

Il faut donc que je vous parle encore de vous. Il faut que je m'applique à vous démontrer ce que vous valez. C'est vraiment bête ce que vous exigez. *On se moque de vous*; les *plaisanteries* vous agacent; on ne sait pas vous rendre justice, etc., etc. Croyez-vous que vous soyez le premier homme placé dans ce cas? Avez-vous plus de génie que Chateaubriand et que Wagner? On s'est bien moqué d'eux cependant? Ils n'en sont pas morts. Et pour ne pas vous inspirer trop d'orgueil, je vous dirai que ces hommes sont des modèles, chacun dans son genre, et dans un monde très riche et que vous, *vous n'êtes que le premier dans la décrépitude de votre art.*

Baudelaire, letter to Édouard Manet of May 11, 1865¹

Qu'un destin tragique, omise la Mort filoutant, complice de tous, à l'homme la gloire, dur, hostile marquât quelqu'un enjouement et grâce, me trouble—pas la huée contre qui a, dorénavant, rajeuni la grande tradition picturale selon son instinct, ni la gratitude posthume: mais, parmi le déboire, une ingénuité virile de chèvre-pied au pardessus mastic, barbe et blond cheveu rare, grisonnant avec esprit. Bref, railleur à Tortoni, élégant; en l'atelier, la furie qui le ruait sur la toile vide, confusément, comme si jamais il n'avait peint—un don précoce à jadis inquiéter ici résumé avec la trouvaille et l'acquit subit: enseignement au témoin quotidien inoubliable, moi, qu'on se joue tout entier, de nouveau, chaque fois, n'étant autre que tous sans rester différent, à volonté. Souvenir, il disait, alors, si bien: "L'oeil, une main . . ." que je resonge.

Cet oeil—Manet—d'une enfance de lignée vieille citadine, neuf, sur un objet, les personnes posé, vierge et abstrait, gardait naguères l'immédiate fraîcheur de la rencontre, aux griffes d'un rire du regard, à narguer, dans la pose, ensuite, les fatigues de vingtième séance. Sa main—la pression sentie claire et prête énonçait dans quel mystère la limpidité de la vue y descendait, pour ordonner, vivace, lavé, profond, aigu ou hanté de certain noir, le chef-d'oeuvre nouveau et français.

Mallarmé, "Édouard Manet"²

Il était plus grand que nous ne pensions.

Degas³



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Preface

AFTER COMPLETING my previous book, *Courbet's Realism*, in January 1989, I spent six months in Paris during which I began again to pursue research in and around the art of Édouard Manet. I say "again" because just over twenty years earlier I had researched and written my first extended essay in art history, subsequently published as "Manet's Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859–1865" in the March 1969 issue of *Artforum*. At that time, I had planned to work my way back in stages toward the middle of the eighteenth century, where (I already realized) the development that Manet's paintings of the 1860s brought to a climax had its origin. But it soon emerged that such a plan was impracticable and that instead of proceeding from Manet to Courbet (thence to Géricault, David, Greuze, Diderot) it was necessary to plunge directly into the eighteenth century in order to study that development from the moment of its inception. The outcome of that plunge backward was *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (1980). I was then able to carry my argument forward, which I did in *Courbet's Realism* (1990) and other writings. The present book returns to Manet and indeed tries to deliver on certain promises I made in "Manet's Sources." More important, together with *Absorption and Theatricality* and *Courbet's Realism* this book forms a trilogy dealing with a central problematic in the evolution of painting in France between the start of the reaction against the Rococo in the 1750s and the advent of Impressionism in the 1870s. The 1860s and 1870s in France are also the time and place associated with the emergence of modernist painting (Manet's canvases of the first half of the 1860s are crucial here), and in fact what initially drew me to the period between Greuze's *Père de famille* and Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, apart from the sheer magnetism of the art, was the thought that art history (from which I did not exempt myself) then possessed only the most rudimentary understanding of what might be called the prehistory

of modernism. Whatever else it seeks to do, my trilogy attempts to give an account of that prehistory by making visible a hitherto unsuspected dynamic at its core.

Toward the end of my stay in Paris in the late spring of 1989 I saw that my new book would have to deal with not only Manet but also other artists in his generation, above all Alphonse Legros, Henri Fantin-Latour, and James McNeill Whistler, and I also began to form some preliminary notions as to its possible structure. I was at a loss what to do about "Manet's Sources," however. On the one hand, I was still convinced of the truth of much of what I had argued there; on the other, numerous points now seemed to me wrong, ill conceived, or badly put, and I longed to fix them. But simply correcting the original essay seemed out of the question, and yet I didn't see a way to write a new and independent version that would preserve and, where necessary, reformulate what was valuable and discard what was not. On a brief visit to Baltimore in April 1989 I put my problem to two friends and colleagues, Frances Ferguson and Walter Benn Michaels, who with one voice instantly suggested republishing "Manet's Sources" in its original form and then going on both to acknowledge its errors and weaknesses and to produce additional arguments on its behalf. (I would then be free to say whatever else I wished to say about Manet and his generation.) That is the strategy I have followed in the present book, and I am deeply grateful to Ferguson and Michaels for their advice without which I might still be casting about for a structure that would allow me to come to grips with my earlier self (and with an earlier phase of art history). No doubt the solution is less than perfect; I would have preferred a more nearly seamless way of proceeding. But it is *sincere* in the sense of being the best that I can do under the circumstances.

In addition to Ferguson and Michaels many colleagues, friends, and former students have assisted and/or encouraged my work on Manet and his generation, and I want to thank them. They include, at Johns Hopkins, Elizabeth Cropper, Charles Dempsey, Neil Hertz, Herbert L. Kessler, Walter Melion, Ronald Paulson, and Daniel Weiss; at other universities in this country, Stanley Cavell, Kermit Swiler Champa, Arnold I. Davidson, Marc Gotlieb, Josué Harari, John Harbison, Steven Z. Levine, Stephen Melville (from whose commentaries on my work I have learned a great deal), W. J. T. Mitchell, Dianne Pitman, Joel Snyder, Martha Ward, and Richard Wollheim; at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Jay Fisher, and at the Chicago Art Institute, Douglas Druick; and in Paris, Hubert Dam-

isch, Jacques Derrida, Claude Imbert, René Major, the late Louis Marin (whose radiant intelligence and noble soul are missed every day by those who knew him), Régis Michel, Pierre Rosenberg (whom I thank for, among other things, enabling me to see the School of Botticelli *Venus* discussed in chapter 2 in the *réserve* of the Musée du Louvre), and François Roustang. Also in Paris, Philippe Brame of Brame and Lorenceau kindly gave me access to letters by and to Fantin-Latour in his gallery's archives. Past and present graduate students beside those already mentioned who have in one way or another contributed to my work on Manet include Anna Brailovsky, Harry Cooper, Nancy Forgione, Lauren Freeman, Carla Koop, Annette Leduc, Margaret MacNamidhe, Anne Summerscale, and Veerle Thielemans. Macie Hall, slide librarian of the Department of the History of Art at Johns Hopkins, has helped in the gathering of photographs and related materials. Finally, Bridget McDonald provided a fine translation of Antonin Proust's 1901 essay, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," which is given whole along with the original in appendix 1. Two other persons deserve separate thanks. T. J. Clark, whose magnificent book *The Painting of Modern Life* transformed Manet studies when it appeared in 1985, has been my chief interlocutor with respect to Manet's art ever since we spent an exhilarating two days together at the retrospective exhibition at the Grand Palais in 1983. His friendship and support have been unstinting. And my wife, Ruth Leys, has lived through every stage of both "Manet's Sources" and *Manet's Modernism* with me and has contributed materially to whatever is good in both. Most recently, she read the present work in manuscript and made various useful suggestions.

In April 1991, at the invitation of the University of Chicago Press and the Committee on Social Thought, I presented three Harry and Lynde Bradley Foundation Lectures based on material in this book at the University of Chicago. My thanks to Paul Wheatley, François Furet, and other members of the Committee on Social Thought and to Morris Philipson of the University of Chicago Press for giving me so productive a head start on the writing of *Manet's Modernism*. At the University of Chicago Press I again have had the privilege of working with that outstanding editor, Karen Wilson. (A change in the rules of the press finally allows me to thank her for all she has done not just for this book but for my previous ones as well.) I also wish to thank Jane Marsh Dieckmann, who expertly copyedited this book in manuscript and went on to make its index.

The original "Manet's Sources" was written between February 1968



and January 1969; I wouldn't be surprised if the reader came to feel that some of the emotional climate of that devastating year made its way into the writing. Among the debts I acknowledged when "Manet's Sources" first appeared were to Stanley Cavell (who read and discussed it with me as it was drafted), Wassily Leontieff and the Harvard Society of Fellows (I had been a junior fellow between 1964 and 1968), James S. Ackerman, Frederick Deknatel, and Sydney J. Freedberg of the Harvard University Department of Fine Arts, Philip Leider (then editor of *Artforum*), and Marie-Hélène Gold (who helped with translations from the French). I also noted that I owed my first acquaintance with the art of Manet to my parents, who frequently took me to the Metropolitan Museum of Art when I was small. My memories of *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* in particular go far, far back.

"Manet's Sources" was originally dedicated to Stanley Cavell. However, in 1987 I dedicated my book *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration: On Thomas Eakins and Stephen Crane* to Cavell, which leaves me free to assign this one to two particular friends: John Harbison and, in memoriam, Louis Marin.

Buskirk, N. Y.
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Introduction: Manet before Impressionism

THE FRENCH painter Édouard Manet, by common agreement the pivotal figure in the modern history of painting, was born January 23, 1832, in Paris to a distinguished high bourgeois family that hoped he would follow the law.¹ But his vocation was undeniable, and in 1850, at the age of eighteen, he entered the studio of Thomas Couture (b. 1815), one of the leading painters of the day and a highly successful teacher. (Couture had been a student of Antoine-Jean Gros, who had studied with Jacques-Louis David; Manet's artistic lineage, the fact that he was only two generations removed from the founder of the modern French school, is not without significance.) Manet's first biographer, his boyhood friend Antonin Proust, tells of numerous clashes with Couture,² but Manet remained with his teacher six years, after which he traveled extensively visiting European museums in preparation for embarking on his own independent career. In 1859 *The Absinthe Drinker*, a painting Manet came to regard as too indebted to Couture in its execution, was rejected by the Salon jury. Two years later, however, *Le Guitarrero* was accepted for the Salon of 1861, where it was praised by Théophile Gautier and where it made a powerful impression on a group of Manet's painter contemporaries. But it was between 1862 and 1865 that Manet fully broke through to the first phase of his mature accomplishment (I think of those years as his *anni mirabiles*). In close succession there followed paintings such as *The Old Musician* (1862), *The Street Singer* (1862), *The Gypsies* (1862; subsequently cut down and all but destroyed by Manet himself), *Lola de Valence* (1862), *The Spanish Ballet* (1862), *Music in the Tuileries* (1862), *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* (1862), *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1862–63), *Olympia* (painted in 1863 but exhibited in the Salon of 1865), *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* (1863), *Episode in a Bullfight* (1864; afterward cut down to make *The Dead Torero*), *The Angels at the Tomb of Christ* (1864), *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne* (1864;

another largely destroyed work), *Battle of the Kearsarge and the Alabama* (1864), and *Christ Mocked* (1865)—a remarkable series of highly original works that quickly established Manet's reputation as the leader of a new generation even as they drew down on him a sustained barrage of critical and journalistic obloquy that continually caught him off guard.

The abuse came to a head with the exhibition of *Olympia* and *Christ Mocked* in the Salon of 1865. In the late summer of that year Manet made a brief visit to Madrid to look at the Spanish pictures at the Prado;³ and during the next few years he produced a number of brilliant single-figure paintings, including the *Woman with a Parrot* and *The Fifer* (both 1866), manifestly under the inspiration of Velázquez. In 1867, coinciding with the Exposition Universelle, Manet held a one-man show of his work to date, and once again the response was mainly negative. But the years 1866–68 also saw the appearance in print of Manet's best-known critical champion, the young Émile Zola, whose insistence on the artistic irrelevance of considerations of subject matter and whose praise of Manet's technique of painting by "colored patches" sketched the terms in which Manet would eventually be assimilated to the history of modern art.⁴ Among Manet's major paintings of the later 1860s are the Mannheim *Execution of Maximilian* (1868–69; the project for that painting dates to the summer of 1867), *Portrait of Émile Zola* (1868), *Déjeuner* (1868, which I will call *The Luncheon in the Studio* to distinguish it from the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*), and *The Balcony* (1868–69); I see the last two works in particular as marking a return to the more-than-single-figure compositional type of his pre-Madrid oeuvre, and I also see in them a renewed engagement with a set of pictorial issues that the single-figure canvases had placed somewhat in abeyance.

The 1870s began with the Franco-Prussian War and the fall of Napoleon III, the siege of Paris during which Manet served in the forces of defense, followed by the founding of the Third Republic and the bloody suppression of the Commune—events that, taken together, made a violent caesura in French cultural life. Early in the decade Manet enjoyed one of his rare public successes with the exhibition in the Salon of 1872 of *Le Bon Bock*. (That year too the art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel bought more than twenty works by Manet, to widespread astonishment.) But Manet's more ambitious and challenging new pictures—for instance, *Le Chemin de fer* (1873), *Argenteuil* (1874), *Le Linge* (1875), *Nana* (1877), *At Père Lathuille's* (1879), *In the Conservatory* (1879), and his culminating masterpiece, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881–82)—continued to meet crit-

ical resistance, though he also gradually won over various critics who for years had been hostile, and increasingly writers who were full of reservations about his art conceded that his sheerly painterly skills were not in question and that his influence on contemporary painting was already profound. Among the younger artists Manet was correctly believed to have influenced were Claude Monet, Pierre Renoir, and Berthe Morisot, all of whom belonged to the group known as the Impressionists. In fact their formative exposure to his work took place in the mid- and later 1860s, when they were still in their twenties; by the early 1870s the situation had grown more complex as Manet responded in turn to aspects of their practice, above all to their emphasis on painting out of doors, *en plein air*, in natural light. Despite his interest in and support for the work of the younger painters, however, Manet declined to participate in any of the group exhibitions that they held independently of the Salon at various intervals starting in 1874;⁵ instead he chose to go on striving for recognition within the official Salon, with all the likelihood of disappointment that that entailed. By the late 1870s Manet was suffering from the effects of syphilis; in search of relief, he pursued a dangerous course of treatment—doses of *ergot de seigle*—that led to circulation problems and finally to gangrene in one leg. Toward the end of April 1883 the leg was amputated, and on April 30, at the age of fifty-one, Manet died in convulsions.

The growth of Manet's posthumous reputation began with the memorial exhibition of 1884 and continues to this day. Major milestones include the retrospective exhibitions of 1932 and 1983 (the centennials of his birth and death), and of course he has been the subject of an enormous mass of art-historical scholarship, which has accreted dramatically during the past thirty years. There is no need to summarize that scholarship, or even to invoke its principal themes; suffice it to say that we now possess a vast fund of information about Manet's life and work. But I shall argue—it is the point of this book to show—that we have yet to grasp the specificity and complexity of his aims during the 1860s and especially during the first half of that decade, the short but absolutely critical span of years which will be my particular focus.

I have reason to think that this view will not easily win general acceptance. In March 1969, fresh out of graduate school, I published a monograph, "Manet's Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859–1865," as a special issue of a magazine of contemporary art, *Artforum*.⁶ There I put forward an interpretation of the meaning of one of the most puzzling features of

Manet's paintings of the 1860s: the obviously intended allusions, in many of his most important canvases, to works of earlier art, mainly paintings and engravings after paintings by the Old Masters. Without wishing to rehearse my conclusions here, I will say that I saw Manet's enterprise as aiming to secure, by a strategy of more or less conspicuous allusion to or citation of particular "sources," first, the essential "Frenchness" of his own work, and second, going beyond "Frenchness," what I described as a kind of "universality"—a relation of something like connectedness with the entire history of European painting before his time. I also argued that Manet's conception of "Frenchness" was based on a particular canon of "authentic" French masters, one I associated chiefly with the writings of the eminent art critic and pioneer art historian Théophile Thoré. And I went on to link Manet's concern with nationality with the art and thought of his teacher Couture, and, at a further remove, with the historical and political writings of Jules Michelet. Six months later, also in *Artforum*, my study was subjected to a raking critique by one of the leading Manet scholars of the generation senior to mine, Professor Theodore Reff of Columbia University,⁷ after which both "Manet's Sources" and I were widely regarded as left for dead. In time I managed to resuscitate myself. But with rare exceptions (notably Kermit Champa and T. J. Clark), scholars who have written on Manet and related topics during the past two decades have refused even to consider the possibility that the vision of his art put forward in "Manet's Sources" deserved to be taken seriously—as if the very questions I addressed were so fanciful or misconceived as to lie outside the pale of legitimate art-historical inquiry. One impulse at work in this book is therefore a desire to persuade the reader otherwise, though I hasten to add that I am much less interested in justifying my early monograph, which indeed is flawed, than in correcting, refining, amplifying, and enriching it in ways that were altogether beyond the scope of my understanding twenty-five years ago.

Several further points should be stressed. There are numerous reasons why art historians in the late 1960s found "Manet's Sources" scarcely intelligible, but one nontrivial source of difficulty had to do with its partial dependence upon an account of the evolution of painting in France from Chardin and Greuze through Millet and Courbet (i.e. from the middle of the eighteenth century until the 1860s) that I had not yet written. I already saw Manet's masterworks of the first half of the 1860s as the climactic stage of a long historical development the central issue of which concerned the relation of a painting to its beholders. But I was able

only to allude to such a development—which at that time I only partly understood—in several much too condensed and obscure footnotes. In the years that followed I set out to make up for that lack. I began by going back to the mid-eighteenth century and, in *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (1980), interpreting the painting of Chardin, Greuze, Carle Van Loo, Vien, Joseph Vernet, Fragonard, Hubert Robert, early David, and others in the light of the art criticism and theory of the period (and vice versa: the art criticism and theory stood in need of interpretation fully as much as the painting). More recently, in *Courbet's Realism* (1990), I surveyed the various strategies with respect to the beholder adopted by David, Gros, Géricault, Daumier, Delaroche, Millet, and the photographer Disdéri, before going on to explore the structure of beholding in the paintings of Manet's immediate predecessor, the self-proclaimed Realist Gustave Courbet.⁸ The last chapter of *Courbet's Realism* characterizes Manet's art as standing in a relation of dialectical reversal or opposition to Courbet's art as regards the issue of beholding, and although I continue to believe that that view is basically right, one of my aims in this book will be to redescribe that relation in less general, more thickly contextual terms.

Another sort of contrast between Courbet and Manet will help clarify my present project: whereas in *Courbet's Realism* I emphasize Courbet's singularity relative to his contemporaries (within painting, at any rate),⁹ in this book I insist on the importance of seeing Manet as belonging to and, up to a point, as representative of a particular generation of painters. There are two main reasons why this basic fact about his life and work has tended to be overlooked. First, Manet's generation visibly cohered as such only for a short span of time. And second, it was immediately followed by the much longer lived and both stylistically and ideologically far more cohesive generation of the Impressionists, whose breathtakingly simplified vision of their art proved remarkably influential not just on other painters but also on critics, amateurs, art historians—on the entire world of painting, including portions of it that were hostile to the new work.¹⁰ Indeed the simplifying import of the Impressionist vision, in combination with Manet's quick response to the younger painters' *plein-airisme*, tended from the outset to cast Manet in the role of the first Impressionist—some critics described him as the movement's *chef de file*¹¹—which is to say in the role of the first truly radical simplifier. (The designation stuck. Thus we find Henri Matisse saying in 1932: "Manet is the first painter who immediately translated his sensations, thereby liberating his in-



stinct. He was the first to *act by reflexes* and thus simplify the painter's metier."¹² And in general what might be called the formalist-modernist view of Manet follows these lines.) But this also meant that when, on Manet's death in 1883 and on the occasion of the posthumous exhibition of January 1884, a cluster of appreciative articles finally appeared, the works that tended to be singled out for praise were the "impressionist" canvases of the 1870s and 1880s, while the paintings of the 1860s that twentieth-century scholarship has chiefly equated with his modernism, notably the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*, were often ignored or criticized.¹³ (Matisse himself felt that the latter was not one of Manet's best works.)¹⁴ In other words, the appreciation of Manet's revolutionary achievement—the appreciation, and perhaps also the constitution, of it *as* revolutionary—took place in reverse order, under the sign of Impressionism and the transformation of painting and the seeing of painting that it brought about. "If Manet has suffered for Impressionism," Albert Pinard shrewdly wrote in 1884, "it is by Impressionism that he must triumph."¹⁵ Viewed in those terms, it's altogether fitting that the campaign to buy *Olympia* and present it as a gift to the state so that it could be hung in the Louvre was spearheaded by the foremost Impressionist painter, Monet.¹⁶ As the connoisseur and critic (also formerly a close friend of Manet) Théodore Duret wrote to Monet in 1889 apropos that campaign, "What a singular thing! It will be you who will make the gap through which Manet will pass, although it was he who was the precursor. Your work coming later finds the terrain better prepared; then too Manet was a figure painter and there the terrible academic convention and *le poncif* [the hackneyed treatment of gesture and expression] reign and will always reign supreme."¹⁷ In fact I would go further and suggest that the lasting triumph of Impressionism (the most durably successful movement in the history of modern painting) has meant that our usual understanding of Manet's modernism, perhaps of modernist painting generally, is so thoroughly saturated by Impressionist values and assumptions as to confront the art historian who wishes to recover the pictorial meaning of Manet's art *before* Impressionism—"before" both chronologically and interpretatively—with an especially difficult task. I shall have more to say about the Impressionist vision of Manet (and of painting) later. For the moment let me state that I shall be operating throughout on the belief (I already was operating on it in "Manet's Sources") that our best chance of clarifying the pre-Impressionist meaning of Manet's art is by exploring the larger issues at stake in "advanced" French painting in the 1860s, that

is, in the artistic and discursive community to which Manet belonged. This will involve detailed consideration of the work of other members of his generation, and it will also lead me to appeal extensively to the art criticism of the period, which is rich in hints that can be used.¹⁸ (My approach will be closer to that of *Absorption and Theatricality* than to that of *Courbet's Realism*, in which contemporary criticism plays a minor role.)

HERE I need to give Manet's generation a name: I shall call it the generation of 1863, in honor of the occasion of its most visible manifestation, the notorious Salon des Refusés of that year. In addition to Manet (b. 1832), the generation comprised Henri Fantin-Latour (b. 1836), James McNeill Whistler (b. 1834), and Alphonse Legros (b. 1837). (Legros, exceptionally talented and one of the most interesting painters and etchers in France in the late 1850s and early 1860s, has almost disappeared from the history of art; in chapter 3 I shall make a case for his importance.) All four men are represented in the most important surviving pictorial document of their association, Fantin-Latour's group portrait, *Homage to Eugène Delacroix* (1864; pl. 1).¹⁹ I shall want to look at this work again, but a preliminary viewing will help get us under way.

In the first place, three of the four artists just mentioned—Whistler (standing to the left of the portrait of Delacroix), Fantin (seated to his left and wearing a white shirt), and Legros (standing behind Fantin)—are grouped together on one side of the canvas while Manet (to the right of the portrait) stands apart from them on the other side. This reflects the fact that Fantin, Whistler, and Legros had been close friends since the late 1850s (Fantin and Legros went back earlier than that), while Manet had come to be seen by them as sharing their vision of painting only in 1861, the year his *Guitarrero* was exhibited in the Salon. (Fantin and Legros were the two leaders among the painters who were so impressed by the *Guitarrero* that they went as a group to Manet's studio to make his acquaintance.)²⁰ In any case, the compositional distance between Manet and the others is telling, as is Manet's prominence relative to all the other painters except Whistler, whom Fantin admired and whose flamboyant, temperamental personality would have made him a natural rival to Manet had he remained in France. Whistler and Legros moved permanently to London in 1863, however, and although both continued to sub-

mit paintings to the Salon the seeds of disunion had been sown. A few years later Whistler ended his friendship with Legros, and in 1867 in a letter to Fantin he repudiated realism and expressed the wish that he had been a student of Ingres rather than an admirer of Courbet.²¹ For his part, Fantin became increasingly reclusive, sending paintings to the Salon but otherwise leaving Manet alone in the public arena. (Note, by the way, that the figure of Fantin in the *Homage* holds a palette, not a paintbrush, in his right hand. Fantin himself was right-handed, and eventually we shall want to understand the meaning of this seeming lapse.)

Just to the left of Manet and below the portrait of Delacroix sits a somewhat older figure, Champfleury (Jules Husson). Champfleury had been Courbet's first critical champion in the late 1840s and 1850s; he was also a novelist, journalist, and art historian who had recently published a monograph on the Le Nain brothers, seventeenth-century French realist painters from his native town of Laon.²² Equally to the point, he had recognized Legros's abilities as early as 1857, when the latter exhibited his *Portrait of the Artist's Father* in the Salon of that year (Legros was then just twenty).²³ As regards the overall symbolism of Fantin's composition, the presence of Champfleury signals an allegiance to realism, and in fact Manet, Fantin, Whistler, and Legros all thought of themselves as realists and regarded Courbet's *Burial at Ornans* (1849–50) and related works as marking an epoch in the history of their art. But none of them was merely a follower of Courbet and the *Homage* is something more than a tribute to his example.²⁴ For we find seated at the lower right, just in front and to the side of Manet, the poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire, who by the mid-1850s had come to deplore what seemed to him the positivist and materialist—in his lexicon the anti-imaginative—nature of Courbet's Realism but who had never ceased to call for painting that would represent modern life, and who in the early 1860s had supported Manet, Whistler, and Legros both privately and in print.²⁵ (Baudelaire's friendship with Manet is legendary. By April 1864 he was living in Brussels, where he had moved in a quixotic attempt to escape his Parisian creditors and perhaps recoup his fortunes by arranging for the publication of various works and by giving a series of lectures on contemporary French art and literature. Not surprisingly, his various projects came to nothing. In March 1866, ill with syphilis, he suffered a stroke and several months later was brought back to Paris with diminished faculties. He died there on August 31, 1867.)²⁶ Even more difficult to square with realism as it was then understood, Fantin's canvas memorializes the Romantic painter

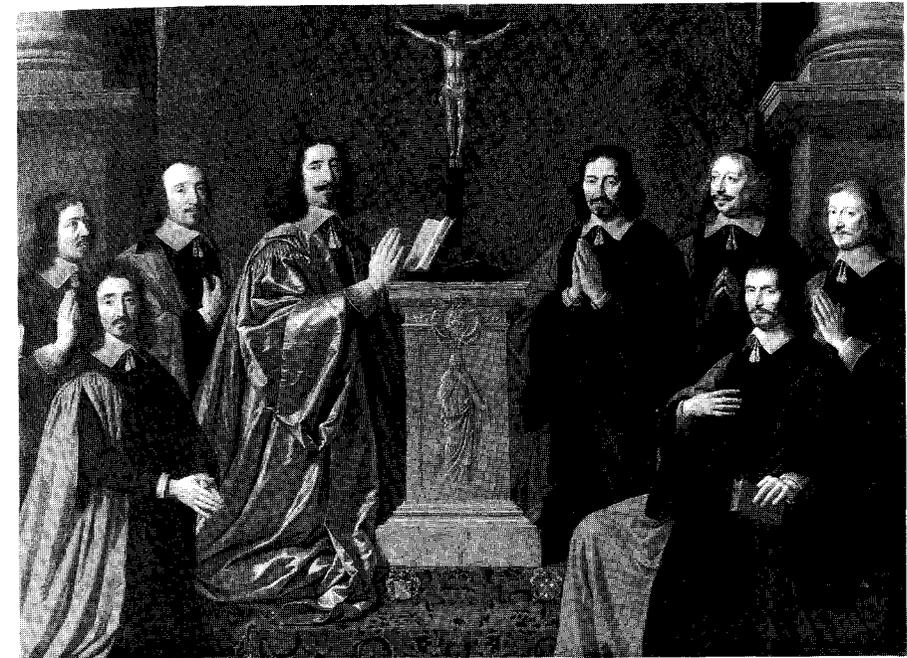


Figure 1. Philippe de Champaigne, *The Provost of the Guilds and the Municipal Magistrates of the City of Paris*, 1647–48.

Eugène Delacroix, who had died the year before, and thus asserts a relationship of affiliation between the Romanticism of 1830 and the young realists (for Baudelaire, of course, Delacroix was *the* great painter of the nineteenth century). This was recognized at the time by a few critics, who were puzzled by the connection. "I don't believe that Delacroix's poetic was ever Courbet's," Jean Rousseau wrote in *L'Univers illustré*. "How then has an alliance suddenly been established between these schools that seemed to exclude one another, and which for such a long time have been at war? It must be that realism has singularly modified its program, and we would be curious to learn about the new formula."²⁷

I shall have more to say about the terms of that new formula in chapters 3 and 4. I want to call attention to another aspect of Fantin's canvas, however: its close relation to, indeed its seeming compositional dependence upon, an earlier painting, also a group portrait, Philippe de Champaigne's *The Provost of the Guilds and the Municipal Magistrates of the City of Paris* (1647–48; fig. 1).²⁸ Champaigne's picture, now in the Louvre, was then in the La Caze Collection in Paris and had been shown in a large and much-discussed exhibition of French paintings from private

collections which was held in 1860 at Louis Martinet's gallery at 26 boulevard des Italiens.²⁹ (During the early 1860s Manet, Fantin, Whistler, and Legros all exhibited at Martinet's, where new and old works were often shown together; in this and other respects Martinet's was a central site of the advanced pictorial culture of that moment.) And what I want to emphasize is that Fantin not only made no effort to disguise the relationship between the *Homage* and Champaigne's canvas, he seems on the contrary to have wished to *declare* that relationship in much the same way as his painting declares an allegiance to Delacroix. Put more strongly, the relationship of the later to the earlier work is one not of dependence but rather of allusion or reference: as if one of Fantin's central aims in the *Homage* was to assert a connection with the Champaigne and by so doing to encourage educated viewers—painters, critics, and connoisseurs who, like him, were familiar with famous works of previous art—to consider the implications of his choice of source.³⁰

Now, what has never been recognized—what I myself was unaware of when I wrote “Manet's Sources”—is that this sort of active, explicit engagement with the art of the past was typical (and was seen as typical) of the work of almost all the ambitious young French painters of the late 1850s and early and mid-1860s whose reputations have survived to the present day. So for example Fantin himself, in addition to painting the *Homage to Delacroix*, made a number of smaller works called *féeries* in which a generalized allusiveness to Italian Renaissance painting coexists with a deliberate vagueness of subject and action; Legros was widely seen to have based his art on the work of the so-called primitives and other fifteenth-century Italian and Northern masters; Théodule Ribot, in the eyes of contemporaries another realist (Fantin considered including him in the *Homage*), was viewed even by his admirers as repeatedly pastiching Ribera (no discussion of his art in the 1860s fails to make this point); James Tissot's costume pieces set in the sixteenth century were routinely criticized for imitating the older contemporary Belgian painter Baron Leys, who in turn was held to have imitated Dürer and Cranach; Puvis de Chavannes's decorative canvases were understood, from the moment of the success of his *Concordia* and *Bellum* in the Salon of 1861, as attempting to resuscitate the look of Italian Renaissance frescoes; no aspect of Gustave Moreau's paintings starting with *Oedipus and the Sphinx* in the Salon of 1864 (the same Salon as the *Homage to Delacroix*) was more widely disputed than their stylistic adherence to the manner of Mantegna, Carpaccio, and other Northern Italians; Edgar Degas's engage-

ment with the art of the museums, not only with Italian masters of the Renaissance but also with later figures such as Van Dyck and Ingres, has always been recognized;* Whistler, while not seen as recycling earlier European art, was sometimes described as “pastiche” Chinese painting; and of course Manet himself repeatedly cited earlier painting, most famously in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (largely based on a figure group in Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving after Raphael's *Judgment of Paris*), *Olympia* (based on Titian's *Venus of Urbino*), and the *Episode in a Bullfight* (based on a seventeenth-century painting in the Pourtalès Collection then attributed to Velásquez).³¹ Such a pattern of active involvement with the art of the past marks a fundamental difference between the practice of the young realists among the group I have just named (with the exception of Whistler, who seems not to have been involved with earlier European painting as the others were) and that of Courbet, whose occasional exploitation of older prototypes had nothing systematic about it. In this respect as in others Courbet remained somewhat traditional, whereas the young painters in question, not just the realists but the others as well, evidently were responding to a new situation, one that called for deliberate allusion to or adaptation of earlier works and styles in order that all meaningful connection with painting's past—with its canonical achievements—not be lost.³² Fascinatingly, critics of every stamp were uncomfortable with this aspect of these artists' work, though certain of them, notably Legros and Puvis, tended to escape censure, for reasons that are difficult to specify. Indeed those critics who in other respects were

*The mention of Degas in this context leads me to acknowledge his absence from this book. In an obvious sense, that absence is appropriate: especially during the first half of the 1860s Degas was not part of the group of advanced painters I shall be tracking (his formation was different, he began by idolizing Ingres not Courbet or Delacroix, he spent the years 1856–59 in Italy where he became close to Moreau, unlike the others he devoted much effort in the first half of the 1860s to making history paintings such as the *Daughter of Jephthah*, *Semiramis Building Babylon*, *Young Spartans*, and *Scene of War in the Middle Ages*). Moreover, throughout the 1870s and after, he exhibited with the Impressionists, with whom he is sometimes identified. But his year of birth, 1834, places him squarely with Fantin, Legros, Whistler, and Manet; his commitment to the figure was primary, as was theirs; he was from the first deeply involved with earlier painting; the issue of beholding troubles his art from the early *Daughter of Jephthah* (1859–61) to the great nudes of the 1880s and after; and starting in the late 1860s his relations with Manet, though sometimes strained, were also particularly close—George Moore, who knew them both, called Manet “the friend of [Degas's] life” (“Degas: The Painter of Modern Life,” *Magazine of Art* 13 [Sept. 1890]: 419). At least one recent study has emphasized his singularity to the extent of casting him as an “odd man out” within the modern movement (Carol Armstrong, *Odd Man Out: Readings in the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* [Chicago and London, 1991]). Without developing the point, and without claiming to assimilate him too neatly to the structures I shall be analyzing, I suggest on the contrary that his art makes historical sense only when it is seen in relation to the concerns of the generation of 1863.

most supportive of Manet and his cogenerationists—Baudelaire, Thoré, Zola, and Zacharie Astruc—were downright hostile to the idea of recycling earlier art. “To make oneself a great man [i.e. a great painter], it’s not absolutely necessary to be inspired by Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, Rubens, or Velásquez,” Astruc wrote in 1863, naming five artists of particular interest to his friend Manet.³³ But the painters remained impervious to criticism on this score, which suggests just how much was at stake for them—how deeply grounded was the imperative that drove them—in their dealings with the past. That no such programmatic involvement with earlier art was shared by the still younger group of painters who became the Impressionists is a basic difference between Manet’s generation and theirs.

As I have said, “Manet’s Sources” frontally attacked the question of what Manet’s allusions to the art of the museums meant. The question itself had arisen within art history much earlier (in the 1930s and 1940s) and my account of Manet’s enterprise made extensive use of the work of previous scholars who had identified numerous sources for his paintings and prints. But my arguments persuaded almost no one, which may be one reason why in recent scholarship the topic of Manet’s relation to his sources has tended to be brushed aside. A more important reason is that it has seemed to have little place in the revisionist, largely social-historical reading of Manet’s art that, starting in the late 1960s, art historians such as Anne Coffin Hanson, Theodore Reff, T. J. Clark, and Robert L. Herbert have been elaborating. Hanson’s *Manet and the Modern Tradition*, Reff’s *Manet and Modern Paris*, Clark’s *Painting of Modern Life*, and Herbert’s *Impressionism* (works of unequal merit) typify this state of affairs: in each, Manet’s use of past art is discussed in connection with specific works bearing an obvious relation to famous prototypes, but the larger theme of his possibly strategic engagement with the past is ultimately not addressed.³⁴ The same situation prevails in Françoise Cachin’s and Charles Moffett’s counterrevisionist catalog for the retrospective exhibition of 1983, which partly in reaction against social-historical readings of his art portrays a normalized “painterly” Manet who takes his place unproblematically in the standard history of nineteenth-century painting, as well as in monographs by Beatrice Farwell, George Mauner, and James H. Rubin.³⁵ Finally, two recent technical studies by Juliet Wilson-Bareau, *The Hidden Face of Manet* and *Manet: The Execution of Maximilian*, underscore an indifference to the question of the overall meaning of Manet’s allusions to the Old Masters by declining even to mention “Manet’s

Sources” in their notes or bibliographies.³⁶ However, once it is recognized that virtually Manet’s entire cohort of advanced painters engaged in some version of citing or conspicuously adapting the art of the past, the question gains immensely in historical resonance. By the same token, the failure to address that question—the almost universal tendency to treat it as of no particular consequence—becomes emblematic of a larger failure to come to grips with a network of issues that I shall try to show were central to French painting at a critical moment in its evolution.

ONE WAY of thinking of that network of issues is in relation to a concept that has already been touched on and is invoked in the title of this book: that of Manet’s modernism. Within the past several decades it has become customary for art critics and art historians of widely differing points of view to characterize Manet as the first modernist painter. A classic statement to that effect is by the American “formalist” critic, Clement Greenberg, who in his essay “Modernist Painting” defines modernism (which he spells with a capital M) as a process of immanent self-criticism the aim of which has been to determine the irreducible working essence of the individual arts. Greenberg contends that at a certain point in the nineteenth century, painting and the other arts were faced with the danger of a progressive loss of mission. “Having been denied by the Enlightenment all tasks they could take seriously,” he writes, “[the arts] looked as though they were going to be assimilated to entertainment pure and simple, and entertainment itself looked as though it were going to be assimilated, like religion, to therapy. The arts could save themselves from this levelling down only by demonstrating that the kind of experience they provided was valuable in its own right and not to be obtained from any other kind of activity.”³⁷ The key passage follows:

Each art, it turned out, had to effect this demonstration on its own account. What had to be exhibited and made explicit was that which was unique and irreducible not only in art in general but also in each particular art. Each art had to determine, though the operations peculiar to itself, the effects peculiar and exclusive to itself. By doing this, each art would, to be sure, narrow its area of competence, but at the same time it would make its possession of this area all the more secure.

It quickly emerged that the unique and proper area of competence of each art coincided with all that was unique to the nature of its medium. The task of self-criticism became to eliminate from the effects of each art any and every effect that might conceivably be borrowed from or by the medium of any other

art. Thereby each art would be rendered “pure,” and in its “purity” find the guarantee of its standards of quality as well as of its independence. “Purity” meant self-definition, and the enterprise of self-criticism in the arts became one of self-definition with a vengeance.

Realistic, illusionist art had dissembled the medium, using art to conceal art. Modernism used art to call attention to art. The limitations that constitute the medium of painting—the flat surface, the shape of the support, the properties of pigment—were treated by the Old Masters as negative factors that could be acknowledged only implicitly or indirectly. Modernist painting has come to regard these same limitations as positive factors that are to be acknowledged openly. Manet’s paintings became the first Modernist ones by virtue of the frankness with which they declared the surfaces on which they were painted. The Impressionists, in Manet’s wake, abjured underpainting and glazing, to leave the eye under no doubt as to the fact that the colors used were made of real paint that came from pots or tubes. Cézanne sacrificed verisimilitude, or correctness, in order to fit drawing and design more explicitly to the rectangular shape of the canvas.

It was the stressing, however, of the ineluctable flatness of the support that remained most fundamental in the processes by which pictorial art criticized and defined itself under Modernism. . . . Flatness, two-dimensionality, was the only condition painting shared with no other art, and so Modernist painting oriented itself to flatness as it did to nothing else.³⁸

For all its clarity and power, Greenberg’s account of modernism is open to serious objection (I have taken issue with it more than once, most recently in *Courbet’s Realism*),³⁹ but I want to stress, first, its emphasis on flatness as *the* defining condition of the medium of painting, and second, the implication, which Greenberg elsewhere makes explicit, that the process of self-criticism he describes entails the progressive detachment of the individual arts from all concerns other than strictly or narrowly artistic ones. (Which is to say “esthetic” ones. “Modernism defines itself in the long run not as a ‘movement,’ much less a program, but rather as a kind of bias or tropism: towards esthetic value, esthetic value as such and as an ultimate,” he writes in a later essay. “The specificity of Modernism lies in its being so heightened a tropism in this regard.”)⁴⁰ Put slightly differently, the “purity” to which Greenberg refers means not only a relative indifference to considerations of subject matter, which have no place in the later stages of the “reduction” he evokes; once under way the “reduction” itself, although triggered by social developments (specifically the Enlightenment critique of institutions), is conducted in a void.

In contrast, the social historians of art understand the emergence of modernist painting in Paris in the 1860s and 1870s as responding

to a distinctive experience of *modernity*. Baudelaire’s poems, prose poems, and art criticism are read as testifying to the nature of that experience, which has been variously glossed by subsequent commentators: sometimes the emphasis falls on the increasingly dehumanized and dehumanizing aspects of life under commodity capitalism, sometimes on the rise of a “society of spectacle” with its newly developed modes of entertainment, leisure activity, fashion, and display; in both cases, however, an experiencing subject is imagined as standing at a certain virtual distance from his surroundings, and in a sense from himself (hence the pertinence of the Marxist notion of “alienation”). In T. J. Clark’s working definition of modernism in *The Painting of Modern Life*, that virtual distance is equated with a loss of certainty about the very act of representation. In his words:

“Modernism” . . . is used [in this book] in the customary, somewhat muddled way. Something decisive happened in the history of art around Manet which set painting and the other arts upon a new course. Perhaps the change can be described as a kind of scepticism, or at least unsureness, as to the nature of representation in art. There had been degrees of doubt on this subject before, but they had mostly appeared as asides to the central task of constructing a likeness, and in a sense they had guaranteed that task, making it seem all the more necessary and grand. Certain painters in the seventeenth century, for example, had failed to hide the gaps and perplexities inherent in their own procedures, but those traces of paradox in perception—those markers in the picture of where the illusion almost ended—only served to make the likeness, where it was achieved, the more compelling, because it was seen to exist in the face of its opposite, chaos. There is no doubt that Manet and his friends looked back for instruction to painters of just this kind—to Velázquez and Hals, for example—but what seemed to impress them most was the evidence of palpable and frank inconsistency, and not the fact that the image was somehow preserved in the end from extinction. This shift of attention led, on the one hand, to their putting a stress on the material means by which illusion and likeness were made . . . ; on the other, to a new set of proposals as to the form representation should take, insofar as it was still possible at all without bad faith.⁴¹

Whereas Greenberg portrays the modernist artist as seeking a narrow certainty, Clark goes so far as to imagine a taste for uncertainty becoming almost an esthetic in its own right.⁴² But as Clark is aware, his conception of modernism is not simply or wholly opposed to Greenberg’s. He too sees in early modernism “a stress on the material means by which illusions and likenesses were made,” and for him as for Greenberg the norm of flatness plays a crucial role not only in Manet’s art but in subsequent



modernist painting. The difference is that Clark refuses to hypostatize flatness; rather, he insists that it cannot be understood apart from “the particular projects—the specific attempts at meaning—” in which it came to the fore:

Certainly it is true that the two dimensions of the picture surface were time and again recovered as a striking fact by painters after Courbet. But I think the question we should be asking in this case is *why* that literal presence of surface went on being interesting for art. How could a matter of effect or procedure seemingly stand in for value in this way? What was it that made it vivid?

