256.

returned--with different degrees of frequency and intensity--to an academic style.

The textual sources indicate that artists generally perceived their renewed interest as prompted by the need to return to a so-called "order." Silver has examined the cultural and political discourses associated with this desire for order in the avant-garde. While Silver does not deal with Rivera's art, the latter's production underwent the same type of change early in 1917. From that date until his return to Mexico, Rivera returned to a classicized academicism which took various forms: drawings with an Ingresque resemblance, academic nudes, still lifes, and preliminary studies.

Former interpretations of Rivera's stylistic shift in the late war and post-war years have stressed essentializing mythologies. The generalized belief is that Cubism somehow did not permit Rivera to remain part of a putative 'real world.' According to these speculations, the artist chose to return to traditional representation because Cubism was not an adequate pictorial language to represent this 'reality.'<sup>55</sup> Interpretations such as these are clearly not acceptable from an

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<sup>55</sup>A large number of Rivera's critics have produced interpretations along these lines. Rivera's Cubism has been interpreted as "removed from reality" by Rivera's biographer, Bertram Wolfe, who argues that "at no time in history was art isolated from life as at the moment when Diego came to Europe." Bertram Wolfe, The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera (New York: Stein & Day, 1963), 71. Jorge Eneas Spilimbergo, an Argentine painter who wrote a book on Rivera after the latter returned to Mexico, claimed that "[Cubism was] a non-figurative painting in which values acquire a certain autonomy. . .the artists from the circle find among their fellow artists almost the only spectators for their works." Jorge Eneas Spilimbergo, Diego Rivera v el Arte en la Revolución Mejicana (Buenos Aires: Editorial Indoamericana, 1954), 15. In his contribution to the catalogue accompanying Rivera's retrospective at the Detroit Institute of the Arts in 1989, Jorge Hernández Campos writes that "[It should not] be surprising that Rivera abandoned Cubism. In reality, he had never felt comfortable with it. It must have seemed too narrow, a small corner of a vast field that had begun to open before him." Jorge Hernández Campos, "The Influence of the Classical Tradition, Cézanne, and Cubism on Rivera's Artistic Development," in Diego Rivera: A Retrospective, ed., Cynthia Newman Helms (Detroit: Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of the Arts, 1989), 23.

historical point of view. Esprit de Corps, instead, allows us to interpret Rivera's stylistic moves from the standpoint of wartime cultural politics. In the above sections of this chapter, I have used Silver's findings by selecting out of his rich account the experiences of those artists who shared Rivera's 'situation:' his status as a foreigner and as a non-combatant, his manifested French patriotism, and his avant-garde art.<sup>56</sup> In the remaining pages, I will trace the same artists' return to *la tradition*, and situate Rivera's 'return to order' in the context of Silver's interpretation of the political significance of such a shift.

After March 1917, Rivera's shift from Cubism to *la tradition* was decisive and irreversible. Like many other artists in the Parisian avant-garde, Rivera found different ways to channel the desire for "order" which was pervading French society since late 1916. While he was still working in a Cubist fashion, he started emulating the work of J.A.D. Ingres, the French archetype of *le style classique* in

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<sup>56</sup>It should be noted that these connections are not arbitrary. A wealth of primary and retrospective documentation connects Rivera with Severini, Picasso, and Gris during the war period. Rivera met Picasso in the spring of 1914. In July Picasso left for Avignon and Rivera for Majorca. They were reunited in Paris a year later, in the spring of 1915, after Rivera's return. According to most retrospective sources--particularly Marevna's memoirs--Rivera's relations with Picasso were generally friendly, though competitively tense. In a series of drawings, Marevna portrayed meetings of Picasso and Rivera. Marevna, Life with the Painters of La Ruche. In 1916, however, Rivera broke his friendship with Picasso for reasons which are not totally clear, though it is generally believed (by Rivera's advocates) that it was "on grounds of plagiarism." Laurence Hurlburt, Diego Rivera: A Retrospective, 45. Favela reports that also in 1916, Rivera frequently attended Sunday gatherings at the home of Matisse, where Gris and Severini were present. Favela, The Cubist Years, 130. Severini's early 1917 tract, "La Peinture d'avant garde" attests to this, by describing his ideas about Cubism, Poincaré's theories, and the fourth dimension as "the result of our conversations and our experiences," referring to Severini, Gris, and Rivera, and Jean Metzinger. Gino Severini, "La Peinture d'Avant-Garde," 467; cited in Linda Henderson, The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art, 301. Finally, Gris's correspondence with Maurice Raynal accounts for *l'affaire Rivera*. Details about the latter episode are upcoming in chapter 3. Douglas Cooper, ed., Letters of Juan Gris, 46-50.

the 19th century. Ingres, indeed, would continue to find followers throughout Montparnasse studios during the early post-war era.<sup>57</sup> Rivera's imitation of Ingres is evident in his choice of characteristically Ingresque formal features: precise line, clarity of form, and balanced composition, in his choice for *le dessin* (drawing) and, especially, in the subject matter of portraiture. Between late 1917 and early 1918, he emulated Ingres in works such as Portrait of Angelina Beloff (1917) (Fig. 23), Portrait of Chirokoff (1917) (Fig. 26), Portrait of Jean Cocteau (1918) (Fig. 27), Portrait of Levereff (1918) (Fig. 28), and Self-Portrait (1918) (Fig. 29) among other works. All works are polished in their rendering, precise, and thoroughly Ingresque, except for a heavier and more solid look which Rivera had learned from his mentor Santiago Rebull, in Mexico. Also after he renounced Cubism, his pictorial production was consistently paralleled by apprentice-like academic nudes and still lifes, such as Still Life with Petit-Dejeuner and Rhum Bottle (1919) (Fig. 30), and Nude Woman (1918) (Fig. 31).

Rivera's return to "order" was manifest in yet another form: his recourse to rule and compass in preliminary drawings for finished works. An example of this 'constructive mood' is The Mathematician (1918) (Fig. 32). The work shows the elongated figure of a pensive fellow, surrounded by geometry sketches and books. The preparatory sketch for the painting (Fig. 33) is revealing as to Rivera's methods

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<sup>57</sup>The fact that Rivera had been trained in an Ingresque manner of drawing in Mexico only corroborates that he felt perfectly attuned to such undertaking; his Ingresque technical capacity, in any case, does not deprive his choice of Ingres as a source of inspiration of any significance. About Rivera's early classical training, see Favela, The Cubist Years, 3-23.

around this time: it shows that the artist measured angles and proportions. The sketch, with its circles, dotted lines, numbers, and letters, looks more like an architectural plan or design drawing than a sketch for a painting. That The Mathematician came to be perceived as a solidly "constructed" work, rooted as much in rational principles as in visible reality, is corroborated by the fact that the painting was included in a 1918 exhibition christened "Les Constructeurs." This new method of "constructing" paintings--a practice followed by Rivera and many others, particularly Severini--operated within the late war and post-war discourse of the reconstruction of the French nation. Silver tells us that this desire for constructive clarity and rationalism among avant-garde artists mirrored the post-war nationalist discourse of reconstruction of the French nation.<sup>58</sup>

Before addressing the discourses mapped by Silver, it will be useful to briefly trace the stylistic changes of Severini, Picasso, and Gris, which were comparable to Rivera's. In 1915, Severini was painting dynamic-looking Cubo-Futurist creations which were thematically related to the war, such as Cannon in

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<sup>58</sup>The show "Les Constructeurs" was organized by Rivera's new friend, the critic Elie Faure.

Rivera also engaged in landscapes which have been called "Cézannesque" by Favela. About these, Favela comments as follows: "By January of 1918, Rivera had rejected Cubism altogether and embarked upon a style bordering pure *Cézannisme* that produced such imitative Cézannesque works as his Landscape at Arcueil and Still Life (1918). Such later French works by Rivera as his Piquey landscapes and series of aqueducts from Arcueil are almost indistinguishable from original late Cézannes with their compositions and subdued palette of ochres, green, pale blues, and deep umbers. Rivera's Landscape at Arcueil is clearly derivative from such works as Cézanne's Bend in Road at Montgeroult." Favela, The Cubist Years, 145.

No reproductions about these landscapes or further information about the circumstances in which they were painted (with the exception of the mentioned Landscape of Arcueil) are available. I will not discuss their significance in the overall context of Rivera's stylistic shift.

Action (1915) (Fig. 4). By late 1916-early 1917, he was also theorizing and painting an utterly lyrical and modernist (if calmed and reflective) Cubism. Yet also in 1916, Severini painted two intimate, private works: Portrait of Jeanne (Fig. 34) and Maternity (Fig. 22). Though the Italian artist would not indulge in such evident traditionalism for a few years, both works must have been important in his mind. He allowed a preliminary study of Maternity to be published in the December 1916 issue of L'Elan; he also exhibited the finished painting "along with other works conditioned in the modern spirit of the moment"--as he recalled in his memoirs--at a drawings exhibition at chez Madame Bongard on March 1916.<sup>59</sup> By 1921, Severini's support of a classicized manner of painting came in full force: that year he published a book-length treatise called From Cubism to Classicism: Aesthetic of the Compass and the Number. Severini criticized in this book the "artistic anarchy of the past [referring to pre-war Cubism]." He also explained that during the course of the 19th century, artistic matters got out of hand, especially when "[a]fter Ingres, whose benign influence has been a great support, more and more brazen efforts, often divergent and contradictory," came to prevail.<sup>60</sup> Around that time, Severini was making mathematically measured sketches for his paintings, such as Study for Family of the Commedia dell'Arte (c. 1922) (Fig. 35) shows. Angles are measured

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<sup>59</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 88 and Severini, The Life of a Painter, 163.

<sup>60</sup>Gino Severini, Du Cubisme aux Classicisme: Esthétique du compas et du nombre (Paris, 1921), 13, quoted in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 265.

by exact degrees and lines are drawn to accommodate every detail to a precise place in the plane.

Around late 1916-early 1917, as we saw earlier, Gris painted a solid and orderly form of Cubism. Yet as early as September 1915, we find him writing to his former dealer D.-H. Kahnweiler:

Nowadays when I have finished working, I don't read serial novels but do portraits from life. They are very good likenesses and I shall soon have as much skill as a *Prix de Rome* winner. It is a perpetual thrill for me to discover how it is done.<sup>61</sup>

By 13 May 1918, Gris could still comment to this friend Maurice Raynal that "[w]ork is going well, and I am busy painting for eight or nine hours a day, apart from two hours in which I draw from nature."<sup>62</sup> Gris's academicizing still lifes from around this time, such as The Tobacco Pouch (April 1918) (Fig. 24), corroborate his statement. But as scholar Christian Derouet has observed, in 1918 Gris "[saw] painting and drawing as two clearly distinct activities."<sup>63</sup> The artist, in fact, maintained parallel Cubist and traditional productions throughout the late war and post-war years since he sold one hundred and eighty five Cubist canvases to his monopolizing dealer Léonce Rosenberg between April 1915 and March 1920.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Gris to Kahnweiler (7 September 1915), in Cooper, ed., Letters of Juan Gris, 31.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 294.

<sup>64</sup>Derouet, "A Correspondence Restored," 289.

In early 1915, Picasso started showing a renewed interest in French neo-classicism. Drawings clearly imitative of Ingres, such as Portrait of Ambroise Vollard (1915) (Fig. 36), are softly modelled, well constructed, and highly accurate. The difference with the ravingly modern "Manager in Fancy Dress" (Fig. 37)--one of the characters Picasso created for the ballet *Parade* in 1917--could not be greater. Significantly, it appears that the wider Parisian public applauded neither this "Manager" nor any of the other aspects of *Parade* on the night the ballet opened. Silver explains that:

although it is among the most celebrated manifestations of modernism, *Parade* did not dazzle as its organizers had hoped: it fizzled and, according to some accounts, threatened to break into chaos. When they heard [Eric] Satie's dance-hall melodies, saw Picasso's Cubists set and costumes, and watched [Jean] Cocteau's strange little story unfold, many in the audience were not at all amused. In a vein that was typical of wartime Paris, they booed the production, shouting "*métèques*," "*boches*," "*trahison*," "*art munichois*," "*embusqués*," and every other epithet that signified unpatriotic behaviour.<sup>65</sup>

After 1918, we find Picasso somewhat mockingly 'studying' the classical tradition. In Bathers (1921) (Fig. 38), Picasso represents goddesses with rather grotesque proportions: huge hands and feet, massive bodies, clumsy movements. The mythological theme, however, speaks for the allusion to the classical tradition. Yet he would still paint along Synthetic Cubist lines, such as in Three Musicians (1921) (Fig. 39). Picasso's oeuvre is, in fact, exemplary of the wartime and post-war dual aesthetic traced by Silver.

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<sup>65</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 116.

As I explained above, Esprit de Corps has attempted to provide a contextualized interpretation for the wartime and post-war traditional, academic, and classicizing tendencies of artists such as Picasso, Gris, or Severini. According to Silver, these productions operated within the wartime and post-war nationalist discourses. Nationalism and patriotism had pervaded all sectors of French society and culture, and had nominally united them in the name of the coalition known as the *Union Sacrée*. In this context, Silver argues that avant-garde manifestations of a return to *la tradition* and of a generalized return to "order" need to be understood as the visual sites where artists manifested their French patriotism.

Silver explains that "the equation of France and Classical Antiquity had long been a commonplace in national propaganda,"<sup>66</sup> but that

[w]ith increasing frequency as the war progressed, the accusation of German barbarism was coupled with the affirmation of French "civilization" and "humanity." The Goth was the antagonist in a propaganda drama whose hero of course was France, the inheritor, preserver, and defender of classical culture.

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Within nine months of the start of the war, the cultural significance of the Antique, Mediterranean, and specifically Latin world took on an added meaning. The French sense of a mission to defend the best and the oldest in Occidental culture was reinforced when Italy, which had remained neutral during the fall and winter of 1914-15, joined the allied cause.<sup>67</sup>

From the kind of evidence that Esprit de Corps presents, we gather that as the war advanced, the notion that the classical tradition was France's true

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<sup>66</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 90.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 92 and 93.

heritage intensified and came to pervade all levels of French culture. Silver himself explains it in this way:

both during and after the war the terms *classique* and *classicisme* came to represent all manner of values, depending on the user. Of course, the flexible use of the concept was not new with the Great War. In French artistic parlance, "classical" is used to describe not only Antiquity and the Italian Renaissance, but also the court art of Francis I at Fontainebleau; the art of Poussin and his contemporaries during the *grand siècle*; the painting of David and his followers at the end of the eighteenth century; and the art of Ingres, the great representative of *le style classique* in the nineteenth century. . . . It is, after all, part of the usefulness of this conception of classicism that it can be stripped of its historical specificity and used to bind together disparate events with a label that may signify no more than approval. Nonetheless, for all that "classicism" is and was subject to manipulation, after the start of the war in 1914 it always referred to a sense of new national self-identity.<sup>68</sup>

In Esprit de Corps, Silver is able to locate the coalition of classicizing and patriotic manifestations at all levels of French culture: official war propaganda, popular imagery, books published during the war, and avant-garde art and literature. An anonymous postcard which circulated during the war, for example, shows Victory, an antique goddess distributing olive branches among Allied soldiers (Fig. 40). With each branch, she also gives away a streamer marked with the name of a battle (Mulhouse, Marme, Liège, Varsovie, et. al.) . At the bottom of the postcard it reads, "Glory to you, noble combatants, for right and justice." Victory is represented as a proud antique figure; drapery falls loosely on her legs and arms. In a "National Loan" poster by Sem (Fig. 41), a winged figure holds a lance in commanding attitude and directs the soldiers who march to the war. As she stands against the

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 98-100.

Triumphal Arch., a legion of ancient horsemen who carry lances and flags emerges through the arch. Its powerful force forms a cloud in the form of a column. As the horsemen reach the ground, they are transformed into modern *poilus*: they now wear the characteristic hats, coats, and boots, and march on foot carrying firearms. The association between the classical tradition and modern, patriotic France could not be more evident here. The *poilu*, representing France, inherits the spirit and might of the soldiers of ancient times. At the bottom of the poster it reads "To triumph, subscribe to the national loan."

By 1920, the "Poster for Peace Loan" (Fig. 42) illuminates how French nationalist discourse conceived the reconstruction of their nation. While this image does not make obvious references to the classical tradition, it addresses another discourse which would affect the arts (particularly after the armistice): the notion that the arts needed to serve 'useful' endeavors, such as construction and teaching. In the background, men are shown constructing buildings, plowing the land, running ships and factories. In the foreground, a mother suckles a newly-born baby (a symbol of the need for new lives) while a child learns how to read.<sup>69</sup> In relation to these notions of "reconstruction," Silver traces the renewed prestige of the art of architecture; in the pictorial arts, this discourse had its equivalent in the revival of academic apprenticeship. This was so because academic representation relied on established conventions and empirical processes. This revival of architecture made

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<sup>69</sup>All of these popular images are illustrated and briefly addressed in Silver, chapter III "Comme il Faut" in *Esprit de Corps*, 74-145.

its way into avant-garde painting in the expected form: as artists' new reliance on mathematics and measurement. Rivera's new dependence on mathematically measured proportions--and also Severini's--is evident in "construction drawings" such as that for The Mathematician (Fig. 33). In measuring proportions mathematically, Severini and Rivera showed their endorsement of the post-war call for the reconstruction of the nation.

The literary sectors of the avant garde also applauded the return to classicism, justifying it on basis of the presumed universality of "the human tradition." Writing for Nord-Sud in October 1917, Guillaume Apollinaire, the most prominent supporter of Cubism in the pre-war, attributed universal legitimacy to French patriotism, stating that "the duty of the French is superior to all other patriotisms, because at all times in her history France has never been uninterested in the destinies of humanity. . .the duty of the French is melded to the great human tradition."<sup>70</sup> For Apollinaire, it was the French nation that had the right and the duty to propagate the classical tradition. In the meantime, several propagandistic publications of the same year point to the association between the classical tradition and the modern French nation. Silver indicates, for example, that:

propagandistic literature showed a marked preference for Antique, classical, and Latin evocations which, by extension, led to the increasing use of the terms "civilization," "Occident," and "humanity." In that one year [1917] appeared Ferrière's *L'Esprit latin et l'esprit germanique*, Anatole France's reissued *Le Génie latin*, Gaillard's *Le Germanisme et*

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<sup>70</sup>Guillaume Apollinaire, "La Guerre et nous autres," Nord-Sud 1, no. 9 (October 1917), 10, quoted in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 101.

*les cultures antiques*, Mithouard's *La Terre d'Occident*, Antheius's mystical *Notes sur l'harmonie: Le crime allemand et sa faute d'harmonie*, Mathieu's *Le Rôle de la France dans la civilisation*, and Rey's *La Guerre Européene et les enseignements de l'histoire; L'Union des nations latines: France et Italie*.<sup>71</sup>

The implications of the arguments presented in Esprit de Corps are revealing (and unsettling as well). Silver has charted a pervasive theme in French wartime and post-war culture: the association of the Greco-Roman tradition with the French nation. This association fueled the nation's patriotism during the war and the post war on the grounds that France had the duty to defend and perpetuate the greatest achievements of humanity. In the public mind, French patriotism came to bear a universally-valid civilizing role, while the German nation came to be regarded as barbaric and destructive. At the artistic level, this construction resulted in the essentialized associations of Germanism with romanticism and of French culture with classicism. In this context, Silver suggests that in their adoption of a classicizing pictorial language, the avant-garde sectors--deemed as "boche" by a conservative campaign since before the beginning of the war--submitted to the nationalist agenda.

The classicizing technique adopted by many avant-garde artists, including Rivera, was associated in the public mind with a French-inherited Greco-latin tradition. This is made evident in a 1921 article by the critic Arsène Alexandre for the post-war art periodical La Renaissance, entitled "To understand Ingres is to

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 95.

understand Greece and France." Alexander argued that France was the most Hellenic of all the Allied nations--"the Greece of Euripides, Socrates, Plato, Praxiteles, Phidias." In reference to Ingres's Birth of the Muses, Alexandre stated that: "Such a work will always bestow on men of Greco-Latin race and culture a light and calm intoxication that can help them to bear the doubts and burdens of life." He also constructed the usual polarization with German barbarity as he pronounced that the "lucidity, clarity, luminous enthusiasm, and intelligent goodness" present in Ingres's art came just "when we are hardly awoken from the Germanic ascendancy that assaulted our minds in the form of asphyxiating systems much more dangerous than poison gases. . ."72

It was within these discourses that Rivera's classicizing production--as well as those of other artists--operated. Not only did it accompany the generalized return to order demanded by French morale during and after the war: it also manifested the artist's sympathy towards the widespread belief that the Greco-Roman tradition was the true heritage that needed to be defended. It is through Juan Gris that we find out about Rivera's attitude toward *la tradition* during the post-war. In a letter Gris sent to Maurice Raynal, dated February 15, 1919, he quoted the following excerpt from a text by Louis Vauxcelles, a close ally of Rivera:

"Princet, a clever mathematician, learnt about the fourth dimension through reading the works of Poincaré. He talked about this to M.

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<sup>72</sup>Arsène Alexandre, "Comprendre Ingres, c'est comprendre la Grèce et la France." in La Renaissance d'Art Français et des Industries de Luxe, special Ingres issue (April 1921), 191, quoted in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 247-249.

Picasso, who turned the knowledge to practical ends in some decorative fantasies. Apollinaire attempted to produce a set of rules, and so Cubism was born. This caused great sensation in the studios of Montmartre and Montparnasse and even some worthy people were affected by it, for example, Raynal who telephoned Juan Gris. Avid but ignorant, Gleizes and Metzinger seized on it at once, while others such as Léger and Picabia tried to graft it on to Futurism and even the *Unanimistes* got mixed with it. But now some serious artists have discovered in museums and in the works of certain old masters that other people have been concerned with the same ideas of the so-called Cubists. So a privileged few have been able to create a strong and natural art which has nothing to do with the dead schematic intellectual exercises of the Cubists."

[Gris goes on writing to Raynal:] The final lines of the paragraph show quite clearly that it was dictated to Vauxcelles by Rivera. As a matter of fact I know that Rivera has been saying this for some time in Montparnasse. . .<sup>73</sup>

It was in the Parisian museums (and very soon in Italian ones) that Rivera had rediscovered *la tradition*.<sup>74</sup> And it was the French "old masters" he was thinking about--Ingres, Courbet, and presumably, Cézanne--when he praised "those people who have been concerned with the same ideas as the so-called Cubists."

Soon after he engaged in producing Ingres-like portraits, Rivera was rejected by critics associated with the Cubist circles and approved by more mainstream critics. Pierre Reverdy, a poet and critic who favored Cubism and was friendly with Rosenberg's artists was quick to notice Rivera's new "Ingrism" by late 1918. In an article published in Nord-Sud--the journal he had founded--Reverdy mocked Rivera's "haut de forme d'un peintre assez connu" "which remind[ed] [him]

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<sup>73</sup>Gris to Raynal, in Cooper, ed., Letters of Juan Gris, 62-3.

<sup>74</sup>Before returning to Mexico, Rivera travelled to Italy to study the old masters. Details about this venture are upcoming in chapter 3.

of Monsieur Ingres."<sup>75</sup> A few months earlier, however, Rivera's new Ingrism had been praised by the well-known and well-connected retardataire critic Louis Vauxcelles. In June and July 1918, Vauxcelles applauded Rivera's Ingresque "portraits savants et sensibles. . . d'une forme précise et d'un contour serré."<sup>76</sup> Vauxcelles was particularly interested in promoting young artists who, like Rivera, were resisting the "Cubist fashion" by the end of the war. In October-November 1918 he organized an anti-cubist exhibition which was held at the Galerie E. Blot. This exhibition, revealingly christened La Jeune Peinture Française, included the work of Corneau, André Favory, Fournier, Lhote, Cornet, Fisher, and Rivera.<sup>77</sup>

Yet the incident that definitively prompted the end of Rivera's Cubist epoch took the form of a series of written attacks that Rivera made through Vauxcelles's voice. In October-November 1918, Vauxcelles published a series of letters by Rivera and Lhote in his weekly column for Le Carnet de la Semaine.<sup>78</sup> In these letters, the painters played down their commercial deals with Léonce Rosenberg, who had been instrumental in promoting Cubism during the war. Rivera and Lhote complained that they had an imperative need for artistic freedom which

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<sup>75</sup>Pierre Reverdy, "Echo," Nord-Sud (October 1918), reprinted in Pierre Reverdy, Nord-Sud, Self-Defense, et autres écrits sur l'art et la poésie (1917-1926), ed., Etienne Alain Hubertt (Paris, Flammarion, 1975), 302.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., Reverdy quotes from Vauxcelles, Le Carnet de la Semaine (22 June and 28 July 1918).

<sup>77</sup>Gee, "Dealers, Critics, and Collectors," 136.

<sup>78</sup>Rivera and André Lhote, "Au pays de cube," Le Carnet de la Semaine (6 October 1918). Gee comments on the content of Rivera's and Lhote's letters in "Avant-Garde, Order, and the Art Market," 48.

Rosenberg restricted. Rosenberg, who published an answer, apologized for having stopped buying Rivera's work by saying that his painting did not come close enough to Cubist ideas.<sup>79</sup> Vauxcelles also published a statement: he argued that Cubism had provided a necessary corrective to the formal anarchy initiated by impressionism, but that it was pernicious because it rejected nature as the source of art. He also mocked the doctrinal pretensions of the Cubists of "the headquarters of pure painting," i.e., Rosenberg's gallery.<sup>80</sup> Vauxcelles's articles served to legitimize Rivera's break with Cubism.

Scholar Malcolm Gee, who has studied Louis Vauxcelles's career, claims that the latter was "the most prestigious and widely read critic of the period."<sup>81</sup> During the war, Vauxcelles worked for a large number of important French newspapers (Le Journal du Peuple, Le Pays, L'Événement, and Le Carnet de la Semaine) and remained well connected with important dealers and collectors such as Bernheim-Jeune and Eugène Blot.<sup>82</sup> According to Gee, Vauxcelles, as well as the critic Elie Faure--another supporter of Rivera--judged painting with concepts derived from late 19th century art and valued the artistic developments of their time

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<sup>79</sup>Rosenberg, "Une Lettre," Le Carnet de la Semaine, 15 September 1918. Gee comments on the content of Rosenberg's response. Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>Vauxcelles, "L'Effort Moderne" Le Carnet de la Semaine (22 October 1918). Gee comments on Vauxcelles verbal attacks against Rosenberg. Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Gee, "Dealers, Critics, and Collectors," 132.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 126.

in terms of a return to the original sources of quality.<sup>83</sup> It was with Vauxcelles's help and through his Ingresque portraits, indeed, that Rivera allowed his name to be associated with France's mainstream culture.

In siding with Vauxcelles against Rosenberg, Rivera publicly reinscribed his name in the debate over the relative merits of Cubism and more traditional forms of classicism. Yet, the wider context in which these pugnacious articles were published points to an additional interpretation of the above narrated episodes. Rivera's former dealer, Léonce Rosenberg, credited the Cubists with having achieved the rupture of French art with "Greco-Latin decadence," while Rivera's new promoter, Louis Vauxcelles, believed that modern painters should escape the influence of Cubism.<sup>84</sup> The revival of neo-classicism--of Ingres in particular--in avant-garde circles has been interpreted by Kenneth Silver as a public demonstration of French patriotism on the part of the Cubists during World War I. In the same context, I propose that Rivera was able to promote his French patriotism by publicly affiliating himself with conservative defenders of the French tradition who had rejected Cubism.

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 141-2.

<sup>84</sup>Gee, "Dealers, Critics, and Collectors," 51 and 146.

## 2.6 Conclusion

In Esprit de Corps, Silver calls to the cultural politics behind the ideology of the *Union Sacrée*. He argues that "although most Parisian artists chose, at least in public, to ignore the fact, the source of the new classicism during the war was indisputably the French Right. . .to invoke a new classic age was to find oneself in the company of the French Right."<sup>85</sup> He further explains that:

those who believed that France could not regain her classical tradition without the restoration of the king were the Royalist party, the Action Française, and in particular, their outspoken leader, Charles Maurras. It was the extreme right that had been propagandizing for a French return to classicism for nearly twenty years, just as it was the extreme right that had warned since 1870 that the Germans would again be marching on France. . . .Maurras's political/cultural theory, formulated as part of the campaign against Captain Dreyfus, would be echoed in the campaign against Germany during the Great War: the Germans were barbarians; French culture was based on a "two fold tradition of classicism and Catholicism; the barbarian culture had weakened the great French traditions since 1870; the task of all good Frenchmen was to rid France of non-indigenous elements."<sup>86</sup>

Clearly enough, French society did suffer a return to order and to conservatism, which was associated with a classicizing aesthetic, and the latter with the true heritage of France. But this does not need to imply that French society came to support a return for the *ancien régime*; nor does it imply that the avant-garde came to politically support the program of Action Française. Due to his

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<sup>85</sup>Silver, Esprit de Corps, 104.

<sup>86</sup>[*ibid.*, 102-104.

excessive collapsing of art into politics, Silver overstates his case, for a return to order did not necessarily imply a full endorsement of right-wing politics.

The conservative overtones of France's patriotic discourse might suggest that the avant-garde circles which Rivera frequented during World War I turned out to be politically conservative. Esprit de Corps, in fact, leaves this question open and unresolved. I do not believe it is possible to argue that avant-garde artists complied with the royalist political program. Rivera's case makes this situation tangible: the voice he chose to publicize both his disassociation from Cubism and his French patriotism, the critic Louis Vauxcelles, was artistically conservative but not politically right-wing. Vauxcelles, in fact, had been the frequent target of abuse for Louis Dimier, the art critic of L'Action Française.<sup>87</sup> This very paradox, so palpable in Rivera's case, indicates that the totalizing discourse of French patriotism was matched by a plurality of political responses by avant-garde practitioners of a return to order.

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<sup>87</sup>Gee, "Dealers, Critics, and Collectors," 138, n. 1.

## Chapter 3

### IMAGING THE NATION:

#### Rivera's National Identity and the Mexican Revolution,

1912-1921

#### 3.1 Introduction

Throughout the 1910s, the Mexican revolution provoked a political, class, and cultural confrontation in Mexico's population: a confrontation which necessarily constructed a variety of distinct notions of *Mexicanidad*, i.e., Mexican national identities.<sup>1</sup> The central quest of Francisco I. Madero--the *caudillo* of the 1910 revolution which overthrew the twenty-six year-long dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz--was to return to democracy, free suffrage, and legality. Madero's economic policies--and those of his partisans--favored national progress along the lines of Western industrialized nations, particularly, France and the United States. His

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<sup>1</sup>Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Knight fully explains and documents this model of the Mexican revolution as a class, culture, and political confrontation in 301-309.

ideological followers were middle- and upper-class urbanites, educated, altruistic professionals, small businessmen, and ranchers who stood for policies that were fiscal, educational, and moralizing. Among these policies were free and public education, and campaigns against drink, gambling, and vagrancy. While Madero was assassinated in 1913 by a conservative coup d'etat, he remained an inspirational icon for the liberal revolutionaries that followed his ideals.

The Madero revolution of 1910 had been initially aided by troops commanded by peasant *caudillos*. But after 1911, it was clear to the peasantry that neither Madero--then constitutional president--nor his liberal followers would be willing to grant their demands: the break-up of *haciendas*, regular employment, and above all, the relaxation of central political control. The peasantry tended to commit to forms of political authority which were local, personal, and charismatic; they did not identify with projects of national reconstruction or with the concept of a centralized nation-state. The most famous peasant *caudillos* of the revolution were Pancho Villa, from the northern state of Durango, and Emiliano Zapata from the southern state of Morelos. The *Zapatista* cause was deeply attached to the soil: Zapata was followed by poor town dwellers whose lands had been expropriated. Zapata's revolution fought for the return of these lands to the robbed agrarian communities. Villa's revolution represented another peasant cause: that of the labourers who had never owned land but were exploited by the *hacendados*. Villa's

labourer followers looted and raided haciendas and distributed the pillaged lands among themselves.

The same peasants who had once supported Madero's liberal platform were, by November 1911, clearly disillusioned by his refusal to grant meaningful land reforms to either northern or southern revolutionaries. The *Plan de Ayala*, signed on November 25, 1911 by *Zapatistas*, declared revolution against Madero for "ineptitude" and "bloody treason." After Madero was assassinated by a right-wing *coup d'état* in February 1913, the reins of the Constitutional revolution were taken by don Venustiano Carranza and, again, aided by peasant armies. The joint forces of the Constitutional army triumphed in July 1914. Peasant leaders, however, broke with Carranza at the *Convención de Aguascalientes* on October 14. This break-up gave way to a civil war between *Convencionalistas* (peasant revolutionary armies led by Zapata and Villa) and *Constitucionalistas* (middle-class, liberally-minded revolutionaries led by Carranza and Gen. Alvaro Obregón). The political, class, and cultural confrontation ferociously unveiled by the Mexican revolution prompted by the 1910s numerous essentializing definitions of *Mexicanidad*. Among these definitions were those formulated by Mexican exiles in Europe, including Diego Rivera.

Previous claims that Rivera identified with "the Mexican nation" during his European sojourn have overlooked the schismatic character of the Mexican revolution. Ramón Favela, for example, has argued that Rivera's *Mexicanidad* was

manifested in his depiction of Mexico's arts and crafts (present in a number of Cubist paintings from 1915).<sup>2</sup> Favela's argument is based on two assumptions: first, that a nation is a coherent unity without differences or factions of any kind and that, as such, it is not capable of generating different national identities in its inhabitants. This generalized assumption implies another which directly effects Rivera's case: that Rivera's national identity remained attached to one imagined community throughout his European sojourn--or throughout his life, for that matter. This chapter will contest the idea that Rivera consistently identified with a single imagined community throughout the time he spent in Europe.

A recent construction of Rivera's Mexican national identity--as signified by his Cubist oeuvre--is David Craven's.<sup>3</sup> Craven suggests that, by means of his Cubist production, Rivera identified with a "non-Eurocentric" and "post-colonial" Mexico. Rivera's national identity, Craven argues, reproduced the one that "[t]he Mexican revolution. . . was unequivocal[ly] commit[ed] to constructing."<sup>4</sup> Craven's discussion presents two related problems. The first one concerns the Mexican revolution as a conflict. As I demonstrated earlier in this chapter, participants in the revolution were far too divided to be "unequivocally committed" to any one program. Consequently, they could not construct one "unequivocal" national

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<sup>2</sup>Favela, The Cubist Years, 2-3. Besides Favela, most of Rivera's commentators have read these depictions of Mexican folk arts and crafts as representations of an essentialized *Mexicanidad*.