The details of an answer will of course be open to argument as to emphasis, evidence, and so forth; but surely the answer must take approximately *this* form. If the fact of flatness was compelling and tractable for art—in the way it was for Manet and Cézanne, for example—that must have been because it was made to stand for something: some particular and substantial set of qualities which took their place in a picture of the world. So that the richness of the avant-garde, conceived as a set of contexts for art in the years between, say, 1860 and 1918, might best be redescribed in terms of its ability to give flatness such complex and compatible values—values which necessarily derived from elsewhere than art. On various occasions, for instance, flatness was imagined to be some kind of analogue of the “Popular” . . . It was therefore made as plain, workmanlike, and emphatic as the painter could manage; loaded brushes and artisans’ combs were held to be appropriate tools; painting was henceforth honest manual labour. . . . Or flatness could signify modernity, with the surface meant to conjure up the mere two dimensions of posters, labels, fashion prints, and photographs. There were painters who took those same two dimensions, in what might seem a more straightforwardly modernist way, to represent the simple fact of Art, from which other meanings were excluded. But during this period that too was most often an argument about the world and art’s relation to it—a quite complex argument, and stated as such. Painting would replace or displace the Real, accordingly, for reasons having to do with the nature of subjectivity, or city life, or the truths revealed by higher mathematics. And finally, unbrokenness of surface could be seen—by Cézanne par excellence—as standing for the evenness of seeing itself, the actual form of our knowledge of things. . . .

My point is simply that flatness in its heyday *was* these various meanings and valuations; they were its substance, they were what it was seen *as*; their particularity was what made flatness a matter to be painted. Flatness was therefore in play—as an irreducible, technical fact of painting—with all of these totalizations, all of these attempts to make it a metaphor. Of course, in a way it resisted the metaphors, and the painters we most admire insisted also on its being an awkward, empirical quiddity; but “also” is the key word here: there was no fact without the metaphor, no medium without its being made the vehicle of some sense or other.⁴³

This is superb in its way and I have no argument with it. Or rather I have no argument with it as it applies to modernist painters *after* Manet. For it will be one of my procedures in the pages that follow (above all in chapter 4, “Manet in His Generation”) to refrain from appealing to flatness as a basic parameter of his art, on the grounds that the common modernist interpretation of Manet’s paintings of the 1860s as pioneering above all in their assertion of flatness is largely an artifact of Impressionism, or to put this more broadly, that a concern with flatness and related notions such as “decorative” unity, that is, the notion that pictorial unity was essentially a *surface* affair, did not emerge or did not fully emerge as the defining characteristic of modernist pictorial practice before the articulation of a distinctively Impressionist point of view in the early and mid-1870s.⁴⁴ Did not fully emerge is perhaps the point. Courbet, for example, is supposed to have said of Manet’s *Olympia*, “It’s flat, it isn’t modeled; it’s like the Queen of Hearts after a bath,” to which Manet is supposed to have replied, “Courbet bores us in the end with his modeling; his ideal is a billiard ball!”⁴⁵ (But isn’t there something a little pat about this exchange, which was first reported almost twenty years after it supposedly took place, by a critic inveterately unsympathetic to Manet?) Then, too, critics of the 1860s castigated Manet’s pictures for their occasional failures of perspective, for the harshness with which figures and figure-groups were felt to stamp themselves out against their backgrounds, and perhaps most frequently, for their seeming incompleteness, their inexplicable lack of finish—all features of his art that have been associated after the fact with the foregrounding of the literal flatness of the support.⁴⁶ Zola, for his part, willingly conceded the resemblance between Manet’s paintings and the popular engravings known as *gravures d’Épinal* as well as Japanese color woodblocks, both notoriously “flat” types of images, but he also insisted that seen from the proper distance Manet’s paintings offered a coherent spatial illusion in which each object occupied its appropriate plane.⁴⁷ In short, no critic of the 1860s actually spoke of Manet’s paintings as aggressively flat, and I shall offer a fundamentally different interpretation of the tendencies in his work that lent themselves retroactively to being perceived in those terms. Without wishing to get ahead of myself, let me add that issues of *facing*—as indicated by the second part of the title of this book—will play an equivalent role to that played by the topos of flatness in previous accounts of Manet’s art. (The displacement of issues of flatness by ones of facing is suggested already in “Manet’s Sources” and is underscored in *Courbet’s Realism*.)⁴⁸

Greenberg's "Modernist Painting" is pertinent to this discussion in another respect as well: along with his stress on flatness and as it were determined by it is an emphasis on a *purely visual or optical* mode of illusionism. "With Manet and the Impressionists," he writes, "the question ceased to be defined as one of color versus drawing [a traditional opposition in painting and art theory], and became instead a question of purely optical experience as against optical experience modified or revised by tactile associations. It was in the name of the purely and literally optical, not in that of color, that the Impressionists set themselves to undermining shading and modeling and everything else that seemed to connote the sculptural."⁴⁹ This historical claim soon gives way to a theoretical one, when Greenberg links Kantian self-criticism (the model for modernist self-criticism) and science, and goes on to say: "That visual art should confine itself exclusively to what is given in visual experience, and make no reference to anything given in other orders of experience"—the implicit imperative of all modernist painting, in his view—"is a notion whose only justification lies, notionally, in scientific consistency."⁵⁰ Again, his argument is open to multiple objections, but I want to call attention to his equating of Manet and the Impressionists with respect to visuality and opticality (taking these to be the same): "With Manet and the Impressionists, the question . . . became [one] of purely optical experience, etc."⁵¹

As a generalization about Impressionism or rather about the contemporary response to the work of the landscape Impressionists Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Alfred Sisley, this is incontestable. As early as 1874 Armand Silvestre, an early advocate, wrote of the Impressionists that the viewer needed "special eyes to be sensitive to that accuracy in the relation of tones that is their honor and their merit,"⁵² and a less friendly critic, Marc de Montifaud, characterized the new group as "the school of the eyes."⁵³ And as I have already suggested, it was largely on the strength of the triumph of Impressionism that Manet's work began to win acceptance in the 1870s and 1880s. The first stirrings of that process were contemporary with the advent of Impressionist painting in the early and mid-1870s⁵⁴ but the "impressionist" reading fully came into its own toward the end of the decade and (especially) during the years just before and after Manet's death. So for example Pinard, in a companion article to the one cited earlier, marveled at two "impressionist" works by Manet: "One would hardly believe that the human hand must have been employed to transport to the canvas the image gathered by the artist's eye,

one could suppose that his gaze has been the sole agent of both the reception and the reproduction of the image."⁵⁵ In a less exalted register we find Jacques de Biez writing in 1883 that Manet's divinity was the truth air and light, and asking rhetorically: "Should Manet be blamed for the care he seems to have taken to repudiate in his oeuvre all psychological intention or every philosophical subject? Manet was a painter before everything, and his highest ambition was to remain a painter in the full plastic meaning of the term. Manet was an eye rather than a reasoning."⁵⁶ A year later Edmond Bazire added: "[Manet's] career can be summed up as a continuous ascension toward light and truth. . . . To paint on the basis of the eyes, not the imagination, was his program."⁵⁷ Théodore Duret, looking back on Manet's career, maintained that the painter saw differently from other people (a point made earlier by Zola) and that that accounted for both the unconventional appearance of his art and his difficulties with the public.⁵⁸ And Proust in 1901 not only attributed to Manet "the incessant pursuit of an ideal which he attained in his last productions and which could be defined thus: the realization of optical effects resulting from the movement of the varied colorings that nature offers us," but also quoted Manet himself as saying in conversation the year before he died: "They will be happy, my dear friend, the people who will live a century from now; the organs of their vision will be more developed than ours. They will see better."⁵⁹

But the notion of opticality, of a mode of painting addressed exclusively to the sense of sight, has only limited and specific application to modernist painting after Impressionism (even as regards Impressionist practice it stands in need of qualification), and whatever its relevance to Manet's later work it is positively misleading as a guide to his canvases of the 1860s.⁶⁰ Indeed Greenberg's overvaluing of opticality, an attitude he shares with his severest critic, Rosalind Krauss, bears witness to the lasting influence of Impressionism and its criticism on subsequent theorizing about modern art.⁶¹ As in the case of flatness, a concern with issues of facing—more broadly, of the relationship between painting and beholder—will open the way to a more historically accurate and theoretically nuanced reading of Manet's achievement.⁶²

IN ADDITION to this introduction, the present book comprises five chapters and a coda. Chapter 1 consists of "Manet's Sources" almost exactly as it first appeared in *Artforum*. Although the temptation to correct

its most obvious defects has been strong, the arguments for leaving it intact and then proceeding to both criticize it and supplement it in subsequent chapters have proven even stronger. For one thing, the original essay has been largely unavailable for a long time; for another, had I begun to alter it in significant details I would not have known where to stop; most important, had I changed it substantially the result would have been hybrid in the worst way, representing neither my original thoughts about Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s nor my present rethinking of the larger, generational context to which those paintings belong. Above all, there would have been no way to introduce into the framework of the revised essay the results of my later investigations into what I have described as a central antitheatrical tradition in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French painting; and in the absence of those results a crucial dimension not just of Manet's enterprise but also of those of his fellow realists would have remained incomprehensible.*

In chapter 2, "Manet's Sources' Reconsidered," I criticize my original essay—conceding various points to Reff, highlighting flaws, acknowledging omissions—before going on to amplify its claims and to argue anew, on the grounds of fresh pictorial and textual evidence, for what I continue to believe is the rightness of its core account of Manet's allusions to the art of the past. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the question of genre as it was posed in the 1860s, a question I see as related to that of nationality in that what was at stake in both cases was a tension between fragmentation and totality. Indeed I suggest that the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (a work I return to repeatedly throughout this book) may be seen as an attempt to combine virtually all the separate pictorial genres in a single composition that would in effect put an end to the fragmentation of painting on a generic level.

In chapter 3, "The Generation of 1863," focusing primarily on Fantin, Whistler, and Legros and making use of the writings of a broad spectrum

*I have, however, made a number of minor changes in the text. For example, I have occasionally changed "which" and "that" and made small improvements in punctuation or phrasing. I have followed recent scholarship in renaming Manet's favorite model Victorine Meurent, not Meurend. In some cases I have modified the titles and/or adjusted the dates of paintings. I have added a few footnotes that were missing from the original essay, and on rare occasions I have introduced corrective remarks between square brackets. In the original essay I gave French quotations in the body of the text and English translations in a separate set of notes; here I have given the translations in the text and the French in the endnotes. (In a few instances I have moved the French originals to the notes of later chapters in which the quotations recur and are analyzed at greater length.) Finally, I have simplified the title of the original essay, "Manet's Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859–1865," to "Manet's Sources, 1859–1869."

of critics, I trace the lineaments of a fundamental shift in advanced pictorial sensibility by virtue of which certain kinds of excess, which would previously have been viewed as artistically deleterious—specifically, as theatrical—were recuperated as an artistically valid mode of intensity or, a key term, *strikingness*. More precisely, I discern in a broad range of works by the young realists (other than Manet) a *double or divided structure* within which an excessive treatment of the very means that in previous French painting had secured compositional closure now facilitated, became the vehicle for, a highly charged mode of address to the beholder which critics who deplored theatricality found not just acceptable but admirable, even exhilarating. I go on to consider other manifestations of such a structure in the painting and criticism of the time, and bring the chapter to a close by examining a network of concepts whose meaning in the art writing of the 1860s and 1870s has never properly been understood.

Chapter 4, "Manet in His Generation," approaches Manet's paintings of the 1860s in the light of these and other considerations; in particular I redescribe his handling of the relationship between painting and beholder—a cardinal element in his art—partly on the strength of a comparison with the work of his cogenerationists. The chapter is long and complex and resists summary. Among other points I pay particular attention to the question of the meaning of the widespread concern with the *tableau*; to Manet's avoidance or negation of absorptive themes and effects; to what contemporary viewers saw and deplored as his consistent refusal to finish his pictures (this largely via a comparison between the respective critical responses to Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* and Moreau's *Oedipus and the Sphinx*); to his pursuit of various modes of instantaneousness, and its bearing on his involvement with photography and Japanese woodblocks; and to the delicate question of the thematization of the relationship between painter and model in his art. Throughout this chapter issues of strikingness emerge as central to our understanding of his work, which is to say that Manet is seen to have shared with his cogenerationists not only a systematic concern with the art of the past but also a drive to establish a new type of connection with the beholder. Once again the writings of numerous art critics are deployed in the service of my analyses, though contrary to the way in which the advent of Impressionism made Manet's paintings accessible both to contemporary viewers and to later commentators as a first stage in a process of progressive simplification (toward the foregrounding of flatness, the develop-

ment of a sheerly optical illusionism, the pursuit of the impression), I emphasize what all the evidence suggests was a widespread initial conviction of his paintings' essential *unintelligibility*. (This is an emphasis I share with Clark, for all the divergence in our interests.) Put slightly differently, my approach here as elsewhere in this book is strongly contextual, but my aim in trying to contextualize both Manet's paintings of the 1860s and their initial reception is not only to recover aspects of their original meaning but also to recapture an original *resistance* to available modes of pictorial understanding. The chapter ends with a discussion of the Mannheim *Execution of Maximilian*, a work not treated in "Manet's Sources" but that now may be seen virtually as allegorizing many of the issues dealt with in the chapter as a whole.

A fifth chapter, "Between Realisms," begins by analyzing the logic of mirror reversal of left and right in several self-portrait drawings by Fantin-Latour of around 1860 and goes on to apply the results of that analysis to a range of other works by Fantin, Whistler, Legros, Pissarro, Frédéric Bazille, and Manet himself. As those names suggest, "Between Realisms" takes us to the verge of Impressionism; specifically, it proposes a new interpretation of the art of the generation of 1863 as transitional between Courbet's corporeal Realism and the optical or (as I prefer to say) ocular realism of the Impressionists.

Finally, a coda, "Manet's Modernism," gathers together various strands of my argument and considers some of their more important historical and historiographical implications.

I Manet's Sources, 1859-1869

IF A SINGLE question is guiding for our understanding of Manet's art during the first half of the 1860s, it is this: What are we to make of the numerous references in his paintings of those years to the work of the great painters of the past? A few of Manet's historically aware contemporaries recognized explicit references to past art in some of his important pictures of that period;¹ and by the time he died his admirers tended to play down the paintings of the first half of the 1860s, if not of the entire decade, largely because of what had come to seem their overall dependence on the Old Masters.² By 1912 Jacques-Émile Blanche could claim, in a kind of hyperbole, that it was impossible to find two paintings in Manet's oeuvre that had not been inspired by other paintings, old or modern.³ But it has been chiefly since the retrospective exhibition of 1932 that historians have come to realize concretely the extent to which Manet based his art upon specific paintings, engravings after paintings, and original prints by artists who preceded him.⁴ It is now clear, for example, that most of the important pictures of the 1860s depend either wholly or in part on works by Velázquez, Goya, Rubens, Van Dyck, Raphael, Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin, Courbet. . . . This by itself is an extraordinary fact, one that must be accounted for if Manet's enterprise is to be made intelligible. It becomes even more extraordinary in the light of his repeated assertions, the truth of which cannot be doubted, that he had tried to be himself and no one else. His pictures, he wrote in 1867, were above all *sincere*: "It's the effect of sincerity to give to works a character that makes them appear an act of protest, when the painter has thought only of rendering his impression."⁵ This statement and others like it rest on familiar assumptions of midcentury realism. But they raise the further question of how those assumptions can be reconciled with the scope and explicitness of his involvement with the art of the past.

From 1932 until fairly recently [this piece was almost entirely written in 1968] that involvement was seen almost exclusively in connection with issues of subject matter and “composition.” Some historians have argued that for Manet subject matter was nothing more than a pretext for the problems of form and color that alone interested him, and that he used the art of the past as a source of themes which for one reason or another he was unable to invent for himself.⁶ This is clearly false. For one thing, it has become plain that Manet’s intentions were far more complex than so simple a reading of his art implies. In 1947 Michel Florisoone wrote that “Manet does not deliberately take a subject from a master of the past, but asks of such a master the plastic rendering of his inspiration which itself was stimulated by a natural fact (the bathers at Gennevilliers, a dancer stretched out on the ground, a woman in bed . . .),”⁷ and while this does not always seem to have been the case, the implicit emphasis on Manet’s response to reality was salutary. Moreover, it has gradually become clear that, as Meyer Schapiro wrote in 1954, Manet chose the subjects of his paintings “not simply because they were at hand or because they furnished a particular coloring or light, but rather because they were his world in an overt or symbolic sense and related intimately to his person or outlook.”⁸ (What this means in individual cases remains to be made out.) It has also been suggested that Manet either lacked the ability to “compose” or was uninterested in that class of problems, and so turned to the Old Masters for the *ordonnance* of his paintings.⁹ But this too does not hold up. In the first place, as Alain De Leiris has remarked, “It postulates the existence of an autonomous stylistic element called ‘composition,’ which is presumably absent from Manet’s works, or inadequately developed therein.”¹⁰ Whereas the concept of composition has its own history in nineteenth-century painting and criticism, a history in which Manet’s art plays an important role.¹¹ Furthermore, it simply is not the case that most of Manet’s borrowings from previous paintings are of entire “compositions.”¹² Much of the time he takes over single figures, motifs, even details; the question is why. Finally, this type of explanation wholly fails to account for what is perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Manet’s borrowings, the literalness and obviousness with which he often quoted earlier paintings. If it is argued that Manet knowingly exploited the art of the past to make up for deficiencies in his own gifts, it must be explained why he would have chosen in effect to call attention to those deficiencies. But nothing now seems less fruitful than attempts to explain disquieting

aspects of Manet’s art in terms of supposed defects in his talent or temperament.

In more recent studies the tendency has been to see in Manet’s involvement with past art the ambition both to identify and to compete with the great painters whom he most admired. For example, Nils Gösta Sandblad has shown that Manet’s depiction of himself and his future wife, Suzanne Leenhoff, in *La Pêche* (1861–63; fig. 2) was a deliberate allusion to Rubens and Hélène Fourment, and that his portrayal of himself at the extreme left of *Music in the Tuileries* (1862; fig. 3), by analogy with the Louvre’s *Petits Cavaliers* (then attributed to Velásquez), amounts to an implicit identification with the great Spanish master.¹³ Theodore Reff has interpreted Manet’s use of Titian’s *Venus of Urbino* in *Olympia* in similar terms, adding: “In choosing to identify himself, even if somewhat playfully, with Rubens, Velásquez, and Titian, artists who mingled with the highest society, Manet affirmed that love of worldliness and elegance which governed his own life in the salons and cafés of Paris, and which gave to *Olympia* its singular tone.”¹⁴ Manet’s identification with the great painters of the past has in turn been seen as evidence of his determi-

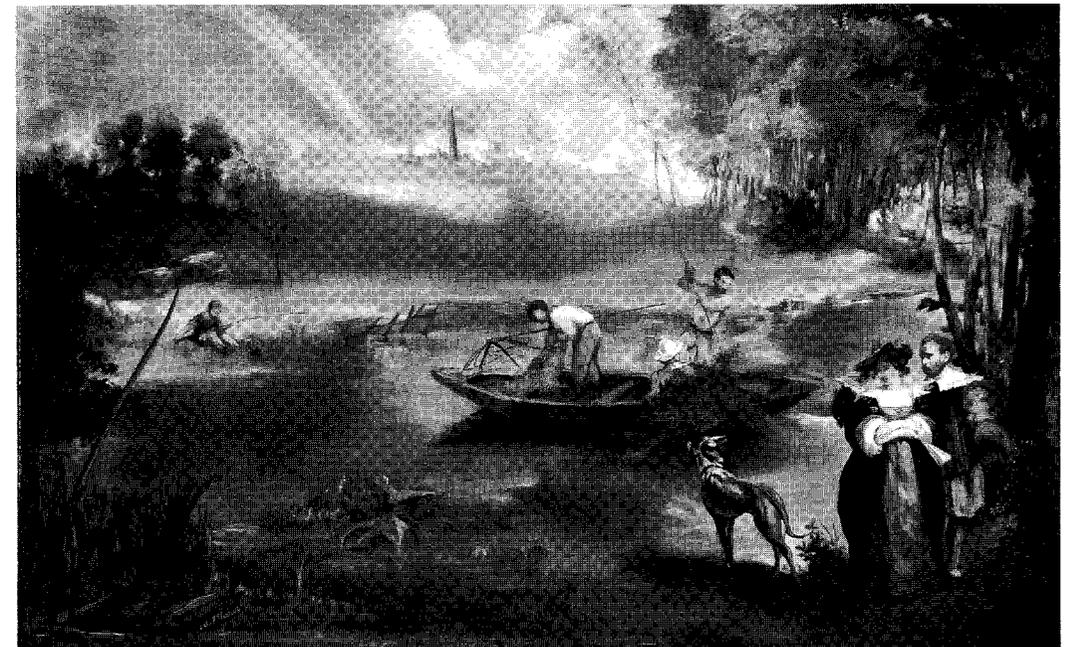


Figure 2. Édouard Manet, *La Pêche*, 1861–63.





Figure 3. Édouard Manet, *Music in the Tuileries*, 1862.

nation to compete with them. Sandblad has argued that this determination became wholly serious with the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. Until those paintings Manet had been able playfully to evade “the problem of the conflict between classical art and the portrayal of contemporary life.”¹⁵ In the *Déjeuner*, however, Manet set out to show “that he was capable of establishing a modern correspondence to the classical scene [i.e. those of Giorgione’s—in fact Titian’s—*Concert champêtre* and Marcantonio Raimondi’s engraving after Raphael’s *Judgment of Paris*] as a whole.” In other words, Manet “wished to compete with [the Old Masters] on his own ground.”¹⁶ In the same spirit De Leiris has remarked, “Manet’s art thrived on this constant and deliberately sought challenge of the past.”¹⁷

There is truth in these views. It seems clear that Manet did in fact identify himself with Rubens and Velásquez in *La Pêche* and *Music in the Tuileries*; and inasmuch as those and other paintings explicitly invite comparison with specific works by great painters of the past, they may be said to compete with them. Certainly Manet must have aspired to sustain

those comparisons. But this interpretation of Manet’s involvement with past art is deficient on several counts. To begin with, it fails to explain why Manet found it necessary, or even desirable, to compete *explicitly* with the Old Masters. A test of strength with the standards established by the art of the museums was at least implicit in the ambitious painting of the previous decades; and it was in terms of those standards that nineteenth-century critics judged the paintings of their time, including Manet’s. Nor does the notion of competition account for the manifest but puzzling, almost riddling, *specificity* of his references to previous art. For example, it says nothing about why Manet based the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* on Raphael and not some other master. And without some rationale for his choice one is left with the impression that any other great painter—Rubens, Velásquez, Rembrandt—would have served Manet’s purposes just as well, as long as an equivalent motif could be found. Even when historians have emphasized the peculiar aptness of one or another reference to past art, almost no effort has been made to relate those references to one another or to Manet’s development as a whole. Similarly, when it has been recognized that his relations with the art of the past did not remain constant throughout his career, but rather underwent some sort of development, the tendency has been to regard any shifts in those relations as at least somewhat playful or arbitrary—moves in a game which Manet could just as easily have chosen to forego. This is not obviously wrong. Despite the ubiquitousness and specificity of references to previous art in both the great and the relatively lesser paintings of the first half of the 1860s, it is conceivable that Manet’s intentions in that regard were finally neither deep nor precise nor coherent enough to reward exhaustive interrogation. But we are not entitled to assume that this is so.

In what follows I shall try to show that exactly the opposite is the case, namely, that Manet’s involvement during those years with the art of the past constituted a profoundly serious, rational, and progressive undertaking, virtually every step of which must be understood in relation to every other. I shall also suggest that the undertaking in question was as central to his total enterprise as any other aspect of his art—his realism, for example, or his concern with painting as such—and that in fact it cannot ultimately be understood in isolation from either of these. Finally, I shall suggest that Manet’s involvement with the art of the past must be seen in relation to some of the most important intellectual and spiritual currents in nineteenth-century France.



Figure 4. Diego Velázquez, *The Drinkers (or Bacchus)*, 1628.

2

THE FIRST problems that face the student who wants to make sense of Manet's relations with the art of the past are how, and in particular where, to begin. One painting of the first half of the 1860s presents itself as a place to start, first, because it contains a larger number of specific references to past art than any other picture in Manet's oeuvre, and second, because those references are presented with unique emphasis on the identity of each and hence on the conjunction of all. By studying the relations among the painters and paintings it quotes, we might be able to understand why Manet conjoined them in a single painting; and that might provide us with a kind of key to understanding his involvement with the art of the past generally. The painting is the *Old Musician* (1862; pl. 2), a work that has received comparatively little attention in the literature on Manet. Except for De Leiris, those who have written about it have been disturbed by the obviousness and apparent arbitrariness of its relations with past art, as well as by the half-realistic, half-fantastic situation it

seems to depict, and have tended to characterize it as an immature work in which Manet had not yet managed either to declare his independence from the Old Masters or to turn his attention once and for all to the world around him.

But Manet's involvement with the art of the past was, as I have said, a general characteristic of his work during those years: what distinguishes the *Old Musician* from subsequent pictures such as the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia*, *Episode in a Bullfight*, or *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* is not the fact of its relation to past art but the number of references it contains and the way in which their coexistence within a single canvas is apparently insisted upon. Moreover, to view the *Old Musician's* references to the art of the past simply as indications of influences not yet overcome is to assume something one has no right to assume. There are, after all, generally accepted paradigms of *influence*; and these bear little resemblance to the obviously deliberate quotations of specific paintings by previous masters that one finds in that picture. It might also be remarked that the *Old Musician* belongs to the type of painting which seems to have been the vehicle for Manet's highest ambitions during this period: the large arrangement of two or more clearly defined figures.¹⁸ In this important sense it is far more representative of Manet's enterprise during those years than, for example, the somewhat anomalous (though great) *Music in the Tuileries* which Sandblad, after downgrading the *Old Musician*, describes as offering "perhaps the best general departure for an illustration of Manet's artistic development during the first years of the 1860s."¹⁹

The most notorious though not ultimately the most significant of the *Old Musician's* sources in past art is Velázquez's early masterpiece *The Drinkers* (1628; fig. 4), which Manet would have known through Goya's engraving [or, more likely, Célestin Nanteuil's lithograph] and which, as De Leiris remarks, "offers parallels in its bohemian theme, frieze composition and certain details such as the framing tree branch on the left and the shadowy standing figure on the right."²⁰ There is also a close relationship between the head, in particular the profile and hair, of the kneeling figure at the left of the *Drinkers* and the same features of the girl who stands holding an infant at the left of the *Old Musician*; and there may be a more distant one between between the two drinkers who look out at us from Velázquez's picture and the two boys to the left of the seated violinist in Manet's. In addition, John Richardson has suggested—convincingly, I think—that the boy nearest the violinist is based on another early Velás-

quez,²¹ and Florisoone has claimed to see a connection between Manet's painting and Velázquez's pictures of classical philosophers.²²

The Spanishness of the *Old Musician* is not just a matter of references to specific paintings by Spanish masters. For example, the light, almost blonde tonality, the frank but deliberate painterliness, and the particular size and internal scale of the *Old Musician* seem characteristically though unspecifically Spanish in feeling. In fact it ought to surprise us that this kind of general relation to Spanish painting, which Manet achieved only after long study of pictures such as the *Petits Cavaliers* and Murillo's *Flea Picker*, also in the Louvre, was not enough for him, and that he chose to refer specifically to a famous masterpiece that he had never seen. Here it is worth remarking on the apparent gratuitousness of the almost literal quotations from the *Drinkers*. Manet does not seem to have been led to appropriate either the tree branch or the hair and profile of the standing girl from Velázquez's painting by urgent needs within his own painting which otherwise would have gone unfulfilled. On the contrary, one feels that Manet did not need to borrow either motif at all, and that he did so only in order to make the connection with the *Drinkers* as explicit as possible.

The young Manet's enthusiasm for Spanish painting and in particular Velázquez has been documented by generations of historians, and it is almost entirely in the context of that enthusiasm that the *Old Musician* has been seen. There are, however, two further sources for Manet's painting which bear crucially upon its ultimate meaning and which are not Spanish but French: Louis Le Nain's *La Halte du cavalier* (ca. 1640; fig. 5)²³ and Watteau's *Gilles* (1717–19?; fig. 6).²⁴ The first of these obviously determined, far more closely than did the *Drinkers* or any other Spanish painting, both specific figures in the *Old Musician* and its arrangement in general. The two boys in the Le Nain, one of whom has his arm around the other, have been lifted reversed into the *Old Musician*; the seated cavalier could hardly be more closely related to Manet's seated violinist; even the peasant girl at the left of Le Nain's painting has her equivalent in the girl who stands in profile at the left of Manet's—though I believe that two figures of girls in another famous painting by Le Nain, *La Charrette* (or *Les Moissonneurs*) (1641; fig. 7), actually provided the basis for Manet's figure.²⁵ It is equally clear that the arrangement of the figures in the *Halte du cavalier* provided the basis for that in the *Old Musician*. In fact Manet seems to have brought over into his painting not merely the physical but also something of the psychological, or spiritual,

disposition of the Le Nain. Both paintings are marked by an almost complete absence of external action or overt drama; in each the figures stand immobile and largely disjunct from one another; in each they are aligned roughly parallel to the plane of the canvas; in each they convey the feeling of having been posed or placed in the positions they occupy, of having been grouped; and in each the gazes of the individual figures play a role of considerable importance. The *Drinkers* in contrast is vivid with action and observed behavior. Instead of disjunction between figures there is interplay of a kind that is relatively lacking in the Le Nain and completely absent from the Manet. The two drinkers who look directly at the beholder do so in a way and within a context that is basically inviting. Whereas in both the *Halte du cavalier* and the *Old Musician*, especially



Figure 5. Louis(?) Le Nain, *La Halte du cavalier*, ca. 1640.

the latter, the beholder is distanced, and made uneasy, by the strange and for the most part impassive figures who face him.²⁶

Watteau's *Gilles*, the second important French source for the *Old Musician*, is essentially a full-length portrait of a standing figure. Although Watteau's comedian is a grown man, it is clear that he was the model for the small boy dressed in a white blouse, loose light gray trousers, and wide-brimmed hat in Manet's painting. Here again it seems highly un-



Figure 6. Antoine Watteau, *Gilles*, 1717-19?



Figure 7. Louis(?) Le Nain, *La Charrette* (or *Les Moissonneurs*), 1641.

likely that Manet was compelled to paraphrase the *Gilles* by needs arising within the *Old Musician* itself. He could, for example, have based the figure in question on that of the boy playing the flageolet in the *Halte du cavalier*, whose dress is similar enough to that of *Gilles* for the final result to have been much the same. Instead Manet chose the opposite course: he used the similarity in dress to refer specifically to Watteau's painting while at the same time retaining the prior connection with the *Halte du cavalier*. The similarity in dress between the flageolet player and the comedian is only a surface indication of a much more significant affinity between the *Halte du cavalier* and the *Gilles*. The same characteristics—immobility, lack of action or drama, direct but uncommunicative confrontation of the beholder—are found in each, though in Watteau's painting of a costumed actor presenting himself to his audience these characteristics are rationalized both by the conventions of the full-length portrait and, more important, by the explicitly theatrical context.

At this point it becomes possible to formulate several basic questions. Why, for example, if the *Gilles*-like figure in the *Halte du cavalier* could very nearly have been the source for the equivalent figure in the *Old Mu-*



sician, did Manet insist on referring explicitly to the *Gilles* itself? To say that Manet saw a deep connection between Le Nain's and Watteau's paintings is not a full answer. Because the question then arises: Why was it important to him, as it seems to have been, that the *Old Musician* make that connection explicit? Furthermore, what led Manet to Le Nain and Watteau in the first place? Was it simply the recognition that each had something that he could use, or was it more? Finally, what is the relation, if any, between Manet's involvement with Le Nain and Watteau and the manifest Spanishness of the *Old Musician*, in particular its specific and gratuitous references to Velázquez? I shall discuss these questions in roughly that order.

3

THE REFERENCE to the *Gilles* in the *Old Musician* begins to seem if not less unaccountable at any rate less special when it is recognized that a second figure in Manet's painting, that of the man in top hat and brown cloak to the right of the seated violinist, is also partly based on a painting by Watteau. That figure is, of course, a direct quotation from Manet's own *Absinthe Drinker* (1858-59; fig. 8); and the Watteau on which I believe it partly to have been based is the small panel apparently depicting a man dancing called *L'Indifférent* (1716-18; fig. 9), which at that time was in the La Caze Collection in Paris and which Manet certainly knew. Germain Bazin has connected *L'Indifférent* with Manet's *Polichinelle* oil painting and sketch of 1873,²⁷ whose derivation from Watteau's panel is unmingled with allusions to the work of other painters. The *Absinthe Drinker*, on the other hand, appears to have been adapted rather freely both from *L'Indifférent*—I find the odd, almost dancelike formality and elegance of the pose of Manet's figure inconceivable except on the basis of that of Watteau's—and from Velázquez's paintings of the philosophers *Aesop* and *Menippus* (and perhaps from the cloaked and hatted figure who stands at the right of the *Drinkers* as well). The connection with Velázquez is documented in various ways. Manet himself described the *Absinthe Drinker* as one of "Four Philosophers" when in 1872 he listed it among the paintings he had just sold to Durand-Ruel.²⁸ Also, Antonin Proust reported in an important essay of 1901, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," that Manet had actually said that the *Absinthe Drinker* was related to the *Drinkers* of Madrid. He went on to quote Manet directly: "I have made,"

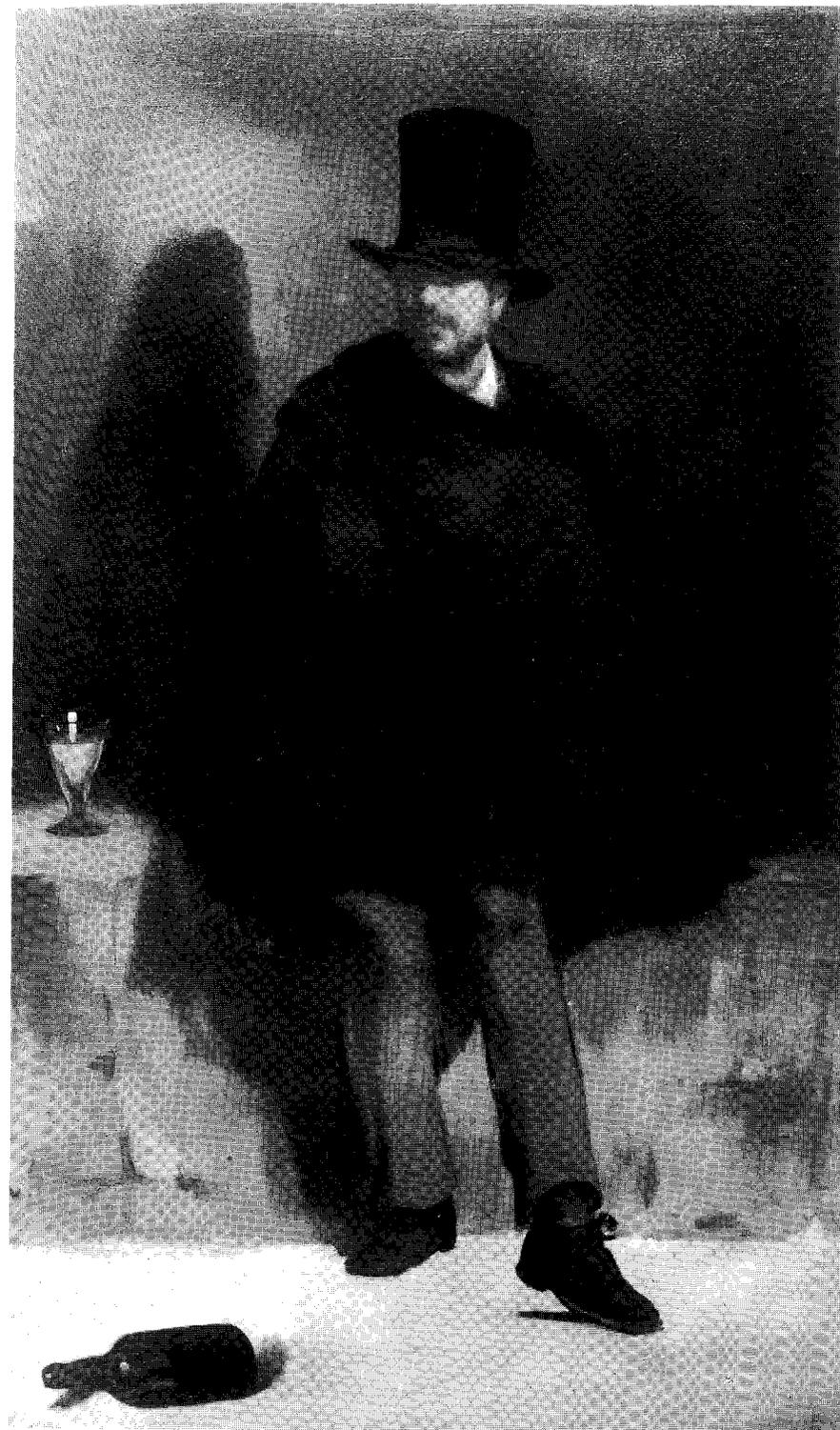


Figure 8. Édouard Manet, *The Absinthe Drinker*, 1858-59.



Figure 9. Antoine Watteau, *L'Indifférent*, 1716–18.

he says, ‘a Parisian type, studied in Paris, while putting into its execution the technical naïveté that I recognized in Velásquez’s painting. No one understands. Perhaps they will understand better if I make a Spanish type.’” (Proust added: “And, with that good humor undisturbed by anything, he offers the *Guitarrero*, which earns him an honorable mention in the Salon of 1861.”)²⁹ There is some confusion here. Proust’s account implies that Manet had seen the *Drinkers* by 1859, whereas he did not make his sole visit to Madrid until the summer of 1865. But Proust’s claim that the *Absinthe Drinker* must be seen in relation to Velásquez is not invalidated: Manet knew both the *Drinkers* and the *Aesop* and *Menippus* through Goya’s engravings, and had already formed his conception of Velásquez’s *métier* through copying pictures like the *Petits Cavaliers*. More generally, the explanatory power of Proust’s vision of Manet as having wanted above all to be clear, to make himself understood, must not be underestimated. For example, it suggests at least part of an explanation for the reappearance of the *Absinthe Drinker* in the *Old Musician*: by

quoting that figure in a picture whose relation to Velásquez was made explicit by unmistakable references to the *Drinkers*, Manet in effect made the connection between the original *Absinthe Drinker* and Velásquez explicit as well. (At the same time, Manet gave himself an opportunity to redo that figure, to paint it as he wished he had painted it three years before.) Similarly, the reference to the *Gilles* in the *Old Musician* made explicit the *Absinthe Drinker*’s partial and far from obvious basis in a painting by Watteau. This interpretation is, I think, strengthened by Richardson’s discovery of a specific Velásquez prototype for the small boy with his arm around the shoulder of his Gilles-like companion,³⁰ which suggests that Manet deliberately exploited Le Nain’s motif of the two boys in order to present references to Velásquez and Watteau in friendly proximity to one another. If all or even most of this is right, the obviousness and apparent gratuitousness of the *Old Musician*’s references to Velásquez and Watteau become more nearly intelligible: Manet deliberately referred to specific paintings by those men because he wanted to acknowledge publicly the connection he, and perhaps no one else, knew to obtain between his work and theirs.

The larger question of Manet’s relation to Watteau has been almost completely ignored by historians, who have concentrated instead on his manifest involvement with the great Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, and Italian masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³¹ I am convinced, however, that for most of the 1860s Watteau was at least as important a source of Manet’s art as any other painter, including Velásquez.

This is not easy to prove. For one thing, Manet’s involvement with Watteau rarely entailed direct quotation of specific works. The free adaptation of *L’Indifférent* that I have claimed to see in the *Absinthe Drinker* is characteristic of the relationships that obtain between individual pictures. For example, Manet’s *La Joueuse de guitare* (1866 or 1867; fig. 10) makes similar use of Watteau’s *La Finette* (1716–18; fig. 11), which throughout the 1860s was also in the La Caze Collection and which Manet definitely knew.³² (It is perhaps significant that *La Finette* is, and was then recognized to be, the pendant to *L’Indifférent*.) Sometimes the dependence of a particular Manet on one or more pictures by Watteau is further obscured by the simultaneous presence of explicit references to works by other artists. This seems to be the case in the important *La Pêche* (fig. 2), which Bazin has shown contains quotations from two paintings by Rubens (figs. 12, 13),³³ but which I believe ought also to be seen in the context of Watteau’s art, e.g. his pictures of couples strolling in



Figure 10. Édouard Manet, *La Joueuse de guitare*, 1866 or 1867.



Figure 11. Antoine Watteau, *La Finette*, 1716–18.



Figure 12. Schelte Adam Bolswert, engraving after Peter-Paul Rubens, *Landscape with Rainbow*.

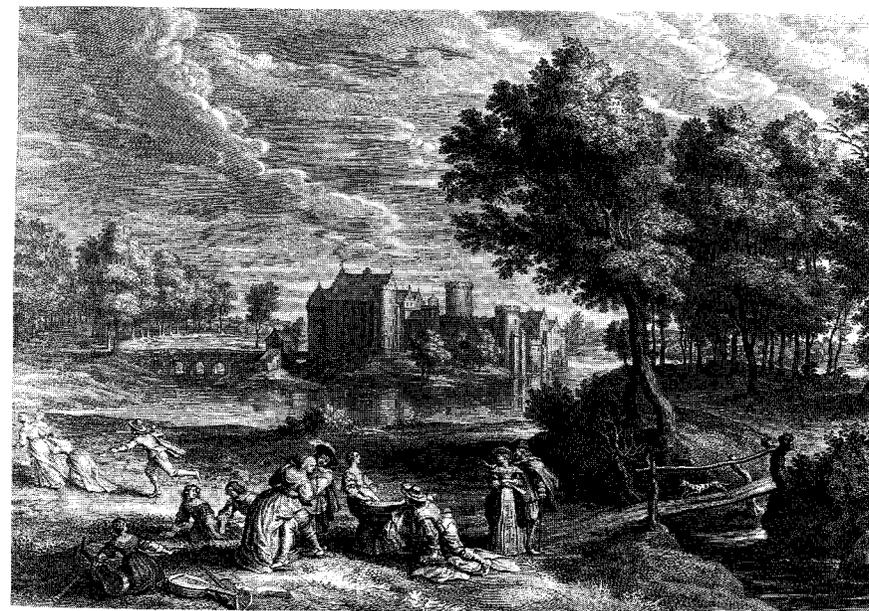


Figure 13. Schelte Adam Bolswert, engraving after Peter-Paul Rubens, *The Castle Garden*.





Figure 14. Antoine Watteau, *L'Assemblée dans un parc*, 1716–17.

country landscapes. Both the scale of Manet's picture and the actual character of the landscape are closer to Watteau than to Rubens—I am thinking of such works as *L'Amour paisible* (1718; fig. 77), *L'Assemblée dans un parc* (1716–17; fig. 14), *L'Île enchantée* (1716–18), *Le Rendez-vous de chasse* (1718; fig. 15), *La Chasse aux oiseaux* (fig. 16)³⁴—and I suggest that *La Pêche* ought to be seen as alluding to both those masters, and perhaps to Carracci as well. Jean Collins Harris has observed that the distant church spire in *La Pêche* is also found in the etching usually regarded as Manet's first, *Les Voyageurs* (1860–61; fig. 17), and that the landscapes depicted in the two works are similar.³⁵ Here again Manet appears to have taken over aspects of the general organization of a work like *L'Amour paisible*; and he seems to have adapted the travelers themselves either from one of several versions of Watteau's *Recrue allant joindre le régiment* or from the engraving of this subject by Watteau and Thomassin (fig. 18).³⁶ Finally, the relation of a painting by Manet to its source or sources in Watteau may be masked by the exotic, often the Spanish, character of the subject matter. Perhaps the most striking instance of this is *The Spanish Ballet* in the Phillips Collection (1862; fig. 19), which is generally discussed as if it were simply a literal record of the Mariano Cam-

prubi troupe of Spanish dancers, but which I suggest subtly and freely recombines motifs from various paintings by Watteau of the Italian and French Comedy troupes of his time—e.g. *Une Mascarade* (fig. 20),³⁷ *Sous un habit de Mezetin* (fig. 21),³⁸ *L'Amour au théâtre italien*,³⁹ among others.⁴⁰ No single picture by the earlier master comes close to accounting for the *Spanish Ballet* as a whole. More serious, there is



Figure 15. Antoine Watteau, *Le Rendez-vous de chasse*, 1718.

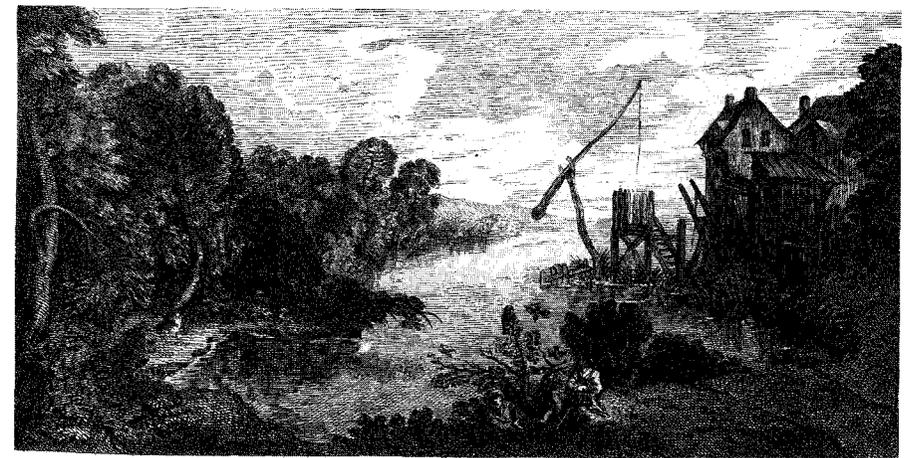


Figure 16. Comte de Caylus, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *La Chasse aux oiseaux*.

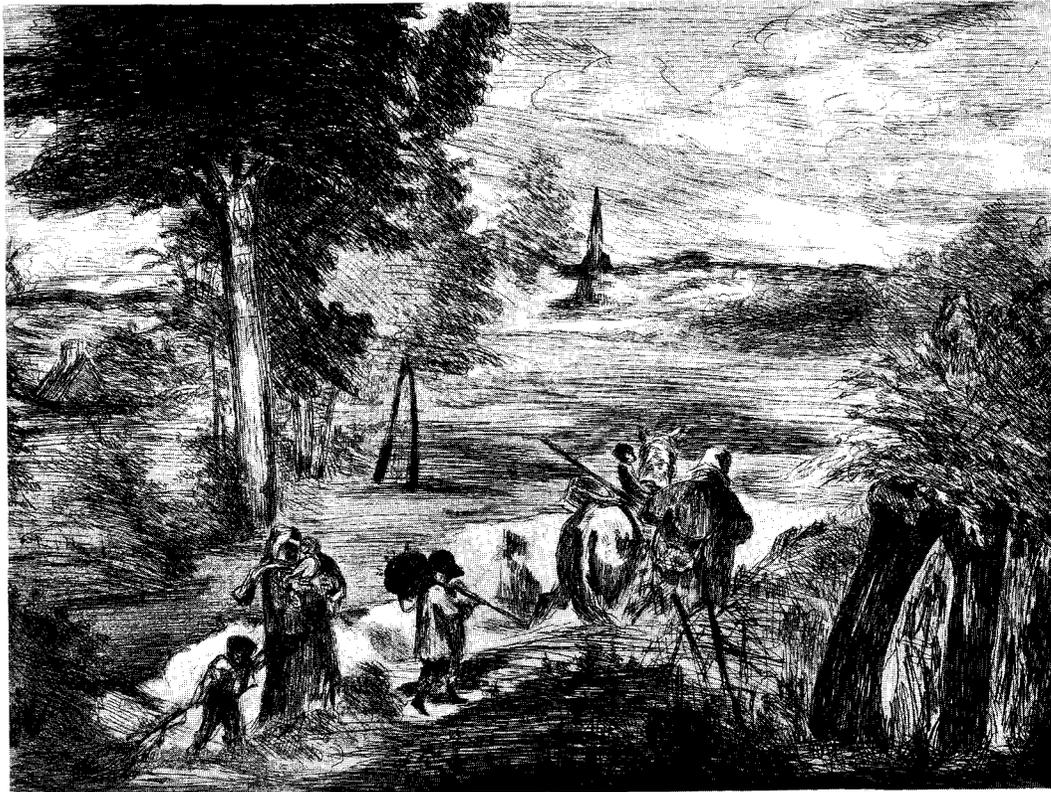


Figure 17. Édouard Manet, *Les Voyageurs*, etching, 1860–61.



Figure 18. Antoine Watteau and Simon Thomassin, engraving after Watteau, *Recrue allant rejoindre le régiment*.

no single Watteau which seems unmistakably to have left its mark in Manet's painting. Nevertheless, I believe that both the basic conception of the *Spanish Ballet*—a troupe of performers presenting themselves to the beholder, who is also their audience—and individual figures in it derive ultimately from Watteau. I want also to call attention to Watteau's *Italian Comedians* (fig. 22),⁴¹ in which an entire cast of players strike characteristic poses on what is recognizably some sort of stage or playing area: the presence in that painting of a seated musician, a standing Gilles, and a bearded man in a dark robe or cloak leaning on a cane suggests that it may have had a role in the conception of the *Old Musician* itself.

Another instance of the masking of Watteau sources by an ostensible Spanishness occurs in the *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume* (1862; fig. 23), which is inscribed "à mon ami Nadar" and presumably represents the latter's mistress. Although the painting bears a general relation to Goya's *Maja Clothed*, the figure of the young woman resembles very closely that of the reclining female nude sculpture in Watteau's *Fêtes Vénitiennes* (1718–19; figs. 24, 25); while the pose of her upraised hand



Figure 19. Édouard Manet, *The Spanish Ballet*, 1862.

and arm almost exactly imitates that of one of the women in *Une Mascarade*.⁴² The latter connection in particular seems unmistakably to have been intentional, specific.

Other possible instances of Watteau's importance for Manet's art at roughly this time might be cited. The *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* may have been adapted from various figures in Watteau's paintings or "Figures de différents caractères." The two small children who play together in the foreground of *Music in the Tuileries* may derive from any of a number of paintings by Watteau; I suggest in fact that the *Music* looks to Watteau perhaps fully as much as to later artists like Debucourt.⁴³ Even Manet's decision to append a four-line poem by Baudelaire to his etching of *Lola de Valence*, a common practice in theater prints generally, may have been principally inspired by the use of similar poems in eighteenth-century engravings after Watteau.

Over and above the connections that can be made between specific works, and largely independent of the convincingness of those connec-



Figure 20. Antoine Watteau and Simonneau l'aîné, engraving after Watteau, *Une Mascarade*.



Figure 21. Thomassin le fils, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *Sous un habit de Mezetin*.



Figure 22. Bertrand Baron, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *Italian Comedians*.

tions, Manet's extensive reliance not just during the first half of the 1860s but throughout his career on subjects of guitarists, dancers, costumed performers of all kinds, and theatrical productions of diverse sorts⁴⁴ must be seen as having received important and perhaps even decisive *sanction* from the art of Watteau—in particular the sanction that this apparently less than fully serious class of subjects was in fact consistent with the highest artistic purposes and ambitions. (One might say that for Manet the concept of sanction takes the place, or assumes the importance, which the concept of influence traditionally has. Moreover, the differences between the two concepts are rooted in what I see as the historical uniqueness of Manet's situation. His problem was not how to overcome the power of the past to determine the present, but what to make of a past that had lost the power to do just that constructively.)⁴⁵ Indeed, the more attuned one becomes to the possible scope of Manet's relations with Watteau, the less fundamental or essential the obvious Spanishness of much of his subject matter begins to seem. The first stanza of the short

poem which accompanies the engraving of *Une Mascarade* is perhaps apposite: “The costumes are Italian / The airs French, and I wager / That in these true comedians / Lies a pleasing deception . . .”⁴⁶ This is not to suggest that Manet’s enthusiasm for the Camprubi dancers or for Spain generally was other than intense or genuine. Rather, it is to say that what enabled him to exploit that enthusiasm in his painting was a prior, and more profound, involvement with theatrical subject matter—an involvement whose chief artistic precedent was Watteau. The arrival in Paris in August 1862 of the Camprubi troupe gave Manet something which, consciously or otherwise, he had been waiting for: a contemporary equivalent for the Italian and French Comedy troupes of the early eighteenth



Figure 23. Édouard Manet, *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*, 1862.

Figure 24. Laurent Cars, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *Fêtes Vénitiennes*.



Figure 25. Laurent Cars, engraving after Watteau, *Fêtes Vénitiennes*, detail of statue of reclining woman (reversed).



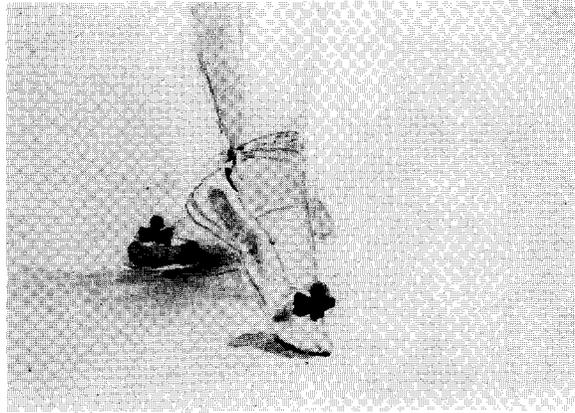


Figure 26. Édouard Manet, *Ballet Slippers*, watercolor, ca. 1862.

century. Even a work as slight as the pencil and watercolor *Ballet Slippers* (ca. 1862; fig. 26) must be seen, not merely as a record of the ballerina Anita Montez, but as marking Manet's discovery of an equivalent in his own experience for the position of the feet in a picture like *L'Indifférent*.

4

IT IS IN this context that we must see the two etchings which Manet made as trial frontispieces for his *Collection de huit eaux-fortes*, published by Cadart in October 1862. The first of them—the one which Marcel Guérin calls *Deuxième Essai de frontispice* (1862; fig. 27)⁴⁷—depicts the character of Pulcinella, ancestor to the French Polichinelle, thrusting his head through an otherwise drawn curtain as in early engravings of scenes from the commedia dell'arte. To the left of the actor's head the curtain seems to become a wall; at any rate, it supports both a sword (in its scabbard and with belt attached) and a print or drawing of a balloon flying above a landscape with buildings and windmills. A wicker basket filled with clothes and containing a guitar and sombrero rests on the ground. In an important article, “The Symbolism of Manet's Frontispiece Etchings,” Theodore Reff demonstrates that both the curtain and head of Pulcinella were drawn at an advanced stage in the preparation of the plate, thereby transforming what until then had been a symbolic image of the artist's studio into an “ambiguous stage.” Reff asks why this occurred and proposes the following answer:

If not intended initially, the actor was probably suggested to Manet by the objects already in existence: the sword and guitar (both of which had appeared in previous pictures by Manet) are familiar properties in many scenes of the Commedia dell'Arte, just as the articles of exotic costume in the basket are familiar features in his own carefully composed productions on Spanish themes. Thus his studio suggested the stage, with himself the figure behind the scenes, even before the latter was actually drawn.⁴⁸

He relates the basket and its contents to the painting called *Guitar and Hat* which Manet painted earlier that year to hang over the door of his studio, and discusses seventeenth- and eighteenth-century antecedents to that canvas.⁴⁹ He connects the print or drawing of a balloon in flight with *The Balloon* (1862; fig. 28), the large lithograph of a balloon ascension in the Tuileries which Manet executed for Cadart at exactly the same time.⁵⁰ Finally, Reff suggests that the Pulcinella may stand for Manet himself, “identified here not with the courtly art of Velásquez [as in *Music in the Tuileries*],⁵¹ but with the popular art of the Italian comedy. In this studio



Figure 27. Édouard Manet, Guérin's *Deuxième Essai de frontispice*, etching, 1862 (actually *Premier Essai de frontispice*).

strangely transformed into a stage, he is the figure behind the scenes and the entertainer appearing before his audience.”⁵²

The other etching, Guérin's *Premier Essai de frontispice* (1862; fig. 29),⁵³ depicts a portfolio of prints resting in a wooden stand, at the base of which a cat sits quietly on its haunches and gazes at the beholder. Reff points out that the depicted label on the portfolio also functions as the title on the actual page, and suggests that various apparent analogies between the portfolio and the cat were intended by Manet to identify the two:

Thus the cat becomes not simply the artist's studio pet, a genre detail, but a sophisticated allusion to the artist himself, an echo of the portfolio containing his work and name, and in some indefinable sense an embodiment of his presence here, staring intently at the spectator. Its direct descendant is the famous black cat in *Olympia*, a creature of similar significance.

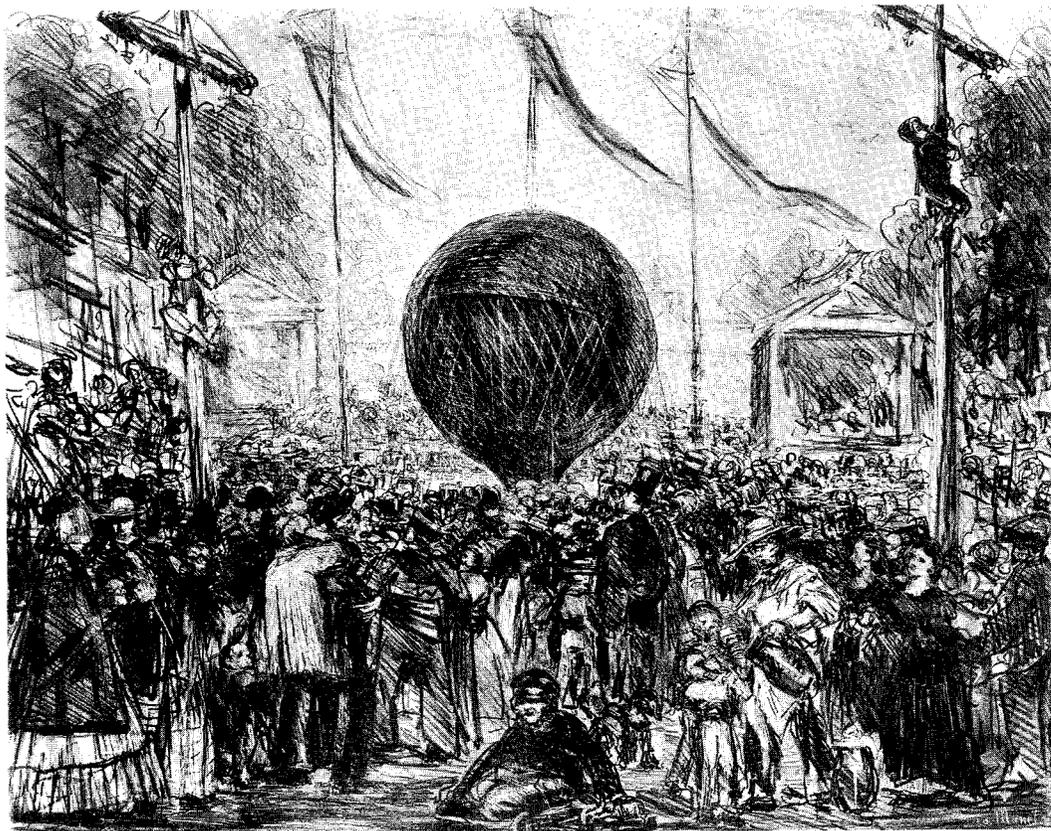


Figure 28. Édouard Manet, *The Balloon*, lithograph, 1862.

Figure 29. Édouard Manet, Guérin's *Premier Essai de frontispice*, etching, 1862 (actually *Deuxième Essai de frontispice*).



Both etchings, Reff maintains, are therefore “based on a similar awareness of [Manet] himself as a performing artist.”⁵⁴ But he does not try either to place that awareness in the broader context of Manet's art during the early 1860s, or to account other than by association for Manet's choice of a subject from the commedia dell'arte in works as special, as likely to summarize essential themes, as prospective frontispieces.

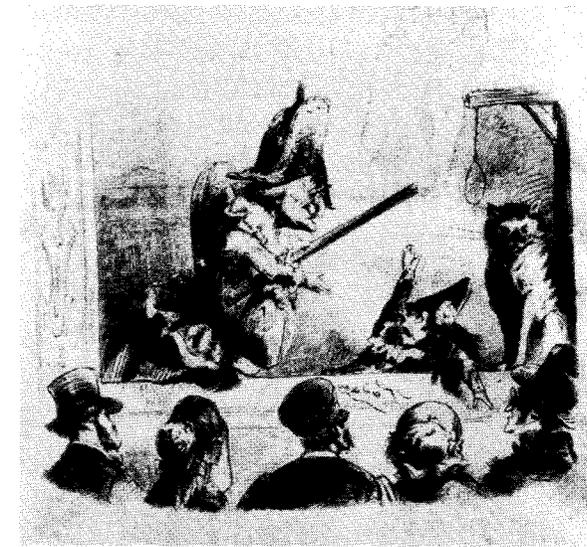
A further connection between the two etchings may be noted at this point: each relates to the marionette theater established in the Tuileries by the young novelist and critic Edmond Duranty in the summer of 1861. The chief marionette was Polichinelle—in fact the theater was known as *le théâtre de Polichinelle*—which suggests that the Pulcinella in Manet's etching may have had its immediate inspiration in his experience of Duranty's puppets. This suggestion finds strong support in the fact, hitherto unremarked, that Manet actually depicted Duranty's marionette theater in the right-hand portion of *The Balloon*: the roofed structure shown

there is clearly the same as that in the frontispiece by Alphonse Legros to Fernand Desnoyers's *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle* (1861; fig. 30), a verse prologue written expressly for the theater's opening.⁵⁵ Thus the connection, noted by Reff, between the print or drawing of a balloon in flight in the *Deuxième Essai* leads, in part at least, back to Polichinelle himself. Furthermore, the fact that Polichinelle's traditional companion was nothing other than a cat suggests that the *Premier Essai* as well ought to be seen in relation to Duranty's marionettes. And this suggestion too finds unexpected support in the virtual identity between Manet's cat and the one depicted onstage with Polichinelle on the back cover of Duranty's *Théâtre des marionnettes du jardin des Tuileries* (fig. 31), a collection of short plays illustrated in color by the author.⁵⁶ The vignette in question was by Nadar—the dedicatee of the *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish*



Figure 30. Alphonse Legros, frontispiece etching to Fernand Desnoyers, *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle*, 1861.

Figure 31. Nadar [Félix Tournachon], rear cover illustration for Edmond Duranty, *Théâtre des marionnettes du jardin des Tuileries*, published in 1862.



Costume—who was then preparing to build his famous balloon *Le Géant*.⁵⁷ (So once again a connection emerges between balloon ascensions and Polichinelle.) Curiously, Polichinelle's cat seems to have been missing during at least the first months of the theater's operation. In a short review in *L'Artiste* praising Duranty's venture, Victor Luciennes complained:

But something is missing: a cat, I haven't seen a cat. Do you remember, when we were children and our mothers led us by the hand, do you remember that handsome cat, Polichinelle's inseparable companion? It reminded us of the chorus in Sophocles and Euripides. The cat, *mon Dieu!* it's tradition, it's the poetry of our childhood! . . .⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the cats that appear in Duranty's illustrations, as well as the single cat portrayed onstage in another print by Legros, the lithograph *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle des Tuileries* (1861; fig. 32),⁵⁹ prove that the traditional relationship had not been abandoned.

The question that now arises is *why* Manet referred, although indirectly, to Duranty's marionettes in both frontispiece etchings. My answer is that those references are only somewhat less than explicit acknowledgments of his prior involvement with Watteau, the commedia dell'arte, and theatrical subject matter generally. This is not to say that Manet identified personally with the *character* of Polichinelle or Pulcinella, as Reff suggests. The ultimate subject of Manet's etchings is not himself but essential aspects of his art. Reff is right when he connects various objects

in the *Deuxième Essai*, such as the sword and the guitar, with the *commedia dell'arte*. But he is almost certainly wrong when he implies that Manet became aware of those connections only as he worked on the plate. It seems far more probable that he had been deliberately exploiting them for years.

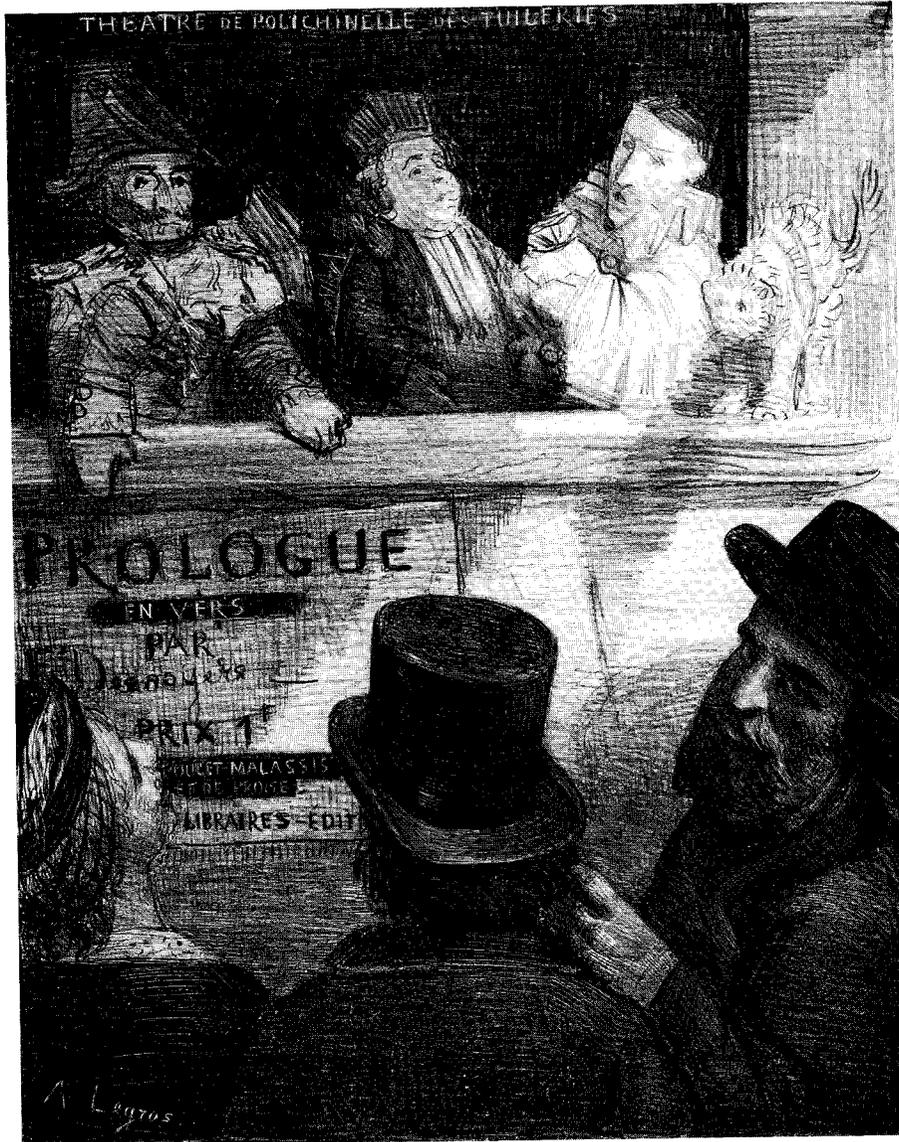


Figure 32. Alphonse Legros, *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle des Tuileries*, lithograph, 1861.

A few additional remarks about the *théâtre de Polichinelle* are perhaps in order here. Duranty's project was the latest in a succession of ventures whose aim was to revive the theatrical conventions of the eighteenth century.⁶⁰ Those ventures belonged in turn to a broader current of interest in the *commedia dell'arte*, which received its initial impulse from the estheticism and hedonism of the generation of Romantic writers and artists who reached early manhood around 1830, but which went on to coexist and even partly to coincide with the Realism of the circle of Courbet and Champfleury. Duranty's marionette theater is an example of just this coincidence of seemingly diverse points of view. Duranty was Champfleury's protégé and during the fifties had written avowedly Realist criticism and fiction; Desnoyers had defended Realism in the pages of *L'Artiste* in 1855;⁶¹ Champfleury himself seems to have supported Duranty's venture;⁶² even the drawing of *Polichinelle* by the young artist Amand Gautier on the cover of Desnoyers's prologue had previously appeared on the announcement of the *Grande Fête du Réalisme* that had taken place in Courbet's atelier on October 1, 1859, almost two years before the marionette theater opened.⁶³ At the same time, Duranty was able to enlist the sympathies of men like Théodore de Banville and Baudelaire, whose interest in the *commedia dell'arte* and the Rococo was rooted in Romanticism and who throughout the 1850s had occupied positions that cannot simply or easily be assimilated to Realist theory or practice.

By the summer or early autumn of 1862, when Manet etched the prospective frontispieces, Duranty himself may well have been known to him.⁶⁴ Legros definitely was, and it is likely that Desnoyers and Amand Gautier were as well.⁶⁵ More significantly, at least three men associated with Duranty's project—Baudelaire, Champfleury, and Aurélien Scholl—have been identified among the crowd of fashionable strollers in *Music in the Tuileries*, which dates from roughly the same moment as the frontispieces. And in general Manet's great painting celebrates the very milieu that revived and supported the marionettes at this time. Moreover, *Music in the Tuileries* is related as regards both style and subject matter to *The Balloon*, which, as has been shown, contains a representation of the *théâtre de Polichinelle*. All this suggests that *Music in the Tuileries* relates, if only indirectly, to Manet's involvement with Watteau and the *commedia dell'arte*. And it further suggests that that involvement itself must eventually be seen in relation to the collective sensibility that found itself reflected in the puppet theater at precisely this moment.⁶⁶



Figure 33. Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Judgment of Paris*, engraving after a lost drawing by Raphael, ca. 1515–16?

5

Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe (1862–63; pl. 3) is probably the most striking instance of the way in which references to specific works by other painters may obscure a less specific but possibly fundamental reliance upon Watteau. In the first place, the three foreground figures in Manet's painting are a direct quotation from Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving after Raphael's composition of *The Judgment of Paris* (fig. 33).⁶⁷ It is also known that Manet turned to Giorgione's *Concert champêtre* [the scholarly consensus now gives the painting to the young Titian] for the most immediately controversial aspect of his painting, the depiction of two fully clothed men picnicking with two women one of whom wears nothing more than a kind of shift and the other of whom is (almost) wholly naked.⁶⁸ But despite the specificity of these connections, the basic conception of the *Déjeuner* is far closer to Watteau than to either Raphael or Giorgione. Florisoone has called the *Déjeuner* a "sort of *scène galante*," and has related it to Watteau's definitive achievements in that genre.⁶⁹ I believe he was right to do so. Without the precedent of Watteau's fêtes

champêtres Manet might never have found his way to the conception of perhaps his sheerest, most intractable masterpiece. (The full sense in which this may be said to have been the case will, I hope, become clear as we proceed.) Furthermore, the *Déjeuner's* relation to Watteau's art is not simply generic. When Manet's painting was first exhibited at the Salon des Refusés in 1863 it was called *Le Bain*, a title which inevitably directs attention to the woman who has waded up to her knees in the stream or pond in the middle distance and who now raises her shift and bends over as if to fill some sort of cup or other receptacle with water. There is no equivalent for this figure in Marcantonio's engraving. But there is a painting by Watteau, *La Villageoise*, which also depicts a woman wading in shallow water while raising her skirt and turning her head to the side; I believe Manet adapted the pose of the bathing woman in the *Déjeuner* from an engraving after it (fig. 34).⁷⁰ A drawing by Manet in the Louvre (fig. 35)⁷¹ seems to represent an intermediate stage in the process of adaptation: the reliance on Watteau's figure is closer than in the final painting, but the arms as well as the legs are mostly bare, the breasts are partly revealed, and the costume seems generally simpler, more shiftlike. Manet's



Figure 34. Antoine Aveline, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *La Villageoise*.



Figure 35. Édouard Manet, untitled drawing, 1850s.

use of *La Villageoise*, especially in conjunction with the original title of the painting, is evidence for the suggestion that Watteau's art presides over the conception of the *Déjeuner* as a whole, though it remains to be seen what relation, if any, Manet's use of Raphael and Giorgione bears to his involvement with Watteau.

Manet's other supreme painting of 1863, *Olympia* (pl. 4), is also based extremely closely on a sixteenth-century Italian source, Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538; fig. 36). Another article by Reff, "The Meaning of Manet's *Olympia*," deals at length with this connection,⁷² while Sandblad has emphasized the relation of *Olympia* and the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, among other paintings, to the Japanese color woodcuts that had begun to come into vogue in Paris during the 1850s.⁷³ Unlike the *Déjeuner*, *Olympia* is not generically or fundamentally grounded in Watteau.⁷⁴ But its derivation is more complex, more implicated in modes of feeling whose ultimate source is the Rococo, than its closeness to Titian suggests. Specifically, if one compares the wood engraving by Prunaire after "a wash drawing in Chinese ink by Manet that was the first idea for *Olympia*" according to Guérin (fig. 37),⁷⁵ or the almost identical watercolor reproduced by Julius Meier-Graefe in his 1912 book on Manet (fig. 38),⁷⁶ with Achille Devéria's lithograph of a *sujet gracieux* for a *macédoine* (1820s; fig. 39),⁷⁷ there seems to be little doubt that it was to Devéria, and not to Titian or any classical master, that Manet turned for the initial conception of his masterpiece. Devéria, born in 1800, four years before his brother Eugène, whose *Birth of Henri IV* was one of the sensations of the Salon of 1827, was primarily a graphic artist. Together with his brother he played an important role in the revival of interest in the Rococo that took place during the 1830s, first in the *petit cénacle* dominated by Petrus Borel and later, around 1835, in the apartment in the impasse du Doyenné in which Gérard de Nerval, Arsène Houssaye, and Théophile Gautier all lived. The lithograph in question, which Stanley Meltzoff dates around 1824, exemplifies the return to Rococo subject matter and shades of feeling that took place in the work of several young Romantic artists, at least partly under the influence of Jean-Frédéric Schall, the last important practitioner of the traditions inaugurated by Watteau.⁷⁸ Significantly, the connection between Manet and Devéria is documented by Proust. In his invaluable *Souvenirs* of the painter, Proust describes how, while he and Manet were still painting under Thomas Couture, that is, before early 1856, they were befriended by Auguste Raffet and taken by him to the Louvre:

He led us straight to Rembrandt's *Supper at Emmaus* and Velásquez's *Cavaliers*, and then had us make a long station in front of the drawings of the masters, above all those of Watteau and Chardin.

There we found [Eugène] Devéria, author of the *Birth of Henry IV*, whom he [Raffet] had arranged to meet. Devéria led us before the Veroneses and gave us an enthusiastic speech in praise of the Italians.

"The young men," Raffet said laughing, "have listened politely to the advocate. The painter can conduct them to his painting at the Luxembourg."

Our visit there was brief. Raffet addressed praises to Devéria, and we all joined in, which made Devéria our protector and friend. Later he even gave Manet a small *Fête* by Fragonard painted on slate, which my comrade later passed on to me as a present.⁷⁹

Eugène Devéria's gift suggests that, like Raffet, he encouraged in the young Manet an interest in eighteenth-century French art. And it seems likely that this early friendship was a factor in Manet's later use of the work of Achille Devéria for the first conception of *Olympia*.

For Baudelaire, who was not born until 1821, Achille Devéria was one of the chief figures of the Romanticism of the Restoration, a period idolized by the poet throughout his life. In fact, Baudelaire saw Devéria as epitomizing that aspect of early Romanticism which was closest to the Rococo in spirit and which largely amounted to a kind of revival of Rococo artistic conventions and modes of feeling. As early as his "Salon of 1845" Baudelaire protested against the current tendency to denigrate Devéria's accomplishment, which he described in the following terms:

For long years, and all for our pleasure, this artist poured forth from the inexhaustible well of his invention a stream of ravishing vignettes, of charming little interior-pieces, of graceful scenes of fashionable life, such as no Keepsake—in spite of the pretensions of the new names—has since published. He was skilled at coloring the lithographic stone; all his drawings were distinguished, full of feminine charms, and distilled a strangely pleasing kind of reverie. All those fascinating and sweetly sensual women of his were idealizations of women that one had seen and desired in the evening at the *café-concerts*, at the Bouffes, at the Opera, or in the great Salons. Those lithographs, which the dealers buy for three sous and sell for a franc, are the faithful representatives of that elegant perfumed society of the Restoration, over which there hovers, like a guardian angel, the blond, romantic ghost of the duchesse de Berry.⁸⁰

Almost fifteen years later, in "The Painter of Modern Life," Baudelaire named Devéria among the "historians of the doubtful charms of the Restoration,"⁸¹ And in his "Salon of 1859" he remarked of that period: "It was a period of such beauty and fruitfulness, that not one spiritual need

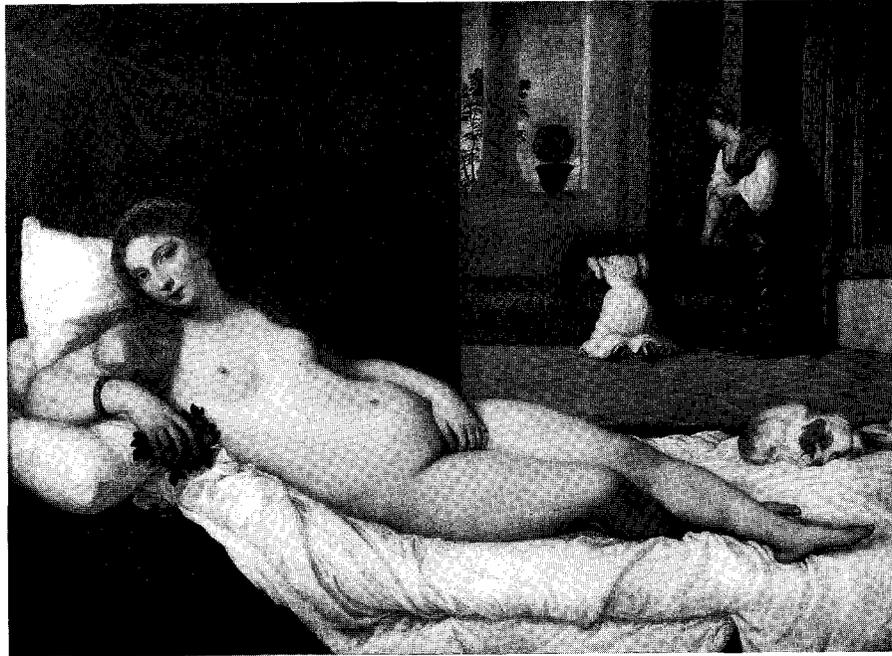


Figure 36. Titian, *Venus of Urbino*, 1538.

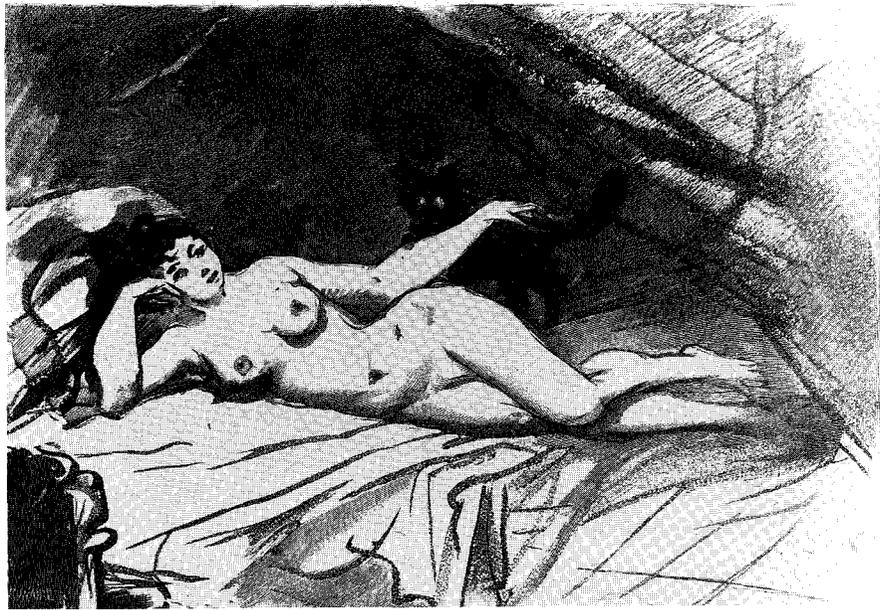


Figure 37. Alfred Prunaire, wood engraving after an early wash drawing for *Olympia*.



Figure 38. Édouard Manet, early wash drawing for *Olympia*, 1863.



Figure 39. Achille Devéria, *sujet gracieux for a macédoine*, lithograph, 1820s. From Maximilien Gauthier, *Achille et Eugène Devéria*, 1925.

was forgotten by its artists. While Eugène Delacroix and [Eugène] Devéria were creating a great and picturesque art, others, witty and noble within a little sphere—painters of the boudoir and of a lighter kind of beauty—were adding incessantly to the present-day album of ideal elegance.”⁸²

By 1860 if not earlier Baudelaire and Manet were close friends;⁸³ and it is perhaps not accidental that Manet turned to Achille Devéria for the initial conception of the painting which, more than any other, critics and historians have tended to describe as Baudelairean.

In *Music in the Tuileries* Baudelaire is depicted in conversation with Théophile Gautier and Baron Taylor, two of the most distinguished representatives of the Romantic era then alive.⁸⁴ I have already suggested that *Music in the Tuileries* relates indirectly to the *théâtre de Polichinelle*, and have observed that the sensibility that revived the marionette theater in the early sixties had important roots in the Romantic taste for the Rococo. *Olympia*, whose first conception was, it seems, based on just such a Romantic source, ought also to be seen in relation to that sensibility. The close resemblance—at least of pose—between the notorious cat in *Olympia* and the cat in Legros’s lithograph *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle des Tuileries* strongly supports, and perhaps decisively confirms, this suggestion.⁸⁵

6

MANET’S involvement with the art of Louis Le Nain was neither as general nor as profound as his involvement with that of Watteau.⁸⁶ The first painting that seems clearly to depend upon Le Nain is the *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* (1860; fig. 40). The figure of his father—note in particular the clenched fist—seems to me to have been inspired by figures such as those in *Le Repas de paysans* (1642; fig. 41) in the La Caze Collection, which Manet undoubtedly saw in the important exhibition of French painting from private collections that was held at Martinet’s on the boulevard des Italiens the same year.⁸⁷ (Watteau’s *Gilles*, *L’Indifférent*, *La Finette*, and *Le Rendez-vous de chasse*, plus versions of *Une Mascarade* and *L’Amour paisible*, were in that exhibition as well.) The figure of Manet’s mother, although perhaps related generally to the woman standing at the left of the *Repas de paysans*, seems to have been based on the female figure in another major painting by Le Nain, *The Forge* (1640s;



Figure 40. Édouard Manet, *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*, 1860.



Figure 41. Louis(?) Le Nain, *Le Repas de paysans*, 1642.

fig. 42), then as now in the Louvre.⁸⁸ It may or may not be significant that the relative positions of Manet's father and mother are paralleled rather closely by those of the central male figure and the standing violinist in the *Repas de paysans* [see also the standing woman and seated peasant at the left, especially the latter's right fist resting on his thigh, which closely matches that of Manet *père* in the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*]. Almost certainly, though, the arresting mood of Manet's painting—above all the apparent abstraction or self-absorption of his parents—derives from Le Nain.⁸⁹ Even the apparent harshness of Manet's depiction of his parents, which disturbed the critic Léon Lagrange,⁹⁰ may have been the result of a conscious attempt to emulate Le Nain's powerful example.

The second painting that seems to have been based at least in part on Le Nain is *The Gypsies* of 1861. Only a few fragments of the original picture survive: Manet himself dismembered and mostly destroyed the large canvas after it was shown in his retrospective exhibition of 1867. But on the strength of the etching that he made of it in 1862 (fig. 43)⁹¹ it seems likely that the female gypsy seated on the ground and holding an

infant in her lap was adapted from the similar figure in the foreground of Le Nain's *La Charrette* (fig. 7), then in the collection of Philippe de Saint-Albin but well known through reproduction,⁹² or from that of Saint Anne in the *Nativity of the Virgin* (ca. 1640; fig. 55) in the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont in Paris, or from both together. Furthermore, the standing gypsy has, I feel, certain affinities—of sheer presence as much as anything else—with the blacksmith in *The Forge*, and the possibility that Manet partly based his figure on Le Nain's cannot be discounted.

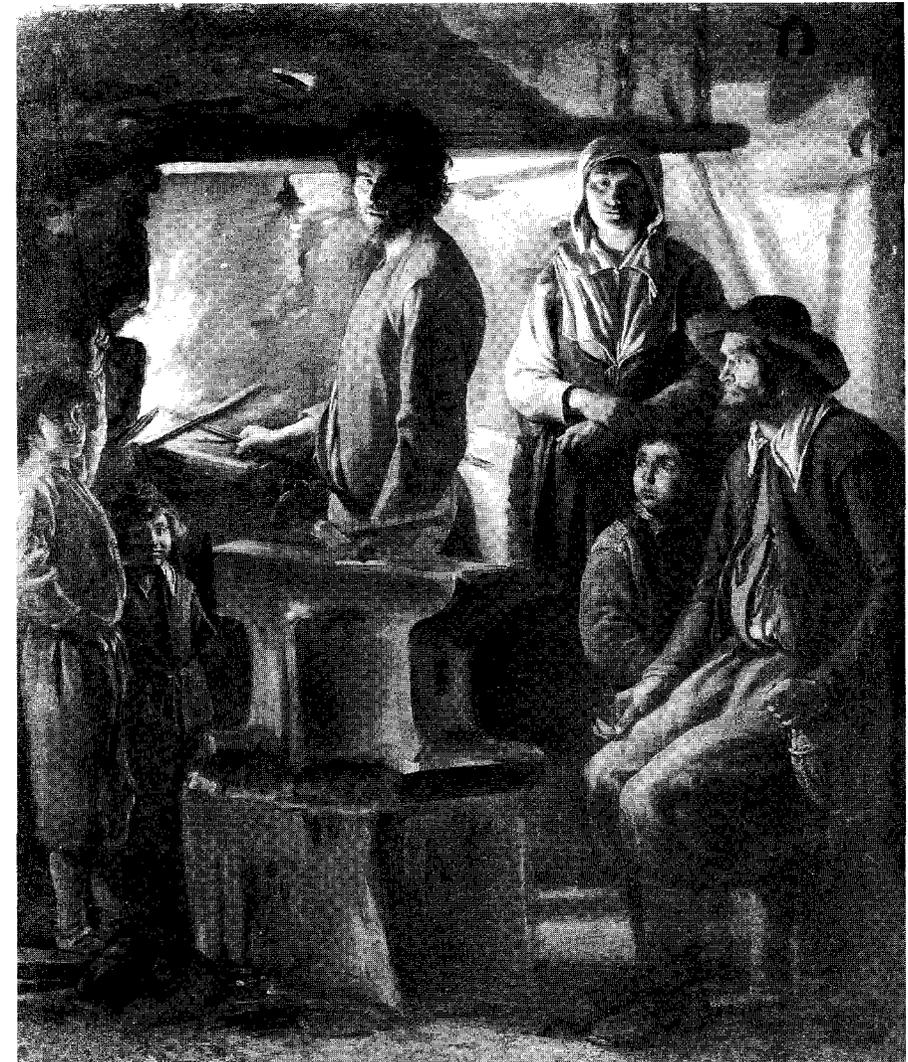


Figure 42. Louis (?) Le Nain, *The Forge*, 1640s.

Manet's interest in Le Nain reached its high-water mark in the *Old Musician*, probably the next painting he made, after which it seems more or less to have disappeared from his work as an active, shaping factor. But despite its relatively short tenure—from 1860 through 1862—it was far from unimportant; indeed, his deeper and more lasting involvement with Watteau cannot fully be understood apart from it.