<sup>3</sup>David Craven, Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1997).

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 50-1.

identity. The second problem concerns the notion of a "non-Eurocentric" or "post-colonial" identity which, Craven argues, Rivera was attached to. Craven seems to suggest that Rivera's pre-1921 national identity sought to integrate European and non-European elements in a non-hierarchical fashion. In this chapter, in fact, I hope to show the contrary: while Rivera's identity with specific imagined communities oscillated during the 1910s, his differing notions of *Mexicanidad* consistently reproduced the class, culture, and political schisms that the revolution provoked throughout its duration. I will also attempt to show that Rivera's European pictorial production did not signify in any way an integration of the cultures, classes, or political ideologies that served to divide participants in the revolution.

In this chapter, I will map Rivera's changing national allegiances through a joint reading of his pictorial representations 'of Mexicans and of Mexico.' Each of these representations will be contextualized in terms of the developments of the Mexican revolution. I will localize Rivera's 'representations of Mexico' in his depictions of folk arts and crafts and of the landscape of Anahuac; 'representations of Mexicans' will be charted in his portraits of Mexican emigrés. The latter portraits include 'props' which denote the social class and culture which the artist wanted to imprint on the sitters. Adolfo Best-Maugard and Alberto J. Pani, for example, are depicted as cultured urbanites while Martín Luis Guzmán wears clothing stereotypical of the peasantry. Because all of the emigrés portrayed participated in different ways in the Mexican revolution, I will also unveil the political import of

Rivera's representations of these various figures, particularly with regard to conflicting notions of *Mexicanidad*.

### **3.2 Modernity, democracy, and universal education: the portraits of Adolfo Best Maugard**

Adolfo Best-Maugard, "a Mexican aristocrat" and a talented artist whom Rivera had probably met at the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City, reached Europe in September 1912. Rivera encountered him in Paris around that time.<sup>5</sup> On two occasions during his European sojourn, Rivera portrayed his compatriot: in early 1913 he painted Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard (Fig. 43), and in 1914, Young Man with a Stylograph (Portrait of Best Maugard) (Fig. 44). Around May 1912--according to an informative article in the Mexican newspaper El Imparcial of May 18--Adolfo Best Maugard had been sent to Europe by the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts of the Madero administration, to reproduce copies and facsimiles of "Mexican archaeological and historical objects related to Mexico" in European museums and libraries.<sup>6</sup>

Best Maugard was one of the many wealthy upper-middle class educated urbanites who were mobilized by the Madero revolution. As such, he

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<sup>5</sup>Favela comments that "upon Rivera's return to Montparnasse from Toledo [in 1912], he was greeted by a group of Mexican artists now living in Paris in what must have seemed like a class reunion from his days at the Academy of San Carlos." The Mexican artists mentioned by Favela are Angel Zárraga, Enrique Freymann, Dr. Atl, Roberto Montenegro, and "the young Mexican artist and aristocrat, Adolfo Best Maugard." Favela, The Cubist Years, 37.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

remains a representative of the young generation who stood for a return to democratic practices, who supported Mexico's full entry into the modern industrial world, and who believed that Mexico's full development would be achieved by educating every Mexican regardless of class or race.<sup>7</sup> A joint scrutiny of the two portraits that Rivera painted of Best Maugard reveals a representation of the very values held by middle-class *Maderistas*, and by Madero himself.

Rivera's Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard (Fig. 43) represents an optimistic celebration of industrialization and modernity. Despite the quick rhythm imposed by technological advancement, life is presented here as harmonic and under control: the heavy smoke does not prevent the city from looking clean and pristine, and the train moves smoothly and rapidly. In this painting, Rivera depicted two icons of Parisian modernity: the Great Wheel and the trans-European trains which rolled in and out of the Montparnasse Station. For the past twenty years, similar icons of technological modernization--particularly the railway--had been idealized by Mexico's upper and middle classes as the only form of economic advancement.<sup>8</sup>

Rivera's choice of a Mexican-born as the overseer of this industrial and urban landscape is significant in itself, since projects for industrialization and

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<sup>7</sup>For Madero's ideology, his political program, and the policies carried out during his administration, see: Knight, The Mexican Revolution, 1: 55-71 and 1: 171-490. Charles Curtis Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: Genesis under Madero (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1952); Arnaldo Córdova, La Ideología de la Revolución Mexicana, 87-112.

<sup>8</sup>Knight, The Mexican Revolution, 1: 22-24.

Mexican economic modernization had predominated during administration of Porfirio Díaz. During the Díaz government, economic policies were decided by the so-called *Científicos* [the Scientists], the foremost advocates, apologists, and beneficiaries of Mexican capitalism. In the *Científico* picture of progress, foreign investment of European and American origin was regarded as crucial to attain a dynamic, developing Mexico. During the *Porfiriato*, in fact, foreign investment, grew thirty-fold, with the U.S. supplying the greatest share. The favored industries were mining, banks, utility companies, property ventures, textile factories, and oil. But the greatest share--about one third of the total direct foreign investment--went into building the Mexican railways.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, cities which were connected by the railway had grown significantly: Monterrey's population grew from 14,000 to 79,000 (1879-1910) and Mexico City from 200,000 to 471,000 (1874-1910). Mexico's wealthy classes, to which Best Maugard's family belonged, had in fact celebrated *Científico* developmentalist policies.<sup>10</sup>

Best Maugard, indeed, is shown as one of the beneficiaries of the country's economic expansion in Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard (1913). As he stands on a balcony, he wears an elegant suit, dress shoes, gloves, a stick, and a fancy coat. This garment indicates his wealth and his social status as an urban, upper-middle class Mexican. Middle-class urbanites, in fact, had not only emerged

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

with progressive modernization but had also been the primary beneficiaries of the industrialist policies of the Díaz generation. Because urban dwellers were wealthier, commercial life had diversified and shops, hotels, cinemas, schools, colleges, banks, and law firms had created a heterogeneous and ever-growing urban culture in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey.<sup>11</sup>

Neither Madero nor his followers pugnaciously attacked the *Científico* economic policies carried out under the dictator's administration. In The Presidential Succession of 1910, the book which was publicizing Madero's political credo by December 1908, the liberal rebel praised

the administration of General Díaz [as] highly valuable because it helped the country to fully enter into the route of material progress...absolute power provided us with great development of public wealth, the considerable extension it has given to the railways, the opening of magnificent ports, the construction of splendid palaces, the embellishment of our greatest cities, especially the capital of our republic.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, after Díaz's overthrow, Madero's short-lived administration continued to foster industrialism and modernity, arranging further concessions for the construction of railway lines to connect all parts of the country.<sup>13</sup>

Madero's differences with Díaz rested on his belief in the need to return to legality and democratic practices--specifically, in the need to return to the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 41-44.

<sup>12</sup>Francisco I. Madero, La sucesión presidencial en 1910. El Partido Nacional Democrático, San Pedro, Coahuila, December 1908, 226 and 230-1, quoted in Córdova, La Ideología de la Revolución Mexicana, 100.

<sup>13</sup>Cumberland, Genesis under Madero, 250.

Mexican liberal Constitution of 1857. This Constitution's foundation stones were the democratic, representative, and federal state; the superiority of constitutional law above despotism and arbitrariness of particular rulers; the right and freedom of thought, of expression, of work, of transit; and the rights and guarantees of election of representatives of the people--especially the right of free and universal suffrage for all Mexican citizens. Madero's revolution, indeed, was founded on the call for a return to this constitution.<sup>14</sup>

Rivera's 1913 Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard (Fig. 43) includes signifiers which celebrate modernity and progress along the lines of industrialized nations; but it is the very choice of Best Maugard as the sitter that signifies Rivera's sympathy with the *Maderista* ideal of a return to democratic practices.<sup>15</sup> Best Maugard was, above all, an appointee in a mission instructed by the Madero administration. This mission, in turn, involved a contribution to another of Madero's crusades: free and universal education for all Mexican citizens. As we shall soon see, Rivera himself alluded to this commission in a 1914 portrait of his friend, Young Man with a stylograph (Fig. 46).

Madero's educational ideals followed the notion--characteristic of 19th-century liberalism--that everyone, regardless of social, economic, or racial status is

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<sup>14</sup>Córdova, La Ideología de la Revolución Mexicana, 8.

<sup>15</sup>Favela, who has traced the stylistic significance of this painting in great detail, does not report that it was a commission. Rivera apparently spontaneously chose to portray Best Maugard. The painting was submitted to the 1913 Salon des Indépendants. Favela, The Cubist Years, 53.

equal. In a letter dated 18 November 1909 and addressed to J.I.Limantour, the Porfirian Minister of Finance, Madero confessed that he was aware that, at the moment, the majority of peasants and indians had neither the capacity to practice democracy nor the experience to take an active part in politics. But, he added, he believed that all Mexicans could be taught the advantages, beauties, rights, and responsibilities of a democratic society with the help of "public and universal education."<sup>16</sup> This should be provided at no charge by the state. In Young Man with a Stylograph (Fig. 44). Rivera acknowledged the mission which had taken Best Maugard to Europe--an educational one--and, in doing so, he acknowledged Madero's educational ideals as well.

It was the Ministry of Public Instruction that had sent Best Maugard to Europe, where he was to copy Mexican artifacts from archives at European museums and libraries. Young Man with a Stylograph (Portrait of Best Maugard) (1914) shows him dressed in a suit and wearing a hat, which is his only discrete adornment besides a bow tie. The latter gives him the appearance of a dandy, and somewhat softens the stiffness of his overall position. Rivera has skillfully played with Best Maugard's stiff pose, drawing parallels between his posture and his character. His muscular neck appears tense, his shoulders are upright, and his overall attitude is attentive, as demanded by the importance of the job he is about to begin. We see Best Maugard is about to start drawing. He holds a fountain pen

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<sup>16</sup>Francisco I. Madero to J.I. Limantour (18 November 1909), quoted in Cumberland, Genesis under Madero, 35.

with one hand and the notebook with the other, and his left eye stares with attention at the pen's imminent movement.

Best Maugard's mission "to copy Mexican artifacts from archives at European museums and libraries" is very likely to have been ordered by Alberto J. Pani, the most consistent member of the Maderista Ministry of Public Instruction. It was during Pani's period as Assistant Secretary of Public Instruction and Fine Arts (November 21, 1911 to September 2, 1912) that Best Maugard was sent to Europe<sup>17</sup> As he assessed the state of popular education, Pani discovered that by 1910, "after thirty years of Porfirian peace and prosperity, less than 30% of all of Mexicans could read or write."<sup>18</sup> Consequently, he proposed substantial changes to the so-called "Plan for Rudimentary Education" which his Ministry had inherited from the Porfirian government. Pani's proposed reforms to this plan were publicized in a pamphlet called Rudimentary Instruction in the Republic (published in June 1912). This short book, which fully embodied the educational ideals held by the middle class, received an enormously positive response among educated urbanites.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>The Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts of the short-lived Madero administration underwent successive changes of authority due to the continuous attacks that opposition parties and movements imposed on Madero and his collaborators.

<sup>18</sup>Alberto J. Pani, Apuntes Autobiográficos, 2 vols. (Mexico: M. Porrúa, 1950), 121.

<sup>19</sup>Rudimentary Education in the Republic was, according to Pani's memoirs, published in June 1912 (during the Madero administration). Most of the original text of this book was later reprinted in a more comprehensive book of Pani's program for the administration of Venustiano Carranza in 1916. This second version was called *Hygiene en México*. A 1917 English translation exists called Hygiene in Mexico: A Study of Sanitary and Educational Problems, trans. Ernest L. de Gorgoza (New York and London: The Knickerbrocker Press, 1917). In Apuntes Autobiográficos, Pani explains: "The publication of my Rudimentary Instruction in the Republic, produced numerous and valid opinions which multiplied my viewpoints and gave me new information. In most cases, these opinions coincided substantially with

Pani's plan of "integral education" was oriented to infants who--the plan read--needed to receive "instruction" and "discipline;"

the second is considered of greater importance, as its object is to accustom the pupil to observe, to reason, and to express his ideas; to moderate and control his passions, to respect the rights of others, and to acquire habits of cleanliness, order, and method, which are of so great a value in his life in society.<sup>20</sup>

This form of "integral education," Pani argued, would foster love for democratic practices because it would "maintain the pupil close to the book and the newspaper."<sup>21</sup> He proposed that pupils "should be taught the elements of geography"<sup>22</sup> and other natural sciences so that they would overcome their parochial attachments; that they should be taught Spanish so that the nation would enjoy uniformity in language, and that they should be taught national history so that they would develop sentiments of patriotism:

If the law seeks to establish the uniformity of language throughout the commonwealth--a powerful stimulus of patriotism--with the diffusion or propagation of Spanish among the natives, and if the teaching of geography, wiping out the narrow limits of parochialism, renders possible the uplifting of provincialism into a wider and nobler patriotism, then surely some knowledge of history would have to be added. Emile Faguet has told us: "The fatherland is its history."

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mine" Pani, Apuntes Autobiográficos, 130. In Hygiene in Mexico, Pani reproduces some of the responses he received. Some of the respondents are identified as "Mr. Carlos Prieto, a distinguished student. . .in the last year of the civil engineering course;" "Attorney-at-law Rafael del Alba" "Lawyer Ezequiel A. Chávez;" "Architect Federico Mariscal;" indicate that the respondents were all university educated professionals. Pani, Hygiene in Mexico, 150, 162, 165, and 168 respectively.

<sup>20</sup>Pani, Hygiene in Mexico, 140.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

Consequently the study of the nation's history, while imbuing the pupils with the love and honor of country, brings forth in the citizen a feeling of responsibility towards the commonwealth, and this is of transcendental importance.<sup>23</sup>

Pani's project of integral education clearly reveals the type of national identity that Madero's liberal followers sought to inspire: one which revolved around the nation-state and which, in the process, broke time-immemorial identities with provincial localities. In addition, the educational plan put enormous emphasis on its role as an instrument of restraint, "moderat[ion] and control of passions," and "respect for the rights of others." In other words, it focused on a conversion from barbarity and violence, which (the text clearly assumes) was present in the pupils, to civility.<sup>24</sup> This polarity, barbarity and civility, would infuse the political and cultural discourse of the middle-class throughout the duration of the Mexican revolution. Rivera, who remained in Europe for the ten crucial years of this revolution was in no way immune to the tensions between these identities.

Both Portrait of Best Maugard (Fig. 43) and Young Man with a Stylograph (Fig. 44) were painted after the coup d'etat which overthrew Madero and put the traitor Victoriano Huerta in power in February 1913. Huerta took power by

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>24</sup>The "Plan of Rudimentary Instruction" inherited from the Diaz administration consisted in teaching pupils nothing else than basic skills such as reading, writing, and basic arithmetical operations. In his critique of this project, Pani argued that such educational program constituted "a menace to our social regime" because, while it "project[s] light into consciousness by means of abstract teachings [i.e., skills only]. . . it brings up wretchedness at the same time that it brings economic improvement." Alberto Pani, Hygiene in Mexico, 143. This strongly suggests that Pani conceived of his own project of Integral Education as a plan for the acculturation of illiterate indians and peasants.

force after ten days of unnecessary yet incessant shooting in Mexico City--an episode now known as the *Decena Trágica* [the Tragic Ten Days]. At the end of the *Decena Trágica*, Madero and his vice-President were brutally assassinated by Huerta's cronies. Madero, who during his own government had been repeatedly attacked (both verbally and militarily) by different sectors of the population, was now elevated to the position of the "apostle" of the revolution.<sup>25</sup> In Madero's name, all factions which condemned the actions of Victoriano Huerta united to overthrow him. In this context, Rivera's portraits of Best Maugard gain a new dimension: in addition to signifying the artist's identity with the urban, educated Mexican middle class, they become nostalgic homages to the ideals held by the apostle of the revolution: democracy and universal education. But, as we shall soon see, Rivera's identity with this notion of *Mexicanidad* would lessen after the patriotic overthrow of Huerta by the revolutionary army, i.e., after the revolutionary factions started revealing their sharp class and cultural differences.

### 3.3 The quest for national identity: *Mexicanidad*, culture, and politics

In September 1914, Rivera, Alfonso Reyes, Angel Zárraga, and Jesús Acevedo coincided in Madrid. Each chose to move to the Spanish capital for different yet related reasons. Rivera, whom the outbreak of the war had caught vacationing in Majorca, did not want to return to Paris immediately. Angel Zárraga,

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<sup>25</sup>Cordova, La Ideología de la Revolución Mexicana, 95-113.

another Mexican artist, decided not to remain in Paris during the war. The architect Jesús Acevedo had recently arrived from his native Mexico, where he was apparently not welcome, most likely for political reasons. Alfonso Reyes, still a little-known writer, had been holding a post as Assistant Secretary of the Mexican Legation in France. With the advent of Venustiano Carranza to power in mid-1914, all Mexican diplomatic bodies in foreign countries were suspended. Reyes, however, was not able to return to Mexico because he was not provided with return tickets. Unemployed and penniless, he fled to Spain at the outbreak of the war as well.<sup>26</sup> Another emigre from Mexico, Martín Luis Guzmán, joined the group early in 1915--approximately one month before Rivera returned to Paris in the spring.