Manet's uses of Le Nain were charged with an immediate, so to speak *prima facie* significance which his references to Velásquez and Watteau did not have, or not to the same degree. The three brothers Antoine, Louis, and Mathieu Le Nain, of whom the most important by far was Louis, had been largely unknown until the years just before the Revolution of 1848 when a group of young, democratically inclined writers about art—including Théophile Thoré, Paul Mantz, Philippe de Chennevières, Louis Clément de Ris, Eudore Soulié, Charles Blanc, and Jules Husson who wrote under the name Champfleury—began to rediscover them.⁹³ Their subsequent revival was almost wholly the work of Champfleury, who throughout the 1850s was Courbet's foremost champion and the principal ideologist of what both men called Realism in painting and literature. Champfleury's first slim book on the Le Nains was published in 1850, at the outset of the struggle for Realism, but his definitive and more substantial study of their art did not appear until ten years later. By then, as Meltzoff has shown, he explicitly revered them as anti-academic, democratic, above all realistic painters—in short as forerunners of the contemporary art for which he himself had fought. What will always be seen as true of the Le Nains, Champfleury wrote in 1850,

is that they were full of compassion for the poor, that they would rather have painted them than the mighty, that like La Bruyère they yearned for the fields and the country people, that they believed in their art and practiced it with conviction, that they were not afraid of *lowness*, that they considered men in tatters more interesting than courtiers in embroidered garments, that they obeyed the inner feeling that moved them, that they spurned academic instruction the better to render their sensations on canvas; finally, because they were simple and natural, they remain after two centuries and will always remain three great painters, the brothers Le Nain.⁹⁴

Champfleury's views, both historical and critical, received the widest publicity, and by the early 1860s, if not before, the Le Nains were inextricably associated both with Champfleury and with the modern art which he was known to have supported.⁹⁵ Moreover, by 1862 Manet actually knew Champfleury, whose connection with the *théâtre de Poli-*



Figure 43. Édouard Manet, *The Gypsies*, etching, 1862.

chinelle has already been mentioned and who is portrayed seated and in conversation with several women in the right-hand portion of *Music in the Tuileries* [in fact the figure in question is the composer Jacques Offenbach; the personage between the heads of Manet and his friend Albert de Balleroy at the extreme left of the canvas has been identified as Champfleury]. All this suggests that Manet's references to Le Nain in the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*, the *Gypsies*, and the *Old Musician* ought to be seen as a kind of declaration that he conceived of his art as essentially realist in intent, and hence as an invitation to compare his work with that of the great painter of the preceding generation, Gustave Courbet. Courbet himself may have been influenced by Louis Le Nain's *Repas de paysans* when he painted the first masterpiece of Realism, *An After Dinner at Ornans* (1848–49), and it is possible that Manet was deliberately challenging that work in the *Old Musician*. At any rate, the decision to make one of his figures a violinist seems to relate simultaneously to Courbet and Le Nain. In fact, the seated figure at the right of the *Repas de paysans* is almost identical with the main figure in the *Halte du cavalier*, and in some respects—the bare head, the feet alongside one another—seems even closer to Manet's seated musician. If it is also true, as I have suggested, that the standing girl at the left of the *Old Musician* is largely based on the two similar figures in *La Charrette*,⁹⁶ Manet made use of no less than three paintings by Le Nain, two of them well known, in his picture of 1862. Except by directly paraphrasing Courbet himself, Manet could hardly have done more to declare his basic allegiance to the Realist conception of art.

(This is borne out by the fact, which I simply mention here, that Manet's next large-scale figure painting, the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, represents just such a paraphrase of Courbet—specifically, of the *Young Women on the Banks of the Seine* (1856–57; fig. 44), which had scandalized the French public when it was shown in the Salon of 1857. The ostensible subject matter of the two paintings is roughly the same: two women, obviously of loose morals, picnicking on the banks of the Seine. Only in Manet's painting they have been joined by their male companions and have undressed. Manet's gratuitous quotation of Courbet's rowboat was intended to make the connection between the two paintings even more explicit than it already was, and thereby to ensure that the *Déjeuner* as a whole would be seen in the context of Courbet's art and of Realism generally.)

Almost certainly, Manet did not mean by these acts to identify his pur-

poses with Courbet's. Rather, the deliberate and explicit siting of his art in the context of precedents and assumptions established by Courbet and Champfleury during the preceding dozen years should, I feel, be seen as an attempt to make the differences between his realism and theirs as salient and as intelligible as it was in his power to make them. I intend to discuss those differences at length in a future study.⁹⁷ For the present I call attention to just one of them, which hinges on the status and ultimately the meaning of the art of Watteau. The subject comes up more than once in Champfleury's later study of the Le Nains, the first time in the following passage:

The dean of art critics, M. Delécluze, regards "the simple path opened up by Le Nain as altogether higher than the imaginary and fantastic genre treated by Watteau." I shall not discuss this opinion; oppositions between masters, comparisons between the ancients and the moderns, are the stuff of long but not very useful theses. Watteau is Watteau, Le Nain is Le Nain. If my nature pushes me toward Le Nain, I shall not prevent fanciful spirits from going into raptures



Figure 44. Gustave Courbet, *Young Women on the Banks of the Seine*, 1856–57.

over Italian masques, actresses, and amorous embarcations. But the eighteenth century is slandered when it is decked out exclusively as an age of gallantry.⁹⁸

(Because, he adds on the same page, the eighteenth century also includes Chardin, and the reaction against the painters of fêtes galantes in the name of the antique, and finally the Revolution itself.) This initial comparison between Le Nain and Watteau is somewhat restrained, perhaps because Théophile Thoré, whom Champfleury admired and to whose pseudonymous identity of William [or simply W.] Bürger he dedicated his study when it was published in book form in 1862,⁹⁹ had made it clear in his own critical and historical writings that he considered Watteau a great painter. The second time Champfleury treats the same comparison he again tries to be circumspect but in the end his true feelings emerge more distinctly. The passage in question is long but worth quoting extensively. Champfleury is discussing the *La Caze Repas de paysans*: “One of the most singular pictures by Le Nain was exhibited in 1860, on the boulevard des Italiens, among the *maîtres galants* of the eighteenth century, Watteau, Pater, Lancret, Boucher, Gillot, Lemoyne, etc. This painting cut a sad figure, I must say, in the midst of all that elegant sensuousness. Imagine among courtiers arrayed in silk a band of coalmen who have fallen into flour, and you will barely get an idea of the sober and stern Le Nain, whose description I will leave to W. Bürger.”¹⁰⁰ He goes on to quote Thoré’s description of the *Repas de paysans*, which ends with the remark that everything about that painting constitutes “a singular anomaly in the midst of the pompous and theatrical art of the seventeenth century.”¹⁰¹ Champfleury continues:

And W. Bürger added rightly that “among the Parisian painters,” Le Nain and Philippe de Champaigne, because of their convictions, seemed two “eccentrics.” This is the right word. Le Nain is an *eccentric*. Ordinarily quiet and tranquil, he appeared severe in such company. Put a portrait by Holbein alongside a woman’s head by Fragonard, and you will realize the gap that separates those two ways of seeing nature, an experience like reading a novel by Crébillon *fils* after meditating upon one of Pascal’s *Pensées*. Art is ruled by mysterious currents which guide the hand of a Watteau and a Boucher, but that those pleasant masters are now the objects of a cult, that their admirers, imitators, and all their contemporaries are also admired, that is a fad and an adoration against which one cannot protest too much. Those periods of decadence led to the Revolution, and in the presence of this *prettiness* in art, one is forced to regret that the revolution initiated by David was not sharper and more absolute, since one century later we are reverting to this third-rate art, which had its

historical and social causes, but which should be considered solely as an amusement.

Would it not be good today to put aside Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard, in order to concern ourselves with a more glorious French school: Clouet, Poussin, Champaigne, Le Nain?¹⁰²

This comes close to misrepresenting Thoré, who contrasts Le Nain with the rhetorical, and in *that* sense theatrical, art of the seventeenth-century French masters (e.g. Le Brun, Vouet),¹⁰³ not with Watteau and the other eighteenth-century French painters of whom Champfleury disapproved. By 1860 Champfleury’s contrast between Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard on the one hand and a more serious and ultimately higher strain in French painting on the other was itself traditional, having been formulated in roughly those terms by writers such as Pierre Hédouin, Clément de Ris, and Champfleury himself in the years before the Revolution of 1848. But whereas Hédouin and Clément de Ris admired Watteau and sought chiefly to counteract what seemed to them the excessive fashion for his work and the uncritical overvaluing of his followers, Champfleury throughout his life was driven to deny the Rococo all value as art.

7

I HAVE tried to show that between 1859 and 1863 Manet was deeply and almost continuously involved with Watteau, and that his reference to the *Gilles* in the *Old Musician* should be seen as an acknowledgment of that involvement. At the same time, Manet chose to make his acknowledgment in a painting that was fundamentally dependent on Le Nain, whose art Champfleury had just claimed was the antithesis of Watteau’s. Given Champfleury’s importance, and his association with Courbet, it is not credible that Manet did this lightly, or that the significance of the conjunction escaped him. On the contrary, he must have been sharply aware that to yoke references to these painters was to go in the teeth, not just of Champfleury’s distaste for Watteau, but of the traditional contrast between the realistic, democratic, serious, naïve, and moral painting of the Le Nains and the fantastic, aristocratic, frivolous, contrived, and dissolute art of Watteau which was basic to Champfleury’s view of the history of French painting. Manet hardly meant by this—he literally could not have meant—to call into question the realism of the Le Nains. His intention seems to have been the reverse: to claim Watteau for realism, in op-

position both to those who, like the Romantics of the 1830s, delighted in his art because of what they saw as its fantasy, sensuality, and gratuitousness and to those others who, like Champfleury, deplored it for the same qualities.

Manet was not alone in seeing Watteau as essentially realistic. As early as 1847 Paul Mantz had argued that Watteau, Chardin, and Boucher had painted their contemporaries truly.¹⁰⁴ But the man who more than any other had advocated this view of Watteau's art was the great critic, connoisseur, and pioneer art historian—and dedicatee of Champfleury's 1862 volume on the Le Nains—Théophile Thoré.¹⁰⁵ In the same article on the boulevard des Italiens exhibition of French paintings from private collections from which Champfleury quoted his description of the *La Caze Repas de paysans*, Thoré wrote of Watteau:

To superficial observers, Watteau does not seem to adhere closely to nature. This, however, is his supreme merit, along with his sense of elegance, and his subtle and delicate mind.

Didn't this melancholy young man go observing and sketching in the outskirts of Paris whenever he had the leisure? When sickness attacked his vital forces, where did he think of going to recuperate? To the country, by the water, in the heart of nature. And how many studies he has left, all of them, even in their most minute details, stamped with penetrating passion! One sees very clearly that he loved nature, in his mysterious and poetic landscapes, in his dazzling, bright skies, in the incomparable ease of his figures, with the delicate and deft extremities, in the exquisite coloring of his women's complexions, in the impressive combinations of nuances in his fabrics, in the harmony of his total effects.¹⁰⁶

Thoré acknowledged that Watteau's art often did not look realistic. But he did so in a way that at once deepened the concept of realism—freeing it from mere verisimilitude—and left no doubt as to his belief in Watteau's stature:

And, incomprehensibly, although he begins thus directly from the observation and love of nature, he ends up with an extremely mannered kind of drawing, with forms that are almost impossible, with mirages of color such as are rarely seen. But this happened also to some other painters of genius, Rembrandt, for instance, and Velásquez, who are at once very fantastic and very real. This is one of the mysteries of painting among certain privileged colorists.¹⁰⁷

Earlier in the same article Thoré apostrophized the painter in terms which implicitly opposed any account of Watteau's art, such as Champfleury's, that viewed it as fundamentally aristocratic and therefore as corrupt, decadent, antidemocratic: "Watteau! Before him, they painted

princesses, and he painted shepherdesses; they painted goddesses, and he painted women; they painted heroes, and he painted mountebanks—and even monkeys!"¹⁰⁸ These remarks are to be understood in the context of Thoré's democratic and socialist political beliefs. In a series of groundbreaking catalogues of various Dutch and Flemish museums and largely theoretical articles on the relation of art to society written during the late 1850s, Thoré stated and restated his belief that the dominant, progressive tendency of the modern age was toward universality, by which he meant the transcendence of class and even of nationality in the recognition of all men's common humanity. (I shall return to this later on.) Accordingly, he deplored the "art for art's sake" esthetic of Romanticism and summed up his own counterdoctrine in the words "art for mankind"—"l'art pour l'homme." He regarded the Dutch school of the seventeenth century, which he saw as essentially naturalistic, as the great precedent for the modern art in which he believed. Read in this light, his apostrophe to Watteau salutes that painter for having taken a decisive, even revolutionary step within French painting toward the still incompletely realized achievement of a truly human art.

Thoré's interpretation of Watteau's art parallels Manet's use of that art in the *Old Musician*. It is also true that Manet's sense of the compatibility of Watteau and realism is manifest in his first ambitious painting, the *Absinthe Drinker* of 1858–59, and seems to have been one of the basic givens of his vision. But in Thoré's articles on the boulevard des Italiens exhibition of 1860, as well as in his books and essays of the late 1850s and early 1860s, Manet found what he would have considered further sanction for his own intensely personal vision of Watteau's art. It goes without saying that Thoré's writing could not have had that power had it not been the product of one of the finest pictorial intelligences then at work. (Which is only a way of saying that the sanction Manet created for himself in the art of the past, and the sanction he found created for him by the most serious art writers of his time, were finally the same.) In fact, I regard it as questionable whether without Thoré's sanction Manet would both have acknowledged publicly his involvement with Watteau and have declared publicly his commitment to realism in the same painting, as I have claimed he did in the *Old Musician*.

One further point might be mentioned here. In 1862 Champfleury described the foreground figures in paintings by the Le Nains as "actors who come in front of the curtain to sing the final couplet to the public."¹⁰⁹ That, however, did not persuade him to connect their work with

the overtly theatrical art of the eighteenth century which was so repugnant to him. By 1863 Ernest Chesneau, a young critic influenced by Thoré, was able to write in a long essay significantly entitled “Realism and the French Spirit in Art”:

It is therefore in French manuscripts, at the moment that art becomes secularized and leaves the convents, starting in the eleventh century, that we should look for the nascent realism which made up and still makes up our taste in art. . . . How could one deny the kinship of certain groups of saints in the miniatures with the groups that are found in the work of the brothers Le Nain, Philippe de Champaigne, Watteau himself, and Chardin, and to a lesser extent Pater and Lancret? Among the variety of those talents, whether humble and modest, or brilliant, dazzling, superficial, and light, how often we encounter, even in the most corrupt, this return to naïveté which poses the characters in a scene simply facing the spectator, unaware of outside sounds, their eyes vaguely staring into space, looking without seeing:—a singular characteristic that turns up repeatedly at the most widely separated dates!¹¹⁰

Chesneau saw both the Le Nains and Watteau as realists. But what is more significant, he did so partly because of just that immobile, frontal, jarringly direct, but finally reserved and impassive relation to the beholder which characterizes the figures in both the *Halte du cavalier* and the *Gilles*. If that aspect of their work is thought of as a particular kind of theatricality—and Champfleury’s simile together with the overtly theatrical context of many of Watteau’s paintings encourage one to take this step—Chesneau’s remarks suggest that the recognition of Le Nain’s and Watteau’s shared theatricality, experienced as central to their common realism, may have been an important factor in Manet’s decision to conjoin references to those masters in a single, explicitly realist painting.¹¹¹

8

MANET’S decision to yoke Le Nain and Watteau in the *Old Musician* rested, then, on a particular view of the history of French painting. But because it did, it directly engaged with issues even more basic and far-reaching in their implications than the meaning of Watteau’s art or the relation of Watteau to the Le Nains. Between the mid-1840s and the early 1860s the history of French painting had become a subject of intense study and, partly in response to developments in contemporary art, heated controversy within France. During those years—years which included Manet’s apprenticeship under Couture, his first visits to foreign

museums, and his gradual emergence as an independent artist—Le Nain and Chardin were revived, Watteau’s reputation was finally stabilized at a high level, the first archival sources of the French painting of the past were published, the contents of provincial museums began to be explored, the *Revue universelle des arts* and the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* were founded, the first important monographs on French masters appeared, and two great exhibitions—the Exposition Universelle of 1855 and the Manchester exhibition of 1857—surveyed the art of Europe since the thirteenth century and thereby made inescapable various questions having to do with the nature of French painting and its relation to that of other schools. The most important of those questions can be formulated roughly as follows: Which painters, ancient and modern, are authentically French and which are not? More generally, in what does the essence or natural genius of French painting consist? Does a body of painting in fact exist in which that essence or genius is completely realized? Has painting in France ever been truly national, or has it always fallen short of that ideal, however the ideal itself is understood?

These questions are not wholly separable from one another. The judgment that certain painters but not others constitute the authentic French school implies a particular view of the nature of French painting, and probably of Frenchness as such, just as any characterization of the essence of French art implies a particular canon of painters and paintings. As a result, contemporary discussions of these issues may strike the modern reader as at least somewhat circular or arbitrary. Moreover, the questions themselves are far from rigorously historical by modern standards. The fact remains, however, that almost every important French scholar of the French painting of the past addressed himself to them, not only at the time but for decades after: one might say that the discipline of art history arose in France largely in response to them.

What makes the situation still more complex is that from the outset those questions were of more than just historical significance. The Exposition Universelle in particular had made it clear that starting with Jacques-Louis David, and probably with Watteau, French painting had been the best in the world. Writing in 1857, Thoré described the contemporary French school as “the first in Europe and almost the only one.”¹¹² But the more the task of modern art was felt to have devolved upon French artists, the more all questions about the nature and destiny of French art became inseparable from questions about the nature and destiny of modern art as such. Thus one finds different and sometimes violently opposed

critics claiming justification for their value judgments in different histories of French painting, different canons of authentically French masters, different concepts of Frenchness. Here, for example, is another passage from the article by Chesneau quoted above:

The realistic tendencies of the modern school are in fact nothing but the preliminary signs of a legitimate return to the earlier tendencies of French art. Those primitive aspirations, which were repressed and smothered from the very beginning, without ever being able to develop or manifest themselves with consequence, are in strict accord with the very genius of the French intellect. . . . A chronological study of the French painters who remained truly French, who shook off or simply refused the yoke of the Italian tradition, would abundantly prove the accuracy of these assertions.¹¹³

It may seem that Chesneau simply used historical arguments to defend his preferences in contemporary art. But it would be at least as true to say that his sense of the historical identity of French painting largely determined those preferences in the first place. And in general both the depth and the prevalence of such concerns in the art writing of the 1850s and 1860s cannot be exaggerated.

One of Chesneau's assumptions in the above passage deserves closer examination: that only those artists are authentically French who resisted or escaped the influence of the great tradition of Italian painting. Like his equation of Frenchness and realism, this assumption seems to have had its immediate source in Thoré,¹¹⁴ whose powerful influence on his contemporaries throughout the 1860s has never adequately been appreciated. Thoré's discussion of the French school at Manchester, for example, begins with a brief historical survey in which it is claimed that throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and with a few exceptions, e.g. the Clouets, Jacques Callot) France in effect produced nothing but Italian artists. The breakthrough to something like an authentically national art was the accomplishment of Watteau and the distinction of the eighteenth century generally:

But now at last in the eighteenth century a French school begins: Watteau is a Frenchman by his turn of mind, by his style; still, he comes from the Flemish border, and, as a technician and colorist, he is akin to Rubens. It is not far from Valenciennes [Watteau's birthplace] to Antwerp.

Chardin is French, too, but his touch and color are also a little Flemish.

From that moment until the end of the century. . . . yes, there was a French school, about which opinions may differ, but which in the absence of any painting in other countries had the privilege of casting its influence across

Europe. Nattier, François Boucher, Fragonard, and others are at least Pompadour-Frenchmen. Greuze is a Louis XVI-Frenchman.¹¹⁵

Three years later, in 1860, Thoré opened his first article on the exhibition of French paintings on the boulevard des Italiens with the following paragraphs, which I want to quote at length in order to convey the quality of his effort to put forward an account of the history of painting in France:

Yes, the French school is really there! Some critics like to maintain that the French school hardly exists. They have only to enter this exhibition. Ah, how French it is! Elegance, caprice, skill, taste; lots of charm and lots of wit: one feels right away that one is in France.

One is forced to recognize that these artists are at home, that their inspiration and manner, their feeling and style are proper to their country and their time, and that they constitute an original school distinct from every foreign school.

In point of fact, the pleiad now shining at the exhibition on the boulevard belongs almost entirely to the eighteenth century. Could it be that the French school dates only from the end of the reign of Louis XIV?—Perhaps.

During the sixteenth century in France one perceives in effect only the Italian style imported by Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo, Sellaio, Rosso, Primaticcio, Niccolò dell'Abate, and others; and the Florentine or Bolognese style, from Jean Cousin to Martin Freminet.—Those who did not become Italianized are the Flemish: the Clouets.

In the seventeenth century the craze for Italian imitations is such that Molière, the most French of French writers, glorifies Mignard, "this great man become all Roman." The Roman and Bolognese school of Vouet, Mignard, and Lebrun dominates so exclusively, that the best native artists go so far as to leave their own country and adopt another nationality: the Norman Poussin, the Lorrainese Claude, the Burgundian Courtois, Valentin and others all live and die in Rome—doing the opposite of those Florentine and Bolognese painters who, one century earlier, had come to live and die in France. . . . The only ones who do not become Italianized are always the Flemish: the painter of the great cardinal and the painter of the great king, Philippe de Champaigne and Van der Meulen, who die in Paris members of the French Academy.

Toward the end of the century, the Dutch influence begins slightly to offset the Italian taste, with Jacob Van Loo, who establishes his dynasty in France; with Largillière, trained in the town of Rubens by the Flemish Goubau, then in London by Lely, who continued the tradition of Van Dyck; by Rigaud, who also perfected his art by copying Van Dyck, with the advice of his friend Largillière; and by many others, who serve as transitions between the entirely Roman *grand siècle* and an altogether different period during which a freedom in manners authorized freedom in art and the blossoming of French fantasy in painting.

Is it certain that the French school of the eighteenth century is more original than that of the seventeenth century? Is it certain that Watteau is more French

than Lebrun? But that couldn't be clearer! Just as Rubens and Jordaens are more Flemish than their predecessors, the Van Coxcyes and the Van Orleys; just as Velázquez and Murillo represent Spain better than their predecessors who aspired to imitate Raphael and Titian.¹¹⁶

The greater Frenchness of Watteau, like the greater Spanishness of Velázquez, consisted largely in his realism, his fidelity to nature (including human nature), his insistence upon basing his art on the life around him rather than on foreign notions of what art should be. It was, Thoré wrote, always through a return to nature, through naturalism, that schools of painting, "even the most ideal or the most religious," renewed themselves;¹¹⁷ and the French school of the eighteenth century was no exception. He might have added—he as much as said—that it was only thus that they became truly national.

In Chesneau's writing Thoré's ideas are qualified by a kind of innate conservatism. The opposite occurs in the work of one of the most interesting critics of Manet's generation, Jules-Antoine Castagnary:

Art is indigenous—or it is not art. It is the expression of a given society, of its mind, customs, and history—or it is nothing. It belongs to the soil, the climate, and the race—or it has no character.

Let us not be afraid to admit it, we have never had any French painting in France.

The seeds of a national art—based on nature and on the expression of life like all the national arts that developed in Europe—were beginning to grow in the various intellectual centers of our old provinces (you can see in the Clouets in the Louvre what heights this art might have reached), when, directly after the Peninsula Wars, Italian art suddenly invaded France, brought by the gentlemen of Francis I, by their horses' hooves. The blow was terrible. The arrival of Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto, the formation of the school of Fontainebleau, the growing importance of Paris—nothing more was needed. Never was an invasion more rapid or more decisive. French painting was killed on the spot. . . . From then on, no more art, except a secondhand art, one inspired by the art of other nations instead of issuing from the guts of the life around it. What is the upshot of all this? Our chief glories, those we tend to be most proud of, are only half ours. Are Nicolas Poussin or Claude Lorraine really French? Not by their style or turn of mind, and not by their choice of adopted country. Le Sueur himself, although he never left Paris, is Italian. From this great flow of imitation that begins with Primaticcio and ends who knows where toward the end of the last century, a few individuals emerge: Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin. But how few of them there were, and how little influence they had.¹¹⁸

It is not part of my purpose here to document the continuing importance of this version of the history of French painting.¹¹⁹ But something of its pervasiveness and durability may be gathered from the following passage,

written in 1888, from Chennevières's informative *Souvenirs d'un directeur des Beaux-Arts*:

And why should we not have the courage to cry out at once, loud and openly: "Enough of the eighteenth century; enough of this corruption. The eighteenth century has softened, spoiled, rotted, and in the end killed us. I mean that it softened and spoiled people at the time and that it took only a few amateurs to reintroduce that ferment of our taste in our national art to get us to decay in turn. Ah, how right David and the strong legion of his students were to scorn it, curse it, banish it, with hatred, mercilessly, from the height of their scorn; and it is about time that we rid ourselves in turn of this flour, this poisoned face powder! . . . So this is the eighteenth century, which the Goncourts and the Marcilles and the Walferdins and all of our amateurs for the past thirty years, those in whom we had the most confidence, have presented to us as the only French school, as the period when the true French genius was at its height!"¹²⁰

When Chennevières wrote those words Manet had been dead almost five years. But the issues raised in Thoré's writings of the late 1850s and early 1860s were still alive.

9

IN VIEW of Manet's involvement with the art of the past, it is inconceivable that he was unaware of these issues. And in fact his paintings of the early 1860s suggest that he was more than just aware of them. Starting in 1859 Manet repeatedly adapted paintings by Watteau or engravings after those paintings in his own work. By 1860, the year the *La Caze Repas de paysans* was exhibited on the boulevard des Italiens and Champfleury's study was published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, he began deliberately to exploit the Le Nains as well. Both involvements are conjoined in the *Gypsies* of 1861 and, more explicitly, in the *Old Musician* of 1862. The first picture obviously inspired by Chardin, a still life, was painted in 1862.¹²¹ Two years later Manet produced a number of paintings in this genre, all of them in frank emulation of Chardin, the best of them as good as Chardin.¹²² These painters—the Le Nains, Watteau, Chardin—were the heart of the pre-nineteenth-century French school as Thoré and those influenced by him saw it. And the inference is strong, first, that Manet too, perhaps partly because of Thoré, saw those masters as authentically French; and second, that his explicit references to them—in particular to Le Nain and Watteau in the *Old Musician*—were intended to secure or establish or guarantee the Frenchness of *his own* art.



These inferences find support in the testimony of his lifelong friend and fellow student under Couture, Antonin Proust. In his *Souvenirs* of the painter, Proust quotes the young Manet's account of an incident involving Courbet and the painter Narcisse Diaz de la Pena:

"The other day [Courbet] paid a visit to Deforge—Diaz was there. 'How much will you sell your Turk for?' he asks Diaz, pointing to one of the pictures on show. 'But that's not a Turk,' says Diaz, 'it's a Virgin.' 'Oh, in that case it doesn't answer my purpose—what I wanted was a Turk!' And with that Courbet and his friends return to the Café Madrid, laughing like mad. Diaz ran after him, trying to impale him with his wooden leg. What a gagster, eh? But he can fool all he likes, the fact remains that this master painter is very French at heart. Because it goes without saying that we French have a depth of probity which always brings us back to the truth, despite the tours de force of the acrobats. Look at works by Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin, David himself. What a sense of truth!"¹²³

Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin—and, almost certainly, the David of the realistic *Death of Marat*. Proust went further in "L'Art d'Édouard Manet":

In our country we have such a false idea of the conditions of beautiful drawing, beautiful color, and sound composition that Watteau and Chardin went almost unnoticed in the midst of a clamor of noisy brushes and metallic drawing, and the banal arrangements prescribed by the formulas of titled professors. At best, Watteau was praised for the elegance of the characters of his *fêtes galantes* and Chardin was granted the badge of master of still life. But no more attention was paid to Watteau's astonishing drawings in red chalk heightened with black pencil, or to Chardin's portraits, than to the works of Clouet, Janet, and Cousin. Manet led us back to a respect for this national tradition, to an admiration for these unrecognized things. He made all this live again by his personal observations, but the eyes of his contemporaries persisted in not seeing.¹²⁴

The last sentence is tantalizing but ambiguous. Did Proust mean to hint that Manet consciously and deliberately re-created the French art of the past by his observations of reality, that is, in his paintings? Is that what his contemporaries failed to see? (His next remarks, which concern Manet's admiration for Ingres and the way in which *Olympia* reveals that admiration, perhaps point to this reading.) Or did he simply mean that Manet made the art of Watteau and Chardin live again in his conversation, but that his contemporaries failed to see their merit? In any event, Proust's witness—and I shall be quoting similar remarks further on—leaves no doubt that Manet was consciously concerned with Frenchness and that like Thoré he associated it with probity, truthfulness, realism.

For Proust, appreciation of the characteristic virtues of French painting

entailed the sharp downgrading, not only of the Italianate school of the court of Francis I, but of the art of the Italian Renaissance itself. In his *Souvenirs* he remarks that what he admires above all about Puvis de Chavannes is "his aversion to the Italian Renaissance, his fidelity to the simplicity and measure of our French art."¹²⁵ And in the article of 1901 he writes: "One of the most curious symptoms of the force of superstition is that the error which, for centuries, since the fatal epoch of the Renaissance, has led art away from its natural path, should be so strong that every loyal expression of the truth could appear as a lie."¹²⁶ Proust cannot here be assumed to represent Manet's views: the explicit dependence of both the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia* on works by supreme masters of the Italian Renaissance makes it clear that Manet's relations with the art of foreign schools were far less circumscribed, far less ideological, than Proust's.

But this reflection, like every other about Manet, raises a further question: What is to be made of the fact, hitherto unremarked, that the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* were the first paintings in roughly four years—since before the *Absinthe Drinker*—to refer unmistakably to Italian sources?¹²⁷ It is extremely unlikely that this was due simply to an aversion on Manet's part that later disappeared: the various copies which he made after Italian paintings in the mid-1850s, as well as the numerous drawings of that period after Andrea del Sarto and other Florentine masters, suggest that Manet was by nature strongly attracted to Italian Renaissance art.¹²⁸ Nor can the absence of Italian sources be explained away as merely accidental: his use of previous art was highly conscious, even programmatic, though it has not yet fully emerged what that program was. Almost certainly, the absence of Italian sources between late 1858 (if not before) and late 1862 was the result of deliberate abstention. And that is exactly what one would expect if, as has been inferred, Manet was intent on securing the Frenchness of his own art on the basis of a canon of French masters that excluded the Italianate figures Thoré deprecated. In other words, I am suggesting that Manet refrained from using Italian art, not because he did not admire it, or because he overlooked it, but because the use of it was ruled out from the start by his understanding of Frenchness. His decision in late 1862 to base the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* on Raphael and Giorgione must therefore have been concomitant with some analogous change in that understanding, or at any rate in his canon of French masters.

By the same reasoning the extensive allusions to Flemish and Spanish

artists in Manet's painting during these years must mean that he did not regard the art of those schools as irreconcilable or incompatible with Frenchness. And this, too, seems to bear a direct relation to the art writing of the time. "The only ones who aren't Italianized are always the Flemish," Thoré wrote in 1860, meaning the Clouets, Philippe de Champaigne, and Van der Meulen; while in those articles and elsewhere he claimed both that Watteau and Chardin were distinctively French and that their art bore deep analogies to that of Flanders and Holland.¹²⁹ In particular, the actual historical relation of Watteau to Rubens came to be generally recognized during the second half of the 1850s.¹³⁰ The *Le Nains*, too, were seen in terms of Flemish art. But most commentators also detected a strong Spanish element in their paintings. For example, Thoré described them as "sorts of displaced Spaniards,"¹³¹ while Champfleury wrote:

[N]o doubt the *Le Nains* were trained in the Flemish school, by a Flemish master, by exposure to Flemish paintings which had a great influence on their future. They are Flemish and Spanish at the same time; an annotator of eighteenth-century catalogues never failed to describe their paintings as "in the manner of Murillo," which showed some insight on his part. They are often Flemish in their choice of costumes, but they are Spanish in the way they paint. I must be careful here if I want to make myself understood, because they are the same time very French.¹³²

And he quoted the description by a young writer, Zacharie Astruc—who by the early 1860s was a close friend of Manet's—of a painting by the *Le Nains* that had been exhibited in Manchester: "*Six small children*. One plays the violin, a charmingly fanciful object, the other plays the oboe. They are almost in the same plane and seem unaware of each other. Background wall dark gray. The ground offers green nuances. The colors are brilliant, although in a quiet range. Very close to Velásquez in its feeling for crystalline tints. Its appeal lies in its simplicity and calm. Its naïveté strikes you as a graceful oddity."¹³³ I believe that associations such as these at least sanctioned, and perhaps suggested, the double references to Watteau and Rubens in *La Pêche* and to *Le Nain* and Velásquez in the *Old Musician*; and in general that they provided Manet with what I think of as *access* to Flemish and Spanish painting, which because of his canon of French masters he did not then have to Italian painting. (Manet's relation to Dutch painting is discussed separately further on.) This is not to say that such associations compelled or even inclined Manet to make use of foreign sources in the first place. On the contrary, the impulse to com-

bine both French and foreign sources, already manifest in the *Absinthe Drinker*, seems to have been one of the deepest traits in his artistic character and must be understood as the expression of profound need. One might say that these sorts of associations, which one encounters time and again in the art writing of the 1850s and 1860s, laid down the conditions within which that trait could be expressed and that need fulfilled.

In an obvious sense Manet's access to the art of foreign schools was determined, at any rate limited, by his canon of authentically French painters. But in another, ultimately far more important sense his access to foreign art may be said to have been *enabled* by that canon. That Manet required such access—that the great painting of foreign schools was in effect unavailable to him without it—is a crucial difference between his enterprise and that of any painter before him.

In this connection it is informative to compare Manet's relations with the art of the past with what was then meant by *eclecticism*. In an essay of 1862, for example, the critic and historian Henri de La Borde characterized what seemed to him the French essence of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's recent painting *Jesus among the Doctors* and then asked:

In claiming to acknowledge the French inclinations or the French traditions in Ingres's talent, must we forget his borrowings, which deserve notice, from Greek and Italian art? No doubt these models have had a great influence on the painters of the *Virgil* and the *Apotheosis of Homer*, of the *Vow of Louis XIII* and *Saint Symphorien*. In this respect, the painting he is offering us now reveals that he still stubbornly admires his models and still studies them with tireless ardor; but by no means does it betray a mania for imitation or servile erudition. Looking at *Jesus among the Doctors* we may recall some composition by Raphael or Fra Bartolommeo, which expresses a taste like Ingres's for perfect balance and rigorous control of line; its fresh and limpid colors may remind us of the frescoes of Andrea del Sarto, while the frankness and diversity of his characters may bring to mind the works, so admirable in this respect, of Massaccio and Filippino Lippi: does it necessarily follow from this that the merit of the painting resides in its skillful mixture of borrowed elements? Has Ingres's method no other principle than eclecticism, no other goal than to introduce into painting a sort of composite order that exploits other people's discoveries, and depends on a few clever combinations?¹³⁴

The question is pertinent, the answer lame: "If this were so, one would not be able to explain the singular ease with which the master varies and renews his style in response to each subject treated, each example that reality provides."¹³⁵ I do not mean to suggest that Ingres's art *was* eclectic. But I want to point out, first that eclecticism was a pejorative notion

for La Borde, and second, that his defense of Ingres rested essentially on the artist's responsiveness to subject matter and to external reality rather than on any structure of relations with the art of the past in the work itself. Four years later Castagnary criticized both the classical and romantic schools for their failure to achieve a truly national art, a failure he connected with what he saw as their eclecticism:

It was one of the claims of romanticism to have founded a national school. The great raising of shields against the presence of Greeks and Romans in literature and art took place in the name of ideas of nationality. This is an amusing memory; for it was precisely that period that saw the rise of cosmopolitanism in art and the outbreak of every kind of imitation. Only twenty years ago all the schools of all possible times and places were to be found among us at once. Alongside Ingres, who was drawing his imitation from Rome and Athens, Eugène Delacroix was paying tribute to Antwerp and Venice, and Meissonier to Flanders, while Ary Scheffer was looking to his compatriot Rembrandt for the secret of color. Beneath these illustrious leaders, each imitated whom he could. It was a tower of Babel, an anarchy, a wild pell-mell which had no equal and which was to be matched only by the frightful whirlwind of paintings borrowed from every age, every country, every style, with which the auction room has been infecting Paris for more than thirty years.

This is the enviable state which the bastard eclecticism of our age wants to prolong, and will prolong if a bolder young generation does not take the matter in hand, and if both classicism and romanticism are not eradicated once and for all.¹³⁶

This task was to be accomplished by the nascent movement Castagnary called naturalism, whose Frenchness would reside in the truthfulness of its depiction of contemporary French society and which, aspiring simply to "express life and paint truly,"¹³⁷ would have the courage to sever all connection with the art of other times and nations.¹³⁸ Whereas Manet seems to have felt that simply depicting contemporary France was not, or was no longer, enough to secure the Frenchness he too wanted; and that in general what was needed was not any further severing of relations with the art of the past but on the contrary the reestablishing of something like natural or necessary connection with it.¹³⁹

IO

LET ME sum up the argument to this point. By the early 1860s, if not before, Manet was intensely concerned with questions having to do with the natural genius of French painting which had recently become central

to the study of the history of painting in France. In order to secure the Frenchness of his own work—one of the chief imperatives of his enterprise at that time—he found himself compelled to establish connections of different degrees of explicitness between his paintings and the work of those painters of the past who seemed to him authentically French. This imperative did not conflict with the essential realism of his vision. In fact his remark, quoted by Proust, to the effect that the distinctive character of French art was its "sense of truth" implies that each reinforced the other. At the same time, Manet seems to have been driven by an at least equally profound need to make his art more than national, that is, to establish some kind of direct, vital, not simply ad hoc (or eclectic?) relation between his enterprise as a whole and the great painting of the past of all the schools. And this had to be achieved without compromising the Frenchness of his art in any way—but how? Manet's solution, almost certainly intuitively arrived at, has the simplicity and elegance that characterize everything he did: he made explicit, or took as sanction, the "natural," widely recognized affinities between what he regarded as the authentically French painting of the past and the painting of other national schools. Manet's sense of nationality was such that he needed nothing more to give him access to the art of the great French painters of the past. And his genius, about which not enough has been said, enabled him to make Frenchness itself the medium through which Frenchness was transcended and access to the great painting of other nations secured.

It is not clear when Manet fully arrived at this answer—certainly by the *Old Musician*, probably as early as the now dismembered *Gypsies* which immediately preceded it, perhaps even earlier. In the *Gypsies* as in the *Old Musician* Manet used Le Nain and to a lesser extent Watteau to gain access to the painting of a great foreigner with whom they had been compared—in this case not Velázquez but Rubens. The particular painting by Rubens that stands behind the *Gypsies* is the Hermitage *Bacchus* (1635–40), which in the eighteenth century had been in the Crozat Collection in Paris and which Manet must have known from engravings (fig. 45).¹⁴⁰ For example, Manet clearly based the figure of a boy drinking from an upraised jug in his painting on the similar though adult figure in the *Bacchus*, while the standing gypsy bears an analogous if somewhat looser relation to the seated Bacchus himself. I have already observed that the female figure seated on the ground in the *Gypsies* seems to be based on the seated woman in Le Nain's *La Charrette* or on Saint Anne in his *Nativity of the Virgin*, and that the standing gypsy apparently relates to



Figure 45. Jac. Schmuzer, engraving after Peter-Paul Rubens, *Bacchus*.

the blacksmith in *The Forge*. Finally, the implicitly theatrical subject matter, as well as aspects of the standing gypsy's pose and general aplomb, seem to bear some sort of relation to Watteau (admittedly that relation is far less specific than the connection with Le Nain just cited).¹⁴¹ Manet had previously conjoined Watteau and Rubens in the small but important *La Pêche* of 1861–63. Another important painting, the *Surprised Nymph* (1861; fig. 73), was based—as Charles Sterling long ago showed—on a Vosterman engraving after a lost Rubens *Susannah* (fig. 74).¹⁴² In other pictures of 1861 such as the *Reader* and the *Boy with a Sword* Manet's intense interest in Spanish painting is manifest. The depth and urgency of that interest are shown by the fact that although the basic source of the *Gypsies* was Flemish, Manet seems to have tried to make the figures as much like Spanish types, and the painting as a whole as Spanish in feeling, as he possibly could. (In fact it is conceivable that the landscape background relates to those in the various portraits by Velázquez that Goya engraved.) But it was not until the *Old Musician* that Manet estab-

lished an explicit connection between a large, multifigure painting and a specific Spanish source. And this, I suggest, strongly implies that it was not until the *Old Musician* that Manet was prepared to rely on the “Spanish” element in Le Nain's art, as remarked by Thoré, Champfleury, Astruc, and others, to provide anything like full or natural access to Spanish painting.

In other words, that Le Nain, Watteau, and Chardin were chiefly seen in connection with Flemish art—indeed that Thoré associated the authentic French school with the art of Flanders—helps explain Manet's decision to base perhaps the three most conceptually ambitious pictures of the year that preceded the *Old Musician*—*La Pêche*, the *Surprised Nymph*, and the *Gypsies*—on paintings by Rubens,¹⁴³ while at the same time his interest in Spanish painting, and presumably his desire to make use of it in his own work, seem only to have deepened. This is the sort of thing it means to say that Manet stood in need of access to the art of the past.

Earlier I claimed that the *Absinthe Drinker* of 1858–59 combined Watteau and Velázquez. In that picture, however, the question of access to Spanish art does not seem to have arisen: rather Manet appears simply to have assumed that Watteau and Velázquez, or French painting and Spanish painting, could be combined without any further sanction or principle of joinage than his desire to combine them. (And of course I am not claiming that he was wrong to assume this.) But as Manet became more and more intent on establishing the Frenchness of his own art as incontrovertibly as he was able, the relation, or lack of it, between that Frenchness on the one hand and the painting of foreign schools on the other inevitably became a problem that could not be ignored. And as this happened Manet seems to have come to feel that the sort of unmediated fusion of sources and national influences that one finds in the *Absinthe Drinker* was no longer tenable. Sanction of some explicit, objective sort was required. And in the course of the year that led up to the *Old Musician* Manet arrived at the solution described in these pages. It is in the context of these developments that the full meaning of Manet's decision to paint the *Absinthe Drinker* over again can be made out: he did so not just to acknowledge that the earlier picture combined Watteau and Velázquez, and more generally French and Spanish painting, but also to justify, retroactively as it were, his original, unmediated act of fusion.

With the *Old Musician*, but not before, access to Spanish painting was secured, and not for that picture alone. The connection once made, the

justification once achieved, Manet was able to use Spanish painting freely, when and where he wanted to, without the mediation of the Le Nains. More than anything else, it was this breakthrough in the medium of nationality which made possible the remarkable fruitfulness of the year 1862 for Manet. Throughout 1861, despite his attraction to Spanish painting, Manet was constrained to base his most ambitious paintings on Flemish sources. Whereas his work after the *Old Musician* consistently and successfully exploited the new accessibility of Spanish painting and Spanishness in general—an accessibility that had almost nothing to do with physical proximity and almost everything to do with the kinds of relationship I have tried to describe. Meanwhile his involvement with Watteau, which had remained intense, reached a new level of naturalness and freedom. The arrival of the Camprubi dancers presented opportunities for synthesizing French and Spanish painting which he quickly seized. It must have seemed to Manet, who in January 1862 had turned thirty, that at last everything was falling into place. At any rate, it is tempting to see the superb *Mlle V . . . in the Costume of an Espada* (1862; pl. 5), which Manet probably painted in the autumn or winter of that year, in some such terms. First, the explicit theatricality of the painting as a whole, in which a young Parisienne dressed as a matador poses detachedly as if in an arena with a bullfight taking place behind her, would have been inconceivable without the prior example of Watteau. Manet does not seem to have based his painting on a specific Watteau source. But I am convinced that his involvement with his great predecessor in *Mlle V . . .* was at least as deep as in the *Absinthe Drinker* or the *Old Musician* itself. Only Watteau could have made imaginable—could have sanctioned—the choice of so manifestly artificial a subject by a realist painter of major ambition. In any case, that artificiality, and with it the Frenchness of the young woman—Manet's favorite model, Victorine Meurent—are made explicit by the very title of the painting.¹⁴⁴ Second, it has been recognized that the bullfight subject itself was inspired by Goya; and Harris has shown that two plates from Goya's *Tauromaquia* provide exact sources for the bull and picador and for the group by the wall in Manet's canvas.¹⁴⁵ Finally, I want to suggest that the lower portion of Victorine's body, and the initial idea for the cape she holds in her left hand, just may have been based on an oil sketch by Rubens for a *Fortune* or *Venus*, then in the Galerie Suermondt in Aix-la-Chapelle.¹⁴⁶ Rubens's painting was reproduced in a small engraving in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1860 (fig. 46), accompanying a short review article by Émile Gal-

Figure 46. Wood engraving after Peter-Paul Rubens, *Venus* or *Fortune*.



ichon of Thoré's catalogue of the Galerie Suermondt, which had been published under Thoré's pseudonym of W. Bürger earlier that year.¹⁴⁷ If the last connection is right, Manet's painting is a characteristically subtle and complex résumé of his relations with the art of the past as they then stood.