Guzmán was a writer and a journalist who chose voluntary exile from Mexico to avoid taking sides in the war between Venustiano Carranza, the self-appointed "First Chief of the Constitutional Revolutionary Army" and the peasant revolutionary leaders, Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata.<sup>27</sup> While Huerta was still in power, Villa and Zapata had agreed with Carranza that after the triumph of the Revolutionary Army, legal arrangements would be made to "economically emancipate the peasantry, bring about equitable distribution of land and resolve the agrarian problem."<sup>28</sup> Huerta was effectively overthrown on July 15, 1914. By early

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<sup>26</sup>Manuel Olguin, Alfonso Reyes, Ensayista, Vida y Pensamiento (México: Ediciones de Andrea, 1956), 7 and 43.

<sup>27</sup>Emilio Abreu Gómez, Martín Luis Guzmán (México: Empresas Editoriales S.A., 1968), 32.

<sup>28</sup>Both parties had agreed on the above mentioned clause, which appeared in the *Pacto de Torreón* (signed on July 8 1914).

November, however, it was clear to Villa and to Zapata that Carranza would not legalize the land reforms he had promised. The peasant leaders, consequently, declared war on Carranza in the name of their radical revolutionary goals. After bloody battles, Villa and Zapata occupied Mexico City by force on December 4, 1914, and entrusted Gen. Eulalio Gutierrez with the chief administrative role.

Gutierrez's government, however, was short lived: by early 1915 Villa and Zapata's military situation was deteriorating, and Gutierrez and his staff were forced to flee Mexico City. Guzmán, whom Villa had appointed Counselor to the Secretary of War and Navy for the Gutierrez government, fled to Madrid.<sup>29</sup>

Mexican emigrés stranded in Madrid necessarily relied on each others' friendship for emotional, social, and financial reasons. It was Rivera, for example, who probably introduced Reyes to Spanish avant-garde writers such as Ramón del Valle Inclán and Ramón Gómez de la Serna. In the same way, it was to Reyes whom Rivera temporarily entrusted his partner, Angelina Beloff, when he decided to leave Madrid in the spring of 1915. Guzmán, Reyes, and Acevedo (and their families) lived in the same building in the neighborhood of *Torrijos*, sharing food expenses, surviving only on potatoes for weeks at a time, heating themselves with newspapers, and living on credit granted by Madrilean merchants. Rivera and Beloff lived close to the *Plaza de Toros* in similar conditions; they shared rooms

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 302.

with Jacques Lipchitz and his family.<sup>30</sup> Mexican emigrés would meet with Spanish writers and literary and artistic refugees from the war at Ramón Gómez de la Serna's Tertulia de *El Pombo*, which opened its doors at the beginning of 1915, and kindly welcomed all avant-garde intellectuals in Madrid.<sup>31</sup>

Of the Mexican emigrés he encountered in Madrid, Rivera had already befriended Reyes and Acevedo in Mexico as early as 1906. With them--and well as with many others--Rivera had contributed to a journal called Savia Moderna. In his memoirs, Alfonso Reyes claims that Savia Moderna was the first concrete expression of his generation's desire to "renew ideas."<sup>32</sup> Savia Moderna, which had been founded by Alfonso Cravioto and Luis Castillo Ledón in 1906, also involved the Dominican writer Pedro Henríquez Ureña, and the Mexicans Antonio Caso, José Vasconcelos, Jesús Acevedo, Ricardo Gómez Robelo, Rafael López, Manuel de la Parra, Eduardo Colín, Alfonso Reyes, and Diego Rivera. Reyes's memoirs provide some detail about Rivera's activities with the Savia Moderna group:

Many meters above the ground, in a six-floor building, [the office of Savia Moderna, "as tiny as a cage"] opened its immense window to an exquisite perspective. To one side was the Cathedral, to the other, the

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<sup>30</sup>A large number of memoirs and secondary sources corroborate this information. Alicia Reyes, Genio y Figura de Alfonso Reyes (Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1976), 66-78.

<sup>31</sup>Barbara Bockus Aponte, Alfonso Reyes and Spain: his dialogue with Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, Ortega y Gasset, Jiménez, and Gómez de la Serna (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), 159-164.

<sup>32</sup>Alfonso Reyes, Pasado Inmediato, in Obras Completas, 18 vols. (Mexico D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), 12: 207.

sunsets on the boulevard. In front of that window, young Diego Rivera would set his easel. From those heights, the Word fell over the city.<sup>33</sup>

Reyes also remembers that in 1906, the group organized an exhibition of paintings which included works by Ponce de León, Francisco de la Torre, and Rivera. This show was curated by Gerardo Murillo, later known as Dr. Atl, who had just returned from Europe. Savia Moderna, however, would be dissolved in 1907 when its founder, Alfonso Cravioto, travelled to Europe. Later cultural activities, such as the *Society of Conferences* (founded in 1907) and the legendary *Ateneo de la Juventud* (founded in 1909) would resume with Cravioto's return; Rivera, however, had left for Spain in December 1906 and did not participate in any subsequent revolutionary venture.

During the course of 1915, Mexican emigrés such as Guzmán, Reyes, and Rivera sought to essentialize their national identity, i.e. to identify specific qualities which defined their "imagined community" as unique and unlike all other nations. In their cultural productions of 1915, Guzmán, Rivera, and Reyes identified a quality they labelled "*Mexicanidad*" with two subjects: certain geographical characteristics they distinguished in the *bajío Mexicano* [the Mexican plateau], and a violent disposition they observed in Mexican-born persons. In La Querella de Mexico, for example Guzmán expressed his belief that the Mexican soul was

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

congenitally a-moral;<sup>34</sup> in Vision de Anahuac, Reyes called "the Mexican [human] nature" "barbaric" and "fiery."<sup>35</sup> Finally, Rivera (according to various sources) repeatedly defined "the Mexican temperament" as irascible and violent: "the Mexican temperament. It's like a volcano, continuously working underground. It boils up and suddenly bursts and begins to spit fire and vomit lava."<sup>36</sup> While Rivera, Reyes, and Guzmán agreed on their characterization of Mexicans as inherently violent, their viewpoints with regard to this supposedly inherent Mexican violence diverged: between 1914 and 1918, Rivera would celebrate this correlation of Mexicans with a violent temperament, while Guzmán and Reyes would abhor it.

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<sup>34</sup>Martín Luis Guzmán, La Querrela de México [written in late 1915], in Obras Completas de Martín Luis Guzmán, 1: 7-33.

<sup>35</sup>Alfonso Reyes, Visión de Anahuac [written in late 1915], in Obras Completas, 2: 13-34.

<sup>36</sup>Marevna, Life with the Painters of La Ruche, 132. Other episodes narrated in Marevna's memoirs, as well as in David Alfaro Siqueiros's corroborate this notion. Marevna, for example, narrates that "one morning, Ehrenburg turned at my door, all tousled and trembling. 'Listen Marevna! Last night Diego came to my hotel stark raving. It's a wonder he didn't try to kill me. He whirled his Mexican stick round my head shouting that he wanted you at any price--I swear he is losing his wits. What is there between you?" Ibid., 84.

". . .they [Rivera and Picasso] nearly came to blows. 'He [Rivera] left when I picked up my Mexican stick and threatened to break his skull,' Rivera told me. I never learned the full details of the incident but I know that for some time there was coolness between the two painters." Ibid., 95.

David Alfaro Siqueiros, another soon-to-be Mexican muralist, visited Rivera early in 1919. Certain comments in his memoirs reveal how both artists linked their *Mexicanidad* to an essentialized capacity for violence. About his visit to Rivera, Siqueiros remembers: "Given our childishness, in the deepest sense of this term, we publicly manifested in every occasion, in every moment, as furiously patriotic. We were proud to say everywhere that Mexico was the country where people killed among themselves without cause. . . .when I met Diego Rivera in Paris, the topics of our chats used to be all my terrifying accounts about the Mexican revolution; obviously, all of this was united to transcendental accounts, and also to enthusiastic descriptions of the Mexican landscape, of Mexican people, of Mexican arts and crafts, etcetera." David Alfaro Siqueiros, Me Llamaban el Coronelazo (Memorias), (Mexico City: Biografías Gandeza, 1977), 155-56.

It was this clashing perspective with regard to the issue of Mexican violence, in fact, that served to divide the group politically.

All three Mexican exiles developed a romanticized image of the Mexican landscape. In Visión de Anahuac, written in Madrid in late 1915, Reyes poetically idealized and aestheticized the landscape of the Mexican plateau:

Our nature, the nature of Anahuac [the Mexican plateau], is something better and healthier. At least for those who desire to have their volition and their thought clear at all times. The most proper vision of our nature is in the region of central Mexico. The vegetation there is surly and heraldic; the landscape is organized; the atmosphere is extremely clear; colors drown compensating the atmosphere of the drawing--that luminous ether in which things come forward with individual strength; and, finally, quoting at once the words of the modest and sensitive Fray Manuel de Navarrete:

"a resplendent light  
which makes the face of heavens shine."<sup>37</sup>

A number of paintings by Rivera dating from 1915 also romanticize the "local color" of Mexico's geography and of indigenous *artesanía*. Still Life with Gray Bowl (1915) (Fig. 45) is an example. The cubist still life shows a wooden table, on which rest a number of not fully recognizable objects: a cup, a saucer, two pears. It is not possible to distinguish further iconography; the striking aspect of the painting, however, is a section which shows a Mexican folk pattern. Portrait of Martín Luis Guzmán (1915) (Fig. 46), another example, makes a far more obvious use of folk patterns. The painting shows Guzmán 'wearing' different colorful patterns which represent a Mexican *sarape*. He sits on an *equipal*, a traditional

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<sup>37</sup>Reyes, Visión de Anahuac, 2: 16-17.

Mexican seat which Rivera had in his studio. In addition to the paintings, various retrospective sources corroborate that Rivera inscribed this romantic notion of *Mexicanidad* in his dress. His garment during the war in Paris included an "enormous Mexican walking stick and a wide brimmed hat," "a huge hat and enormous parti-colored stick," and again "a carved Mexican stick" which "Diego Rivera brandished."<sup>38</sup>

Guzmán also tended to romanticize and aestheticize the same landscape, and the local color of folk art. In "Diego Rivera and the Philosophy of Cubism," (written after Guzmán's visit to Rivera in August 1915) he argued that what made Picasso's Cubism different from Rivera's was that "Rivera was born in Anahuac: the first thing he learnt to look at were mountains."<sup>39</sup> Guzmán, in fact, opens his essay praising "that good old Diego Rivera [who is] for ever in love with the pure atmospheres and the middle tones of the Mexican plateau [*bajío Mexicano*]."<sup>40</sup>

This 'hyper-aestheticized' set of objects--landscape, folk art, local color--enabled the Mexican emigrés to maintain an area of agreement--a safety net which drained their national identity of politicized, confrontational discourses. No frictions, in fact, would appear in relation to these far too abstract objects, since a conciliatory atmosphere was necessary in the midst of war, poverty, and revolution.

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<sup>38</sup>Marevna Vorobev, Life with the painters of La Ruche, 64 and 129, and Ilya Ehrenburg, People and Life, 143.

<sup>39</sup>Guzmán, "Diego Rivera y la filosofía del Cubismo," 1: 86.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 83.

However, political and cultural tensions did arise when the emigrés attempted to define concepts such as "the Mexican soul." Frictions and tensions, in fact, can be traced through a number of encounters and negotiations in which the emigrés took divergent political and cultural positions.

One such encounter occurred when Guzmán visited Rivera in his Parisian studio in August 1915. It has been suggested--by Olivier Debrouse and David Craven, for example--that, on this occasion, Guzmán shared with Rivera glamorous stories about the battles he had fought at the orders of the peasant revolutionary leader Pancho Villa. But La Querella de México, a critical essay Guzmán wrote in Madrid in late 1915 suggests that he despised *caudillismo* and violence, and that he attributed the violent trait in the Mexican people "to nothing less than the existence of a congenital evil in the Mexican nation."<sup>41</sup> According to Guzmán, Mexico's social problems emerged from its people's lack of morality: "[t]hese pages--those of La Querella de México--affirm our imperious duty. . .to bring about a sincere revision of Mexican social values--a revision which is oriented to illuminate the road that we are about to follow. . ."<sup>42</sup>

virtue is required--civic virtue--, a love for justice, order, and serenity. . . The capacity for democracy, just as for any other government that deserves such a name, goes beyond the capacity to understand, the art of reading and writing, it requires strength of will; it is, primarily, virtue: moderation, patience, obedience, loyalty, and justice. . .

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<sup>41</sup>Guzmán, La Querella de Mexico, I: 14.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 8.

There are two moments in our history from which we can extract the fruit of the Mexican political soul--the soul of [the creole] class, which is homogenous to a certain degree and which directs the social developments of Mexico. [These moments are] the period of Independence and of Porfirian peace. Between these two epochs, the Reform grows, gives almost spoilt fruits, parts with virtue, and loses itself in peace. .

The reform had finally come to incarnate what at the beginning was a vague idea of the revolution of independence. . . the humble confession of a decadence of spirit in the ruling classes, and the need to regenerate them. So it was that reformers founded a large school to forge the new souls. . . .

. . . the only honest political work was that of the reform: the effort to give freedom to the spirits and to moralize the ruling classes, creole and mestizo. . . .<sup>43</sup>

Guzmán's hero in this picture was Justo Sierra, who had been a teacher of Guzmán, Reyes, Pani, and many others of this generation. Justo Sierra, in fact, had been the first proponent of the basic ideas which Pani later appropriated in his plan of "Integral Education:"

The renowned Justo Sierra. . . had already insinuated that even if the economic problem of Mexico was very important, much more important was our educational problem.

. . . it cannot be doubted that the problem Mexico cannot solve is, primarily, the problem of its spiritual nature. Our economic disorder, enormous as it is, does not influence but in a subordinate form, and it will persist unless our spiritual problem changes. We are wasting our time when, with good or bad intentions, we seek the origin of our problems in the break-up of the *hacienda* system. . . . While these are of great importance in themselves, they cannot be considered supreme. The source of our problems lies somewhere else: it is rooted in the spirits, ever weak and immoral of the ruling class--in the spirit of the creole and of the mestizo, to whom the educational campaign must be directed. Though understood in another way, the materialist opinion still prevails

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid, 15-18.

and it has come to constitute. . .the reason for our armed movements since 1910.<sup>44</sup>

With these words, Guzmán questioned the validity of the peasant demands, and gave further justification to the program of acculturation suggested, first by Justo Sierra during the Porfirian dictatorship, and later by Pani during the Madero administration. Guzmán wished to propagate civility and automatically disqualified 'barbarous' peasant revolutionaries as possible political leaders.

Before his encounter with the author of La Querrela de Mexico, Rivera had painted Zapatista Landscape (Fig. 1) earlier that same summer. This painting eulogizes the peasant leader, which clearly indicates that Rivera sympathized with Zapata's revolution around this time. The background shows the mountainous landscape painted in light gray which Guzmán had praised in his essay. The main scene of the work, however, is encased between this landscape and a blue background surface which may represent a lake. Some sections of the painting also show characteristic folk patterns. Other recognizable forms are a hat, a penetrating-looking eye, and a belt; the most striking object, however, is the rifle, which comes forward with commanding force. Zapata's use of fire arms was notorious and feared: it did not take long until he started being called a bandit and a criminal in Mexico City's press.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>45</sup>Lola Elizabeth Boyd, Emiliano Zapata en las letras y el folklore mexicano. España: José Porrúa Turanzas, S.A., 1979. John Womack, Jr., Zapata and the Mexican Revolution, New York: Vintage Books, 1968.

Zapata had started his career as a peasant revolutionary soon after he was elected *calpuleque* [Mayor] by the elders of the town where he had been born--Anenecuilco, in the southern state of Morelos. His revolutionary goals, in fact, were always attached to this piece of land and remained parochial: he was never concerned with defending the rights of an abstract "Mexican people" (like Madero). The rights he defended dated from pre-colonial times: they concerned communal landholding which had formerly been owned and administrated by indigenous peoples. After the declaration of Mexican independence, these lands had consistently been annexed by force to the large *haciendas* owned by creoles. Most *calpuleques* before Zapata had made claims on these lands through legal and peaceful means; soon after he was elected by the elders, however, Zapata organized an army and started taking the lands by force. His fiery attitude gained Zapata the trust and military support of the peasants of nearby towns. By the end of 1910, raids of peasants in the state of Morelos were destroying the limits imposed on lands by the hacendados, and the peasants were distributing them among themselves.<sup>46</sup>

An ideological difference--acknowledged or not--must have emerged between Guzmán and Rivera, since Guzmán fully depoliticized Zapatista Landscape (Fig. 1) in his article on Rivera's Cubism published in the U.S. early in 1916. While he praised Rivera's capacity to depict "light as luminous matter which pours itself

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<sup>46</sup>Boyd, Emiliano Zapata, 17 and 22.

widening in space," neither the rifle nor the name of Zapata were mentioned: "This last characteristic [Rivera's depiction of light] is especially attractive in the most recent of Rivera's paintings: a material and spiritual landscape depicting the Mexican plateau."<sup>47</sup> The very fact that Guzmán would soften Rivera's evocation of the peasant leader indicates a friction in their political and cultural identities.

Other indications suggest that Rivera periodically sided with the reformist and liberal tradition promoted by Guzmán. In a still life Rivera painted soon after Portrait of Martín Luis Guzmán (Fig. 46), his chosen hero was the reformist Benito Juárez. The speeches and writings of Madero's followers routinely conjured with the name of Benito Juárez (1806-1872), whom they regarded as the strongest advocate of a constitutional form of government in the 19th century. Juárez's political concerns had involved the role of the state in society, its relation to the regions and to the individual, its moral purpose, its urgent legitimacy, and its relationship to the Catholic Church. He had envisioned a nation in which individual citizens would owe their primary allegiance to the nation-state rather than to the village, the community, or the corporation. Citizens would be equal before the law and would have the right of representation at all levels--from municipality to federal Congress. As he took office as state governor of Oaxaca in 1847, Juárez had pronounced that he envisioned a "popular, representative, federal republic."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Guzmán, "Diego Rivera y la Filosofía del Cubismo," 1: 86.

<sup>48</sup>Brian Hammet, Juárez (London and New York: Longman), 1994, 49.

The words "BENITO JUA" appear on a label in a little publicized still life by Rivera called La Terrasse du Café (1915) (Fig. 47). The painting shows a table such as those found in coffee places in Paris, on which a syphon, a spoon, a glass rest. The still life might represent a drink set up on a table. On a corner, it is possible to distinguish about a quarter of a round label. The stamp-like label shows a landscape with a mountainous background, a *hacienda*, a palm tree, and in the foreground, golden crops. On the circumference of the label it reads "BENITO JUA"-- words which unequivocally indicate the name of the liberal patriot. Given the political import of Rivera's earlier 'portrait' of Zapata, his pictorial reference to the contrasting political figure of Benito Juárez cannot be regarded as casual.

Even if Rivera would not repeat a 'portrait of the *Zapatista* leader during the remaining period of his European sojourn, he would not so easily be convinced of the justice of liberal ideology. While he did not make overt political statements concerning his sympathy for the peasant cause, he translated this sympathy into a cultural manifestation by imitating certain linguistic distortions characteristic of Mexico's lower classes. In doing so, he was able to re-inscribe his own persona within an imagined linguistic community of lower-class Mexicans. Rivera conjured with these linguistic codes in a letter of July 25, 1916 to Alfonso Reyes. In the letter, Rivera makes use of peasant slang to mock his correspondent.

While the first three paragraphs of Rivera's letter employ a few colloquial phrases appropriate to a friendly letter, they still keep to a perfectly

grammatical Spanish. The fourth paragraph starts in the same correct form, as Rivera discusses the art scene in Paris. But suddenly, without apparent reason, he starts spelling mistakenly and changing the order of letters in words. Two long paragraphs follow, in which Rivera produces the following strategies to denote his imitation of uneducated speech: he spells phonetically what sounds like uneducated spoken Spanish. "*juerza*" for "*fuera*;" "*Siñor*" for "*Señor*;" "*dotor*" for "*doctor*;" he suppresses sounds and words to imitate uneducated phonetic speech: "*una trasdiotra*" for "*una atrás de la otra*," or "*pa'ver*" for "*para ver*;" and he uses words which are characteristic of the speech of Mexico's lower classes: "*menda*" instead of "*yo*," [meaning "I"]. In addition, he calls himself "*chilindrin*," which is slang for "*niño*" [child or kid] while addressing Reyes as "*jefe*" [boss], and "*su mercé*," which phonetically resembles "*su merced*" [your highness]. In other words, he uses these titles to simulate a social difference between himself and Reyes--to denote an assumed relation of servility between his friend and himself. After these confusing paragraphs, Rivera suddenly returns to educated Spanish and greets Reyes using a very respectable formula--a transition which underscores the artificiality of his peasant-like speech:

Alfonso, I send my respects and my friendly greetings to Manuelita,  
your wife. A kiss to Alfonsito [Reyes's son] and a hug to you from your  
friend,

Diego M. Rivera<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Rivera to Reyes (July 25, 1916). Reprinted in Olivier Debroise, Diego de Montparnasse, 113-15

Besides the grammatical, orthographic, and phonetic distortions which betray Rivera's fictive emulation of uneducated speech, the very content of Rivera's letter reveals his presumed anti-intellectualism. The letter, in fact, makes plain Rivera's anti-intellectual and primitivist mode of self-representation, which stood in stark contrast to his friends' (particularly Reyes's) scholarly demeanor while in Madrid. Soon after his arrival to the Spanish capital, Reyes had joined a studious literary group called *Ateneo de Madrid*; he soon started working at the prestigious Philology Section of the *Centro de Estudios Históricos*; and he began contributing to the Revista de Filología Española [Journal of Spanish Philology] and to the Revue Hispanique [Hispanic Review]. Reyes, whose reputation as a literary writer and as a grammarian was growing, was not happy to find that Rivera was mocking his literary accomplishments. In a letter dated May 18, 1916 and addressed to don Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Reyes indicates that he was sick of Rivera's public characterization of him as a pedantic academic. Reyes writes: ". . . Diego Rivera--that traitor who, deep down, cannot tolerate me because he is lazy and I, a good "snob," diligent--is to blame for your imagining that I am a type of Doctor of Philosophy and Letters."<sup>50</sup>

Rivera's letter to Reyes--the one in which he made use of uneducated-like slang--further corroborates the existence of a tension between Rivera and his cultured friend. While the formal aspects of Rivera's letter denote his celebration of

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<sup>50</sup>Reyes to Gómez de la Serna (May 18 1916). Reprinted in Bockus Aponte, Alfonso Reyes and Spain, 165-7.

peasant culture, its content conveys his mocking of Reyes's refined education. The interrelation of the form and content in this letter, in turn, suggests that Rivera perceived Western education as antithetical to Mexican peasant culture:

And lately don't you believe my boss that I mock you, and don't you believe that I want to call you tequila for doctor in philosophy and letters no sir I already know that your highness puts the little letters extremely well one after the other to say what comes out of your deepest soul and that your highness my boss is much more than three stones of a doctor because doctors study the philosophies and letters and your highness lectures about them so that others can study them if they want and so that they don't want by force they clean the bleariness. And after all my boss although I am poor don't ignore me and your highness is deceiving himself if he takes me not for rum but for dogmatic, no my boss, I am pure *colonche* and tequila, at Guanajuato [Rivera's hometown] we do not eat that and I am from the purest plateau though I was born in the very hill for whatever you order my boss and write to me later to see what you tell me and don't get angry my boss only because you regard me as a silly kid.<sup>51</sup>

The wider significance of the speech used in this letter comes to the fore as we turn the pages of a newspaper oriented to the literate middle class residing in Mexico city: Excelsior. Like most daily newspapers, Excelsior included a section on humor and caricature. A particular cartoon which appeared in this section (Fig. 48), in fact, gives us a glimpse of what Rivera was emulating in the letter he wrote to Reyes in July 1916. It also illuminates the perceptions held by educated sectors of Mexican society towards illiterate peasants. On July 6th, 1919, Excelsior published a cartoon which showed two peasants shaking hands in a

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<sup>51</sup>Rivera to Reyes (25 July 1916). Reproduced in Debroise, Diego de Montparnasse, n.p. Facsimile of original letter is reproduced. I have not been able to find the meaning of the slang-word *colonche*, though the context suggests it could refer to another alcoholic beverage, such as tequila. I am indebted to my friend Ms. Celina Contreras for helping me translate this letter.

friendly attitude. They are stereotypically depicted: wide-brim hats, dark moustaches, extra-long pants, and in general, a sloppy appearance. The dialogue printed at the bottom reads:

--Wots' up pal, it's been like five years since I last saw you!

--Gosh, pal, then five and five are ten!"

This joke (though rather poor) suggests that peasants were perceived as slovenly, lazy, and above all, as utterly dumb. One can imagine the impact that Rivera's letter had on the thoroughly urbane, educated, and self-conscious Reyes.

Rivera's confrontational attitude towards both Guzmán and Reyes was manifested both culturally (in his use of language) and politically (in his depiction of Zapata). The notion of nationhood shared by Guzmán and Reyes--founded on a rejection of regionalism, an embrace of developmentalist ideals, legality, and Western education--was clearly opposed to the vision of Mexico propagated by peasant revolutionaries. These peasants were violent, disruptive of order and law and, most frequently, they were illiterate--Zapata had only sporadically attended elementary school, and Villa had remained illiterate until 1912.<sup>52</sup> Besides being illiterate and violent, the great majority of peasants had partial indigenous ancestry. All three aspects combined (illiteracy, violence, and partial indigenous ancestry) made the Mexican peasant a powerful focus for xenophobia. It was this triple

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<sup>52</sup>Boyd, Emiliano Zapata, 22 and 58.

xenophobia, in fact, that fueled the creole desire to moralize and educate the "violent Mexican temperament."

Between 1914 and 1919, Rivera identified with an imagined community of illiterate peasants and violent bandits. Rivera's cultural and political identity during this period, however, did not completely alienate him from other Mexican emigrés, such as Reyes and Guzmán. Rivera's embrace of the romanticized vision of Mexico-- signified by the local color and artisanal objects found in works such as Still Life with Sugar Bowl (1915) (Fig. 45)--helped him maintain his relations with other Mexican emigrés. But once peace in Mexico was relatively consolidated, the former Mexican emigrés were integrated into the new power structure. In order to shift his allegiance from the defeated peasantry to those emigrés he had formerly mocked, Rivera refashioned his self-image once more. How he adjusted his art to meet this demand is our next subject.

### **3.4 The Prodigal Son**

In early 1917, Rivera started experimenting with a classicized manner of painting which appeared to his Cubist friends to be in conflict with the form of representation he had been pursuing since early 1916. In March 1917, an open dispute erupted between Rivera and all the other Cubist artists. Juan Gris, one of Rivera's friends around this time, commented to the critic Maurice Raynal about what later came to be known as *L'affaire Rivera*:

Have you heard of the Reverdy-Rivera incident? During a discussion about painting at Lhote's, Rivera slapped Reverdy's face and so the latter went for him. I hear lots of china was broken, and one pane of glass. Metzinger tried to intervene and get them to fight it out in a duel, that didn't work.<sup>53</sup>

This was the beginning of the end of Rivera's years as a Cubist. From then until August 1921, when he finally returned to Mexico, he produced works which denote an interest in classicism, academic drawing, and pictorial construction. Pencil drawings imitative of Ingres, such as Portrait of Angelina Beloff (1917) (Fig. 18), Portrait of Chirokoff (1917) (Fig. 26), Self-Portrait (1918) (Fig. 29), or Portrait of Levedeff (1918) (Fig. 28), among many others, reveal his interest in proportion, solidity of form, naturalistic shading, and careful, even painstaking realization. Still lifes such as Still Life with Garlic Press (1918) (Fig. 49), Bowl of Fruit (1918) (Fig. 50), Still Life with Petit Dejeuner and Wine Bottle (1919) (Fig. 30), and a true academic sketch, Nude Woman (1919) (Fig. 31), demonstrate that, by way of this production, Rivera positioned himself as a traditional and classicizing artist. Finally, he also started making architecture-type sketches and cartoons, such as the so-called Construction Drawing (Fig. 33) for the 1918 painting The Mathematician (Fig. 32).

Rivera's return to traditional methods was clearly not prompted by his desire to return to Mexico, or to speak to the Mexican (or any other) masses. For if, as it has been argued, the esoteric form of Cubism he had practiced between 1914

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<sup>53</sup>Cooper, ed., Letters of Juan Gris, 46.

and March 1917 could not speak to the violent and illiterate indians or peasants, much less would the ultra-pristine classicized drawings, the constructive landscapes, or the Prix de Rome-like still lifes he drew and painted during the remaining years of his European sojourn.<sup>54</sup> In fact, the Mexicans to whom Rivera's solid classicizing images were addressed were the educated, liberally-minded, self-appointed "civilized" and "civilizing" ones. The "classicized images" from 1917 to 1921 spoke to the new power structure--a specific cultural and political class of Mexicans; as such, these images were instrumental in paving the way for Rivera's official return to Mexico.

One such Mexican was Alberto J. Pani, who arrived in Paris on December 1918 on an official commission by the then constitutional president, don Venustiano Carranza. Pani's role was to attend the Versailles meetings as the representative of the Mexican legation in Paris. But, as Pani himself comments:

. . .once I settled, my diplomatic duties in Paris allowed me frequent spans of free time. Driven by my natural inclination to art--primarily the art of painting, which I have studied and practiced. . ., I spent my free time assiduously visiting museums. At these times, I also had the advantageous occasion to acquire antique paintings, which. . .made me visit art dealers and attend public auctions. These exciting auctions normally took place at the "Hôtel Drouot"--

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<sup>54</sup>To explain why Rivera decided to renounce Cubism, Florence Arquin quotes Rivera's words, which she obtained in a personal interview with the artist: "I stopped painting in the Cubist manner because of the war, the Russian revolution, and my belief in the need for a popular and socialized art. It had to be a functional art related to the world and to the times and had to help serve the masses to a better social organization. In Cubism, there are many elements that do not meet this specific need. Nevertheless, the plastic values of Cubism can be utilized without this limitation." Arquin herself subscribes to this interpretation of Rivera's adoption of a classicized manner of painting. Arquin, The Shaping of an Artist, 86.

where specialized collections were on view daily. In places such as these, it was not odd to discover first-rate works of art. . . .

There is nothing odd, then, in my attempt to collect art. My searches--only pushed by my affection for art, and guided by my good luck and my *flair*. . .--allowed me to own, after almost two years in Europe, 77 paintings and 41 drawings of the Spanish, Flemish, French, Dutch, British, and Italian schools from the 16th to the 19th centuries.<sup>55</sup>

It was in relation to one of Pani's most legendary strokes of "good luck" that Rivera had the opportunity to show off his solid knowledge of the 'great masters.' Pani relates that:

. . .one of those happy searches culminated in an extraordinary find, one which could have fulfilled the aspiration of the most ambitious collector: the discovery of "Susanna and the Elders" by Titian. This painting laid abandoned, as an anonymous work, in the dark and inaccessible corner of an Antiques Shop. I acquired it. The Mexican painter don Diego Rivera--who was then in Paris, fueled my belief that this work had been painted by the great Venetian master and invited his friend M. Elie Faure so that he would see it too. . .<sup>56</sup>

Pani was probably equally impressed by Rivera's own production, since in 1920 he commissioned two paintings by the artist: Portrait of Alberto J. Pani (Fig. 51), and a pendant portrait of his wife--the latter I have never seen reproduced. Pani's portrait shows a man in his early forties dressed in a work suit and a tie. Unlike Best Maugard, Pani does not reveal the slightest sign of ostentation. Neither does he wear any 'typically Mexican' clothing, such as the warm and colorful *sarape* which Rivera had imposed on Martín Luis Guzmán,

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<sup>55</sup>Pani, Apuntes Autobiográficos, 274-76. Pani had his collection documented in a book called Catálogo de las Pinturas y Dibujos de la Colección Pani, text by Dr. Atl. (Mexico: Universidad Nacional, 1921).

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 276.

during six Parisian summer days in 1915. And, most obviously, Pani does not carry a rifle or wear a peasant hat. Instead, he holds a pen and in front of him lie two clean notebooks. Portrait of Alberto J Pani (Fig. 51) is, in fact, a portrait of a middle-of-the-road statesman: a sensible, reasonable, bourgeois bureaucrat. Like The Mathematician (1918) (Fig. 32)--a painting which this solidly established engineer (Pani) bought from Rivera in 1919--Pani's portrait shows a fellow dignified by a pensive look, which is neither exaggerated nor dramatized.

It was Alberto Pani who, in the name of José Vasconcelos, the new Chancellor of the University of Mexico, urged Rivera to return to his country in 1920. Immediately after he was named Chancellor of the University, Vasconcelos started an educational and--according to his own words--"civilizing" campaign. This campaign consisted, on the one hand, in teaching the illiterate mass of the Mexican population to read and write, and on the other, to nationalize education, to create schools, libraries, and museums--overall, to elevate the quality of education in Mexico and to extend it to the whole population. It was as part of this campaign that Vasconcelos requested the collaboration of all of Mexico's fresh-blooded intellectuals and artists, including Rivera.

Vasconcelos's attempt to recruit Rivera to his campaign implicated the artist in the new vision of Mexico that Vasconcelos was then constructing. By including Rivera among the list of potential intellectuals and artists who had the duty to share their knowledge with the less fortunate, Vasconcelos transmitted to

Rivera two implicit messages: first, that the artist belonged to the flower of Mexico's intelligentsia and, second, that because he did, he had the moral obligation to civilize the barbarous peasants and to integrate the indians into contemporary Mexican society. It was because of these assumptions--contained in Vasconcelos's request to the artist--that Rivera would adopt yet another persona between late 1919 and the fall of 1921: no longer the anti-intellectual and irascible Rivera who mocked his cultured friend Alfonso Reyes, he was now the civilized artist who chose a pictorial language of equilibrium, analytical sensitivity, and pristine clarity.

Rivera must have learned either from Pani, from Guzmán, or from Reyes--with the latter two he maintained frequent correspondence--about a legendary talk which Vasconcelos gave in Lima, Perú, at the University of San Marcos on July 26, 1916. In this lecture, Vasconcelos called for communal work among all Latin American intellectuals. The talk bore a universalist tone and already foreshadowed Vasconcelos's well-known anti-U.S. sentiment. Towards the end of the lecture, Vasconcelos announced:

Let me tell you what the sons of Anahuac are good at. . . .[In Mexico] a generation is blossoming. It has the right to be named "new," not only for its age but also because it is inspired in an aesthetic which is different from those of its immediate ancestors, in an ideal creed which criticism, with time, will rightfully discover. This creed is not romantic nor modernist, much less positivist or realistic, but a manner of mysticism founded in beauty, a tendency to look for ineffable clarity and eternal signification. It is not platonic faith in the immortality of ideas, but something very different, a notion of affinity and rhythm, of eternal and divine substance. I will give my list of heroes shortly, but the order in which I place them is no indication of their larger or smaller merit. . . .