II

IT IS ALSO characteristic of Manet that things did not stand that way for long. I have already suggested that the absence of any overt reference to Italian painting from Manet's art through almost all of 1862—until he

began work on the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*—indicates that during the first years of the 1860s his personal canon of authentically French painters excluded the Italianate masters considered by many the glory of the national school but whom Thoré and those influenced by him regarded virtually as foreigners. Conversely, I take the fact that the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* are based respectively on Raphael (or Raphael and Giorgione) and Titian to mean that by late 1862, or at the latest early 1863, he excluded them no longer. And I regard the sheer perspicuousness with which both paintings refer to their Italian sources as signifying that Manet wanted to make the clearest possible—the most explicit—public acknowledgment of what was probably the most important alteration in his vision of the art of the past that he had yet experienced. The modern French painter who most embodied the Italianate tradition was Ingres, and it is not surprising to find Proust testifying to Manet's admiration for his art:

When he said that in our century Ingres had been the master of masters, people regarded this manifestation by the painter of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* of his cult for the painter of the *Source* as a blasphemy. . . .

The famous painting *Olympia*, exhibited at the Salon of 1865 and currently in the Musée du Luxembourg, proceeds, for anyone who examines matters objectively, from the constant preoccupation that Ingres had and that Manet wished to have with seeking an irreproachable purity of line in the contours of his figures. Is anything better set in place, to use Manet's favorite expression, than the figure of *Olympia*? Certainly not.¹⁴⁸

Proust's remarks suggest that Manet's reconciliation of French and Italian painting may have been mediated by his appreciation of Ingres; in any case, that reconciliation was by its nature a spanning of the entire French school, past and present, from Le Nain to Poussin, Watteau to David, Courbet to Ingres.¹⁴⁹ With the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*, but not until then, Manet at once bridged the divisions of the present and established the connectedness of his art with the full range of the great French painting of the past: "During his strolls in the Louvre, with the regulars of the Café Guerbois, who made it a matter of principle to find nothing praiseworthy, Manet would stop and force them to stop in front of the Poussins. Everything that was French seduced him."¹⁵⁰ Manet frequented the Café Guerbois in the second half of the 1860s—according to this account, well after he broke through to a broader view of French painting in the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*. This is not to claim positively that Manet did not admire the Italianate French masters from the outset of his

career. But if he did, his adherence to the conception of Frenchness that I have associated chiefly with Thoré prevented him from putting that admiration to work in his art before the winter of 1862–63.¹⁵¹

One important consequence of these events seems to have been that for the first time since the 1850s, when he had painted several small pictures of Christ, Manet chose to make use of explicitly religious subject matter: as though during the early 1860s—perhaps influenced by Thoré¹⁵²—Manet associated Italian art with religious (or perhaps specifically with Catholic) content, so that access to the first naturally entailed access to the second. Whether or not this was the case, the first of the two large religious pictures which Manet painted roughly at this time, *The Angels at the Tomb of Christ* (1864; pl. 6), has been connected with Italian precedents—most convincingly, I think, with Veronese's *Descent from the Cross* (ca. 1582–84; fig. 47) and Tintoretto's *Dead Christ and Two Angels*.¹⁵³ In other respects—its near brutality, for example—the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* contrasts rather sharply with the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. But it extends and deepens the achieved involvement with Italian painting that begins with them.

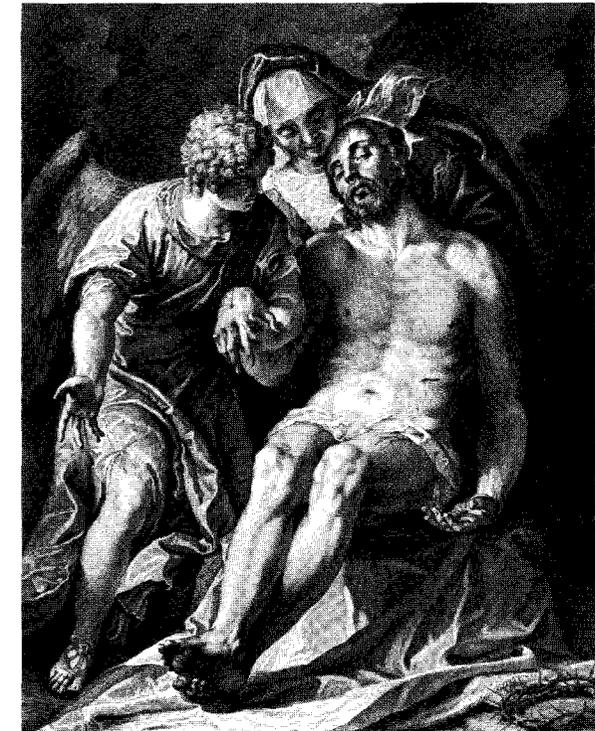


Figure 47. Gaspard Duchange, engraving after Paolo Veronese, *Descent from the Cross*.



Figure 48. Théodore Géricault, *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1819.

Here I find myself compelled to enforce a connection which I recognize may be controversial and which I fully acknowledge is not perspicuous the way, for example, the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*'s dependence on Raphael, *Olympia*'s on Titian, or the *Old Musician*'s on Le Nain, are perspicuous: namely I believe that Manet partly based the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* on Théodore Géricault's *The Raft of the Medusa* (1819; fig. 48). Specifically, I believe that Manet took Géricault's foreground group of a bearded, grieving man holding the dead body of a young man (often mistakenly called his son, fig. 49), and with the help of one or perhaps both of the Italian prototypes mentioned above, transformed the grieving man into the weeping angel and transfigured the corpse of the younger man into the crucified and—as I shall try to show—now just quickening Christ. The similarity between the poses of the grieving man and the weeping angel and between the left arm and hand of the youthful corpse and the arms and hands of Manet's Christ are, I think, striking. In addition, the powerful musculature and general physicality of the Christ, the special starkness with which bodily death has been represented, and the achievement of a mode of realism that without actually employing violent chiaroscuro nevertheless implies it, all suggest a common source of inspi-

ration in the greatest painting of French Romanticism. I do not mean by this to deny the importance of (for example) Veronese's painting to Manet: it alone could have determined most of *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*. Moreover, Veronese's Christ is certainly closer than Géricault's corpse to the Christ in Manet's painting (though Géricault's grieving man is far closer in gesture than either Veronese's or Tintoretto's angels to Manet's weeping angel). But we have already seen that Manet often deliberately overdetermined individual motifs and even whole paintings by not just conjoining but superimposing references to previous works; so the closeness of Veronese's image to *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* does not

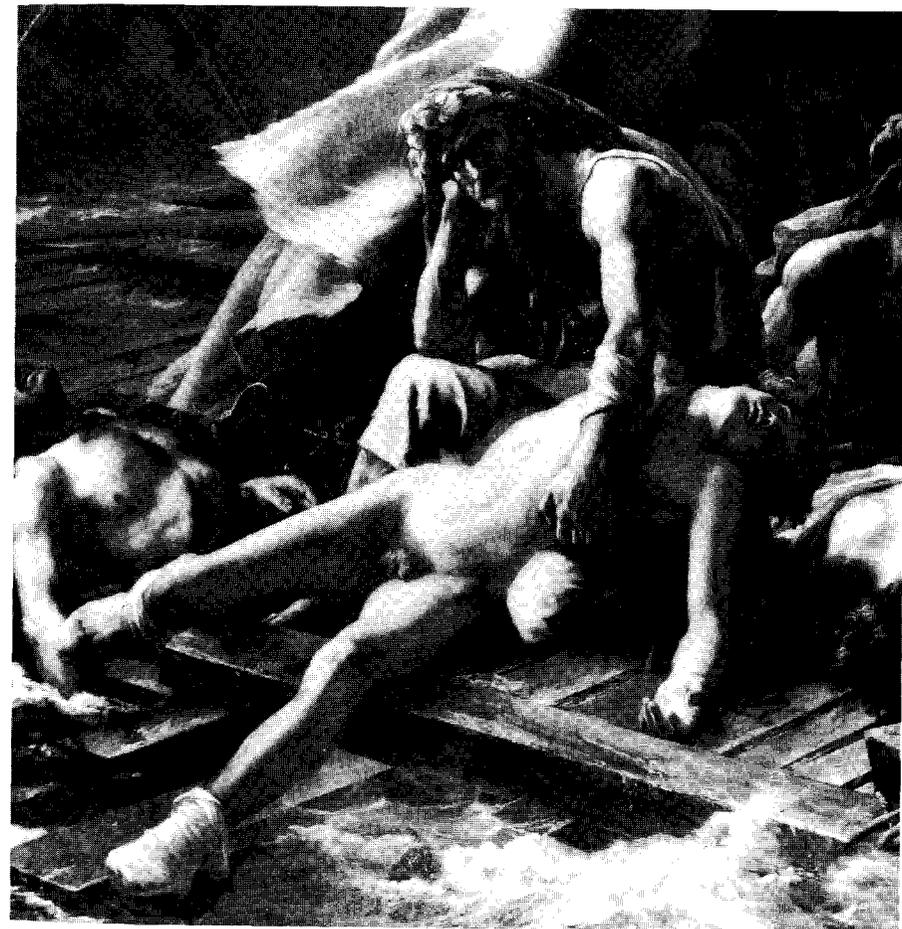


Figure 49. Théodore Géricault, *The Raft of the Medusa*, detail of dead young man and grieving older man.

in itself rule out the possibility that the *Raft* too figures in its conception. In fact it would not have been uncharacteristic for Manet to have turned to Veronese, whose art was now available to him, precisely in order to subsume Géricault, whose relation to Italian art had been the subject of critical discussion for decades, in a broader synthesis. What makes this reconstruction too simple is that Manet must have intended to paint a religious picture from the outset: which for me suggests both that he had Veronese's prototype, or at least the subject of Christ with angels, in mind all along, and that he saw Géricault's corpse as itself a kind of dead Christ. There is nothing beside the paintings themselves to which I can point—no traditional sources of evidence to which I can appeal—that would in effect prove that this was so. But on the basis of my experience of these painters and these paintings, I am myself not in doubt. (At any rate, I am not in doubt about the basic connection between the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* and the *Raft of the Medusa*.)

The powerful realism of the *Raft of the Medusa*, and of the young male corpse in particular, was remarked in an essay of 1851 by one of the most important critics of Thore's generation, Gustave Planche:

Without attaching less importance [than Gros] to dramatic effects, Géricault imitates reality with persevering care; he tries to reproduce all of its details scrupulously, and his efforts are almost always successful. The torso of the young man lying at his father's feet, undoubtedly the most remarkable figure in the painting I am now studying, leaves nothing to be desired from the point of view of imitation; the false ribs are indicated with a precision that defies all criticism. In the entire history of painting it would be hard to find a model more exactly reproduced. All the parts of this corpse are rendered with an amazing and frightening fidelity. Neither David nor Girodet nor Gros ever found, painting the human figure, the power and energy that we admire in Géricault. Girodet's *Deluge*, so rightly praised for the knowledge it reveals, remains far short of the figure which immediately attracts our attention in the *Raft of Medusa*.¹⁵⁴

Géricault, Planche wrote, had "a passion for reality that could not accept any constraint"; in his *Chasseur* of 1812 he "represented naïvely, frankly, what he had seen"; he gave himself "wholly to the desire to substitute reality for convention";¹⁵⁵ he "never aspired, at least in his more familiar works, to anything but the expression of reality."¹⁵⁶ Moreover, he appears to have been seen in similar terms by the Realists themselves. Courbet is generally said to have had a special admiration for Géricault.¹⁵⁷ And in *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale*, published posthumously in 1865, the socialist philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon makes the following significant remark: "A single painting like Gér-

icault's *Raft of the Medusa*, coming a quarter century after David's *Dying Marat*, redeems an entire gallery of madonnas, odalisques, apotheoses, and Saint Symphoriens; it suffices to indicate the route for art across the generations, and allows us to wait."¹⁵⁸ This statement, which occurs in the portion of *Du principe de l'art* that summarizes the history of painting before the advent of Courbet, and which was surely grounded in Proudhon's intimate friendship with that master, implies that the *Raft*'s indications for the future were picked up and developed by Courbet roughly thirty years after Géricault's painting was exhibited in the Salon of 1819. Manet's use of the *Raft of the Medusa*—given that he did use it—was therefore entirely consistent with his realist aspirations. But once again those aspirations cannot be equated with Courbet's. As George Heard Hamilton has observed, the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* must be seen as a deliberate challenge to Courbet's fundamental principle—that the artist should paint only what he sees.¹⁵⁹ And to compound the challenge Manet went back to the masterpiece of the modern painter who more than any other seems to have been important for Courbet, and based his first major religious painting on the foreground group which includes perhaps the most powerfully realistic representation of physical death in all French art. In other words, Manet not only challenged but circumvented Courbet's authority.¹⁶⁰

A further possibility ought at least to be mentioned. Manet may have meant the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* to be seen in relation to David's *Death of Marat* (1793; fig. 50) as well as to the *Raft of the Medusa*. It is perhaps relevant that David's painting was often called *Dying Marat* and that the original or working title of Manet's picture seems to have been *Christ Resuscitating Attended by Angels*: at any rate, this is the title given by Baudelaire in a letter to Chennevières requesting that Manet's and Henri Fantin-Latour's entries to the Salon of 1864 be hung as favorably as possible.¹⁶¹ The same letter gives the correct title of Manet's second entry, *Episode in a Bullfight*; and in general it seems likely that Baudelaire would have taken pains to send Chennevières the most accurate information then available. This suggests that Manet may have conceived of his picture as re-creating, and in a sense transcending, both David's and Géricault's supreme images of physical death. The relation to David, if it exists, is implicit and essentially conceptual; though at one stage it may have been acknowledged by Manet's title itself.¹⁶²

Finally, the possibility cannot be ignored that other paintings of the same year might fruitfully be seen in connection with Géricault. For ex-

ample, Manet may have found in the naval battle between the Union warship *Kearsarge* and the Confederate *Alabama* that took place off Cherbourg in June 1864 the opportunity to establish an approximate formal equivalent for the *Raft of the Medusa*'s basis in an actual disaster at sea. This if true would help account for the rapidity of Manet's decision to base a major painting on that battle.¹⁶³ In 1864, too, he painted a large horse-race picture, *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne*, which he later cut into segments [a watercolor of the composition is reproduced in pl. 15]; and while this was not at all like Géricault's racing pictures in conception or motif,¹⁶⁴ it is still conceivable that Manet's awareness of the latter may have been a factor in his decision to attempt such a painting at this time. (It may or may not be relevant that Manet's later racing pic-

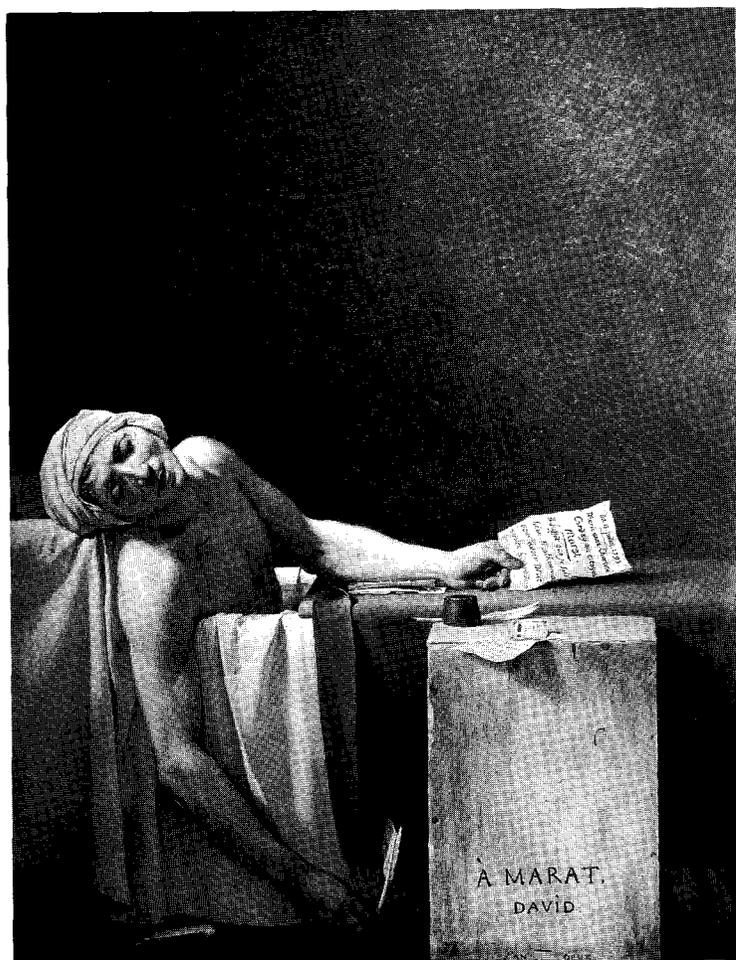


Figure 50. Jacques-Louis David, *Death of Marat*, 1793.

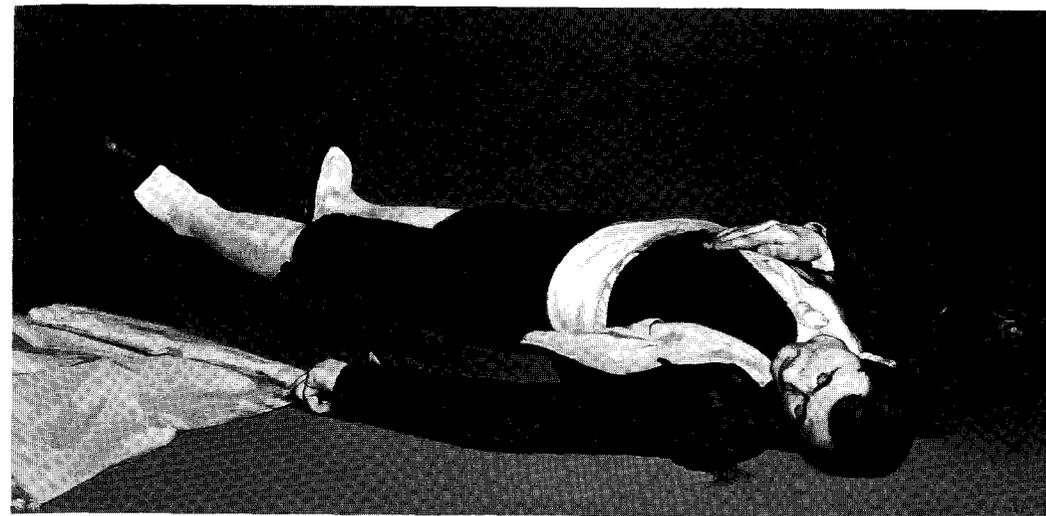


Figure 51. Édouard Manet, *The Dead Torero*, 1864.



Figure 52. Unknown seventeenth-century master, *Dead Warrior* (known formerly as *Orlando Muerto*).

ture, *The Races in the Bois de Boulogne* of 1872, clearly relates to Géricault's *Epsom Derby* of just over half a century before.) Even *The Dead Torero* (fig. 51)—the bottom segment of the larger *Episode in a Bullfight* which Manet painted in 1864 and later dismembered—ought perhaps to be seen not just as an adaptation of the picture known as the *Orlando Muerto* (fig. 52), which in Manet's time was thought to be by Velázquez,

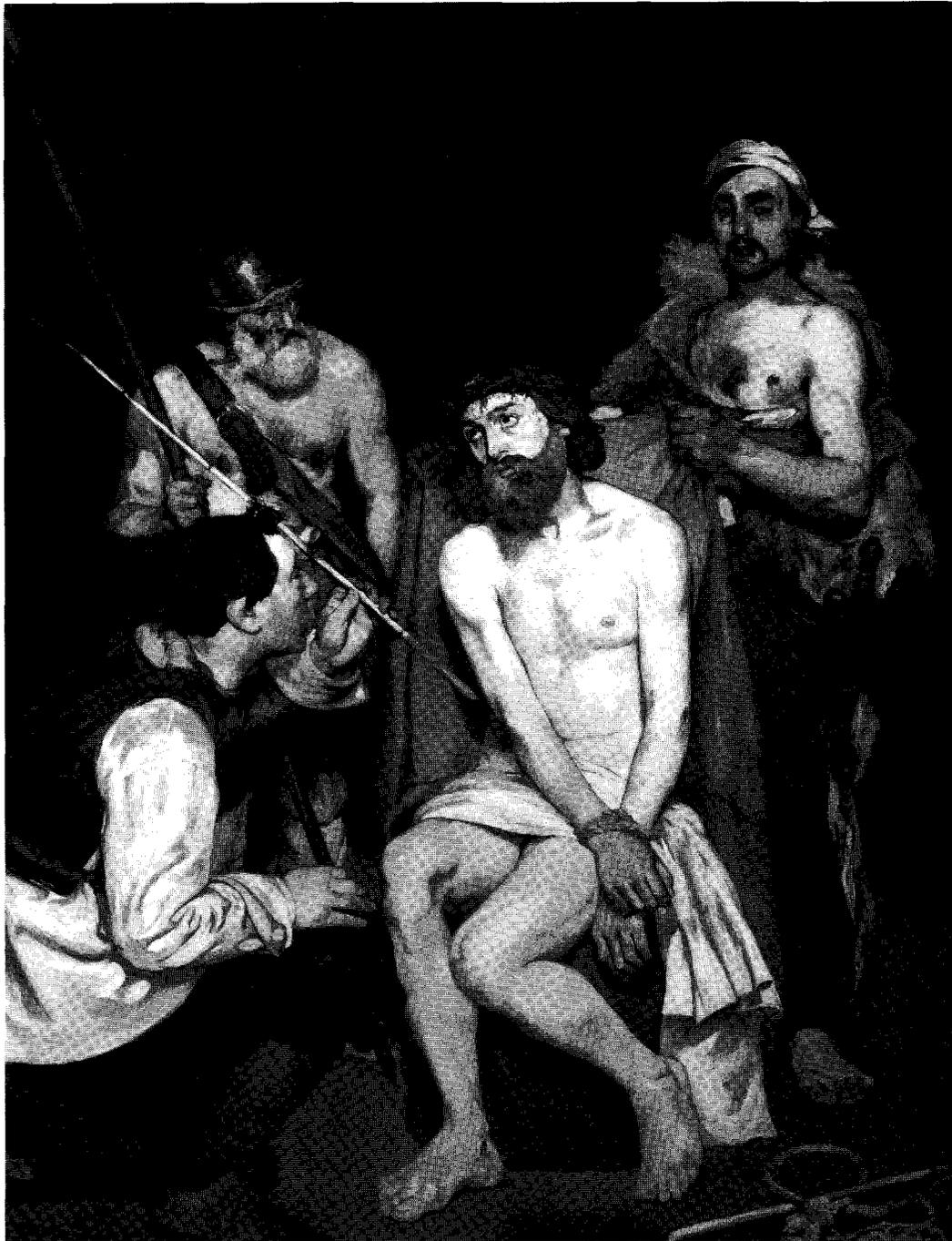
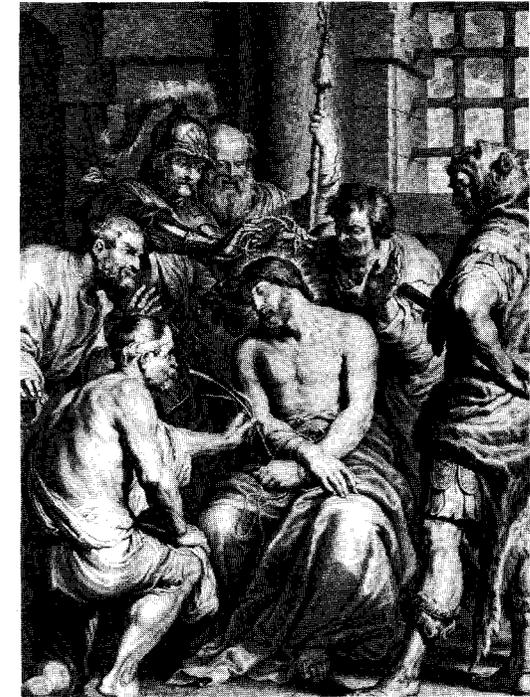


Figure 53. Édouard Manet, *Christ Mocked*, 1865.

Figure 54. Schelte Adam Bolswert, engraving after Anthony Van Dyck, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*.



but as a kind of reworking, with the help of that painting, of the same figure in the *Raft of the Medusa* that I have suggested was a source for Manet's Christ.¹⁶⁵

Manet's second large religious picture, the *Christ Mocked* (1865; fig. 53), while grounded generally in Titian's *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, is chiefly based on Van Dyck's painting of the same subject in the Staatliche Museum in Berlin, which Manet could have known through an engraving by Bolswert (fig. 54).¹⁶⁶ If it is true that when Manet painted the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* he associated Italian art with religious or Catholic subject matter, the *Christ Mocked* breaks that association. And in the light of the deliberateness of Manet's use of the art of the past generally, it is at least possible that this too was intentional.

In an obvious sense the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia* constitute a decisive break with Thoré's view of the history of French painting. But in another sense Manet did not break with that view so much as subsume it in a broader and more fecund vision of Frenchness. He did not for example, give up seeing French painting as essentially committed to the values, including the ethical values, of realism. Nor did he repudiate his previous

canon of French painters: on the contrary, his decision to make the first painting to embody his new vision of Frenchness a large fête galante, and moreover to base the one figure not accounted for by Marcantonio's engraving on a painting by Watteau, specifically established the *Déjeuner*'s continuity with his previous work and with the view of the history of French painting on which that work rested. Finally, however, these paintings jointly represent a turning point in Manet's career. In them, by a supreme feat of imagination, Manet discovered the reconcilability, even the deep affinity, between both the Florentine and the Venetian art of the High Renaissance and a conception of the natural genius of French painting that had been formulated largely in opposition to that art and which Manet himself, it seems, had previously held; and by so doing he achieved access, once and for all, to something like the entire range of the great painting of the past. This, fully as much as anything else, underlies one's conviction that the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* are the climax and culmination of an undertaking, a phase of Manet's development, to which he could never return.

Not that these paintings mark the end of his involvement with the art of the past—far from it. But from this point on, with the qualified exception of several paintings of the late 1860s which I shall discuss shortly, Manet's relations with past art can no longer be described in terms of standing in need of access to it. Even in the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, in which French and Italian sources are superimposed, the meaning of that superimposition is not, I think, that Géricault provided access to Italian art so much as that the access to the latter which Manet had previously achieved in the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*, and the concomitant shift in his conception of Frenchness that had taken place at that time, now made Géricault a natural source of inspiration and direct reference.

The *Christ Mocked* also makes use of a French source: the soldier holding what seems to be a spread cloak behind Christ, and in effect exhibiting Christ to the beholder, is based on the angel warming a piece of the infant Mary's linen in the *Nativity of the Virgin* by Le Nain (at any rate, the motif of the holding of the cloak is based on that of the warming of the linen). (In the early 1860s the *Nativity* [ca. 1640], now in Notre-Dame in Paris, hung in the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont; presumably Manet would have known Léopold Flameng's engraving after it that appeared in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1860 [fig. 55].)¹⁶⁷ But again the meaning of Manet's adaptation of Le Nain's motif seems to have been not to provide access to the Van Dyck on which the *Christ Mocked* as

a whole largely depends, so much as to help secure the Frenchness of Manet's painting in a way that was consistent with its overall dependence on a Flemish prototype. Moreover, Manet's obviously deliberate use of a French angel as the basis for one of Christ's tormentors suggests that blasphemy of some explicit sort was on his mind: perhaps he was expressing in advance his defiance of the French public that presently was to subject the *Christ Mocked* and *Olympia*, his submissions to the Salon of 1865, to a sustained blast of derision and outcry without precedent or sequel in the history of painting.

Manet's trip to Spain in the summer of 1865, in the aftermath of the Salon of that year, marks a further climax in his career. After his return Manet seems to have felt free at last to seek out the artists and works of art that most attracted him, without having to justify or secure those choices in his paintings themselves, and without having to fear that his paintings

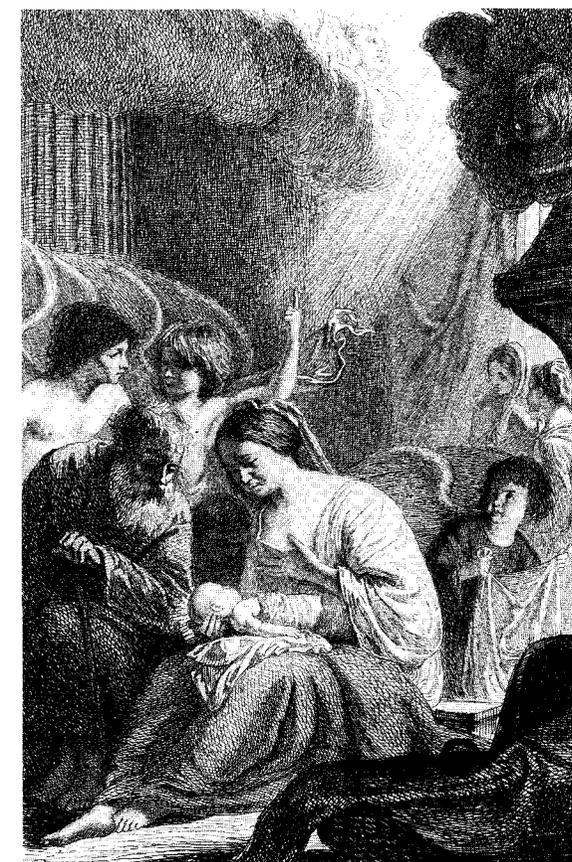


Figure 55. Léopold Flameng, engraving after Louis(?) Le Nain, *The Nativity of the Virgin*.

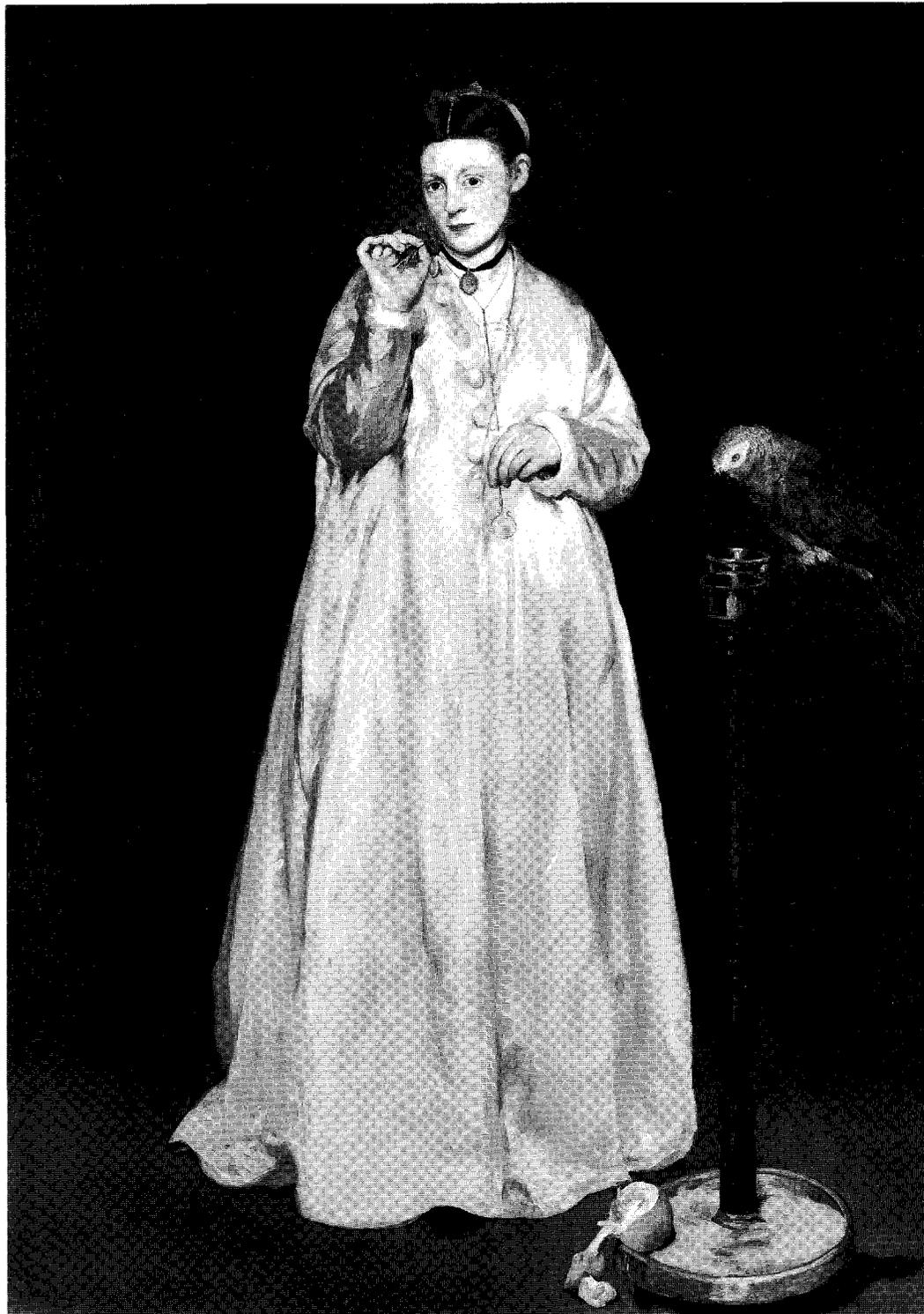


Figure 56. Édouard Manet, *Woman with a Parrot*, 1866.

would lack the comprehensiveness or inclusiveness that evidently obsessed him prior to 1865. As for the Frenchness of the paintings that resulted, that was now at most a matter of subtle, unprogrammatic synthesis—of delicate, unmediated fusion—as in the *Woman with a Parrot* (1866; fig. 56) and *The Fifer* (1866; fig. 57), in which the manifest ambition to emulate Velázquez goes hand in hand with quiet, rather general allusions to Watteau (and in the *Fifer* to Le Nain as well). Manet was able to do this only because in his pictures prior to 1865 he had established the Frenchness of his art broadly and incontrovertibly, and had secured access to something like the full range of the great painting of the past. In themselves, however, such paintings as the *Woman with a Parrot* and the *Fifer* bear essentially the same relation to their French and foreign sources that the *Absinthe Drinker* of 1859 does. It is not clear whether Manet was in fact disappointed that it was to this, rather than to some entirely new development, that his unprecedented efforts of the first half of the 1860s had led. He had, of course, no call to be dissatisfied with the sheer quality or level of the paintings in question. But one can hardly summarize the undertaking I have been describing in terms of the pursuit of quality alone; and it remains questionable what in 1866 or 1867 Manet's view of his achievement up to that time actually was. Proust tells us that in the years following his trip to Spain, Manet suffered from long spells of lassitude and apparent indecision during which he painted little if at all, and he suggests that this was the result of the relentless, unfeeling hostility of the public.¹⁶⁸ There can be no doubt that Manet was depressed by that hostility, and perhaps he really was sometimes incapacitated by it. It is also conceivable that his relative inactivity for at least a few years after his trip to Spain in 1865 expressed a lack of the inner certainty that comes from being engaged in a single protracted undertaking whose aims and conventions are essentially lucid, at least to oneself, and in whose imperativeness one believes absolutely. It is even conceivable that Manet never enjoyed that sort of inner certainty again.

12

FINALLY, I must consider briefly three paintings of around 1868 whose relation to the art of the past seems a kind of reversion to that of the pictures of the first half of the 1860s, and which thereby bring into relief aspects of Manet's enterprise during those years.



Figure 57. Édouard Manet, *The Fifer*, 1866.



Figure 58. Édouard Manet, *The Luncheon* (also called *The Luncheon in the Studio*), 1868.

First, *The Luncheon* in Munich (also called *The Luncheon in the Studio*, 1868; fig. 58) ought, I believe, to be seen partly as an attempt to incorporate the art of the great Dutch painter Jan Vermeer, whose revival had recently been initiated—again, by Thoré—in the pages of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (figs. 59, 60, 61, 62).¹⁶⁹ At the same time, the still-life elements on the table allude unmistakably to Chardin (cf. *La Raie dépouillée*, fig. 190). Moreover, the *Luncheon* bears certain more or less obvious affinities to two important French paintings of the late eighteenth century, David's *Andromache Mourning Hector* (1783; fig. 63) and Pierre Guérin's *The Return of Marcus Sextus* (1799; fig. 64), and it is possible—I do not say probable—that Manet intended to allude to them as well.¹⁷⁰ At the very least, Manet combined Vermeer and Chardin in the *Luncheon* and may even have used Chardin to give him access to the work of the foreign master, much as he had done throughout the early 1860s.



Figure 59. Jules-Ferdinand Jacquemart, engraving after Jan Vermeer, *Le Soldat et la fillette qui rit*.

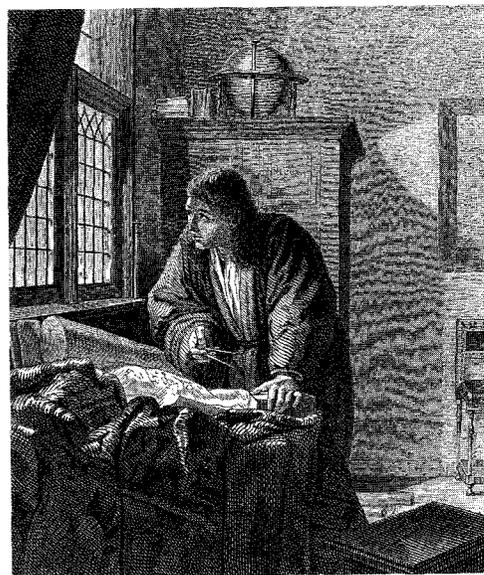


Figure 60. Noël-Eugène Sotain, engraving after Jan Vermeer, *Géographe tenant dans la main droite un compas*.



Figure 61. Henry-Augustin Valentin, engraving after Jan Vermeer, *Jeune Femme au clavecin*.



Figure 62. Noël-Eugène Sotain, engraving after Jan Vermeer, *Jeune Femme qui se pare*.

The whole question of Manet's relation to Dutch painting is a rather difficult one. In his *Souvenirs*, Proust refers several times to Manet's admiration for Rembrandt and Frans Hals, and actually quotes his friend as saying, apparently at some point in the 1870s: "When we were in Am-



Figure 63. Jacques-Louis David, *Andromache Mourning Hector*, 1783.



Figure 64. Pierre Guérin, *The Return of Marcus Sextus*, 1799.

sterdam, [Rembrandt's] painting *The Syndics* gripped us. Why? Because it is the true impression of something seen."¹⁷¹ While in his article of 1901 Proust credits Hals with having inspired Manet's determination to paint the Paris of his own time: "[T]he boldness of Frans Hals's forceful manner made such an impression on him in Holland that, back in Paris, armed with all those memories, he decided to take on frankly the diverse aspects of Parisian life."¹⁷² And in general Manet seems to have been acutely aware of Rembrandt and probably Hals as well during the first half of the 1860s.

In spite of this, it seems that Manet did not refer explicitly to Dutch sources in his ambitious pictures of those years. If he was thinking of Hals when he painted the double portrait of his parents, he nevertheless based that picture not on the Dutch master but on the Frenchman Le Nain. It is true that Germain Bazin long ago connected the *Surprised Nymph* of 1861 (fig. 73) with Rembrandt's *Susannah in The Hague* (fig. 75).¹⁷³ But

almost immediately after Bazin's article appeared, Sterling showed (as was mentioned earlier) that Manet's painting was based very closely on a Vosterman engraving after a lost Rubens of the same subject (fig. 74);¹⁷⁴ and while it is possible that Manet also had Rembrandt's painting in mind, the fact remains, and must be accounted for, that it was to Rubens and not Rembrandt that Manet turned for the actual prototype of his figure. Similarly, I suspect that the basic conception of *The Street Singer* (1862; pl. 7)—a figure emerging onto the street—derives from the *Night-watch*, and that the bearded man with a cane at the extreme right of the *Old Musician* may have been intended to allude to analogous figures in paintings and etchings by Rembrandt. But the girl in the *Street Singer* clearly was not based on any single figure in Rembrandt's painting;¹⁷⁵ and we are not shown enough of the man with a cane in the *Old Musician* to connect him with a specific painting by Rembrandt, or even to be confident that a general allusion to the latter was intended.

Manet's apparent reluctance or inability to refer explicitly to Dutch sources in his paintings of the first half of the 1860s is all the more surprising considering that Thoré, whose importance to Manet has been stressed in these pages, was an ardent champion of Dutch painting—he argued for the superiority of Rembrandt to the great Italians¹⁷⁶—as well as its leading French connoisseur. Perhaps, however, Thoré's vision of Dutch painting, as at once intensely national and essentially realistic,¹⁷⁷ in effect made it unnecessary for Manet to refer to specific Dutch painters and paintings in his own art. That is, Manet may have felt that that congruence of his own enterprise with that of Dutch painting made the latter fully available to him, with the result that he was not compelled to secure access to it in his paintings themselves. Thoré also pointed to various affinities between the work of French artists such as Le Nain, Watteau, and Chardin and that of seventeenth-century Dutch painters; and in view of Chardin's manifest importance to the *Luncheon* it is likely that Manet's Chardin-based *Boy Blowing Bubbles* (1867) was partly an attempt to approach, or reapproach, Dutch painting by way of that master.¹⁷⁸ At any rate, it belongs to a cluster of works—including the *Portrait of Théodore Duret*, the *Portrait of Émile Zola*, *Mme Manet at the Piano*, and the *Luncheon* itself (all 1868)—which in different ways appear to evince concern with Dutch painting. But only in the *Luncheon* does Manet seem to have tried to secure access to the work of a specific Dutch master by means that recall those he employed in the great paintings of the first half of the 1860s.