I will start by referring to Alfonso Reyes: we used to call him "Euforion" some years ago because, like the child of Faust and classical Beauty, he was ready and energetic for any noble exercise of the soul. You will be able to guess the new roads of his aesthetic, his intense literary labor, his exclusive dedication to the ideal in the books, opinions, and articles which I will cite as I talk with you.

Antonio Caso is a constructor of mental paths and a liberator of spirits: he likes to play with and to strengthen consciences and to warmly welcome all creeds only for the pleasure of destroying them with the happiest and most luminous critique. . . .

Pedro Henríquez Ureña puts light in his prose and rhythm rules his spirit. . . . In Mexico, he left pupils and friends, also enemies, and the durable print of his pure soul of skeptic saint. . . .

Alfonso Cravioto is a precious sculptor of prose.

Jesús Acevedo, the architect, is more talented than what can be written in many books; thanks to leisure and homesickness, he now writes from his retirement in Madrid, words that will one day sound marvelous.

Martín Luis Guzmán is a clear and vigorous spirit who will soon define himself with clear relief. He divides his activities between the political essay and the critique of painters. One of these, a friend of his and a compatriot of ours, Diego Rivera, who is not ignored by European fame, has left the classical manner at which he already was a master for the love of esoteric and modern senses of figure and volume. Other painters, Roberto Montenegro, . . . Ramos Martínez. . . .<sup>57</sup>

It was from Guzmán, as Vasconcelos said in his lecture in Lima, that he had heard about Rivera's talent in the classical manner, and also about his 1916 modern style. The tone of Vasconcelos's comment reveals, however, that he preferred Rivera's earlier days as a traditional artist to his modernist period. Of this contrast in Rivera's production, Guzmán had expressed a written opinion in 1915:

[Rivera] did not throw himself dazzled or stunned to the new painting [Cubism]. Already his entire spirit was inside the whirlwind lifted up by Picasso and Braque, and his hand still followed tradition faithfully.

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<sup>57</sup>José Vasconcelos, "El Movimiento Intelectual Contemporáneo de México," Conference read at the Universidad de San Marcos, in Lima, Perú, on 26 July, 1916, in *Obras Completas*, 4 vols. (México: Libreros Mexicanos Unidos, 1957), 1: 57-78.

Before [in Spain], this faithfulness had also resisted the natural consequences of the solitary and prolonged meditation of the artist before the canvases of El Greco. Why? He is modest, and attributes it to the intimate peculiarities of his intelligence, to the spiritual requirement of a lucid conception previous to the act [of painting]. I am sorry to say so, but I won't believe him: the reason is another. There is a suffering, a previous suffering involved in leaving what one loves, and Rivera loved his artistic trajectory within traditional concepts. The old canons had been proper to him. . . . And he would abandon them very slowly, looking every day for further consolation in the enthusiasm and fight for the new art. This is the truth.<sup>58</sup>

Guzmán was neither the first nor the only Mexican who had felt puzzled or even angry about Rivera's Cubism: as early as 1914, Reyes had written to his friend Pedro Henríquez Ureña about the "monsters of ignorance and petulance--those foreigners from Montparnasse," adding that "some day we will talk about our lost forever Diego, who is now a real biddy and who has gone crazy with lies and Parisianness."<sup>59</sup> By May 1918, Rivera's cubist style was even causing some "outrage" in Mexico City itself. A popular magazine, El Universal Ilustrado, published an article entitled "The outrageous works of Cubism: Some Paintings in Diego Rivera's 'new style'." (Fig. 52) The article contained reproductions of Cubist works by Rivera, which were mockingly commented upon. Under an early Cubist work named Tree and Walls, Toledo (1913), it read: "Does the noble and most humane reader know what this painting represents? It represents the city of Toledo." Under Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard (1913), the following caption appeared:

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<sup>58</sup>Martín Luis Guzmán, "Diego Rivera y la Filosofía del Cubismo," 1: 84.

<sup>59</sup>Pedro Henríquez Ureña and Alfonso Reyes, Epistolario Intimo, 1: 89-93.

"This who you see here, pallid and sad, and with the wheel of fortune behind his back, is Fernando Best [*sic*]." Another reproduction was Marine Fusilier (1914), which was commented on with the following statement: "You are perverse to suppose that the above little painting should be placed in our riddles section!...This is nothing more nor less than a French sailor." Under Two Women (1913), a caption read: "in the middle of these triangles, 'rectangles', and 'squares', two ladies are having a conversation." Finally, about Alarm Clock (1914), it read: "To this unbelievable pile of things, the artist gave the name . . ." <sup>60</sup>

By including Rivera's name in his list of Mexican heroic intellectuals, Vasconcelos was--at least nominally--giving Rivera the opportunity to distance himself from his self-representation as a barbarian. (Ironically enough, Vasconcelos's praise of Rivera's artistic and intellectual potential took place exactly one day after Rivera wrote to Reyes the infamous letter in which he appropriated peasant speech). While Rivera did not provide any specific signs of a change in Mexican cultural affiliation until late 1918, by late 1920 he was willing to accept inclusion in Vasconcelos's list of heroes. In a letter dated November 29, 1920 which Rivera sent to Reyes, the artist sounds like the Prodigal Son returning to the wisdom of civilization:

My dear Alfonso:

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<sup>60</sup>"Los Desaguisados del Cubismo: Algunos Cuadros--'por el nuevo estilo'--de Diego Rivera," in El Universal Ilustrado (May 24, 1918), cited and reproduced in Favela, The Cubist Years, 48.

Here go my thanks for your "Oblique Plane," [*El Plano Oblicuo*, a collection of short stories which Reyes published in 1920] which Angelina and I re-read a bit every day, reviving the hours of Madrid during the first times of war and hardship; don't be offended if I tell you that only now I like some of the pieces which you used to read aloud to us over there [in Madrid]; not that I lacked enthusiasm for them--you must remember--, but the years have passed, and maybe I was "oh, still very young!"--this man, poor me. Now things appear deeper to me, and more incisively; decidedly, there were certain things that in 1914-15 passed before my nose.

I know through Don Francisco A. de Icaza [a Mexican friend of Reyes] that Don Alfonso is leaving for Mexico; we might meet there; I might be going to work with my hands in the dough of my own corn, to see what comes out. . . .

Here I send you five photographs of recent works, as soon as I get more photographs, I will send other ones.

Write something to me and say hi to Manuela your wife and give lots of kisses to Alfonsito [Reyes's son] and receive many hugs from your grateful friend

Diego Rivera

[p.s.] picture this yourself that they are showing in the trash can of the Autumn Salon thirty paintings by Renoir, which is as if our father Plato would have suddenly turned into a genial painter; the Olympians must be truly enjoying it; and when Mr. Icaza left, he said (to get this off his chest): "I'd better tell you that those paintings by Renoir that you showed me are bold pigs."<sup>61</sup>

The request Vasconcelos made from Rivera in 1919-20 not only called upon him to use his art to political ends: it demanded that Rivera, together with all other intellectuals and educated Mexicans, position themselves as the civilizing soldiers of the Mexican nation. He urged intellectuals and artists to fully transmit their wisdom to the ignorant, the poor, and the morally corruptible Mexicans--

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<sup>61</sup>Rivera to Reyes (29 November 1920). Reprinted in Debroise, *Diego de Montparnasse*, n.p. Faximile of original letter is reproduced.

among whom Vasconcelos counted the followers of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho

Villa:

In my heart I carry as an imprint the spectacle of abandoned children of all our towns, whom the state must feed and educate, recognizing in the meantime that our most fundamental duty is that of a civilizing mission. Poverty and ignorance are our greatest enemies, and it is our duty to solve the problem of ignorance. . . .

We need to produce, to act rightfully, and to think. All of that, however, is the top of a mountain which must be founded on humble bases, and can only be justified in the happiness of those below us. That is why we must start with the peasant and the worker. Let us take the peasant under our wing and let us teach him how to multiply by the hundreds the output of his production through the employment of better utensils and methods.<sup>62</sup>

In another speech, "Campaign against illiteracy," also given in 1920, Vasconcelos made the following public exhortation:

The University [of Mexico] trusts the unselfish feelings of the Mexican people, and counts on millions of persons who will enthusiastically offer their services in the fight against illiteracy. In the midst of war, all countries call all of their people to public service. The campaign we are proposing is more important than many wars; because of this, we hope that our compatriots will answer to the urgent call of the country, which needs to be educated so that it can be saved. . . .

we will make patriotism sort through the obstacles inhibiting the education of the people. . .<sup>63</sup>

Vasconcelos's powerful rhetoric was sure to touch Rivera's most intimate fibre, since it subordinated all political and class notions for a common goal, and called for everyone to give his or her best to the cause: a craft, a form of

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<sup>62</sup>José Vasconcelos, "Discurso en la Universidad [written in 1920]," *Obras Completas*, 2: 771-776.

<sup>63</sup>José Vasconcelos, "Campaña contra el analfabetismo [written in 1920]," *Obras Completas*, 2: 787-793.

knowledge. But before Rivera's art could gain social value, however, it would be necessary for the artist to fully 'civilize' his own art: to return it to the traditional forms of so-called universality, clarity, and light which all of Rivera's intellectual friends seemed to admire. Before entering the domain of Vasconcelos's civilization, Rivera would need to undertake a complete immersion in classicizing forms. Consequently, at Alberto J. Pani's expense and at the suggestion of Vasconcelos, Rivera travelled to Italy to learn from the 'great masters.' In Italy, Rivera visited Rome, Ravenna, Milan, Verona, Assisi, Venice, Florence, Napoli, and Pompeii. At famous museums, he made studies after Etruscan, Byzantine, and Renaissance art, creating over three-hundred sketches after the work of Giotto, Uccello, Mantegna, Tintoretto, Piero della Francesca, and Michelangelo.<sup>64</sup>

A pencil drawing from 1921 made during the Italian journey and titled Sleeping Woman (Fig. 53), shows a relaxed and prudishly dressed female figure. Lines and chiaroscuro easily flow into the well-proportioned masses of the body. While the figure is depicted as a generalized type--the signifying details are kept to the minimum--the drawing still shows clues as to her social status. The dress of the unknown woman prevents any stereotypical associations, but her hands are huge and her figure is sturdy. She could be an urban worker worn out after a tiring and long day of labor. The image, however, does not suggest the need for revolution, since the peacefully sleeping figure does not convey a sense of struggle or

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<sup>64</sup>Hulburt, "Diego Rivera (1986-1957): A Chronology of his Life and Times" in Diego Rivera, A Retrospective, 46.

frustration with her lot. Her calm demeanor is, in fact, what grants a "civilized" appearance to the representation.

After his own self-civilizing process, fully realized during this Italian journey, Rivera returned to Paris as a reformed artist, said goodbye forever to his Parisian friends, and returned to Mexico, where he took up his role in Vasconcelos's "civilizing mission."

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Far from constituting a fixed notion of *Mexicanidad*, Rivera's national identity was in constant evolution during his ten-year long Parisian sojourn. This unstable national identity, however did not resolve into a doctrine of post-colonialism, as David Craven would have it. On the contrary, Rivera's changing national allegiances mirrored the ideological and cultural ambiguities that arose as a result of the revolution. Between 1912 and 1921, Rivera identified with and represented two nations rather than one. These two "imagined communities" can be traced in a joint reading of Rivera's portraits of Mexican emigrés and of his representations of folk arts and crafts.

## CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I attempted to challenge a number of arguments that sought to legitimize the myth of Rivera's *European Mexicanidad*. I planned to unpack the argumentative fallacies which have constructed the myth and to advance historical arguments which would allow us to perceive a plurality of interpretations for Rivera's European oeuvre.

In chapter 2, I intended to show that Rivera's renunciation of Cubism and his adoption of classicized modes of painting around March 1917 operated within the context of French wartime and post-war nationalism. As Kenneth Silver has shown, this discourse, which bore right-wing overtones, pervaded French society during and after World War I. In this context, Cubism was deemed to be *boche*, and consequently, in the midst of war, as enemy art. Also during this period, Greco-Roman and classicizing traditions underwent a generalized revival and came to be identified with the true heritage of France. By renouncing Cubism for a classicized manner of painting, I have argued that Rivera, together with other avant-garde artists, demonstrated his French patriotism. His adoption of the same classicized tradition allowed him to present himself as a defender of forms and

values of Greco-Roman culture--a role that the French attributed to themselves during the war, particularly after Italy joined the Allies on April 1915.

Rivera, like other avant-garde artists, had reason to present himself as a true French patriot: he was a foreigner and a non-combatant. This dual status put his own personal security at risk; in response, he included patriotic subject matter in his art to convey his sense of morality and duty in relation to the war effort. The same sense of morality and duty led him to respond to the national reconstruction effort during the post-war era. In this context, Rivera's stylistic shift needs to be understood not only as a manifestation of French patriotism but also as a mode of self defense in the face of xenophobic, nationalist rhetoric.

In chapter 3, I argued that Rivera's Mexican national identity changed in response to the volatile politics of the Mexican revolution. Over the course of the war, Rivera's allegiances shifted from support for the agenda set by the Mexican intelligentsia to that held by the rural, illiterate peasantry. Thus he sometimes identified with the liberal call for the creation of a centralized national government, and at other times took up the course of the peasantry, who fought for concrete material gains. By choosing to sympathetically portray Best Maugard, an upper-middle class Mexican who had been sent to Europe by the liberal government of 1912, Rivera signalled his sympathy for the ideals of modernity, democracy, and universal education held by the young generation of Mexican liberals.

During the wartime period, Rivera maintained tense relations with the liberal Mexican emigrés stranded in Madrid and Paris. These tensions reveal that after 1914 and until around 1919, Rivera identified with an alternative vision of Mexico that his liberal compatriots despised: that of the violent and uneducated peasantry. Rivera invoked both the peasant revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata and the linguistic slang of his illiterate followers. Because other Mexican emigrés did not share Rivera's sympathy for that political culture, Rivera's relations with his liberal compatriots were strained during the war. In any case, their mutual friendship endured, based as it was on a consensus about romanticized notions of *Mexicanidad*. This consensus was safely rooted in hyper-aestheticized subjects, such as the Mexican landscape or Mexican *artesanía*, which supposedly stood for 'universal' qualities which united all Mexicans.

Around 1920, Rivera manifested a renewed interest in the "civilizing mission" which the educated Mexican middle-class had assigned for itself. The Mexican emigrés--including Rivera--were urged to join the power structure of post-revolutionary Mexico. This move, however, implied that he would need to relinquish his self-representation as a violent, uneducated peasant. Instead, he would need to identify with a vision of Mexico that Mexican intellectuals promoted. For that, he would be encouraged by the same Mexican emigrés to fully acquaint himself with the old masters and, in the process, to forget his Cubism.

By 1919, Rivera had fully assimilated the classical tradition and the "old masters" into his aesthetic technique. As Kenneth Silver has shown, the latter had been revived as part of France's nationalist discourse. Mexico's intellectual elite, in any case, celebrated the same classical tradition. Consequently, Rivera's classicizing production, which had been induced by his French patriotism, was soon acknowledged by his Mexican friends. When these same Mexican friends came to make up the official intellectual elite of post-revolutionary Mexico, Rivera was invited to join them. In this context, Rivera's classicizing production paved the way for his assimilation into the new body politic. Paradoxically enough, the patriotic calls made by France and Mexico were aligned to different political ideologies. France's nationalist discourse bore right-wing, royalist overtones, while Mexico's nationalist discourse was clearly liberal and democratic. The fact that Rivera's classicizing aesthetic allowed him to respond to both patriotic calls illustrates the complex terrain transferred by this artist during a period of profound political and cultural upheaval.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Note: All works by Diego Rivera unless otherwise noted.



Fig. 1: Zapatista Landscape,  
Summer 1915. Oil on Canvas. Instituto Nacional  
de Bellas Artes, Museo Nacional de Arte,  
Mexico City.

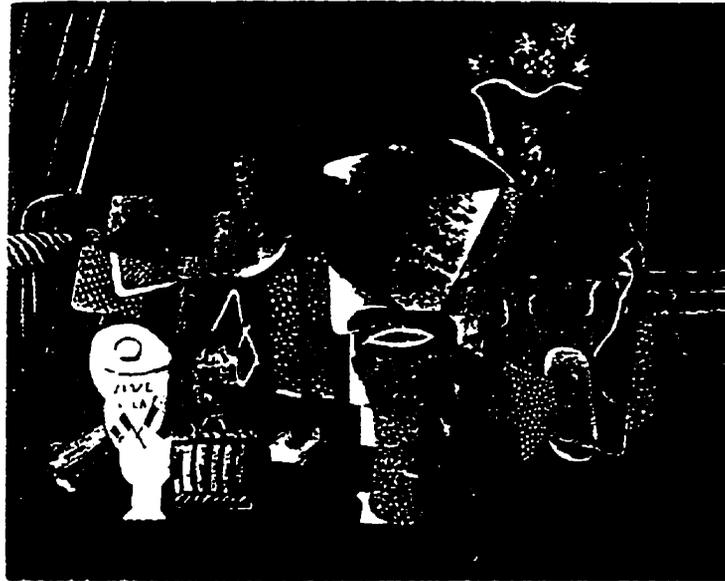


Fig. 2: P. Picasso, Still-Life with Cards, Glasses, and Bottle of Rum ("Vive la France"), 1914-15. Oil on Canvas. Private Collection.