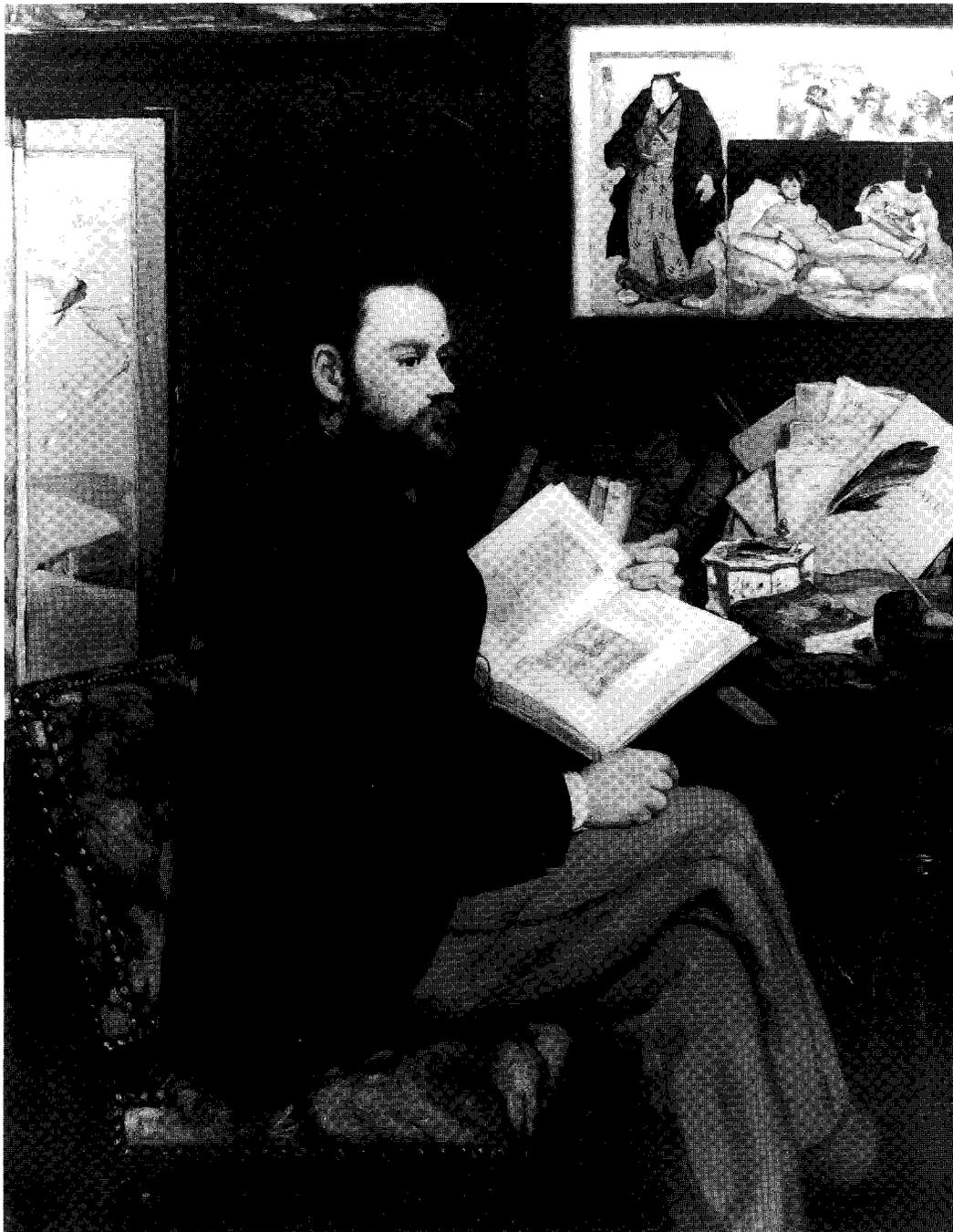


Figure 65. Édouard Manet, *Portrait of Émile Zola*, 1868.

In a second painting of roughly this time, *The Balcony* (1868–69; pl. 8), Manet seems to have made a point of acknowledging his involvement with Dutch painting. Specifically, the well-dressed man holding a cigarette as he emerges from a dark interior onto the balcony—Manet's friend Antoine Guillemet—seems to me to bear a general relation to Dutch prototypes, the principal figure in the *Nightwatch*, for example.¹⁷⁹ His “Dutchness” would be less striking if it were not apparent that the two female figures, Berthe Morisot and Fanny Claus, were meant to seem “Spanish” and “Japanese” respectively. (The painting as a whole is based on Goya's *Majas on the Balcony* in the Prado.) In short, Manet seems to have meant the *Balcony* to be seen as an acknowledgment of his simultaneous involvement with Spanish, Dutch, and Japanese art. He does not seem to have tried to find parallel French sources either for the individual figures or for the painting as a whole; and instead of basing the figures closely on specific works by foreign masters, as in his paintings before 1865, he seems for the most part to have tried to couple accurate portrayals of his sitters with rather general projections of different national types.

The figure of Fanny Claus is not the only Japanese element that occurs in Manet's work at this time. Shortly before, in his *Portrait of Émile Zola* (fig. 65), Manet depicted on the wall above Zola's desk a print of Velázquez's *Drinkers*, a colored woodcut by Utamaro [actually by Kuniaki II], and an etching or photograph of *Olympia*, thereby stating the importance of Spanish and Japanese art for his own work. Sandblad has discussed at length the question of Manet's use of Japanese prints in his paintings of the first half of the 1860s, and while I am not in agreement with his formulations, I do not want to take issue with them here.¹⁸⁰ Rather, I want simply to remark that while Manet undoubtedly was encouraged and even influenced in specific respects by Japanese prints during those years, he did not make this fact explicit in the paintings themselves. It would be surprising if this were not the case. In the first place no connection was made in the art writing of the time between French painting and Japanese art of the past, for the very good reason that no such connection existed. Furthermore, in the early 1860s knowledge of the existence of Japanese prints was limited to a relatively small group of artists, critics, and connoisseurs; and Manet always aimed to be comprehensible at least in principle, if not to the public at large, at any rate to a wider circle. Neither of these considerations kept Manet from exploiting Japanese prints stylistically in his pictures. But they absolutely pre-



vented him from establishing the sort of relation to those prints that I have described as one of securing access to the art of a foreign school; and they even seem to have ruled out the kind of acknowledgment of the importance of Japanese art to his work that he later made in the *Portrait of Émile Zola* and the *Balcony*.

It is, I think, possible to explain Manet's new willingness to make that acknowledgment. The chief artistic event of 1867 was the Exposition Universelle, an international exhibition of works of art and industrial products of all kinds that included a large Japanese section. Chesneau, writing in 1878, claimed that it was that exhibition which made Japanese art fashionable in Paris: "In 1867 the Exposition Universelle finally put Japan in fashion."¹⁸¹ And in his article of 1868, "L'Art japonais," he characterized the natural genius of the Japanese in terms whose relevance to Manet, though partial, is nevertheless striking:

[O]ne can say that Japanese artists combine a deep respect for reality with an admirable esthetic intelligence. They have the gift of making reality comply with the most amazing flights of the imagination. Yet they never betray or denature this reality, which remains their infallible principle and starting point for all their combinations of forms. Nature always provides them with the basic elements. Only they use it freely as regards character.¹⁸²

As a result of the Exposition Universelle, Japanese art ceased being the admiration of a small professional class and became known to the general public. Moreover, it was seen and admired in terms that Manet may have felt were not wholly inappropriate to his own work.

Concurrently, his retrospective exhibition of 1867, in which fifty paintings were shown, must have given Manet a more comprehensive view of his own development than ever before. And this too may have been a factor in his decision to call attention to the role that Dutch painting and Japanese prints had played in his work, and in general to take up again the explicit concern with nationality that I have tried to show was one of the central themes of his art during the first half of the 1860s.

13

ONE IMPORTANT ramification of this account of Manet's mind during the first half of the 1860s concerns his relationship to his teacher, Thomas Couture. In the book *Méthode et entretiens d'atelier* which he published in 1867, Couture insisted on the need for French painting to be truly na-

tional and even suggested, like Castagnary, that this had never been fully accomplished:

Shall I live long enough to see the rebirth of true French art? . . . I see it come. Ah, how lucky you are to be young!

Everything points to the advent of that art which I dreamed about so much: the indifference of the public for the art that is already here is a good omen—why should the public, which is so alive, concern itself with this painting that issues from tombs?

Only a few painters remain, clients of a dying world, who still cater to the weak appetites of the bourgeois. Our national art has yet to be born, or at any rate it must be taken up again, for since Gros and Géricault it has lapsed. Indeed, for all my admiration of the art of the Revolution, even those artists were not completely French, they seem to have treated modern subjects only reluctantly, their manner was not frank enough, they showed too much labor and too many flowers of rhetoric, in short the new art was still at its beginning stage.

Take up again this beautiful, interrupted painting, be even more native, more frankly French in your form, and your art will match in grandeur and majesty the most splendid works of the Venetians. You will become not the imitators but the equals of the Greeks.

Look around you and produce.¹⁸³

Unlike Castagnary, Couture did not believe that the national art he called for could be achieved by the literal representation of reality alone: "In France, simple imitative painting is far from satisfying us; it's necessary for art to elevate itself; and this is done by augmenting itself with thought, with poetry, with philosophy, or with Christian feeling; the more qualities the artists adds to those of the painter, the greater he is."¹⁸⁴ One cannot imagine Manet saying this. For him, Frenchness was not something added to the pictorial qualities of his work but was part of its essence. Nevertheless, for Manet as well as for Couture authentic Frenchness was not achieved simply by depicting contemporary French society. Similarly, there is a world of difference between Manet's evident ambition to comprehend the whole of French painting and Couture's claim that in order for French painting to remain the best in the world, "it's necessary that our most gifted painters, sculptors, and architects cease satisfying particular tastes [i.e. of those who collect or commission their work]; they must address themselves to the nation."¹⁸⁵ But there is also an important sense in which Couture's claim and Manet's ambition express the same unwillingness to rest content with a partial or limited relation to France.

In the political context of the 1860s Couture's nationalism, with its simple faith in the infallibility of the masses who supported Napoleon III,



Figure 66. Thomas Couture, *Romans of the Decadence*, 1847.

was conservative in its implications. But the rhetoric in which it was expressed was nominally democratic, even populist; and it is not surprising to learn that Couture ardently supported the Revolution of 1848—Chennevières describes the painter crying, “To the Hotel de Ville!” and rushing to embrace Lamartine¹⁸⁶—and that he played a role of some importance in the attempts to reform the administration of the arts in France that took place in its wake.¹⁸⁷ He had previously painted the portrait of the greatest Romantic historian and political theorist, Jules Michelet, and in the *Méthode et entretiens* he described at length the sessions during which, around 1850, he portrayed the poet Charles Béranger whom he held in awe and to whom he had been introduced by George Sand.¹⁸⁸ Those three—Michelet, Béranger, George Sand—were among the older figures most admired by the young political left in the years before 1848,¹⁸⁹ and Couture’s connection with them is evidence of his political sympathies at the time.¹⁹⁰

His stunning success at the Salon of 1847, the large and very ambitious *Romans of the Decadence* (1847; fig. 66), by contrasting the virtues of a republican past with the vices of a degenerate and impious present, symbolically arraigned the France of Louis-Philippe and all but called for the revolution which, within a year, ended the July Monarchy.¹⁹¹ Couture, however, did not rely simply on the symbolic overtones of his ostensibly

antique subject matter to carry the politically charged meaning which he wanted at once to affirm and to disguise. Beyond that, he based his picture on an earlier painting, or projected painting, whose national and revolutionary content could not have been more explicit: David’s never-completed *Tennis Court Oath* (1791; fig. 67). [I have reproduced the highly finished drawing of David’s composition that belongs to the Louvre.] The statue, perhaps of Germanicus,¹⁹² which stands facing us in the center of Couture’s painting is therefore a reference both to republican Rome and to Revolutionary France, that is, to the figure of Jean-Sylvain Bailly who stands in an analogous pose and position, administering the oath, in David’s magnificent studies for the enormous painting he was never able to complete. Couture’s lasciviously embracing couples at once symbolize a falling off from the severe morality of earlier Romans and parody the chaste, fraternal embraces of David’s heroes. The entire painting must be understood almost feature by feature in this double light. It is as though Couture’s ambition in the *Romans of the Decadence* was to complete David’s unfinished masterpiece by taking for his subject matter precisely the radical contrast, as he saw it, between the Revolutionary



Figure 67. Jacques-Louis David, *The Tennis Court Oath*, drawing, 1791.

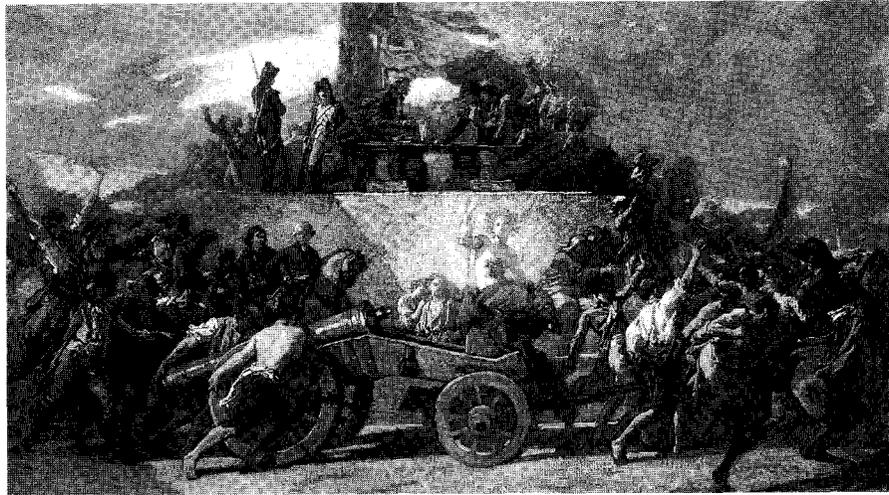


Figure 68. Thomas Couture, *The Voluntary Enlistments of 1792*, begun 1847.

France of 1790 and Orleanist France of the years just prior to 1848, and cloaking that ambition itself in classical dress. Couture not only called for a return to the political ideals of the French Revolution; he also explicitly attempted to resume the heroic pictorial tradition of David, Gros, and Géricault which he believed the generations that followed them had abandoned. (Couture's painting is usually seen by historians as a paradigm, perhaps the paradigm, of mid-nineteenth-century eclecticism. But to see it merely in those terms is to overlook the historical truth of Couture's intentions, which were above all to make a truly national work of art.)

Couture's political sympathies and political aspirations made him a natural choice for the Second Republic's commission of a large painting on a national and revolutionary theme, *The Voluntary Enlistments of 1792* (begun 1847; fig. 68). And once again he seems to have turned to David—above all to *The Triumph of the French People* (1793–94; fig. 69)—for the basic conception of his picture.¹⁹³ Couture's heart and soul were in the project; and when in 1852 the government of Louis Napoleon revoked the commission because of its libertarian content his disappointment was bitter.¹⁹⁴ According to Proust it even made his dealings with the young Manet, who at eighteen had joined his atelier in 1850, more difficult than might otherwise have been the case.¹⁹⁵ In the course of the next several years Couture appears to have made his peace with the Second Empire, and in 1856 he accepted a government commission for a painting

of the *Baptism of the Imperial Prince*. In the *Méthode et entretiens* both commissions are discussed without reference to the political circumstances in which each was offered, simply as two examples of pictures on national themes. In fact, having remarked of the men of the French Revolution depicted in the *Voluntary Enlistments* that they aspired to abolish privilege, replace abuse with right, and give the whole world the liberty that had become their religion, Couture added: "We ourselves, painters, must not enter into political considerations and discuss the feelings that we want to represent; once we have chosen them, all our efforts must be directed at exalting them in their beauty."¹⁹⁶ It is impossible to know for certain whether Couture believed these words or whether they were mostly prudential—perhaps he was still hoping to be allowed to finish the *Voluntary Enlistments*.¹⁹⁷ But there can be no doubt as to his frame of mind around 1850, when Manet placed himself under his tutelage.

The differences between the two men must not be slighted. The natural genius of French painting and its relations with the art of other schools simply were not issues for Couture, who throughout his career more or less equated French painting with the heroic national art of David, Gros, and Géricault. At any rate, he clearly regarded those men as constituting the tradition which he aspired to continue and extend, whenever political circumstances made such aspirations tenable. That tradition was not, it seems, simply or directly available to Manet, because of the political situation in the late 1850s and early 1860s and also of what one is inclined to think of as more purely pictorial considerations. Instead Manet found

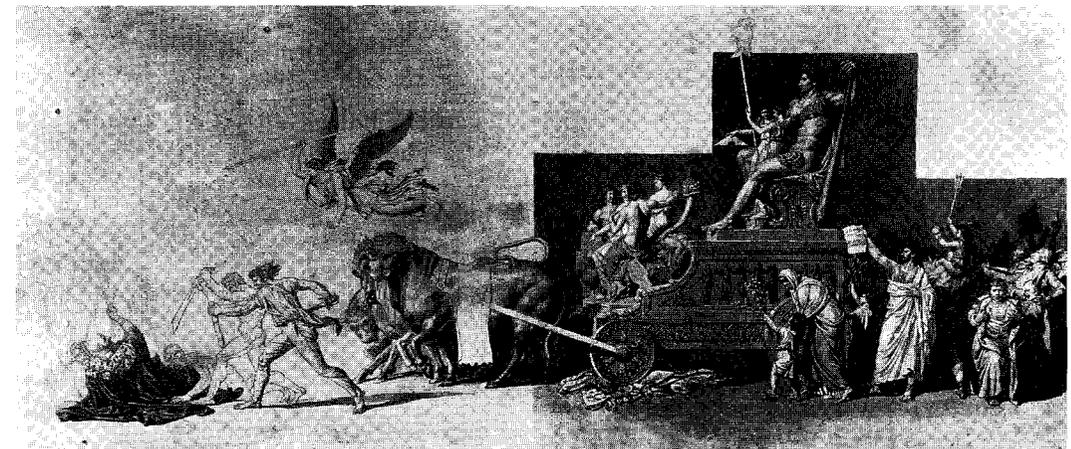


Figure 69. Jacques-Louis David, *The Triumph of the French People*, drawing, 1793–94.

himself compelled to take explicit account of contemporary discussions of the historical identity of French painting, in an attempt to establish the Frenchness of his own art as firmly and as objectively as he was able. Almost certainly, however, Manet's initial concern with the concept of Frenchness, as well as aspects of his use of the French painting of the past as a medium of that concern, had important roots in Couture's teaching and artistic practice. It may even be significant that by 1864—assuming I am right—Manet came to establish explicit connections between his own work and that of Géricault, whom Couture especially admired, though once again the differences between their respective relations to Géricault, and between the ways in which those relations were expressed, must not be minimized.

Couture's preoccupation with Frenchness was characteristic of the intensely nationalistic ideology of the political left in the years just before 1848, in particular as that ideology was shaped by the teachings of the great Michelet. Indeed, Michelet seems to have been the most important influence, perhaps along with Gros, on Couture's thought throughout his life. The close connection between the politics of the *Romans of the Decadence* and Michelet's writings of the 1840s is a case in point. And when it is recalled that Couture painted Michelet's portrait in 1843, the year the latter delivered his controversial lectures against the Jesuits, and shortly before Couture himself began work on the *Romans of the Decadence*, the possibility all but suggests itself that Michelet may actually have helped formulate that painting's program.¹⁹⁸ Also, Couture may have regarded the *Voluntary Enlistments* as a direct answer to the call, which Michelet made in a series of ten lessons published between December 1847 and February 1848, for an art that by taking for its subject matter the true "legend" of the Revolution would help reunify the nation.¹⁹⁹ In any event, Couture's description of that painting in the *Méthode et entretiens* of 1867—the same description whose political implications he was careful to disavow—amounts to a virtual paraphrase of passages in those lessons. And in general, Michelet's themes pervade Couture's writings of the 1860s and 1870s. The call for the rebirth of a truly national art; the conception of such an art as a means of public education; the identification of French painting with the art of the French Revolution and after; the insistence that French artists address the French people in its entirety; the glorification of Géricault—all these are found in Michelet's revolutionary polemics. They are also themes in Couture's writings of twenty and thirty

years later, where the shift in context voids or traduces their political content.

Clearly, Manet's concern with Frenchness did not bear this sort of relation to Michelet. He did not in any obvious sense take up the subject matter Michelet had advocated; he does not seem to have conceived of art as a means of educating Frenchmen to their rights and duties as men and citizens; his canon of French painters was not a function of the French Revolution; and so on. But there is another, less precise but perhaps equally important sense in which what Manet did in order to establish the Frenchness of his own work strikingly paralleled what Michelet had argued needed to be done if the deep and otherwise surely fatal divisions in contemporary French society were to be overcome and the unity of France at last restored. In "Le Lendemain de la Révolution" of April 1, 1848, Michelet wrote of his enterprise in *Le Peuple* of two years before:

The word "fraternity" only very feebly expresses the feeling that dominates this book; union, unity, would be better, the unity of a world in a soul.

This unity in action is the divine quality of the great days of the Revolution, as I have described them, those of the taking of the Bastille, and of our Federations, and of the Departure of 1792, and of so many other sublime moments. This is what had to be brought to light in order to show the true basis, the substance of the revolution.²⁰⁰

For Michelet it was only with the French Revolution that France achieved not just the unity but also the identity it had been striving toward for centuries. "One mustn't say the Revolution, one must say the Foundation," he wrote in his lecture of January 27, 1848;²⁰¹ while in the same vein he had written two years before, "Bear in mind that before Europe, France will have only one name, inextinguishable, which is its true eternal name: the Revolution!"²⁰² By studying the Revolution, by writing its history and thereby resurrecting it,²⁰³ Michelet hoped to "found the Republic in people's minds."

The political faith that ought to determine France's acts and words, its politics and teachings, must not remain in the state of a feeling or vague speculation; it must be based on history and experience.

France is up again, wide awake; what is the country going to teach to its children, to its heroic people, and to the world gathering around it? . . . Rhetoric? Arithmetic? The workings of government, abstract politics of the Sieyès sort? . . . No, it must first of all establish and promulgate the principles which will constitute our civic morality, the dogma of the Republic, the *Credo* of the homeland. It must teach two things which are in fact only one, and which are

the heart of France: *the faith of the Revolution*, and the same faith in practice, *the history of the Revolution*.²⁰⁴

The Revolution itself had not taught the one thing that could have saved it: the Revolution.

In order to do this, France should not have disowned the past but instead ought to have claimed it, to have taken hold of its past and made it its own, as it was doing with the present; it should have shown that along with the authority of reason it possessed the authority of history and of our entire historical nationality, that the Revolution was the belated, but just and necessary, manifestation of the genius of the people, that the Revolution was nothing other than France itself having at last discovered its rights.

It did nothing of the sort, and abstract reason alone did not support it in the presence of the terrible realities that confronted it. It lost its self-confidence, abdicated, and effaced itself.²⁰⁵

What was at stake, finally, essentially, was faith, *la foi*. "The first question of education is this: 'Do you have faith? Do you give faith?'"²⁰⁶

Faith is the common basis of inspiration and action. No great work without it. . . .

But a serious objection arises here. "How can I give faith when I have so little myself? Faith in country, like religious faith, has weakened in me."

If faith and reason were opposed to each other, and there were no rational way of gaining faith, one would have to remain there, sigh, and wait like the mystics. But faith worthy of man is a loving belief in what reason proves. Its object is not some sort of accidental wonder, but the permanent miracle of nature and history.

In order to regain faith in France, to have hope in its future, one must probe into its past, enter deeply into its natural genius. Do this seriously and with all your heart, and you shall see certain consequences following infallibly from the premises of that study. From the past you will be able to infer the future of France and its mission; they will be perfectly clear to you, you will believe and you will want to believe; faith is nothing but that.²⁰⁷

I have tried to show that in his paintings of the first half of the 1860s Manet deliberately set out, not to break with or to deny the French painting of the past, but to reclaim that painting for the present (and implicitly for the future as well). At every stage in this development the authority to which Manet appealed was that of reason, of history, of the Frenchness of French painting as revealed in history. Moreover, I have suggested that his campaign to take possession of the French painting of the past, to make it wholly present in his own art, must be seen as the expression of deep and

more than merely personal need. It was, one might say, in order to secure the Frenchness on which his own conviction as a (French) painter depended that Manet found it necessary to concern himself both with what seemed to him the authentically French painting of the past and with the natural genius of that painting, which he appears to have identified with realism or anyway with truthfulness.

The relation of formulations like these to Michelet's writings of the mid- and late 1840s may seem fortuitous: after all, Manet was concerned with making paintings, while Michelet had been discussing nothing less than the French Revolution and the destiny of France. But Michelet himself wrote in *Le Peuple*:

No art object, no luxury industry, no form of high culture remains without influence on the masses, down to the lowest and the poorest. In the great national body thought circulates imperceptibly, rises to the highest, descends to the lowest point, ideas enter through the eyes (fashions, shops, museums, etc.), others through conversation, through language, which is the great storehouse of common progress. Everyone receives everyone else's thought, without analyzing it perhaps, but in the end everyone takes it in.²⁰⁸

And in his lesson of January 15, 1848, "Dangers de la dispersion d'esprit,"²⁰⁹ Michelet discussed the life and work of a great painter, Géricault, in terms that prove beyond a doubt that he regarded painting as an enterprise of the highest importance, and moreover as one that could embody the relation to France that he passionately advocated. Roughly, Michelet saw Géricault not only as the first painter of his epoch but as the one Frenchman who remained true to France during the years after Waterloo:

One knows the strange reaction of 1816, and how France seemed to become untrue to itself then. But as it did so, Géricault adopted it. He protested for it, by the wholly French originality of his genius, and by choosing national types exclusively. Poussin painted Italians, David painted Romans and Greeks, but Géricault, amid the bastard mixtures of the Restoration, kept national thought strong and pure. He did not submit to the invasion and yielded nothing to the reaction.²¹⁰

Seen in this light, the *Raft of the Medusa* became a powerful realist symbol of France itself:

In 1822 [actually 1818–19] Géricault paints his raft, the shipwreck of France. Alone, he sails into the future . . . without taking notice or making use of the reaction. This is heroic.

It is France itself, it is our whole society that he cast onto the raft of the *Medusa* . . . Image so cruelly true that the original refused to recognize itself. People recoiled before this terrifying painting; they passed it by quickly; they tried not to see or understand.²¹¹

For Michelet, Géricault was “the national artist of an epoch, he who, alone, was then the true tradition; I’ve said it and I repeat it: At that moment, Géricault was France.”²¹² Not only was the artist himself unaware of this; according to Michelet, the corruption of French society in the early 1820s sickened and depressed Géricault; the apparent death of the country he loved made him despair and finally invite his own death:

This is the one grave reproach that he deserves. He lacked faith in the eternity of France.

How could he fail to believe in his homeland? He had just created its powerful and immortal symbols, its first popular art. France was in him.

He was unaware of this; he no longer wanted to live.²¹³

In this, too, Géricault’s example was a lesson for young Frenchmen: “Let the life and death of this great man be an example to us; let us not give way, as he did, to discouragement.”²¹⁴

I am not here concerned with the historical accuracy of Michelet’s view of Géricault. Instead I call attention to the following points. First, Michelet held that painting could be a political act, even when the subject matter of the work in question was not overtly political. Second, the vital political concepts for Michelet were Frenchness, the national genius of France, and faith in France—to be acquired through the study of history. And third, Michelet seems to have believed that through his art a painter could place himself, either deliberately or unknowingly, in a relation to France—and, by implication, to the French Revolution, to the entire history of France—that no one else in the France of his time exactly matched. I am not, of course, suggesting that in 1862 or 1863 or 1864 Manet *was* France. But I am suggesting that the parallel that has emerged between Michelet’s political tracts of 1846–48 and Manet’s enterprise during the first half of the 1860s is not necessarily empty, or merely formal, or unfaithful to the spirit of Michelet. Finally, Michelet’s lecture on Géricault was republished in 1862 and again in 1864 by Chesneau as an appendix to his book *Les Chefs d’école*.²¹⁵ This raises the further possibility that Manet’s decision, as I see it, to engage with Géricault in the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, and perhaps in other paintings of 1864, may have been partly motivated by the desire to associate or even to identify himself with

the French artist whom no less an authority on Frenchness than Michelet had described in terms that Manet would have been gratified to find addressed to himself.

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THE SECOND and last ramification of this account of Manet’s paintings of the first half of the 1860s concerns the relation of his enterprise during those years to certain more general aspects of Thoré’s thought. In the short preface which Thoré wrote (as W. Bürger) for the republication in 1868 of his *Salons* of 1844–48, he contrasted his “ultrapatriotic” attitudes of the 1830s and 1840s with the more just and cosmopolitan recognitions that he had arrived at in exile.²¹⁶ For one thing, Thoré had come to feel that the great artists of other nations were the equals, and in some instances the superiors, of their French counterparts. More important, he seems to have become convinced that modern society as a whole was in the process of becoming cosmopolitan, of transcending national prejudices in a new awareness of the common brotherhood of mankind. This conviction, which made itself felt in everything Thoré wrote between the mid-1850s and his death in 1869, received perhaps its most systematic exposition in two important essays of 1855 and 1857 respectively, “Des Tendances de l’art au XIXe siècle”²¹⁷ and “Nouvelles Tendances de l’art”:²¹⁸

[T]here is now in France and everywhere a strange uneasiness, an irresistible aspiration toward a life altogether different from that of the past. All the conditions of the former society have been overthrown: in science and in the religions which are the résumé of science; in politics and in political economy, which is the application of politics; in agriculture, industry, and commerce, which are the elements of political economy. Incomparable discoveries have given every idea and fact an unforeseen and unlimited extension. It is as if an invisible telegraph puts into circulation almost instantly and everywhere the impressions of entire peoples, the thoughts of men, and events and novelties of all kinds. The slightest quiver, moral or physical, felt anywhere on the globe, propagates itself from point to point and is transmitted around the world. Humanity is in the process of constituting itself, and soon it shall attain self-awareness down to its furthest extremities.

The chief characteristic of modern society—of the society of the future—will be universality.

Whereas previously—yesterday—each people shut itself up in narrow territorial boundaries, in its particular traditions, its superstitious cult, its selfish

laws, its obscure prejudices, its customs and its language, today each tends to expand beyond its narrow limits, to open up its frontiers, generalize its traditions and mythology, humanize its laws, enlighten its opinions, liberalize its customs, mingle its interests with those of other nations, and permit everyone to share its energy, language, and genius.²¹⁹

Thoré believed that that development was already at least imminent in poetry, literature, painting. In particular he regarded international exhibitions, such as the Exposition Universelle of 1855 and the Manchester exhibition of 1857, at once as expressions of the general impulse toward universality and as major factors in the promulgation of that impulse within the arts:

When the arts of all countries, with all their indigenous qualities, shall be brought into relation with each other often, when mutual exchange shall have become habitual, the character of art everywhere will gain an incalculable extension, without the genius proper to every nation being altered by it. First, a sort of European school will take shape, instead of the national sects which still divide the great family of art according to the topography of frontiers; then, a universal school, at home in the world, to which nothing human will be alien.²²⁰

The general implications of this development for criticism and esthetics were plain:

In our opinion, nineteenth-century esthetics and criticism must be independent of any school, any system, any nationality, any local or historical prejudice. They must not belong to any single country or period, if they are to promote the sympathetic and providential convergence of the creative powers proper to the different peoples.

. . . It is said that art is the expression of society: this is undoubtedly true, since one means by society the binding together of human manifestations. . . . This is why the progress of contemporary art consists in rendering in a harmonious form the irresistible impulse that draws the world toward unity.²²¹

Specifically, Thoré believed that the art of the future would consist in a new naturalism based on the recognition of the common humanity of all men—it would be an art for man, like the Dutch painting of the seventeenth century, only extended now beyond the limits of any single nation to embrace the whole world.

It is not entirely clear whether or not Thoré believed that nationality as such would eventually come to an end; perhaps he did. But he does not seem to have felt that the respective demands of nationality and of universality were essentially or necessarily opposed to one another.²²² The de-

velopment of modern society toward universality would, he believed, naturally erode national prejudices, hostilities, caprices, arrogances, blindnesses; at the same time, the fuller expression of the natural genius of individual peoples was seen as promoting the recognition of the common brotherhood not just of nations but of mankind. His recurrent figure of speech for the relation of individual nations to the universal society of the future was that of natural accord, natural harmony, natural convergence toward a common end. This is implicit in the passages quoted above, as well as in the following remarks from his preface to *Les Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, a book-length study by national schools of the paintings in the Manchester exhibition of 1857:

A general history of art seems to be one of the tendencies and necessities of modern civilization. National monographs are no longer sufficient. Generalization and universality characterize the present in art, literature, and science, as well as in political economy and industry. The moral frontiers between peoples have been removed. These peoples from now on will feel united not only by the concord of their interests but also by the solidarity of their imagination and intelligence.

How is one to bring about this universal history of art, if not by collecting dates, particulars of all sorts, which help us to understand the different epochs, different countries, different national geniuses, and especially to grasp the analogies and harmonies that bind them in a great unity?²²³

It is not clear from this—it must have been unclear to Thoré—exactly what a general or universal history of art would finally consist in, that is, what the terms were in which such a history would finally be written. (It seems unlikely, for example, that Thoré would have regarded a stylistic or formal account of the development of the visual arts as universal in his sense.) But what is clear, I think, is that the category of nationality was fundamental to Thoré's conception of the historical enterprise which he himself was actively pursuing.

And in fact it has already emerged that considerations of nationality were basic to Thoré's descriptions both of the French painting of the past and of the relations which that painting bore to the work of foreign artists. But only in the context of his belief in the tendency of modern society toward universality—indeed, only in the context of his lifelong commitment to democracy, socialism, and progressive politics generally, which led him to welcome that tendency with all his heart—does the meaning of Thoré's concern with Frenchness become fully evident. Far from being the expression of a narrow or restrictive nationalism, that concern was inspired by the belief that the pursuit of universality was inherent in the

national genius of French painting itself. Even Thoré's insistence on distinguishing between the relatively few painters whom he considered authentically French and the mass of painters whom he did not is to be seen in this light: the authentic Frenchness of the former consisted chiefly in their willingness to depict the men and customs of the France of their eras; by so doing they contributed to the eventual, though in Thoré's view still incomplete, achievement of a universal art for man.

It has also emerged that Manet's involvement with the art of the past must be understood in terms of a conscious program to establish a particular kind of relation, which I have described as one of access, to the painting of the major foreign schools; and that Thoré's writings played a far more important role in that program than those of any other critic or historian. I think of this aspect of Manet's art as a deliberate attempt to establish the universality of *his own painting*. This is not to imply that Manet thought of his use of past art in connection with Thoré's concept of universality, or that Thoré himself, if he had grasped the meaning of Manet's relations with the art of the Old Masters, would have regarded Manet's paintings as universal in his sense of the term. It is, however, to assert that Manet's evident determination to secure access to the major schools of painting must be seen, not simply as motivated by his intense interest in each school in its own right, but also—fundamentally—as directed toward the accomplishment of access to the art of painting *in its entirety*, so to speak. Both Thoré and Manet were simultaneously concerned with the natural genius of individual nations on the one hand and, on the other, with the transcendence of nationality in a comprehensive and essentially natural unity. Moreover, just as Thoré's concern with Frenchness in his later writings was an expression of his belief in the progress of modern society toward universality—a belief grounded in the politics of a lifetime—so Manet's explicit involvement with the Frenchness of French painting was an expression of his complete dedication to the art of painting *altogether*.²²⁴ It is as though Manet achieved in just a few years and within his paintings alone what Thoré expected would come about only gradually and in painting at large: “First, a sort of European school will take shape . . . ; then, a universal school . . .” (It may be argued that the latter step did not occur definitively until the Exposition Universelle of 1867 enabled Manet to acknowledge the importance of Japanese art to his paintings of the first half of the 1860s.)

Thoré's remarks about the need for a universal history of art also seem specially relevant to Manet. We have seen that it was finally “to un-

derstand the different epochs, different countries, different national geniuses, and especially to grasp the analogies and harmonies that bind them in a great unity” that Thoré collected facts, dates, particulars of all kinds, and made himself one of the leading connoisseurs of his time. And as I have tried to show, Manet put Thoré's findings to his own uses—uses which, in important respects, were consistent in spirit with Thoré's aspirations. The solidarity of the pictorial thought and imagination of different peoples, the analogies and harmonies that bind different national schools into the single unity of painting—where are they to be found if not in the *Old Musician*, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia*, *Dead Torero*, *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, *Christ Mocked*, *Portrait of Émile Zola*, *Luncheon*, and *Balcony*, to name only ten of Manet's paintings of the 1860s? I am not suggesting that Manet's paintings are the universal history of art that Thoré called for (though Thoré's apparent uncertainty as to the nature, organizing principles, and basic categories of such a project perhaps suggests that the possibility ought not to be rejected out of hand). At the very least, however, paintings such as those just named constitute a kind of fruition both of Thoré's historical labors and of the aspirations toward a universal history of art in which those labors were grounded.

Thoré says just a bit more about those aspirations in a remarkable passage in his first article of 1860 on the boulevard des Italiens exhibition of French paintings from private collections:

In order to arrive at being able to write a history of European art since the Renaissance, a project that seems to torment our epoch, it is necessary to distribute justice among the various schools of painting, to establish their distinctive and essential qualities, to reconsider each country's claims and give each its due role in the general development of art. Instinctively, one feels today that each nation is preparing itself for a kind of Last Judgment, after which, the past having been liquidated, we will enter a new world.²²⁵

Until now I have been emphasizing the sense in which Manet's enterprise during the first half of the 1860s may be seen as an attempt to reclaim the past, to repossess it, and thereby to establish its presence in his art in a new way—explicitly, specifically, comprehensively. But there is also a sense in which that enterprise may be seen as having the same purpose as Thoré's historical Last Judgment: to liquidate the past and so enter a new world. It is as though by 1860 the past of painting was no longer present as until then it had been, in continuity and return and revolution. Nor,

however, was it simply or wholly absent. Whatever conventions of painting had changed, however the essence of painting may have changed during the centuries—since Giotto, or the High Renaissance, or the age of Velásquez, Rubens, and the great Dutchmen—the success or failure as art of a new work ultimately depended (as it ultimately depends) on the ability of that work to stand comparison with the art of the Old Masters. And that meant that the very enterprise of painting—the very possibility of that enterprise—was essentially a function of what they had done. (Hence the futility—and, as it turned out, the sterility—of Castagnary's repeated calls to break with the art of the past; hence also the simple falseness of his claim that paintings are not made with paintings.) One might say that by 1860 the past was present chiefly in absentia, as commodity or reproach or nightmare; and that Manet, partly by establishing its presence explicitly in his own work in ways which I have tried to describe, resolved that situation once and for all. It is perhaps misleading to say that Manet made the past directly available again to the painters who came after him: for one thing, because that may seem to imply that in the end nothing changed, that there is nothing new or different about the modern painter's relation to the past of his art. At the very least, however, Manet made the past something that once again did not *need* to be dealt with but could be ignored, taken for granted, even forgotten. It is also true that probably the most single important characteristic of ambitious painting since Manet has been the closeness and particular urgency of its involvement with the ambitious art of the *immediate* past—its commitment to what might be thought of as the *historical present*. But no painter since Manet has been faced with the need to secure the connectedness of his art to that of the distant past, to the enterprise of the Old Masters. With Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s, that simply and without notice disappeared as a problem for painting.

In those paintings Frenchness was the medium through which Frenchness was transcended and access to painting in its entirety—to what I have called the art of painting altogether—was finally achieved. That it was Frenchness which Manet used to this end was, naturally, a function of Manet's own Frenchness—of the historical accident of his birth. But that accident concerned both his being French and what it meant to be French, what Frenchness itself was. Above all I am referring to the conception of France and of the relations between France and the rest of the world that one finds in the teachings of the man I have already discussed in connection with Manet's involvement with Frenchness—and who was

also a decisive influence on the thought of the young Thoré—Jules Michelet.

To begin with, the general relation of the individual nations to the universal whole they constitute—a question one finds active both in Thoré's later writings and, I have argued, in Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s—has perhaps its deepest source in Michelet's writings of the 1830s and 1840s. For example, in the chapter of *Le Peuple* entitled “La Patrie: Les Nationalités vont-elles disparaître?” Michelet wrote:

God's most powerful means of creating and increasing originality is to keep the world divided harmonically into the great and beautiful systems which we call nations, each of which, opening to man a diverse field of action, is a living education. The more man progresses, the more deeply he enters into the genius of his homeland, the greater his contribution to the harmony of the world; he comes to know his homeland, both in its distinctive and its relative value, as a note in the great concert; through the one he participates in the other; in his homeland, he loves the world. The homeland is the necessary initiation into the universal homeland.²²⁶

But while Michelet venerated nationality as such, and conceived of the brotherhood of mankind in terms of a concert of highly individualized nations, he reserved a position of unique importance for his nation, for France:

As for us, whatever becomes of us, poor or rich, happy or unhappy, alive or beyond death, we shall always thank God for giving us this great country, France. Not only because of all the glorious things that she has done, but above all because we find in her the representative of the liberties of the world and the most sympathetic country of all, the initiation into universal love. . . .

Doubtless, every great country represents an idea important to humanity. But good God, how much more true that is of France! Let us suppose for a moment that France should disappear, that she should no longer exist—the bond of sympathy which unites the world would be loosened, and probably destroyed. Love, which makes life possible in this world, would be attacked in what makes it most alive. The earth would enter the ice age that has already claimed other worlds not far from us.²²⁷

The great idea which France represented was that of the Revolution of 1789: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, above all the last of these. France was “the universal homeland”; “much more than a nation, it [was] fraternity incarnate.” More than any other nation France had “con-founded its interest and destiny with those of humanity.”²²⁸ Each French child, Michelet wrote, should be taught “that God had graced him or her with this country which promulgated, written in its blood, the law of di-

vine equality and fraternity that the God of nations had spoken through France.”²²⁹ In the Revolution and the wars that followed it, France, like a Christ among nations, sacrificed itself in the attempt to redeem humanity as a whole:

We are the sons of those who, by a heroic effort of nationalism, did the world's work, and established throughout the nations the gospel of equality. Our fathers did not understand by fraternity that vague sympathy which makes you love and accept everything, which mixes, adulterates, confuses. They believed that fraternity was not a blind mixing of existences and characters but rather a union of hearts. They kept for themselves and for France the primacy of devotion, of sacrifice, which no one disputed with them; alone, she watered with her blood the tree that she had planted.²³⁰

More than once “France gave its life for the world.”²³¹ And if because of its selflessness, its sacrifices, France in 1846 was weak, divided, impoverished; nevertheless “it is not the industrial machinery of England, it isn't the scholastic machinery of Germany, which make the life of the world; it's the breath of France, whatever its state, it's the latent warmth of its revolution that Europe bears within itself always.”²³² Only when France recalled itself to itself, only when it regained faith in its divine but profoundly human mission, would the nation be strong, unified, invincible; and only then would it be able to bring the principles of the Revolution to the entire world. Revolution alone “can reunite us, and, through us, save the world.”²³³ There was no other way for humanity to be saved; no rationalist humanitarianism based on the concept of the individual could possibly do it: “The homeland, my homeland, alone can save the world.”²³⁴

For Michelet, then, diversity of nationality was a necessary condition for meaningful concord, meaningful unity; and France alone could accomplish that unity by bringing the principles of the Revolution to all the nations of the world and thereby liberating humanity as a whole. There is no evidence that the young Manet read *Le Peuple* or other works by Michelet of roughly the same moment, though the strong republican sympathies which he clearly felt before and after the Revolution of 1848 suggest that he may have done so.²³⁵ In any case, his concern with Frenchness in his paintings of the first half of the 1860s must be seen in relation to Courture and Thoré, both of whom were directly and powerfully influenced by Michelet. So Manet would not have had to study Michelet's writings himself in order have had his mind shaped by them. The availability of a vision of France as “the universal homeland”—as that nation which nat-

urally transcended itself, which naturally identified its interest with that of humanity as a whole—was instrumental in enabling Manet to make the Frenchness of French painting a medium of access to foreign schools of painting and finally to the art of painting altogether. One might say that Michelet in his writings of the 1830s and 1840s made Frenchness as such a medium of transcendence, of universality; and that Manet made Michelet's vision of Frenchness a medium of painting. It is even conceivable that without Michelet's inspired reading, or resurrection, of the history of France and in particular of the French Revolution, Manet would have been unable to attain the depth of conviction in his work as painting which he seems to have attained. The least that must be said is that without Michelet's vision of France, Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s would have been radically, unimaginably different. And it is not at all certain that they would have been as great, or as revolutionary, as they have proved to be.

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MANET MUST have hoped that at least a few critics would grasp the intentions which he had worked to make perspicuous. But none did. For a moment Chesneau almost came close, when he spotted the dependence of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* on Raimondi's engraving after Raphael,²³⁶ as well as something of its relation to Courbet.²³⁷ But he regarded Manet's use of Raphael as eccentric, incomprehensible; and he deplored what seemed to him Courbet's ruinous influence on many of the most gifted younger painters, Manet included.

It is not surprising that the only critic who consistently discussed Manet's paintings in terms of their relation to previous art was Thoré, and even he missed seeing the *Déjeuner-Raphael* and *Olympia*-Titian connections. “I can't imagine what can have made an intelligent and distinguished artist choose so absurd a composition,” he wrote of the *Déjeuner* in 1863.²³⁸ But the next year he noted the dependence of the dead torero in Manet's *Episode in a Bullfight* on the *Orlando Muerto*:

Here is another victim of ferocious customs, a voluntary one, lying dead in an arena at the far limit of which the bullfight continues. This toreador, disem-boweled for the pleasure of a few thousand overexcited spectators, is a life-size figure boldly copied from a masterpiece at the Pourtalès Gallery . . . painted by none other than Velásquez. Manet does not scruple to “take what he needs

where he finds it," any more than to throw on his canvas his splendid bizarre colors, which irritate the "bourgeois" to the point of insult. His painting is a sort of provocation and he apparently wants to torment the public just as the picadors in his Spanish arena place their barbs trimmed with garish ribbons into the neck of their savage adversary.—He has not yet taken the bull by the horns.

Manet has the gifts of a magician, effects of light and flamboyant tones that pastiche Velásquez and Goya, his favorite masters. He was thinking of them when he composed and painted his bullfight.²³⁹

Thoré went on to say that in Manet's second painting in the Salon of 1864, the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, "It's another Spanish master, El Greco, whom he has pastiched with equal fury, no doubt as a kind of sarcasm directed against the timid lovers of discreet and proper painting."²⁴⁰ The painting as a whole, in particular the angels with intense blue wings, seemed to Thoré a further act of defiance or deliberate mockery of the public's expectations. But he observed that the modeling of the arms and the foreshortening of the legs recalled Rubens and Annibale Carracci, and closed his remarks on Manet with high praise: "Enough for the moment on the eccentricities that hide a true painter, one whose works, some day, will perhaps be applauded. Let's recall Eugène Delacroix's debuts and then his triumph at the Exposition Universelle of 1855, and his sale—after his death!"²⁴¹

Baudelaire, then in Brussels, wrote Thoré at once objecting that the word "pastiche" was unfair and denying that Manet had ever seen paintings by Goya or El Greco or that he had visited the Pourtalès Collection.²⁴² Thoré responded generously. He was willing to take Baudelaire's word that Manet had never seen Goya's work and that he was "wholly naturally a colorist in the manner of that exquisite and fantastic painter."²⁴³ But Thoré rightly insisted that Manet must have seen the Pourtalès *Orlando Muerto* one way or another, and concluded: "We certify always in passing that Manet's painting is not a *pastiche* of Goya, and we are pleased to repeat that this young man is a true painter, more of a painter by himself alone than the entire band of winners of the Prix de Rome."²⁴⁴

In his "Salon of 1865" Thoré praised another young painter, Théodule Ribot, almost exactly in these terms: "He's more of a painter than all the Prix de Rome winners taken together."²⁴⁵ Ribot's *Saint Sebastian* was one of the solid successes of that year; but while Thoré granted that it was well painted, he found Ribot's subject matter painfully anachronistic:

If, to express the idea or image of persecution and of the piety resulting from it, you keep using the same stereotyped Catholic symbol, there is no reason why you should not continue to express modern strength and beauty through pagan symbols such as Hercules and Venus. Now the mission and instinct of art are precisely to create plastic forms adequate to the ideas and customs of each period, without forsaking the permanent, typical character of universal life.

It can happen also that in imitating an old idea you are involuntarily led to imitate old forms and practices. If you paint Venus, Diana, Galatea, nymphs or naiads, how can you manage not to think of Greek statuary and the Italian Renaissance, which resurrected the Greek style? If you paint Christian martyrs, who has dramatized torture and pain more acutely than the Spanish mystics, especially Ribera? And here is Ribot falling with his *Saint Sebastian* into the blackness of Ribera!²⁴⁶

The relevance of these remarks to Manet is evident, and in fact Thoré went on at once to speak of him:

It's fatal, irresistible: Manet does not seem to want to be taken for a routine practitioner of academic art; nevertheless, having had the unfortunate idea of painting Christ in the tribunal, this original artist virtually copies the famous composition by Van Dyck! Last year, painting a Spanish subject which he had never seen, he copied the Velásquez in the Pourtalès Gallery.²⁴⁷

Thoré barely mentioned *Olympia* and seems not to have noticed its relation to the *Venus of Urbino*. But there can be no doubt as to what his response to that relation would have been. Having just warned against the use of pagan symbols such as Venus, partly on the grounds that it would lead to dependence on the defunct forms of the Italian Renaissance, it seems inevitable that he would have seen *Olympia* as confirming the truth of his worst fears. Toward the end of the "Salon of 1865" Thoré summed up his attitude toward the use of Italian (and Spanish) art by contemporary French painters:

Along with a few adventurous minds, we think that the art of the South is no longer anything but a dead though quite glorious tradition. It was alive once—and it does not seem that it will live again in the midst of the wholly modern civilization now in preparation. Has anyone noticed Spanish or Italian painting at the universal exhibitions of Paris, Manchester, and London? Oh, what great and noble people they were—in history! When French painting turns toward Italy, it turns toward the past. Archaeology is no doubt extremely interesting, but it is not the business of artists, who ought to be inventors, not compilers. The instinct for innovation dies out in those who shut themselves up among ruins. Isn't life itself simply renewal?²⁴⁸



This could, one feels, have been addressed to Manet; and perhaps it partly was.

Manet's two submissions to the Salon of 1866, the *Tragic Actor* (Rouvière as Hamlet) and the *Fifer*, were rejected by the jury. In his "Salon" of that year Thoré praised Courbet at length, in terms that at least implicitly contrasted him with Manet:

In the contemporary school Courbet represents a frank naturalism absolutely opposed to the pretentious and false painter's manners recently taken up by a frivolous public. His painting raises two problems for those who study the tendencies of art and the means by which it should be renewed.

The question is whether art should still be dragged along in the traces of the past: ideas, symbols, images of what no longer exists, backward-looking pastiches forever alien to the consciousness, conventions, and deeds of the new society.

Let the artist cease to draw his inspiration from pagan antiquity and the Catholic Middle Ages, and both form and invention will become free.

For a subject determines the form. An absurd and unnatural subject like a centaur or an angel will lead to a fanciful form, since the artist cannot base himself on natural reality. Where is one to find the original of a cherub with two wings attached to his temples or of a goat-footed faun?²⁴⁹

No older critic was as consistent or as warm in his praise of Manet's pictorial gifts as Thoré. But the forces of mind that made Thoré's writings enabling for Manet also compelled Thoré to see Manet's involvement with the art of the past and his use of religious subject matter as artistically and socially retrograde. His respect emerges, however, in the account in his "Salon of 1866" of a visit that he made to Manet's studio:

I prefer Manet's mad *ébauches* to academic figures of Hercules. So I revisited his studio, where I saw a large portrait of a man in black in the manner of the portraits of Velásquez, which the jury refused. There was also a "sea-landscape," as Courbet puts it, and some exquisite flowers, and a study of a young lady in a pink dress which perhaps will be refused at the next Salon. Those pink tones on a gray background would be a challenge to the most delicate colorists. An *ébauche*, it's true, like Watteau's *Isle of Cythera* [*Embarkation for Cythera*] in the Louvre. Watteau would have been able to push his *ébauche* to the point of perfection. Manet is still struggling with that extreme difficulty of painting, namely how to finish certain parts of the picture in order to give the ensemble its effective value. But one can predict that he will have his turn at success, like all the persecuted of the Salon.²⁵⁰

Whatever Thoré's reservations, Manet must have been pleased to have elicited a comparison between his art and that of Watteau from the critic who more than any other had formulated the issues and distinctions with

which his paintings of the first half of the 1860s had explicitly engaged. But Manet must have wished that he had been seen in relation to Watteau years earlier, and that the meaning of that relationship for his enterprise as a whole had been grasped as well.

No other critic in Manet's lifetime came close to understanding his involvement with the art of the past, or even to taking that involvement fully seriously. And with the rise of Impressionism and the general simplification of painting that came about largely as a result of his own early work (with which Matisse will credit him), Manet himself may have become uncertain exactly what to make of that aspect of his art before 1865. In any case, he seems to have been content to let his critics, and his historians, work it out for themselves.

2 “Manet’s Sources” Reconsidered

LET ME BEGIN by acknowledging some of the gravest flaws in “Manet’s Sources” as I now see it. In the first place, it begins much too abruptly and so fails to prepare the reader for the arguments that follow. By this I mean not only that its discussion of earlier scholarship is somewhat cursory, but also that no effort is made to distinguish Manet’s practice of quotation and allusion from those of certain earlier painters (in his critique of my essay Reff cites Reynolds and Ingres) it may seem superficially to resemble (Reff thinks all three are interchangeable).¹ I believe Manet is a special case, but even so he belongs to the much broader artistic phenomenon of selective imitation, and it would have been helpful had I made that clear. Moreover, a potentially important methodological insight—that what is at issue in Manet’s references to earlier painting cannot be understood in terms of “generally accepted paradigms of *influence*”—is left undeveloped. Here too going farther might have enabled me to forestall various objections that Reff gave voice to and other readers undoubtedly felt.

Furthermore, I was led by too mechanical a notion of my project to establish as many specific connections as I could between Manet’s paintings and prints on the one hand and works by the Old Masters on the other. As a result, various connections seem forced and unconvincing (especially so in my remarks on Watteau), a fault that’s the more debilitating because of my failure to distinguish sufficiently between instances of alleged quotation that are vital to my larger argument and ones that are not. In addition, Manet is sometimes portrayed as concerned with an ideal of something like perfect intellectual clarity, as if he were seeking not simply to satisfy the demands of ambitious painting as he understood them but also to explain himself to later investigators (i.e. to me). So for example I associate Manet’s *Absinthe Drinker* (fig. 8) with Watteau’s *L’Indifférent* (fig. 9) by saying that “I find the odd, almost dancelike formality and elegance of the pose of Manet’s figure inconceivable except on

the basis of that of Watteau’s,” and go on to suggest that the inclusion of the figure of the Absinthe Drinker in the *Old Musician* (pl. 2), a painting that contains an unmistakable allusion to Watteau’s *Gilles* (fig. 6), “made explicit the *Absinthe Drinker*’s partial and far from obvious basis in a painting by Watteau.” But the connection with *L’Indifférent* is likely to appear forced and unconvincing, and the flat statement that I find the pose of Manet’s figure otherwise “inconceivable” makes matters worse (it hardly encourages the reader to have confidence in the author’s intuitions); moreover, the suggestion that Manet’s principal motive for including the figure of the Absinthe Drinker in the *Old Musician* was to clarify an earlier moment in his own production seems and indeed is inherently improbable. Typically, the core of my reading of the *Old Musician*—the association of Watteau and Le Nain with a particular conception of Frenchness and of Velásquez with a move beyond Frenchness toward universality—doesn’t depend on what I say about the inclusion in that painting of the figure of the Absinthe Drinker, but this becomes clear only later on, after the reader has been distracted by the unpersuasiveness of my claims about the *Absinthe Drinker* and Watteau. Of course, I also argue that the *Absinthe Drinker* embodies a connection with Velásquez’s paintings of beggar-philosophers, the *Aesop* and *Menippus*, which no one now doubts. And the fact remains that no aspect of the *Absinthe Drinker* is more puzzling than the position of the figure’s legs, which I still feel may owe something to Watteau: but I should have gone more slowly, stressing the connection with Velásquez (and perhaps with Rembrandt: isn’t there something Rembrandt-like in the repetition of the figure in the *Old Musician*?), making the pose of the feet and legs seem to require explanation, and finally suggesting that, especially in the light of Manet’s involvement with Watteau after 1860, one or another figure by the latter (perhaps even the protagonist of *L’Indifférent*) may well have been a factor in that early work.² Unfortunately, such subtlety was not in my rhetorical armory in 1968–69.

Another, related area of strain in my argument concerns my claim that Manet found himself compelled to seek what I call “access” to the art of non-French schools of painting by relying on publicly recognized links or affinities between French painters he regarded as canonical and various foreign artists and schools (e.g. between Watteau and Rubens, the Le Nains and both Flemish painting and Velásquez, Ingres and Raphael, and so on). Although I still believe Manet was not indifferent to such connections, I would now qualify my views by saying that he didn’t absolutely

require textual “sanction” (another key word in “Manet’s Sources”) in order to deploy non-French sources. Rather, I see him as acutely aware of the network of resemblances stretching across national boundaries to which the older critic Théophile Thoré bore witness when he spoke of “the analogies and the harmonies that link [the different national schools] in a great unity,” and as requiring no further sanction than that awareness to justify his allusions to a multiplicity of works belonging to at least four major European schools: Spain, Flanders, Italy, and Holland. Still another point I would now modify is the claim that Manet followed Thoré, to whom the Italian tradition was anathema, to the extent of staying clear of Italian art until he came to paint the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*. One of Reff’s most telling criticisms was that this view is untenable as it stands³ (but see the discussions below of the *Surprised Nymph* and *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*). In fact I wouldn’t now wish to say that Manet followed anyone at all—rather that when his relation to earlier art is considered against the background of contemporaneous writing about that art, Thoré and other writers must also be counted among the sources of his thought. More broadly, I would now place less emphasis on matter of timing, as for example when I say that “throughout 1861, despite his attraction to Spanish painting, Manet was constrained to base his most ambitious pictures on Flemish sources,” because he had not yet “secured access to Spanish painting as a whole.”⁴ The rhetoric of constraint and compulsion goes too far, as does the suggestion that Manet’s desire to relate his painting to the major national schools led him to conduct a prolonged campaign “virtually every step of which must be understood in relation to every other.” I now think Manet’s procedures were less systematic than such a formulation implies.

I also agree with Reff that my exclusive focus upon the overall meaning of Manet’s practice of quotation led me to minimize other sorts of meaning in his pictures (but I never claimed—nor do I claim now—to be offering a comprehensive reading of his art); that my accounts of various paintings, most significantly *Olympia*, are therefore incomplete (this will be true also of the present book); that in several instances other sources than those I discuss demand to be taken into account (I examine some of them below), and that in one crucial instance I fail to consider a possible source that had been proposed several years before by another art historian, “perhaps because it would conflict with [Fried’s] Le Nain-Watteau-Velázquez thesis”⁵ (I take this up below as well); finally, that I sometimes engage in unconvincing bits of special pleading in support of associations

that themselves appear far-fetched (Reff cites as an example my statement that “Manet’s obviously deliberate use of a French angel [from Le Nain’s *Nativity of the Virgin*] as the basis for one of Christ’s tormentors [in the *Christ Mocked*] suggests that blasphemy of some explicit sort was on his mind; perhaps he was expressing in advance his defiance of the French public, etc.,” and I can only concur).⁶ Even more chagrining is that in researching my essay I failed to appreciate the importance for my argument of a major textual and visual compendium, Charles Blanc’s multi-volume *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles*, published chapter by chapter and then collected into individual volumes between 1849 and 1876. (The project was edited by Blanc, who also wrote several of the volumes; other authors included Thoré [as W. Bürger], Paul Mantz, Théophile Silvestre, and Marius Chaumelin.) In fact, it was Reff who in 1970 was the first to note the probable importance for Manet of the *Histoire des peintres*, and there is to my ear more than a little irony in his closing statement that as we come to discover in those volumes “further examples of [Manet’s] complex involvement with the art of the past . . . we shall probably also discover that the simultaneous appearance [in the early 1860s] of Blanc’s ambitious history of painters and of Manet’s ambitious ‘historical’ paintings is not so much a fortunate coincidence as a product of specific cultural conditions, in which the foundations of modern art history and those of modern art were laid down together”⁷ (this from someone who shortly before had accused me of exaggerating the singularity and importance of my subject). To do Reff justice, the footnote to that statement refers the reader to “Manet’s Sources.”

Altogether, one may think, a damning list of failures, omissions, rhetorical missteps, and just plain errors (and a partial one at that).⁸ And yet perhaps not altogether damning. At any rate, I still stand behind the following basic claims in my essay of 1969:

1. It is necessary to see Manet’s relation to his sources against the background of contemporaneous French writing and thinking about the art of the past. This might seem obvious but it had never previously occurred to anyone as a worthwhile endeavor. In this connection I was led to underscore the importance of two major exhibitions of older art, the Manchester exhibition of 1857, which Thoré reviewed in a book-length study, and the great (though numerically more modest) show of French paintings from private collections held in 1860 at a private gallery, Martinet’s, on the boulevard des Italiens. The latter made a wide range of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French pictures publicly accessible in a space that

ordinarily was used for displaying and selling modern art (Manet himself was soon to exhibit there);⁹ and it too was reviewed by Thoré in a series of articles in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* from which I quoted extensively and that deserves to be recognized as one of the key proto-art-historical texts of the period.¹⁰

2. Perhaps the most pressing concern of those French critics and art historians (often the same persons) who wrote about the art of the past in the late 1850s and 1860s was to determine the nature of the authentic French national tradition in painting. Roughly speaking there were two camps, a “conservative” one which stressed the Italianate classicizing tradition going back to Poussin and Claude and a “republican” camp, spearheaded by Thoré, which championed the popular, realist, and Northern—in short the anti-Italianate—tradition of the Le Nains, Watteau, Chardin, and nineteenth-century realism. Needless to say, the emphasis given in “Manet’s Sources” to the views of the second camp, which with respect to contemporary painting was by far the more progressive, should not be taken to mean that I endorsed its reading of the French past: in this connection as in others the historian’s job is not to endorse or refute the views of an earlier epoch but rather to understand them. On the other hand, my presentation of the “republican” position betrays the excitement of discovery: the issue of Frenchness had long since disappeared from scholarly view (a new generation of art historians has recently emphasized its role in French painting, decorative arts, and criticism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries);¹¹ nor was it realized that for an important body of nineteenth-century opinion Watteau was not so much the creator of the aristocratic art of the Rococo—the Goncourts’ view—as a realist and man of the people; and Thoré himself was not yet the focus of scholarly interest he has since become.¹²

3. Another major concern of the writers in question—here too Thoré is the key figure—was a certain idea of universality. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century in France the practice of what we would now call art history had been governed by categories of nationality, in particular of national *schools*. But some time after midcentury there emerged a new desire to go beyond nationality in the direction of a universal history of art. Blanc’s *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles* expresses such a desire by virtue of its encyclopedic character; but it’s chiefly in Thoré’s writings of the late 1850s and early 1860s that an increasing awareness of the essential “unity” of painting led to the demand for a new art history that would somehow take that “unity” directly into account.

In the absence of the stylistic or “formal” categories the invention of which would be the work of Heinrich Wölfflin and other late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century German-language art historians, it was anything but obvious how that demand could be met, and in the closing pages of my essay I suggest that Manet’s paintings of the 1860s may be seen as satisfying it in an unexpected way.

4. What strategically was at stake in Manet’s use of past art in his paintings of the 1860s was a desire to establish both the Frenchness and, going beyond that, the universality of his own painting (this was the main thrust of my 1969 essay). Hence his profound involvement with the Le Nains, Watteau, and Chardin, and hence also his repeated allusions to representative examples of the four major European schools: Italian, Spanish, Flemish, and Dutch (the last of these especially after Vermeer became available for citation in the later 1860s). Later in this chapter I shall return briefly to the question of the conditions of Manet’s access to Italian art, which his evident sympathy for the “republican” canon of French painters might be thought to have suppressed, as well as to a further consideration of the ways in which a particular ideal of Frenchness enabled its own transcendence. I shall also touch on the question of the role of Japanese woodblocks in all this, though for the moment I stand behind my claim that an explicit acknowledgment of his involvement with Japanese art took place only after the Exposition Universelle of 1867, in the *Portrait of Émile Zola* and the *Balcony*.¹³ In any case, the affinity between Manet’s relation to his sources and the developments in contemporary art history I have just summarized was both close and profound. “Doesn’t it seem to you,” Thoré asked in 1858, “that Europe today is in quest of a new art, more comprehensive than all the previous schools? And isn’t it the knowledge of the past that can assist in the preparation of the future?”¹⁴

5. Manet’s concern with Frenchness makes a link between his art and that of his teacher Couture. In his massive study, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision*, Albert Boime took issue with my reading of the *Romans of the Decadence* and related works without actually refuting it. In place of my emphasis on Couture’s sense of himself in a modern French tradition (grounded textually in his *Méthode et entretiens d’atelier*), Boime described Couture as possessed by “a Faustian ambition to rival the great masters and a need to identify sympathetically with the outstanding geniuses of the history of art” and developed a portmanteau concept of “eclecticism” that covers virtually everything in French art and culture

for several generations, including Manet's references to earlier painting.¹⁵ Recently, however, the French art historian Pierre Vaisse largely supported my account of Couture, including the emphasis I placed on his relations with Michelet.¹⁶ I also suggest in "Manet's Sources" that Michelet's vision of France as, by virtue of the Revolution, *la patrie universelle* "was instrumental in enabling Manet to make the Frenchness of French painting a medium of access to foreign schools of painting and finally to the art of painting altogether." For all the qualifications I built into those pages the reader may feel this is too strong (and that too much space is given over to Michelet relative to my argument as a whole), but in view of Michelet's importance to Couture, the centrality of his thought to the culture at large, and—a factor I didn't mention—the friendship that developed between the Michelets and the Manets in the second half of the 1860s, it is far from absurd.¹⁷ (See my discussion of Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* below.) Need I add that my emphasis on the importance of Michelet and more broadly of the "republican" canon of French painting for Manet in the 1860s manifestly involves a political reading of his enterprise?¹⁸

6. Already in two long footnotes to chapter 1 I claim that various aspects of Manet's practice in the 1860s must be understood in terms of a pursuit of the *tableau*, a term that, owing to its connotations of achieved unity, can't be translated by the English words "painting" or "picture" without significant loss.¹⁹ I also remark that critics of the 1850s and 1860s routinely criticized Courbet for painting mere *morceaux*, fragments or agglomerations of fragments, as opposed to true *tableaux*, which I take to mean that Manet's pursuit of the latter marks a crucial difference between his aspirations and Courbet's. Subsequently I traced the emergence in the 1750s and 1760s of the concept of the *tableau* as a central term of criticism (in *Absorption and Theatricality*) and said more about the force of the *tableau/morceau* distinction as it was applied to Courbet's art (in *Courbet's Realism*).²⁰ The problem of the nature of the *tableau* for Manet and other painters of his generation will be further developed in chapter 4, but the work of Steven Z. Levine on Monet and Martha Ward on Pissarro and Seurat has shown that it remained an issue for advanced painting for decades to come.²¹

7. In the longer of the two footnotes just referred to I suggest that Manet's differences from Courbet must themselves be understood in the context of his relations with his contemporaries Fantin-Latour, Whistler, and Legros—the three other principals of the group I call, in my introduc-

tion, the generation of 1863. In that note I describe Zacharie Astruc's criticism of the 1860s as speaking for the group, a point I shall elaborate in the pages that follow. And my discussion in "Manet's Sources" of the esthetic of deliberate naïveté at work in Duranty's *théâtre de Polichinelle* in the early 1860s bears on the collective sensibility of that generation as well. Perhaps the most important shift of focus between "Manet's Sources" and the present book involves an attempt to make good on the notion that Manet the painter was not simply an isolated individual but rather, in vital respects, a member of a distinct artistic generation. Here, as a first step in that direction, is an excerpt from Astruc's late *Les Dieux en voyage* (1889), a collection of playlike sketches one of which, "Dans une forêt," features the youthful Fantin, Legros, Whistler, and Guillaume Régamey (the future painter of military subjects) painting together late one afternoon in a forest setting. The date would have been circa 1860 or earlier; at one point Astruc has Fantin say: "We still haven't escaped the Renaissance; we haven't stopped walking in Italian boots. It's enough if someone compares us to some 'chic' Italian to make our fortune and everyone slaps together his nymph or his little *Deposition from the Cross*. I greatly like Veronese—but it's by way of Chardin."²² Given the time lag of roughly thirty years, we can't take this as proof of Fantin's early attitudes. But the words Astruc puts in his mouth make historical sense, and of course I find the statement that he admires the Italian painter Veronese "by the way of" (*à travers*) the French painter Chardin deeply resonant with my reading of Manet.

8. As I mention in my introduction, the argument of "Manet's Sources" rests in part on an almost wholly unarticulated sense of Manet's place in a larger problematic, going back to the middle of the eighteenth century, involving the relations between painting and beholder and the issue (as I already called it) of theatricality. My incomplete grasp of that problematic in 1968–69 is reflected in my citing Denis Diderot, the central figure in *Absorption and Theatricality*, only twice.²³ But I was aware that a crucial aspect of the importance to Manet of the Le Nains and (especially) Watteau had to do with the extent to which their work provided a French precedent for Manet's leanings toward a kind of theatricality. In an important sense it is only now, having written *Absorption and Theatricality* and *Courbet's Realism*, that I am in a position to return to Manet and deal intensively with this aspect of his art. As will emerge, the issue of beholding was crucial for his entire generation in ways I was far from comprehending.

9. Finally, my attempt to specify a relation to previous painting that on the one hand acknowledged dependence on major predecessors and on the other cannot be understood as a matter of “influence” looks forward to (without in any sense anticipating) the work of the literary critic and theorist Harold Bloom on the struggle of belated “strong” poets to overcome their most important forebears—a kind of tragic version of classical *emulatio*.²⁴ Another body of recent scholarship I see as relevant to my reading of Manet explores the tradition of selective imitation in both literature and painting since the Renaissance.²⁵ And there are Michel Foucault’s brief but stimulating remarks comparing Manet’s relation to the museum to Flaubert’s to the library in his essay “Fantasia of the Library.”²⁶ “Manet’s Sources” thus can be seen as taking part in a larger investigation that has been one of the main concerns of scholarship in the humanities during the past two decades.

So much by way of summary of points I believe are true and important even if the evidence and/or arguments by which I supported them are sometimes flawed. I now begin the work of clarifying, amplifying, and deepening my account of Manet’s use of earlier art by looking again at some pictures discussed in “Manet’s Sources.” This will enable me to respond to various criticisms of my original essay, and it will also help explain how and why recent art historians have been led to ignore the larger question of Manet’s involvement with the art of the past.

TAKE FOR instance Manet’s *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* (fig. 40), which I suggested owes a great deal to one or more paintings by Louis Le Nain.²⁷ In his critique of my essay Reff dismissed this in favor of the view that the figure of Manet *père* “clearly depends for its conception . . . on Rembrandt’s etching *A Bearded Man in a Furred Oriental Cap* (fig. 70), which was then considered, appropriately, a portrait of Rembrandt’s father.”²⁸ (Champfleury thought that the standing woman and seated older man in *The Forge* [fig. 42], one of the two Le Nains I associate with Manet’s picture, might be *Le Nain’s* parents.)²⁹ But not only do I see no inescapable conflict between my views and Reff’s, I now insist that just this sort of conjoining or overlaying of sources is what most characterizes Manet’s practice during the first half of the 1860s, which is to say that neither my argument as a whole nor any particular suggestion can be invalidated merely by the discovery of an alternative or indeed a superior

Figure 70. Rembrandt van Rijn, *A Bearded Man in a Furred Oriental Cap*, etching, 1631.



source for a painting or figure. (It’s not irrelevant that Thoré in 1860 actually compared the Le Nains with Rembrandt and his school.)³⁰

Or consider an example that epitomizes this aspect of Manet’s method during the early 1860s. In “Manet’s Sources” I associated the superb *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* (pl. 5) with Watteau’s paintings of figures from the commedia dell’arte as well as, reaching beyond French painting, with an engraving after a picture by Rubens of a figure of Venus or Fortune that appeared in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1860 (fig. 46). In refutation of this Reff proposed an engraving from the *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles* after Titian’s *Girl with a Fruit Dish* (fig. 71) that would have been available to Manet as early as 1855.³¹ And at about the same moment Beatrice Farwell advanced as a source for the *Mlle V. . .* Marcantonio Raimondi’s engraving after Raphael’s *Temperance* (fig. 72), which, in addition to accounting for salient features of Manet’s composition, provides an immediate precedent for his use of Marcantonio/Raphael in the *Déjeuner*.³² Now, it may seem that Farwell’s discovery not only supersedes but invalidates both my Rubens and Reff’s Titian. But it would be consistent with Manet’s project as I understand it to imagine that he might well have been alert to the resemblance between

the posture of the figure's head and upper body in the *Temperance* and *Girl with a Fruit Dish* or, more loosely, between stance and gesture in the *Temperance* and the Rubens, and that all three works were meant to resonate together in the *Mlle V*. . . . Indeed those resemblances raise the further possibility that Titian and Rubens may have had that or a related Raphael image in mind when they composed *their* pictures.³³

The probable roles of the Raphael and Titian prototypes in the conception of the *Mlle V*. . . suffice to call into question my claim that it was only with the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* that Manet found it possible to refer di-



Figure 71. After Titian, *Girl with a Fruit Dish*.



Figure 72. Marcantonio Raimondi, engraving after Raphael, *Temperance*.

rectly to Italian sources (as Reff pointed out). Moreover, the subsequent researches of Juliet Wilson-Bareau based on X rays of Manet's early nudes, as reported in "The Hidden Face of Manet," have underscored both the continuity and the intensity of the painter's involvement with Italian prototypes from the late 1850s on (the approximate date of the oil sketch, probably of *Moses Saved from the Waters*, in Oslo). So for example the important *Surprised Nymph* (fig. 73), signed and dated 1861, is related by Wilson-Bareau to Veronese, Giulio Romano, and, on the strength of the landscape background visible in an X ray of a previous state of the painting, to Titian's *Venus del Pardo* in the Louvre.³⁴ But several points are worth stressing.

First, Wilson-Bareau goes on to observe that the so-called *Moses Saved from the Waters*, *Surprised Nymph*, and *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* all appear to owe a great deal to engravings in the *Recueil Crozat*, a three-volume compendium of engravings after works in French collections edited by the eighteenth-century financier and collector Pierre Crozat.³⁵ In fact I call attention to the importance for Manet of the *Recueil Crozat* in my essay of 1969, where I suggest that he might have been drawn to it because of Crozat's well-known association with Watteau (which Wilson-Bareau mentions but makes nothing of). Indeed the engraved preface to the *Recueil*, while saying nothing about Watteau, thematizes the already charged topic of the relation of French art to the Italian and Flemish schools.³⁶ Then, too, one result of Wilson-Bareau's emphasis on Manet's interest in Italian prototypes is that the actual dependence of the *Surprised Nymph* in its final form on Vosterman's engraving after Ruben's lost *Susannah and the Elders* (fig. 74)³⁷ is largely minimized. But as I say in "Manet's Sources," the fact that despite his early and strong attraction to Italian art Manet chose to base that picture most perspicuously on a work by the Flemish master, and secondarily on Rembrandt's *Susannah* in The Hague (ca. 1634; fig. 75),³⁸ raises the possibility that he may have had strategic as well as local reasons for doing so (Wilson-Bareau never considers that this might be the case). It's therefore not surprising that she also fails to mention my suggestion that a French painting may have mediated Manet's relations with the Rubens (and I would now say with Rembrandt and the Italians as well): Fragonard's *Le Billet doux* (ca. 1776; fig. 76), another picture exhibited at Martinet's in 1860.³⁹ Clearly Fragonard was inspired by the Rubens, and if I am right that Manet was struck by the *Billet doux* (I feel surer of it now that I did in 1969), it seems likely that the relationship between the two predecessor



Figure 73. Édouard Manet, *The Surprised Nymph*, 1861.



Figure 74. Johannes Vosterman, engraving after Peter-Paul Rubens, *Susannah and the Elders*.

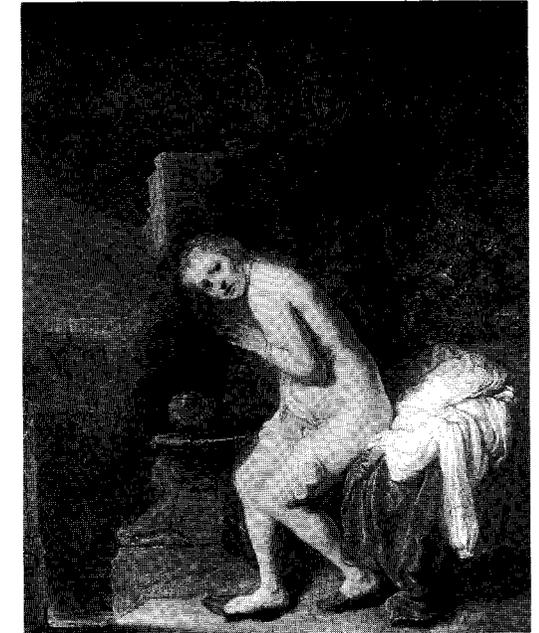


Figure 75. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Susannah*, ca. 1634.

works would not have escaped him. This would be further evidence that Manet’s access to the art of foreign schools was facilitated by French prototypes, but what interests me even more is the possibility that Manet understood his own practice of multiple, superimposed quotation as in some sense a response to the newly visible tendency of previous European painting to *recycle itself* by selective imitation. In any case, it’s worth noting too that the *Billet doux*’s general mise-en-scène, paper-wrapped bouquet, and startled, outward-staring dog all anticipate aspects of *Olympia*, which Wilson-Bareau characteristically associates only with Italian sources.

Finally, Wilson-Bareau’s analyses tend to portray the development of individual paintings by Manet as moving from a dependence on earlier prototypes in their first stages toward a liberation from those prototypes in the interests of modernity as the initial images are effaced and/or covered over by successive layers of paint.⁴⁰ No doubt Manet sharpened the effect of modernity, by which she means contemporaneity, as his pictures progressed. But the import of her argument is that individual sources in



Figure 76. Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Le Billet doux*, ca. 1776.

the art of the past served him mainly as springboards: useful, perhaps even necessary to get his paintings under way, but ultimately to be left behind as he brought them to completion; and this, as we have seen, hardly does justice to the *persistent* visibility of references to the most important of such sources in the finished works.

The stakes are even higher in the case of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (pl. 3), perhaps the most notorious instance of quotation from the Old Masters in Manet's oeuvre. In 1864 the critic Ernest Chesneau noted in

passing that Manet had based the three main figures on a similar group in the lower right-hand portion of Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving after a composition by Raphael of the *Judgment of Paris* (fig. 33).⁴¹ The same observation was made afresh by the German curator Gustav Pauli in 1908, who thereby triggered the widespread inquiry into Manet's use of previous art that was a major vein of Manet scholarship in the decades that followed.⁴² Writing after Manet's death, his close friend Antonin Proust didn't mention the Raphael connection but stressed instead that Manet's depiction of clothed men and unclothed women, far from being intended as a provocation, had as precedent the famous *Concert champêtre* in the Louvre, then attributed to Giorgione and today to Titian.⁴³ Modern scholars, Reff and I among them, have also connected the *Déjeuner* with Courbet's *Young Women on the Banks of the Seine* (fig. 44),⁴⁴ which itself provoked a scandal when it was exhibited in the Salon of 1857. My further conviction, first stated in "Manet's Sources," is that the *Déjeuner* must also be understood as reprising Watteau on a grand scale; generically speaking it is, more than anything else, a *fête champêtre*,⁴⁵ and the earlier artist who chiefly stood for that genre was of course Watteau. As I tried to show, Manet would have been familiar with numerous Watteaus of that stamp both in the flesh and through engravings; insofar as one work bears more closely than the others on the *Déjeuner* it is probably *L'Amour paisible* (1718; fig. 77)—not the glorious canvas in the Schloss Charlottenburg in Berlin (reproduced here) but a smaller version that belonged to the duc de Morny and, once again, was shown at Martinet's in 1860.⁴⁶ (Thanks to an engraving of the Morny copy published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1863, we know that it was faithful compositionally to the Berlin picture.)⁴⁷ In particular the main figure-group of two men and a woman in *L'Amour paisible* resembles the group of the clothed men and naked woman in the *Déjeuner*, so much so that if we didn't have Marcantonio's engraving we wouldn't hesitate to suggest that Manet based his figure of the naked bather looking directly at the viewer on the seated guitarist in Watteau's composition and that the male figure who sits facing the bather and gestures as if conversationally with his right hand amounts to a variation on Watteau's gesturing man half-sprawled on the grass behind the guitarist. But we do have the Marcantonio, and if we compare the crucial figure-group to the one in *L'Amour paisible* it becomes clear that Watteau brilliantly and ingeniously adapted Raphael's invention to his own purposes. Once again I see no reason to doubt that Manet recognized Watteau's recycling of Raphael (especially



Figure 77. Antoine Watteau, *L'Amour paisible*, 1718.

since the water nymph gazing out of the *Judgment of Paris* also seems to undergird a similar figure in Watteau's *Les Champs-Élysées* [1717?; fig. 78], another work shown at Martinet's),⁴⁸ and that his own nearly direct quotation from Raphael/Marcantonio in the Watteauesque *Déjeuner* not only was encouraged by that recognition but also in a certain sense was meant to assert a link between the art of the most canonical of Italian Renaissance masters and the seemingly altogether different art of Watteau. Such a link would have surprised Thoré, for whom Watteau epitomized the non-Italianate current he advocated,⁴⁹ but the attitude toward the Old Masters that it represents—the sensitivity to harmonies and analogies between artists of different schools—has an important precedent in Thoré's historicism. Indeed the connection between Watteau and Raphael that the *Déjeuner* brings into focus may have been a factor in enabling Manet's increasingly open acknowledgment of his longstanding interest in Italian art.⁵⁰

That acknowledgment reaches its zenith in the infamous *Olympia* (pl. 4), which was closely modeled after Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (fig. 36; we now know that the Titian connection was caustically noted in two com-

mentaries when *Olympia* was shown in the Salon of 1865).⁵¹ More broadly, *Olympia* has also been associated with Ingres's *Large Odalisque*, though Manet's precise attitude toward Ingres in 1863 remains an open question,⁵² and to the central female figure in Couture's *Romans of the Decadence*.⁵³ In addition I wonder whether Manet might not have found in David's *Death of Marat* (fig. 50) at least some measure of inspiration for the shocking confrontational quality of his revolutionary nude. What makes this last possibility all the more intriguing is that the *Marat* was on view at Martinet's in April 1863, on which occasion it was described in *Le Courrier artistique*, the gallery's journal, as "attain[ing] the furthest limits of simplicity of effect. It is realistic in the full sense of the word, but a realism doubled by a feeling of grandeur."⁵⁴ But rather than compare the *Marat* and *Olympia* in detail I want to present still another source for the latter, one that introduces a range of issues I haven't yet considered.

In 1862 the French government opened the Musée Napoléon III, the holdings of which were soon partly to be subsumed in the collections of the Louvre and partly to be dispersed to provincial museums.⁵⁵ For con-



Figure 78. Antoine Watteau, *Les Champs-Élysées*, 1717?

temporary critics, the new museum was distinguished by its works by artists then known as “primitives” (i.e. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries); and among those works none was more admired than a *casone* panel of *Venus and Three Putti* then attributed to Botticelli and today thought to be a workshop production (fig. 79).⁵⁶ The panel, just over seven feet long by slightly less than three feet high, depicts the golden-haired figure of Venus, her lower body mostly draped in a reddish purple garment and her torso covered with a transparent blouse, half-reclining on a grassy lawn strewn with flowers; she is attended by three *amoretti* two of whom gather fruit while the third, embraced by Venus’s left arm, gestures with his own left arm and hand; in the distance we see mountains and a river landscape. In her discussion in “The Hidden Face of Manet” of *Olympia* and its preliminary stages Wilson-Bareau remarks the neither “the dreamy sensuality of Titian’s Venus [in the *Venus of Urbino*] nor the more ardent intensity of [Titian’s] Danaë” [the source of a series of nude drawings she relates to *Olympia*] provides a precedent for the “cool detachment”—for which read the alert posture and coolly confrontational gaze—of Manet’s naked courtesan.⁵⁷ Obviously the “Botticelli” *Venus* provides such a precedent. But what reason do we have for thinking that Manet would have been aware of that panel, much less that it would have excited his interest?

Here a text by a critic we have already met, Manet’s friend Zacharie Astruc, is extremely suggestive.* In the last of three articles on the works

* Astruc is best known as the author of the dreadful stanza of poetry that appeared in the *livret* of the Salon of 1865 as a gloss on Manet’s *Olympia* and the inappropriateness of which further inflamed critics already hostile to the painting. He was also a musician, painter, sculptor, and art critic, and from the early 1860s on was one of Manet’s closest friends. Manet painted him three times: first in the *Music in the Tuileries* of 1862 (fig. 3), where Astruc has been identified in the seated bearded man in the left-hand portion of the composition; next in the fascinating *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* (fig. 81), which Sharon Flescher has shown was probably painted in 1866, not 1863 as previously thought; and finally in the *Music Lesson* of 1870. Although not included in Fantin-Latour’s *Homage to Delacroix*, Astruc was portrayed by Fantin (along with Manet, Whistler, Legros, and others) in his allegorical group portrait of 1865, *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, to be discussed in chapter 3; in addition Astruc appears seated and posing for Manet in Fantin’s *An Atelier in the Batignolles* (1870; fig. 157). As a critic his achievement is less than major (he is not the peer of Baudelaire, Thoré, or Zola), but he was intelligent, informed, and serious, and he plays a key role in this book not only because of his intimacy with Manet and other artists of the 1860s (he was particularly close to the young Carolus Duran) but also because, as I say in “Manet’s Sources,” his writing gives special access to the views and assumptions of the generation of 1863. It’s significant, for example, that Astruc in 1862 was concerned to defend the historical achievement of the French school and that for him as for Thoré Watteau was one of its particular glories. (See his “La Galerie de M. le comte de Morny,” first of seven articles, *Le Pays* [July 2, 1862], where he expressed his pleasure that justice was at last being done to the French school, so long unappreciated in France, described the eighteenth

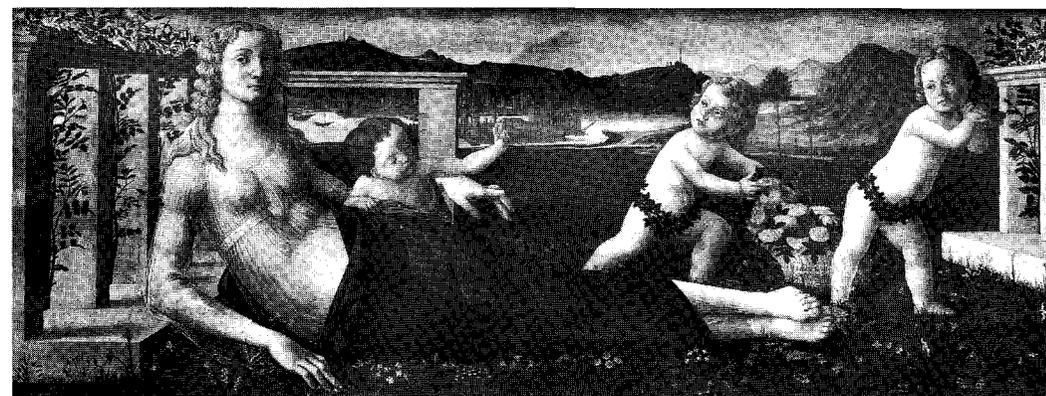


Figure 79. Botticelli workshop, *Venus and Three Putti*.

by “primitives” in the Musée Napoléon III Astruc singled out “Botticelli”’s *Venus* for special consideration. “The chief work is his *Venus*,” Astruc wrote, “admirable masterpiece conceived in a disposition of an almost disquieting bizarreness.”⁵⁸ And what appears to have especially struck him as bizarre was the character of Venus’s gaze. “What lover has betrayed you, Venus?” Astruc asked. “The lovestruck girl looks straight ahead with the calm pupil of the sphinx; her mouth is unmoving, a bitter sadness makes her cheeks pale; but her brow preserves the unmoving serenity of her vital forces; a cold and impassive statue. Nothing beats in that young breast imprisoned by a gauzy robe covered with a purple ma-

century as “a world” [un monde], and declared that Watteau was the greatest figure of that age. See also the later article, “Fragments de l’école française,” *L’Étendard*, Oct. 1, 1866, in which after praising the integrity and continuity of the French tradition starting with the Clouets he singled out “that marvelous hour when our genius was like a flowering of grace, intelligence, and coquetry . . . I mean the eighteenth century” [cette heure merveilleuse où notre génie fût comme une floraison de grâce, d’esprit, de coquetterie . . . J’ai nommé le dix-huitième siècle].) Even more to the point, apropos Watteau’s *Rendez-vous de chasse*, another work shown at Martinet’s in 1860, he described the French master as “a Veronese doubled with Velásquez”—the point not being the specific connection, interesting as it is, so much as the habit of mind it represents. (See Astruc, “La Galerie de M. le comte de Morny,” 3d article, *Le Pays*, July 17, 1862, un Veronese doublé de Velasquez). On Astruc see Sharon Flescher, *Zacharie Astruc: Critic, Artist and Japoniste, 1833-1907*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1978); and *idem*, “Manet’s ‘Portrait of Zacharie Astruc’: A Study of a Friendship and New Light on a Problematic Painting,” *Arts Magazine* 52 (June 1978): 98–103. The role of the first stanza from Astruc’s poem “La Fille des îles” as quoted in the *livret* for the Salon of 1865 in provoking the violently negative critical response to *Olympia* is emphasized by Eric Darragon (Darragon 1989, pp. 116–18). Also worth mentioning is that Astruc early on had studied Velásquez at the Prado, and that it was he who devised Manet’s itinerary when the painter visited Madrid in 1865. For the text of Astruc’s letter to Manet suggesting the itinerary see *Édouard Manet: Voyage en Espagne*, ed. Juliet Wilson-Bareau (Caen, 1988), pp. 29–40.

terial tight around her legs.”⁵⁹ Astruc briefly describes the horizons that open up beyond “that beautiful sphinx,” noting among other things a river of forgetfulness that “bathes the temples and palaces along its banks and cradles the ships on which Watteau’s traveling pleasures seem to be embarked.”⁶⁰ He then returns to Venus and her gaze: “The young woman freezes one’s gaze; she terrifies, she tortures and charms; her penetrating eyes, fixed upon you, lit by a glacial and magnificent ray, are frighteningly cruel. There truly is Venus as the poets have dreamed her: sometimes vampire, sometimes siren—beautiful, implacable, and relentlessly impassive—that is to say always mistress and tyrant!”⁶¹

My point in quoting Astruc is not to suggest that Manet was influenced by his remarks, and it is certainly not to imply that Astruc’s high-flown description of Venus’s state of mind perfectly fits Olympia’s (arguably the least love-struck woman in all Western painting). But certain qualities that Astruc ascribes to “Botticelli”’s picture, above all what he calls Venus’s glacialness and impassiveness, have always been seen as present in *Olympia*. More broadly, the passages I have cited indicate a responsiveness to Venus’s direct and disconcertingly inexpressive visual address to the beholder that invites comparison with Manet’s predilection for a similar mode of address throughout his career (partly on those grounds, Manet’s paintings of the 1860s were often characterized as “bizarre,” Astruc’s cover term for the *Venus*).⁶² Finally, Manet’s closeness to Astruc at this time supports the notion that the two shared an enthusiasm for the “Botticelli,” whose iconic stiffness and hard clarity of outline have their equivalents in Manet’s controversial masterpiece of roughly four centuries later. (Until now those qualities along with the character of Olympia’s gaze have been associated with an interest on Manet’s part in photography, including pornographic photography, and indeed the one “source” by no means precludes the other.)