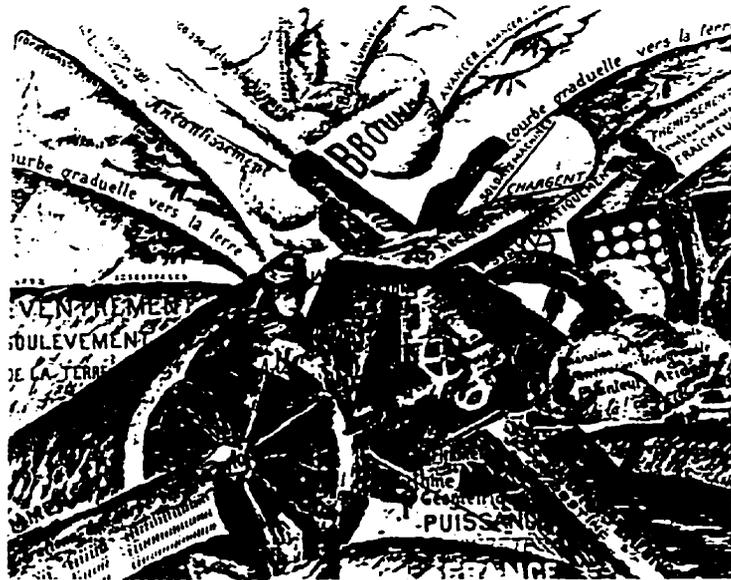


Fig. 4: G. Severini, Cannon in Action, 1915. Oil on Canvas. Private Collection, Milan.



Fig. 3: Sailor at Lunch, 1914.  
Oil on Canvas. Instituto Nacional de  
Bellas Artes, Museo Casa Diego Rivera,  
Guanajuato.

CE N'EST PAS NOUVEAU!



— Des gaz asphyxiants! à l'heure!... Oh! là là!... Voilà plus de quarante ans qu'ils nous en ont enoyés!  
Made in Germany! Dessiné par WILLETTE

Fig. 5: A. Willette, "It's not new!" ("Ce n'est pas nouveau!"), ca. 1914-18. Photograph. Bibliothèque National, Paris. Reproduced in Silver, *Esprit de Corps*, 9.

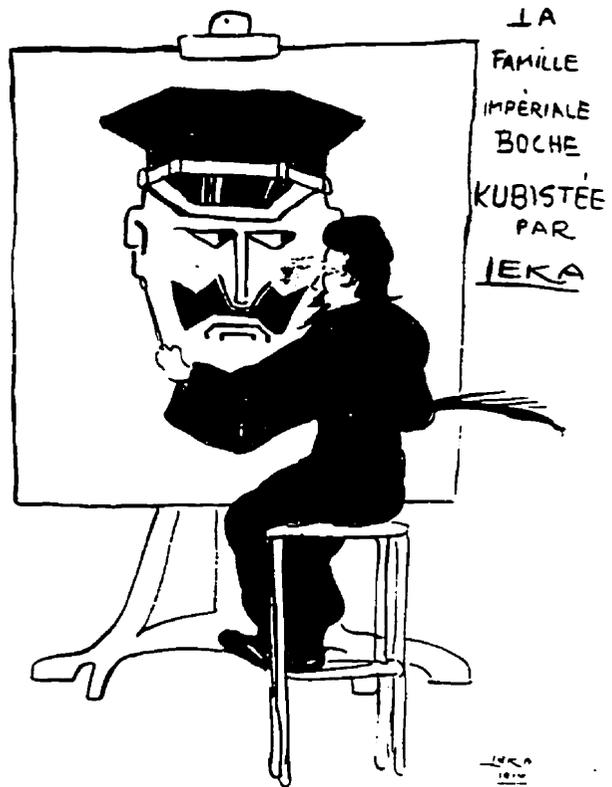


Fig. 6: H. Leka, "The Boche Imperial Family Kubified" ("La Famille Impériale Boche Kubistée"), 1914-15. Musée d'Histoire Contemporaine-BDIC, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris. Reproduced in Silver, *Esprit de Corps*, 10.

N° 1. Guillaume II

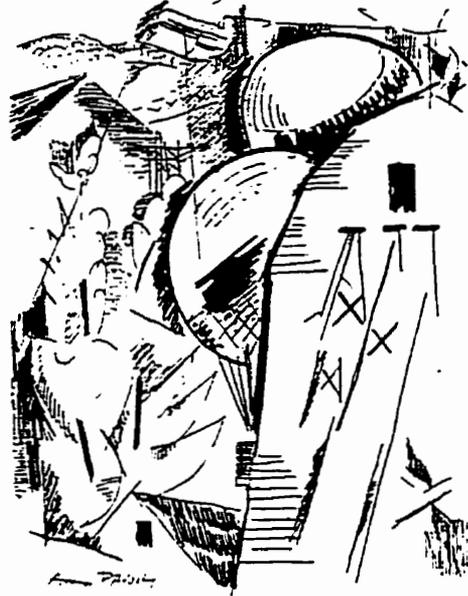


Fig. 7: A. Favory, "Military Aerostation" ("*Aérostation Militaire*"), ca. 1914-16. Ink. Reproduced in L'Elan (1 February 1916).



Fig. 8: D. de Segonzac, "In Repose" ("*Au Repos*"), ca. 1914-16. Pencil. Reproduced in L'Elan (1 January 1916).



Fig. 9: J. Metzinger, "Nurse"  
("L'Infirmière"), ca. 1914-16.  
Reproduced in L'Élan  
(1 February 1916).



Fig. 10: A. Derain, Nurse,  
ca. 1914-16. Pencil.  
Reproduced in L'Élan  
(1 February 1916).



Fig. 11: Lespinasse, "*Les Femmes  
Les Plus Nobles Travaillent  
de Leurs Mains A Des Ouvrages  
de Laine,*" ca. 1914-1916.  
Woodcut. Reproduced in L'Élan  
(1 January 1916).



Fig. 12: Portrait of Maximilian Voloshin, 1916.  
Oil on Canvas. Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes,  
Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City.

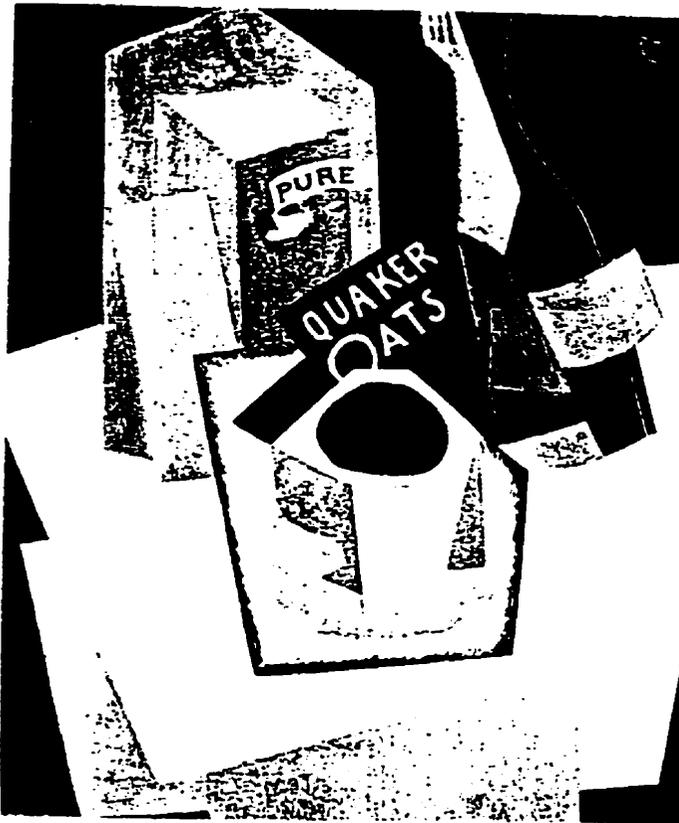


Fig. 13: G. Severini, Still Life with Quaker Oats, 1917. Oil on Canvas. Grosvenor Gallery, London.

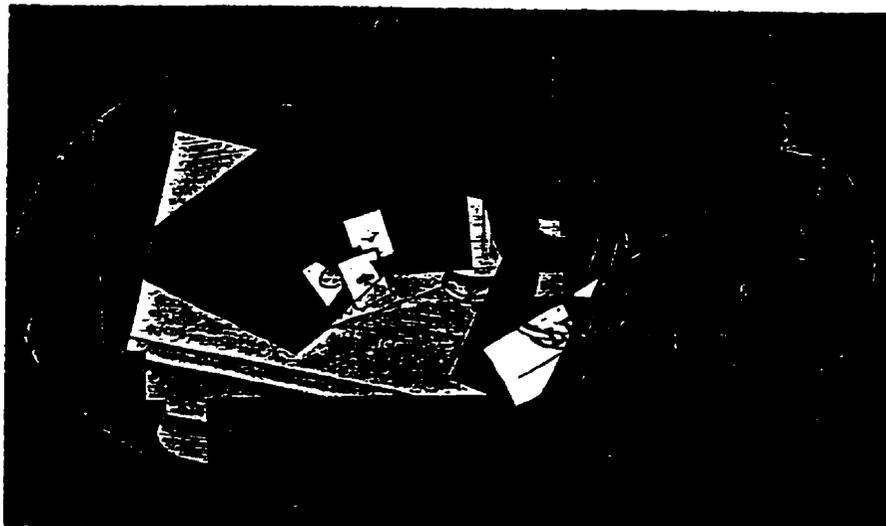


Fig. 14: J. Gris, Playing Cards and Syphon, 1916. Oil on Canvas. Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo.



Fig. 15: Woman in Green, 1917. Oil on Canvas.  
Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes,  
Museo Alvar y Carmen T. de Carrillo Gil.



Fig. 16: Adoration of the Virgin and Child, 1912-13.  
Encaustic painting. Señora María Rodríguez de Reyero.

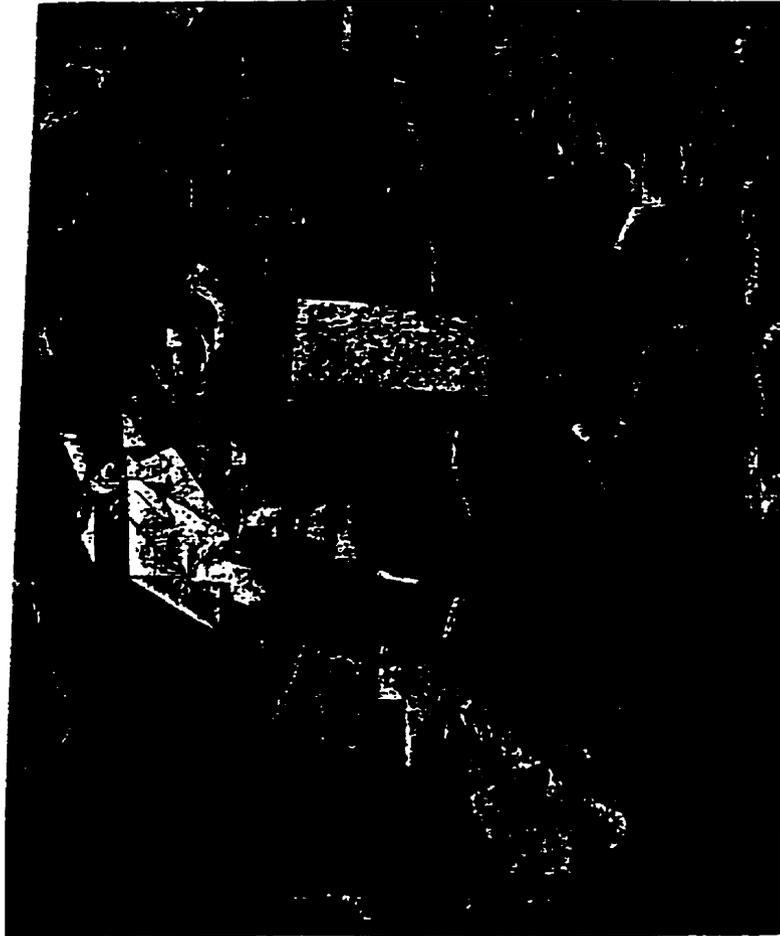


Fig. 17: Two Women, 1914. Oil on Canvas.  
The Arkansas Art Center Foundation.



Fig. 18: Angeline and Baby Diego, Maternity, 1916. Oil on Canvas. Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Museo Alvar y Carmen T. de Carrillo Gil.



Fig. 19: P. Picasso, Harlequin Playing the Guitar, 1918. Oil on Canvas. Private Collection, Basilea.



Fig. 20: G. Severini, Mother and Child, ca. 1916. Oil on Canvas. Stieglitz Collection, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

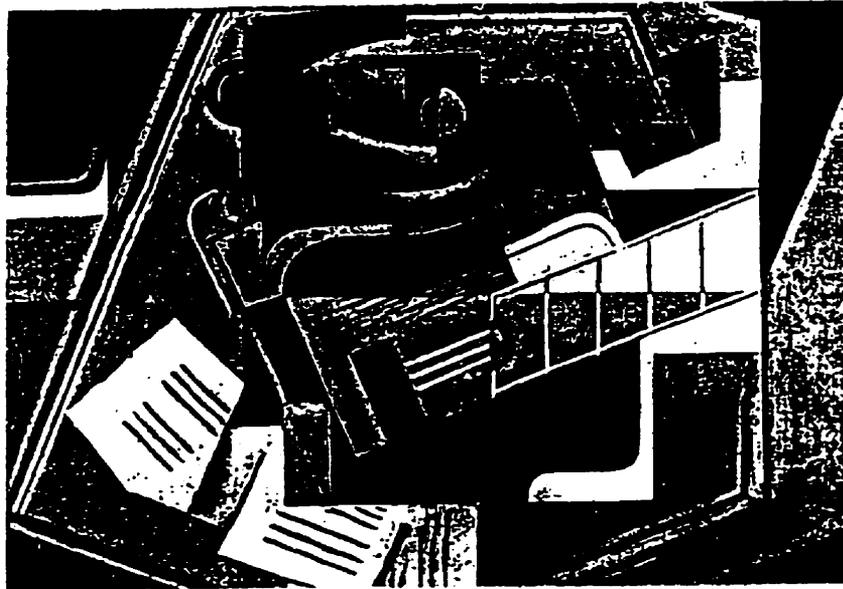


Fig. 21: J. Gris, Guitar and Fruit Dish, 1918. Oil on Canvas. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Kunstmuseum.



Fig. 22: G. Severini, Maternity, 1916. Oil on Canvas. Museo dell'Accademia, Cortona.

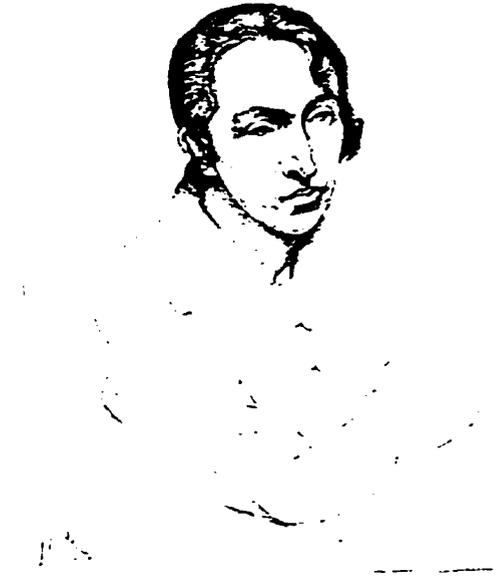


Fig. 23: Portrait of Angelina Beloff, 1917. Pencil on Paper. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

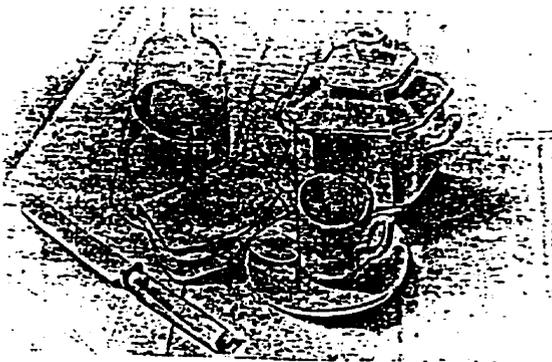


Fig. 24: J. Gris, The Tobacco Pouch, 1918. Pencil on Paper. Galerie Louis Leiris, Paris.



Fig. 25: P. Picasso, Portrait of Riccioto Canudo in Uniform, 1918. Pencil on Paper. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Fig. 26: Portrait of Chirokoff, 1917.  
Pencil on Paper. Worcester Art  
Museum, Worcester, Mass.



Fig. 27: Portrait of Jean Cocteau,  
September 1918. Pencil Drawing.  
University of Texas at Austin,  
Carlton Lake Collection, Texas.



Fig. 28: Portrait of Levedeff, 1918.  
Pencil Drawing. Collection  
Salmon Hale, Mexico City.



Fig. 29: Self-Portrait, 1918.  
Pencil Drawing. Collection of  
Carl Zigrosser, Philadelphia.

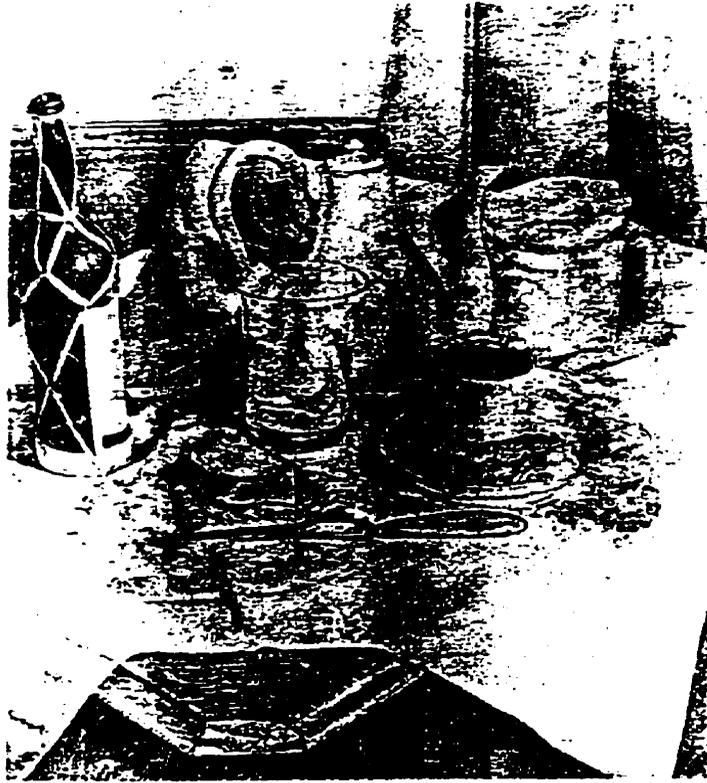


Fig. 30: Still Life with Petit-Dejeuner and Rhum Bottle, 1919. Pencil on Paper. Amherst College, Mead Art Museum, Amherst, Mass.



Fig. 31: Nude Woman, 1918.  
Pencil on Paper.  
Museo Diego Rivera,  
Guanajuato.



Fig. 32: The Mathematician, 1918.  
Oil on Canvas. Dolores Olmedo Collection.

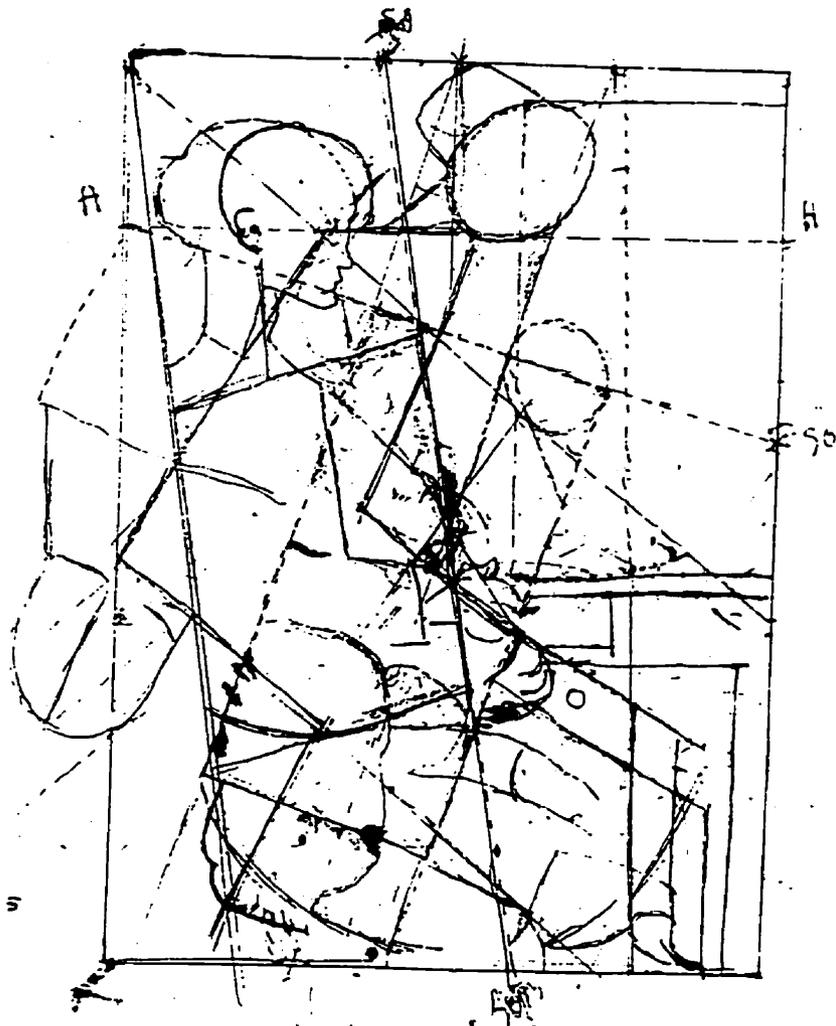


Fig. 33: Construction Drawing for The Mathematician, 1918. Paper on Parchment. Egil Nordahl Rolfsen and Kirsten Revold.



Fig. 34: G. Severini, Portrait of Jeanne, 1916.  
Oil on Canvas. Severini Collection, Rome.1917.



Fig. 35: G. Severini. Study for Family of the Commedia dell'Arte,  
ca. 1922. Pencil Drawing. Severini Collection, Rome.



Fig. 36: P. Picasso, Portrait of Ambroise Vollard, 1915. Pencil on Paper. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 37: P. Picasso. Costume for Parade: "Manager in Fancy Dress," 1917. Boris Kochno Collection. Reproduced in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 117.

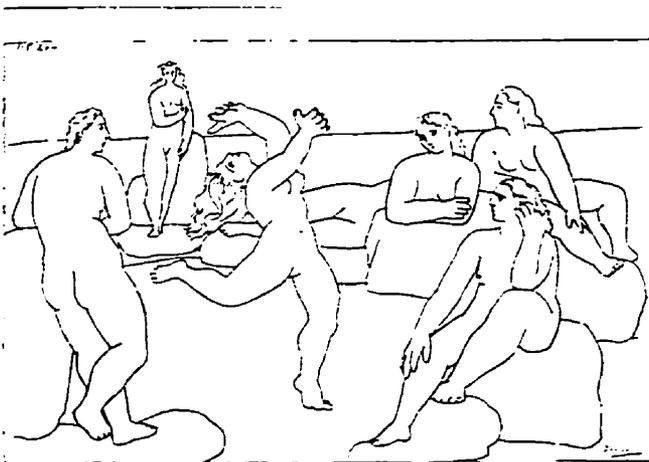


Fig. 38: P. Picasso, Bathers, 1921. Ink. Present Collection Unknown.

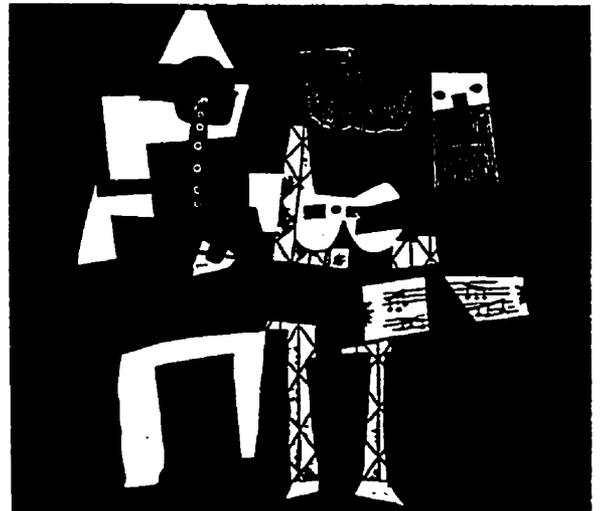


Fig. 39: P. Picasso. Three Musicians, 1921. Oil on Canvas. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Fig. 40: Anonymous, Glorie to You (*Glorie à Vous*), 1914-18.  
Postcard. Reproduced in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 97.



*pour le triomphe  
Souscrivez à l'emprunt national.*  
LES SOUSCRIPTIONS SONT REÇUES A PARIS ET EN PROVINCE  
BANQUE NATIONALE DE CRÉDIT

Fig. 41: Sem, Poster for War Loan, ca. 1914-18. Musée d' Histoire Contemporaine--BDIC, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris. Reproduced in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 103.



Fig. 42: H. Lebasque, Poster for Peace Loan, 1920. Private Collection. Reproduced in Silver, Esprit de Corps, 283.



Fig. 43: Portrait of Adolfo Best Maugard, 1913.  
Oil on Canvas. Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes,  
Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City.



Fig. 44: Young Man with a Stylograph  
(Portrait of Best Maugard), 1914. Oil on  
Canvas. Señora Dolores Olmedo, Mexico City.



Fig. 45: Still Life with Gray Bowl, 1915. Oil on Canvas. Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, Austin, Texas.



Fig. 46: Portrait of Martín Luis Guzmán, 1915.  
Oil on Canvas. Collection of Martín Luis Guzmán  
Estate, Mexico City.



Fig. 47: La Terrasse du Café, 1915. Oil on Canvas.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
The Alfred Steiglitz Collection, New York.

"EXCELSIOR."

CARICATURAS DE "EXCELSIOR"



— ¡Quiero campadre, hace cinco años que no nos vemos . . . . !  
— ¡Caray, campadrito y cinco yo, son diez ! . . . !

Fig. 48: Not Signed. "Cartoons by 'Excelsior'," ("Caricaturas de 'Excelsior'") ca. 1919. Excelsior, Mexico City (6 July 1919).



Fig. 49: Still Life with Garlic Press, 1918. Oil on Canvas. Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.



Fig. 50: Bowl of Fruit, 1918. Pencil on Paper. Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Mass.

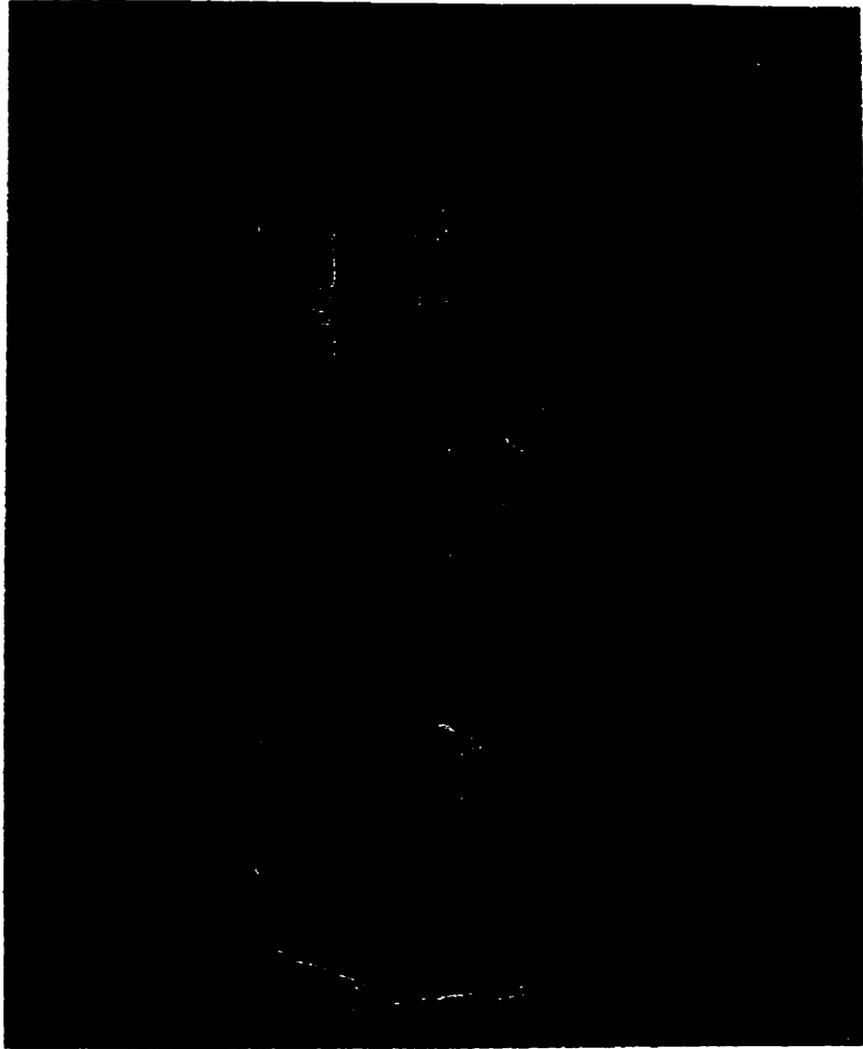


Fig. 51: Portrait of Alberto J. Pani, 1920. Oil on Canvas. Dolores Olmedo Collection.

# LOS DESAGUISADOS DEL CUBISMO

Algunos cuadros—"por el nuevo estilo"—  
de Diego Rivera



Fig. 52: "The Outrageous Works of Cubism: Some paintings in Diego Rivera's new style" (*Los Desaguisados del Cubismo: Algunos cuadros--'por el nuevo estilo'--de Diego Rivera*), *El Universal Ilustrado*, Mexico City, May 24 1918). Reproduced in Favela, *The Cubist Years*, 48.



Fig. 53: Sleeping Woman, 1921.  
Pencil on Paper. Fogg Art Museum,  
Harvard University.

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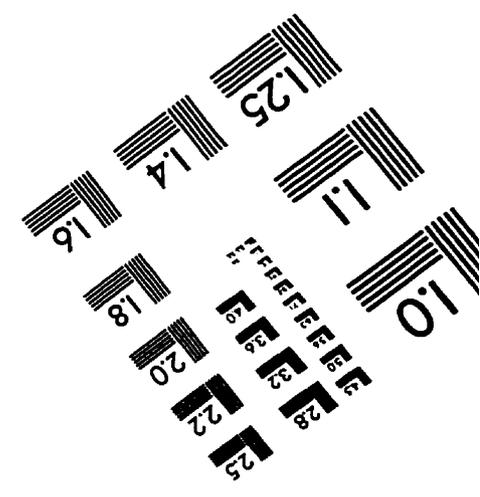
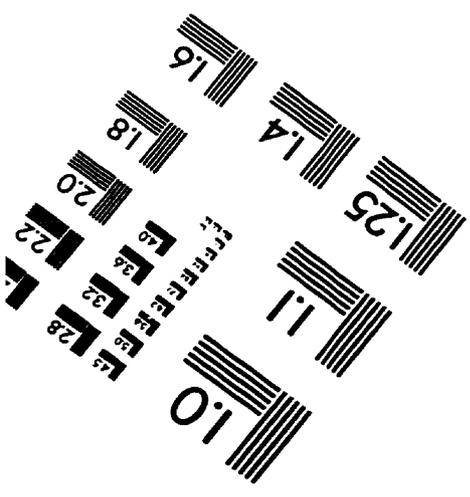
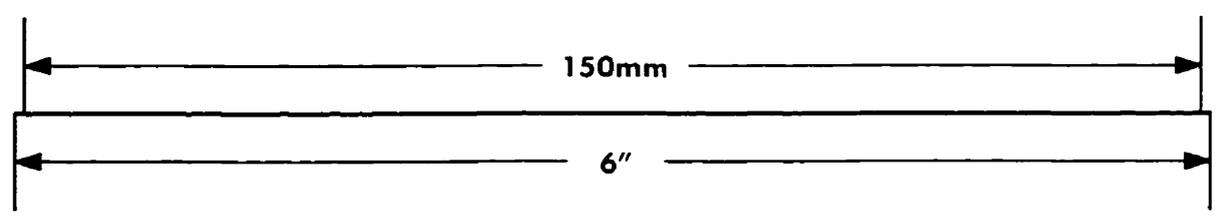
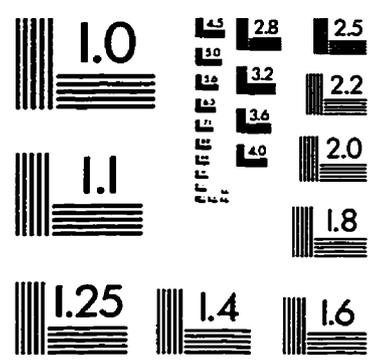
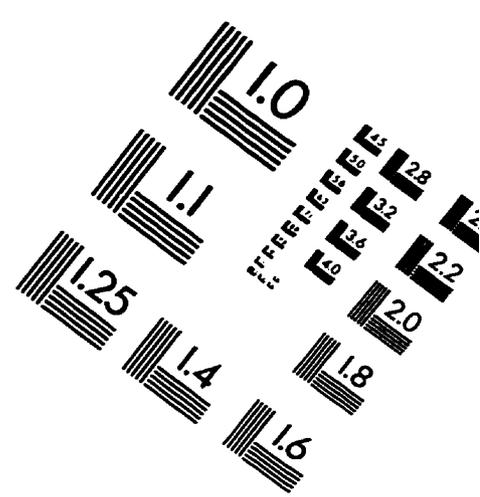
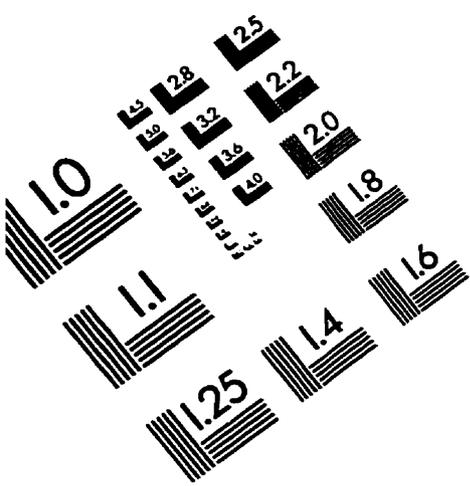
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