Moreover, the likely importance of the *Venus* in the conception of *Olympia*, and perhaps also (to a lesser degree) in that of the *Déjeuner*, supports Proust’s claim that Manet admired “the conscientious sincerity of the Italian primitives”⁶³ as well as Astruc’s testimony in 1866 that “Botticelli is one of the passions of the large modern realist group.”⁶⁴ A complementary perspective is implied by Astruc’s assertion in the second of the three articles on the Musée Napoléon III: “All the modern schools can be found in germ—what I am saying!—[can be found] *affirmed* in [the primitives].”⁶⁵ By this I mean that Astruc’s self-correction, from “in germ” to “affirmed,” suggests a near reversal of the ordinary temporal

point of view: as if from his standpoint in the early 1860s the apparent fecundity of the “primitives”—the sense their works conveyed of being ripe with all the painting that came afterward—assumed something of the character of the *willed* relation to *earlier* art that marked not just his friend Manet’s practice but also that of an entire generation of ambitious painters. Put more strongly, Astruc’s remarks evoke a moment in the evolution of European painting when the “beginning” and the “end” of that evolution—the most remote reaches of the continuous pictorial past and the most advanced expression of the present day—appeared virtually interchangeable across the newly visible expanse of all the painting that crowded between (one obvious figure for that expanse was the nineteenth-century museum).⁶⁶ Writing in 1884, one year after Manet’s death, Jacques de Biez called Manet “a French primitive” and referred to the works of the primitives as “radiant with memories, full of promises.”⁶⁷ Whatever de Biez may have meant by his remark, read in this context it suggests that the respective contents of those memories and promises were the same.

One of my proposals in “Manet’s Sources” that has met with the most resistance was that Manet based the figure of the dead Christ in his *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* (pl. 6) on the almost wholly naked corpse of a young man in the left foreground of Géricault’s *Raft of the Medusa* (fig. 49). I also suggested that the weeping angel at the left in Manet’s canvas owes something to the pose and action of the older man who supports the body of the dead youth. And I glossed those connections by noting that Géricault in the 1860s had come to be seen not just as one of the foremost French masters of the century but specifically as a realist, which meant that Manet, in a canvas that flouted Courbet’s dictum that a painter should only paint what can be seen, “not only challenged but circumvented Courbet’s authority.”⁶⁸ At the time, it seemed impossible to prove that Géricault’s dead youth lay behind Manet’s Christ: the resemblance was less than perspicuous, and I saw no additional evidence to which I could appeal. Soon after the publication of “Manet’s Sources,” however, I became aware of a middle term between the *Raft* and the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* that strongly supports my intuition.

In March 1851, six months after the young Manet had entered his studio, Thomas Couture received a commission for three large mural paintings in the Chapel of the Holy Virgin in the Church of Saint-Eustache, Paris.⁶⁹ One of the major public commissions of the period, the chapel



with its new paintings was officially opened in October 1856, by which time Manet had left Couture to strike out on his own; but the murals were the latter's chief project during the years Manet spent in his studio and all Couture's students would have been aware of what their teacher was up to.⁷⁰ Two of the panels, the central one (*Mater Salvatoris Ora Pro Nobis*), depicting Mary and the Christ child flanked by thirteen angels, and the right-hand panel (*Consolatrix Afflictorum*), depicting an angel interceding for a group of supplicants while three women kneel before a statue of the Virgin, have no bearing on our topic, but the left-hand panel (*Stella Maris*) is another matter (fig. 80). In it Couture has represented two long-haired angels with outspread wings coming to the rescue of a group of shipwrecked men and women on a rocky island surrounded by a stormy sea.



Figure 80. Thomas Couture, *Stella Maris*, 1850–56.

Nothing could be plainer than that Couture in that panel intended a deliberate allusion to the *Raft of the Medusa*, which had already played a role in the conception of his *Romans of the Decadence* and the unfinished project for the *Enrollment of the Volunteers of 1792*.⁷¹ There is also a close similarity between Couture’s and Manet’s angels in the *Stella Maris* and the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* as regards facial type, treatment of the hair, and the emphasis both artists give to their respective angels’ wings. And since Manet would surely have been aware of the importance of the *Raft* to the *Stella Maris*, Couture’s panel thus emerges as a strong pictorial link between Géricault and Manet—precisely the sort of evidence I lacked when I first suggested that the figure of the dead Christ paraphrased that of the dead youth supported by the grieving older man. This is not to say that Manet needed the *Stella Maris* to make use of—provide access to—the *Raft*; it would be truer to say that I required it to make the Manet-Géricault connection stick. But it may be that its explicitly religious subject matter helped suggest to Manet the transformation of the dead youth into a dead Christ. And to the extent that Manet in the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* was concerned with circumventing Courbet, his immediate realist predecessor, by appealing to the great realist painter of the early nineteenth century, that act of circumvention itself may be understood as having taken place under the sign of Couture: as if Manet made the less daunting authority of his former teacher serve what Bloom would call his “transumptive” desire at once to displace Courbet and to identify with Géricault.⁷² In any case, Manet’s familiarity with the *Stella Maris* allowed an unexpected response to Courbet’s insistence that painters paint only what can be seen: Manet *had* seen his angels—in the *Stella Maris*, not to mention the paintings or engravings after paintings by Veronese, Tintoretto, Mantegna, and Ribalta that have also been proposed as possible sources.⁷³

But even as the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* honors Couture, it implicitly mounts a telling critique of his art: there is no precedent in the *Stella Maris* or indeed the *Romans of the Decadence* for the powerful muscularity of Manet’s protagonist, whose solid physique, starkly sculptural rendering—despite the absence of traditional modeling—and bold frontal orientation show up Couture’s avoidance of such qualities. (Couture’s characteristic reliance on schematic underdrawing to hold together a largely transparent, *ébauche*-like pictorial fabric made effects of solidity impossible.⁷⁴ Often, too, as in the *Stella Maris*, faces in his work are turned away from the viewer or otherwise minimized.)⁷⁵ Furthermore, in

“Manet’s Sources” I suggest that the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* may be seen as a sort of pendant to the *Marat* by virtue of the contrast between David’s dead or dying hero—*Marat at His Last Breath*, David called his picture when he announced its completion to the Convention—and Manet’s representation of a *resuscitating* Christ.⁷⁶ (The connection between the two works is underscored by the rock bearing an inscribed reference to the Gospel of Saint John in the right foreground of Manet’s canvas, an equivalent to the inscribed wooden block in the right foreground of the *Marat*.) In other words, Manet relegates Couture to the figures of the angels, thus “feminizing” and as it were rarefying him, while associating himself through the figure of Christ with the “masculine” art of Géricault and David and thereby usurping his teacher’s ambition to inherit their mantle as leader and regenerator of the French school. Understood in these terms, the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* emerges as the painting in Manet’s oeuvre in which his attempt to gain a position of mastery with respect to the modern French tradition of David, Géricault, Couture, and Courbet comes most aggressively to the fore.⁷⁷

Another proposal in “Manet’s Sources” that has met with skepticism is that the three principal figures in *The Balcony* (pl. 8) were intended by Manet to acknowledge a relation to three distinct national schools: Spain (via the seated Berthe Morisot), Japan (via the standing Fanny Claus), and Holland (via the standing Antoine Guillemet). “[A]part from Morisot’s Andalusian look,” Françoise Cachin has objected, “there is no serious support for this interpretation, which schematizes in three individuals influences diffused throughout the art of the period and which might be said to err from excessive art historicism.”⁷⁸ But the figure of Claus seems at least as Japanese in feeling as Morisot seems Andalusian, and the schematization of what Cachin calls “influences” is anything but foreign to Manet’s art, not only throughout the first half of the 1860s but also, tellingly, in the nearly contemporaneous *Portrait of Émile Zola* (fig. 65) with its print after Velázquez’s *Drinkers* (a source for the *Old Musician*), Japanese woodblock, and etching or photograph of *Olympia* all slipped into the edge of a frame in the upper right-hand corner of the painting.⁷⁹ Another work less close in time to the *Balcony* but no less pertinent on that account is the *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* (1866; fig. 81), the still life in the left foreground of which, as has been observed, “contains references to the three artistic traditions that inspired [Astruc] as well as Manet in the 1860s—the Japanese, Spanish, and Dutch.”⁸⁰ Besides, as Cachin

notes, the *Balcony* as a whole was based on Goya’s *Majas on the Balcony*,⁸¹ which further suggests that the “art historicism” she regrets may be not mine but Manet’s. (Remember, too, that just before he painted the *Balcony* Manet made the *Luncheon in the Studio*, which no one now doubts alludes to Vermeer. So his interest in Dutch painting at this time is beyond question.)⁸² I have no additional evidence to support my reading, unless it counts as such that the barely legible picture hanging on the rear wall of the dark apartment toward the right might be a Dutch still life, and that the tricolor ball in the left foreground perhaps symbolizes France.⁸³ But rather than insist on these points, I want to place the acknowledgment of Japan in the *Portrait of Zola* and *Balcony* in the context of an important and largely neglected text, Astruc’s article “L’Empire du Soleil Levant” (1867), in which he reviewed the significance for contemporary painters and painting of the new awareness of Japanese art.⁸⁴

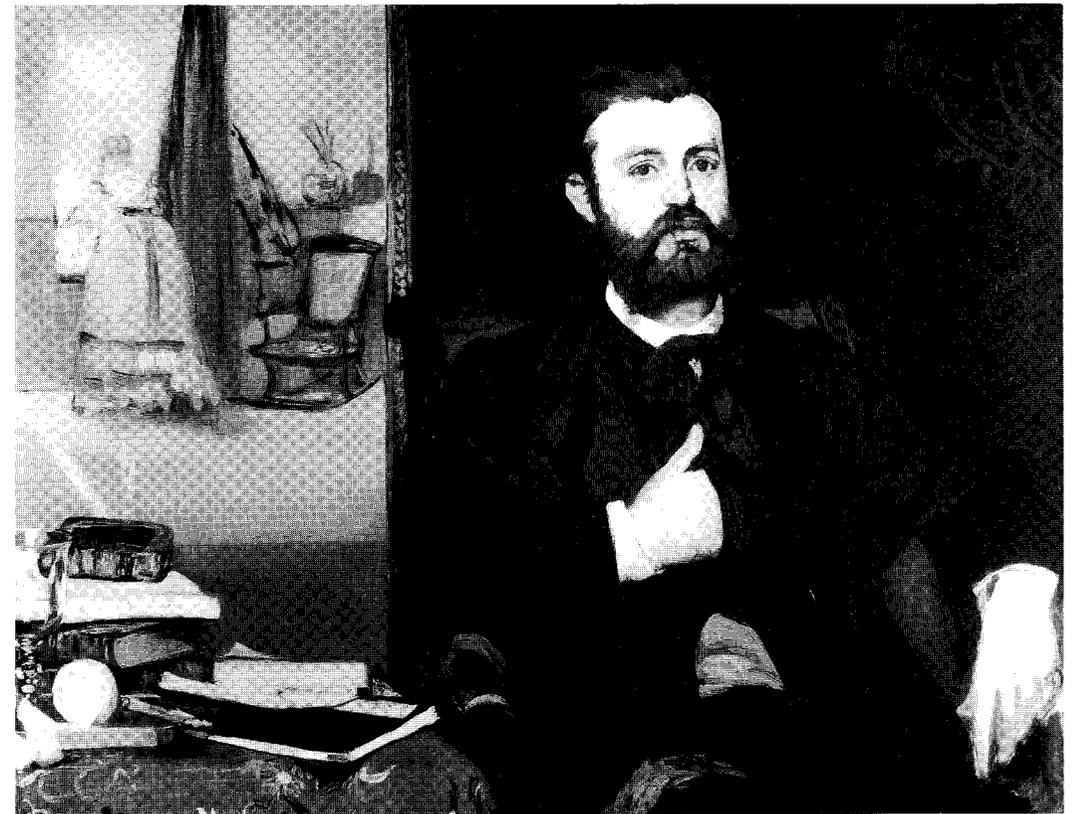


Figure 81. Édouard Manet, *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc*, 1866.

Throughout his article Astruc emphasizes the commitment of Japanese artists to a direct engagement with nature, which he sees as forming a link between them and the younger generation of French painters. But what I find both unexpected and suggestive is Astruc's claim that the arrival in France of Japanese prints threw into relief the hackneyed quality, the sheer repetitiveness, of European painting. "One can maintain this in all confidence: originality is lacking in our European art," Astruc writes. "We flow gently in a few accepted molds and that is all. Nothing proceeds from absolutely independent personal impressions. The artist begins by wanting the approval of the public; and, always anticipating its manner of seeing, its initiative, one condemns it to eternal repetitions which produce neither absolute disgust nor true pleasure—which leads it to say, without other emotion: 'I know that; it's good.' Rarely is it shaken from its monotonous sleep of the spirit by some blow of genius—even if maladroit."⁸⁵ This doesn't exhaust the interest of Astruc's text. He remarks for example that the Japanese artists' love of country makes their work truly national, thereby assimilating it to the dominant conceptual paradigm of national schools that governed French art-historical thinking in the 1860s; he then adds that "in more than one respect, one would say that it continues the Venetians: Carpaccio, Bellini, Lorenzo Costa"⁸⁶—which on the one hand seems at odds with his insistence on the uniqueness of Japanese art and on the other again shows how deeply ingrained the habit of making comparisons *across* schools had become. In any case, Astruc's climactic evocation of the impact Japanese art had on the artists, critics, and connoisseurs of his generation returns to the notion that what mattered most was the contrast between its spontaneous engagement with nature and the stereotypical character of European painting. In his words: "Japanese art, which wrestles bodily with nature, which isn't at all, like European art, prepared laboriously, a matter of absolute transmission [i.e. repetition], limited by genres, restricted to two or three combinations, simply astonished us."⁸⁷

Here too Astruc's remarks open an unfamiliar perspective on the art of the past. For Thoré, as we have seen, what became visible toward the later 1850s were "the analogies and harmonies that link [the different national schools] in a great unity," a universalizing vision he found inspiring. (Hence the call for a new art history that would do it justice.) For Astruc, however, it was rather the depressing tendency of European painting to produce itself by continual recycling—by what he called *redites*—that most struck him, in a certain mood, when he surveyed the art of the

past and of his own time. Evidently the two men, whose views otherwise tended to be in accord, were looking at the same aspects of European art with different eyes—Thoré's analogies and harmonies were Astruc's repetitions—which perhaps is only to be expected in that they belonged to different generations and had been shaped by widely disparate experiences.⁸⁸

And what of Manet? Was his vision of the art of the past closer to Thoré's or Astruc's? Insofar as I have described him as at once thinking in terms of nationality and positively seeking universality, closer to Thoré's. But my account in this chapter of the respective roles of Raphael and Watteau in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (to mention only that extraordinary, altogether central work) suggests that his use of sources was meant to call attention not merely in a general way to analogies and harmonies between different works and schools but, more precisely, to repetitions and variations, that is, to what might be called the *repetition-structure of European painting* from the early Renaissance on, which strictly historiographically (as distinct from valuationally) puts him closer to his exact contemporary Astruc. Even Astruc's complaint that European painting has traditionally restricted itself to "two or three combinations"—surely that's a bit severe—finds a parallel in Manet's tendency to employ a limited set of compositional structures few of which involve more than two or three figures (the *Balcony* is a case in point). In addition, as we shall soon see, Astruc's further charge that European painting, unlike Japanese art, has confined itself to discrete genres is relevant to Manet's endeavor, above all in the *Déjeuner*. Having said this, it should also be stressed that neither Thoré nor Astruc sympathized with the tendency of Manet and other contemporary painters to turn conspicuously for support to earlier painting. (Thoré in 1861 called museums cemeteries of art and said that there were no museums in truly creative ages.)⁸⁹ By the same token, that so many painters in Manet's generation turned to earlier art in one way or another *and were widely criticized for doing so* makes it less surprising than it has hitherto seemed (certainly than it seemed to me when I wrote "Manet's Sources") that Manet's allusions to previous paintings, as distinct from the apparent affinity between his manner of painting and those of Velázquez and Goya, failed to elicit detailed commentary from the critics of his time (Thoré, as noted, was the exception). To the extent that critics were aware of such allusions, they would have seen in them still another manifestation, by no means the most glaring, of a widespread tendency of which they largely disapproved.

Let me be more precise. What the critics of the 1860s found particularly incomprehensible was when an artist of evident ability seemed to follow slavishly the *manner* of an earlier age. The most egregious examples of this in their eyes were Ribot, whose deliberate adoption of Ribera-like chiaroscuro was invariably cited in reviews of his work, and Moreau, whose *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (pl. 14) and other paintings of the mid- and late 1860s were associated with the hard, detailed, linear style of Mantegna and other fifteenth-century Northern Italian masters (I discuss Ribot in chapter 3 and Moreau in chapter 4). In comparison, Manet's apparent stylistic allegiance to Velázquez and Goya was a far looser affair; moreover, the discrepancy between his citations of a broad range of earlier works and what was all but unanimously viewed as his willfully eccentric mode of execution—this despite its general “Spanishness”—further separated his art from what most critics of the time understood by the terms “archaism” or even “pastiche.” It was left to later generations of writers to see a problem in Manet's use of sources, and then, after 1969, to suppress that problem almost entirely.

None of this should be taken to imply that the question of the relation of contemporary painting to the art of the past was first posed in the late 1850s and 1860s. On the contrary, in the form of the problem of eclecticism it had been an issue for French painting and art criticism for more than a generation, and it will help situate Manet's practice to glance briefly at an earlier moment in their evolution.

In the last pages of “Manet's Sources” I review the exchange that took place when Thoré in 1864 described Manet in his *Episode in a Bullfight* and *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* as “pastiching” Velázquez, Goya, and El Greco (Thoré's use of “pastiche” in this context was unusual, for the reasons just given) and Baudelaire defended Manet by denying that he had ever seen paintings by Goya or El Greco or set foot in the Pourtalès Collection, home of the so-called *Orlando Muerto* then attributed to Velázquez and an obvious source for Manet's dead torero. What I didn't realize at the time was how much was at stake for Baudelaire in that exchange—more precisely, how central the question of the right relation of present endeavor to past achievement had been to his writings on painting from the start. By this I mean not only that the most ambitious of his early art-critical texts, the “Salon of 1846,” relentlessly attacks eclecticism and thus is consonant with his desire almost twenty years later to portray Manet as uninvolved with earlier art. I also mean that throughout

that “Salon” Baudelaire seeks to apply a “criterion” of “memory” (by which he means *memorability*) according to which those paintings are best that leave the strongest and most lasting—also an *immediate*—impression on the memory, and that the operations of that “criterion” are ultimately to be understood as calling for the establishment of a particular relationship between a new work and its pictorial antecedents.⁹⁰ (The obscurity of the relationship was such that Baudelaire could not articulate it in so many words; it belongs to stratum of his thought he was never able to master. The account of it I am about to offer is the summary of a reading of the “Salon” whose conclusions alone can be presented here.)⁹¹

Simply put, the implication of the thematics of memory in the “Salon of 1846” is that a serious new work should or (perhaps more accurately) will inevitably contain within it traces of prior works (there may even be the suggestion that the best new works will be especially rich in these), but—and this is the decisive point—the traces of those predecessors *must not announce themselves as such*. Or to rephrase this double demand in terms approaching those of a passage from E. T. A. Hoffmann that Baudelaire cites in a footnote (“True memory . . . consists . . . in nothing else but a very lively and easily roused imagination, which is consequently given to reinforcing each sensation by evoking scenes from the past, etc.”),⁹² the perception of a new work must trigger or activate an endlessly regressive sequence of memories of earlier works (in that sense Baudelaire anticipates Astruc's apprehension of European painting as a system of perpetual *redites*), but not only must those memories not be allowed to overwhelm or otherwise displace the initial perception (as happens in the work of the eclectics), *they must remain below the threshold of conscious awareness*, investing the present with the aura of memory without for a moment appearing on its stage (the mere hint of a “source” suffices to compromise a painting's originality). It should also be stressed, on logical grounds, that *neither must they be forgotten*, for in that event they would no longer be available to come to the support of new perceptions, with disastrous consequences for the future of painting. It's in this light that I understand one of the strangest passages in Baudelaire's early criticism: the long and for the most part enthusiastic discussion in his “Salon of 1845” of William Haussoullier's *The Fountain of Youth* (1845; fig. 82).⁹³ Commentators have always found it puzzling that Baudelaire so admired that picture, but from my point of view the revealing moment comes toward the end when he somewhat tempers his enthusiasm to consider a possible flaw in Haussoullier's performance. “Shall we dare, after



having so frankly displayed our sympathies,” Baudelaire asks not quite rhetorically, “shall we dare to say that following our pleasant contemplation of this work the names of Giovanni Bellini and some early Venetian painters crossed our memory? Would Haussoullier be one of those men who know a little too much about their art? That is a truly dangerous scourge, and one that compromises the naïveté of many excellent impulses.”⁹⁴ As I interpret these remarks, they not only register Baudelaire’s final, almost belated reservations about Haussoullier’s picture. They also raise the possibility that until that moment memories of Bellini and other early Venetian painters had been simultaneously *activated and suppressed*, which on this interpretation would account for the picture’s appeal to him in the first place. (It perhaps has not escaped notice that in certain obvious respects the *Fountain of Youth* has marked affinities with the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*. There is no reason to think that Manet knew Haussoullier’s picture, but the rapport between the two is underscored not simply by Baudelaire’s enthusiasm for the *Fountain of Youth* but also



Figure 82. William Haussoullier, *The Fountain of Youth*, 1845.

by his praise of it as “extremely visible.—There is no way not to see it”⁹⁵—a quality that critics will later attribute, ambivalently, to Manet’s paintings.)

Starting in the early 1850s Baudelaire moved away from the “system” of his early writings toward a less analytic, more frankly intuitive—in his lexicon, more naïve—mode of criticism.⁹⁶ But he never altered his conviction that the truly original artist must eschew all reference to the art of the past, which is what led him to engage in his unwinnable but doubtless sincere exchange with Thoré in 1864. It follows that Baudelaire, in other respects Manet’s chief intellectual companion in the early 1860s, would have been not just out of sympathy with but fundamentally hostile to the painter’s borrowings from the Old Masters—if, as is far from certain, he allowed himself to perceive those borrowings in the first place. (His “Salon of 1846” is full of praise for Delacroix, whose adaptations of earlier paintings are perfectly evident but go unacknowledged by Baudelaire.⁹⁷ On the other hand, a subliminal awareness of Manet’s involvement with past art may have been at work in his famous remark in a letter to Manet of May 1865, “[Y]ou are only the first in the decline of your art.”)⁹⁸ But exactly here care must be taken not to simplify the contrast between critic and painter. For there is an important sense in which Baudelaire’s insistence in his early “Salons” that the art of the present appear uncontaminated by that of the past has for its deepest rationale the production of a memory effect by virtue of which the art of the past, far from being quarantined, is on the contrary brought into intimate commerce with the art of the present, supporting the latter by not quite giving itself away. Conversely, it’s possible to see in Manet’s attempts to universalize across different national schools evidence of an aspiration, if not exactly to break free of or be quits with the art of the Old Masters (the art of the museums), at any rate to subsume that art in its totality and by so doing to transform fundamentally the terms of its relation to both present and future painting (see my comparison toward the end of “Manet’s Sources” of Thoré’s “Last Judgment” metaphor with the implications of Manet’s citational practice).⁹⁹ Indeed it may be that aspiration more than any other which distinguishes Manet from those painter-contemporaries who, like him, insisted on harking back, in one way or another, to the art of their predecessors.*

*A suggestive parallel to Baudelaire’s implicit injunction in the “Salon of 1846” that memories of previous works remain below the threshold of conscious awareness occurs in Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund

One further range of issues is perhaps best examined in this context, for reasons that will become clear as we proceed. A recurrent topic in French art criticism in the 1860s was the uneasy status of traditional distinctions among genres in contemporary painting. This is to say more than that the traditional doctrine of the hierarchy of genres was in disrepair, though that was certainly true. Starting in the late 1840s if not earlier, the most gifted and interesting young French painters abandoned history painting as traditionally understood in favor of other, “lesser” genres, which in many cases individual artists cultivated as specialties. In particular critics were struck by the vast increase in the number of painters practicing what had always (somewhat confusingly) been called “genre painting,” that is, producing pictures, usually though not always modest in scale, whose subject matter was taken from ordinary life, or at least was not derived from Greek or Roman myth or history, the Old or New Testament, or indeed French history.¹⁰⁰ (Couture’s *Romans of the Decadence* was perhaps the last traditional history painting to be widely seen in its own time as counting in the central development of nineteenth-century French painting, and it was soon pushed aside by subsequent events.)

The loss of conviction in history painting had many causes, including two largely opposite ones, the advent of Courbet’s Realism, which at the outset claimed both the monumentality and the seriousness of traditional history painting while sharing none of its heroic subject matter, gestural rhetoric, or dramatic *mise-en-scène*, and the rise of a market for

Freud, ed. and trans. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London, 1953–74), 18:1–64. There Freud observes that memory-traces “are often most powerful and most enduring when the process which left them behind was one which never entered consciousness” and goes on to consider the possibility that “becoming conscious and leaving behind a memory-trace are processes incompatible with each other within one and the same system” (p. 25). From this it would follow that memories of previous works of art simultaneously activated and suppressed in the perception of a successful new work of art would be all the more deeply embedded in the memory on that account, which, on the Hoffmannesque premises alluded to above, also means that they would be made all the more efficacious *agents* of memorableness with regard to the triggering perception.

Another line of inquiry, not unrelated to the first, would compare the treatment of memory in the “Salon of 1846” with Walter Benjamin’s speculations on the intimate connection between what he calls the “aura” of a work of art (or of any perceived scene or object) and what, following Marcel Proust, he terms the *mémoire involontaire* (“On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,” *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn [New York, 1969], pp. 155–200). (Benjamin also cites and discusses *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.) Briefly, my reading of the “Salon of 1846” suggests that, at least as regards that central text, the “auratic” experience arises when an involuntary memory or chain of memories is simultaneously mobilized by an actual perception and yet not quite allowed to become part of the contents of consciousness. The “inapproachability” that Benjamin associates with the notion of “aura” would thus be a

small-scale, carefully finished pictures suitable for contemporary domestic spaces. (Full-blown, large-scale history painting had always implicitly depended on governmental support.) But I am less concerned with the causes of that development, or for that matter with the development itself, than I am in a related phenomenon, which critics tended to describe either as a new and vertiginous *proliferation* of genres or, alternatively, as a progressive erosion of all meaningful distinctions between genres, hence a vertiginous *confusion* of genres.¹⁰¹ In both cases what was registered was a disconcerting fluidity of the discursive space in which paintings were identified, described, compared, judged. And in both cases critics were led to deplore what seemed to them the excessive specialization of contemporary painters, which more than one writer discussed in terms of the division of labor. “With the miraculous perfection of techniques,” Edmond About wrote in 1868, “the division of labor, that law of modern industry, has gradually taken over painting. The time may not be far away when some genre painter will spend his entire life painting over and over a woman seated by a fire, and always the same woman.”¹⁰² In contrast, the great painters of the past were often “universal” artists who practiced all the genres and who took as their subject matter the whole of creation. Such a painter was Géricault as seen by Chesneau, who wrote: “The great artists have no speciality; all of nature and man belong to them.”¹⁰³ Another, the latest and perhaps the last, universal painter was Delacroix,¹⁰⁴ whose exemplariness in that regard surely contributed to Fan-

function of something more than simply the fact that the data of the *mémoire involontaire* cannot be recalled by an act of will, and the inexhaustibility that he cites Paul Valéry as ascribing to the genuine work of art would be accounted for in terms of the endlessness of the memory chain that is brought into play in the experience of a successful new painting (pp. 186–88). This in turn yields a more precise basis for the claim that modern techniques of mechanical reproduction, photography in particular, are “decisively implicated in the phenomenon of the ‘decline of the aura’” (p. 187): not, as Benjamin first suggests, because the fact of reproduction somehow divests the original work of art of its authenticity (see “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” *Illuminations*, pp. 220–22), or because mechanical reproduction is inherently on the side of voluntary as opposed to involuntary memory (“On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,” p. 186), but because the proliferation of reproductions of works of art, as well as the advances in art historical knowledge subtended by that proliferation, make it ever more unlikely that an educated beholder can remain unaware of at least some of the antecedent works that lie behind the work at hand. Perhaps this is the “crisis in perception” to which Benjamin refers in a dense passage in the same essay (p. 187). Understood in these terms, “aura” would be the name of a highly specific historical phenomenon, one that emerged contemporaneously with its supposed decay.

The literature on Benjamin is vast and needs no reference here. For a stimulating study of Freud on memory (and Derrida on both) see David Farrell Krell, *Of Memory, Reminiscence, and Writing: On the Verge* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990), esp. chaps. 3, 4, and 7.

tin's making him the posthumous hero of his group portrait of 1864. Viewed in that context, Manet's evident determination in the 1860s to produce works belonging to nearly the full range of genres, including the major traditional genres of the nude, religious painting, and, in several versions of the *Execution of Maximilian*, modern history painting, strongly suggests that he aspired to be—and to be recognized as being—a universal artist in his own right. (This is not the only respect in which Manet can be understood as seeking to undo what were widely taken to be destructive effects of modernity rather than to embrace modernity as such.)

But there is more to Manet's pursuit of universality with respect to genre, and once again the writings of Astruc have a special bearing not only on his art but also on that of his generation. In Astruc's criticism the issue of genre is from the outset sharply inflected by an antagonism to landscape.¹⁰⁵ Here is a passage from his *Le Salon intime* (1860), a review of an exhibition at Martinet's of works by modern artists:

Landscape is a spoiled child of criticism which never ceases to cry out that it is a marvel. No matter what has been said about it, one needs the courage to insist that this special production of our time establishes only a meager formula for art. Within the capabilities of any semi-organized intelligence, it merits nothing more than a distracted look. It serves as an excuse to laziness. We know very well both its scope and its complications. To rise to its heights, an accurate eye and working at it for one or two years are sufficient. I consider, first of all, that one cannot claim to be a painter even with a solid talent as a landscapist any more than one is a musician on the strength of a few tunes on the piano. Landscape (if you will allow me this figure) is one instrument in the great orchestra of scales that must embrace everything equally. Painting is not fragmented—it is one. It sees everything, it analyzes everything: it is the expression of the colorful whole that sums up the world: from man, his dwelling place, the objects that surround him, to the passions that make him act. Specialties only end up trivializing art. I am irritated by this new tendency that leads so many artists to stick to a path that has become facile and even lucrative, neglecting the solid basis of learning that would have assured them undeniable authority. As a result, narrowness of view, inferiority of arrangement, and without doubt, in the long run, negation of force. It is not with such principles that a great school is formed, or a great example given, not only to the future but to contemporaries. . . . The categories must disappear to make way for the résumé. It is necessary that the landscapist efface himself in favor of the painter. Only then will nature progress.¹⁰⁶

From the perspective of Impressionism—more accurately, from the perspective of art history's customary understanding of Impressionism—

Astruc's remarks are bound to seem surprising if not actually retrograde. Nothing has appeared more obvious than that it was one of the tasks of painting in the nineteenth century to throw off the yoke of the traditional doctrine of the hierarchy of genres and thereby establish the truth of the modern notion of the artistic neutrality of subject matter.¹⁰⁷ Accordingly, nineteenth-century landscape painting before Impressionism—the work of Théodore Rousseau, Corot, Daubigny, the Barbizon school generally—has been viewed as historically progressive by virtue of its subject matter. By the same token, the rise of Impressionism in the 1870s has been portrayed at once as continuous with the landscape painting that preceded it and as marking a crucial stage in the evolution of modern painting, from its origins in an overvaluing of considerations of subject matter (as in Greuze's sentimental genre paintings or David's history paintings), through the progressive leveling of traditional subject hierarchies under the pressure of pictorial realism (as in Géricault, Courbet, and Manet), to the total elimination of subject matter with the emergence of abstract art in the early twentieth century.¹⁰⁸

Such a narrative is just plausible enough to be hard to demolish permanently, all the more so because the fact that its first major formulations date from the period in question—Zola and even Thore asserted that subject matter in painting was artistically irrelevant¹⁰⁹—lends it the authority of a founding modernist insight. But it grossly falsifies the actual dynamics of the evolution of painting in France between the 1750s and the advent of Impressionism (it's not so much a founding insight as a founding myth). One glaring weakness is its assumption that from the beginning nothing more was at stake in the doctrine of the hierarchy of genres than considerations of subject matter narrowly understood. I have treated this topic in *Absorption and Theatricality* and won't repeat my arguments here except to say that for what I have called the Diderotian tradition the core issue was never simply the belief that some classes of subject matter were inherently more elevated than others; rather, it was the need to construct a particular relationship between painting and beholder that for a time made history painting the "highest" of genres but also the one that was best suited to effects of drama, its preferred vehicle.¹¹⁰

The point I want to insist on, though, is that for Manet and his cogenationists Fantin-Latour, Legros, and Whistler landscape did not lend itself to the fulfillment of the highest pictorial ambitions. Rather they were all, crucially, *figure* painters (this was also true of their contempor-

aries Ribot, Carolus Duran, Puvis de Chavannes, Tissot, Moreau, and Degas), and the problem they faced, broadly put, was how to distinguish themselves as such relative to the major figure painters who had preceded them. In the first place this meant finding a way to go on from Courbet's Realist canvases of the late 1840s and 1850s; as was noted in the introduction, the portrayal of Champfleury in Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* signals that desire, while one of Astruc's first pieces of criticism, the eloquent "Récit douloureux" of 1859, honors Courbet as the master of the young generation.¹¹¹ It also meant, especially for Legros, coming to terms with Millet's peasant pictures of the 1850s and after. And of course Delacroix, who died in 1863 and was memorialized by Fantin a year later, was in his most characteristic works a painter of human beings in extremes of action and emotion, as Duranty (a future participant in the *Homage*) stressed in 1859.¹¹² Nor was Impressionism as a movement of one mind with respect to subject matter. Some of the leading painters who took part in the Impressionist exhibitions—Degas, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Gustave Caillebotte, and Mary Cassatt to name just five—were primarily figure painters, as was Frédéric Bazille, an intimate of the future Impressionists during the 1860s who was killed in the Franco-Prussian War at the age of twenty-nine. Even as regards the painters I have called the landscape Impressionists—Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Alfred Sisley—it can't be emphasized too strongly that Monet, to speak only of him, expended a vast amount of effort between 1865 and 1868 on several large-scale figure paintings—his own *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1865–66), which he never completed to his satisfaction and only fragments of which remain, the *Women in the Garden* (1867), and the Frankfurt *Déjeuner* (1868)—before turning, or turning back, to landscape more or less definitively. (A single-figure painting, *Camille*, was a considerable success in the Salon of 1866.)¹¹³ Exactly why Monet gave up figure painting for landscape remains a matter of conjecture. But his struggles of 1865–68 suggest that the sheer difficulty of resolving a set of problems concerning the relation of painting to beholder (and painter) may have been a major factor.¹¹⁴ Moreover, it's important to remember that the movement that immediately followed Impressionism, the Neo-Impressionism of Georges Seurat and his circle, returned to figure painting with a vengeance in such works as Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Isle of Grande-Jatte* (1886) and Paul Signac's *Two Milliners* (1885–86). (By then Pissarro too was concerned with the figure.)¹¹⁵ The primacy of landscape in the mature art of the core Impres-

sionists cannot therefore be explained in terms of a simple teleology based on the progressive liberation of painting from the idea of a hierarchy of subject matter. Indeed looked at historically, the valorization of landscape that was inseparable from the Impressionist project emerges as a highly distinctive episode in the evolution of modern painting, one whose specific motivation remains to be understood.¹¹⁶

In any event, Astruc continued to campaign against landscape in his writings of the 1860s,¹¹⁷ and in his "Salon of 1868" went so far as to announce landscape's imminent death, by which he meant its abandonment in favor of the figure by younger painters, among whom he included Monet and Renoir (Renoir's *Lise* and Monet's *Camille* are said to form a "bizarre trinity" with Manet's *Olympia*).¹¹⁸ He wrote:

Here is happy news that is little recognized: landscape is dying, landscape is dead. The end pursued [by Astruc himself] for ten years will soon be attained. Certainly we don't pretend to believe that such a brilliant defeat is due solely to our blows; many others have understood that this lazy study brought only a factitious vitality to our school and were doubtless unsparing in their criticism; but finally we were alone at first in signaling the evil, in reacting against a supposed discovery that deprived our painters of the greatest result of the art in order to attach them only to its secondary products. The young painters, it is visible, are rallying to the figure. They understand that its domain embraces everything: man, objects, plants, flowers, trees—nature in its harmonious ensemble, that is the vast subject proposed to the painter.¹¹⁹

Astruc acknowledged that he was seeing what he had always hoped to see. But no contemporary critic was closer to all the most progressive younger artists—both to Manet and his contemporaries and to the future Impressionists—and it isn't hard to understand how at that moment their work appeared to justify his conclusions.¹²⁰

But more is at stake in the passage from Astruc's *Le Salon intime* I began by quoting than an antagonism to landscape in the interests of the figure. Rather, Astruc was opposed to *all* specialization, and beyond that, still more interestingly, to the very principle of dividing painting into different categories based on subject matter. To cite again two remarks from that passage: "Painting isn't fragmented—it is one." And: "The categories [i.e. separate genres] must disappear to make way for the résumé." We might say that for Astruc a belief in the essential unity of painting was correlated with a desire to escape the restrictions of genre entirely. (An exemplary virtue of Japanese art in his eyes was its freedom from such restrictions.) "The landscape school will dissolve in the universal

school,” he predicted in the article of 1868 quoted above¹²¹—a formulation that recalls various statements by Thoré first cited in “Manet’s Sources” to the effect that in the modern world the different national schools were in the process of becoming subsumed in a single universal school of painting.

In view of my claim that Manet’s use of sources in older art had as its deepest purpose the achievement of universality with respect to national schools, the question arises whether his treatment of genre evinces a comparable aim. I believe it does, and not only because, unlike his contemporaries, he seems programmatically to have worked in almost the full range of pictorial genres. (The one “pure” genre Manet avoided was Astruc’s *bête noire*, landscape.) Even closer to Astruc’s thought is the treatment of genre in the most extravagantly ambitious of all Manet’s paintings of the first half of the 1860s, the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* (pl. 3). Whatever else it may be, the *Déjeuner*, as has been stressed, is a large fête champêtre; it is also, self-evidently, a study of the female nude; by virtue of its quotation of the figure group from Marcantonio’s engraving after Raphael’s *Judgment of Paris*, it belongs as well if not to history painting or allegory as such, at any rate to *la grande peinture*, the art of the Raphaellesque ideal; that the three principal figures manifestly depict actual persons whose identities are known to us means that the *Déjeuner* is also an example of portraiture (the “portrait effect” is most intense in the case of the seated Victorine Meurent, no doubt because her gaze directly out of the painting invokes a basic convention of the genre); the wonderful sprawling still life in the left foreground speaks for itself; the wholly untypical extent of the forest setting—ordinarily Manet would have cropped his composition much more closely around the main figure-group¹²²—asserts a relationship to landscape; finally, I see the bullfinch frozen in flight at the upper center of the canvas (fig. 151) as a parodic but not therefore unserious allusion to the dove of the Holy Ghost that appears in that position in scenes of the baptism of Christ (Manet originally called his picture *Le Bain*), which is to say that religious painting too has its place in the *Déjeuner*.¹²³ In sum I see Manet’s project in the *Déjeuner* as involving a deliberate attempt to bring together and in effect to fuse in a single large-scale work as many of the major genres of painting as he could encompass—to paint a picture in which the separate categories indeed make way for the résumé, a word that means not just “summing up” but “epitome” and thus seems particularly appropriate to Manet’s venture as I have described it.¹²⁴

Not that Astruc in 1860 had such a strategy in mind, any more than Thoré, prophesying an evolution toward a universal school of painting, envisioned Manet’s practice of multiple, overdetermined quotation. Rather, both Thoré and Astruc imagined that a new, essentially realist art could somehow make a clean break with the past and so free itself from a host of constraining conventions (Thoré’s model for this was Dutch seventeenth-century painting, Rembrandt especially). In contrast, Manet, in a way that was characteristic of his generation of painters, instinctively rejected the idea of such a break. Where Manet was unique is that he seems also to have believed that no solution to the problems confronting his generation could be valid—could compel full conviction—that did not attempt to summon *all* the resources of painting, or least as many of them as could be made viable at that juncture. Perhaps more than anything else—certainly far more than any desire for purity of medium based on exclusion or simplification—a desire for comprehensiveness, a pursuit of what in “Manet’s Sources” I call “painting *altogether*,” was the hallmark of Manet’s modernism.

One other critic may be cited here. Toward the end of a highly intelligent and largely positive discussion of Manet’s paintings in the *Salon des Refusés*, a writer not yet mentioned, the pseudonymous Le Capitaine Pompilius, expressed the hope that Manet would one day become a master: “He possesses,” Pompilius wrote, “the frankness, the conviction, the power, the *universality*, that is to say, the stuff of great art.”¹²⁵ This might be just a lucky hit, without real significance. But the article as a whole is impressive enough to suggest that its author may have had something specific in mind. Moreover, at the moment of its writing—June 1863—Manet had not yet painted the first of his mature religious canvases, the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, and he may well not have begun work on *Olympia*. Nor for that matter had he begun painting still lifes in earnest. And the brilliant naval battle picture of the *Keersarge and the Alabama* was roughly a year away. So what could have motivated the claim about Manet’s “universality” if it wasn’t some understanding of the genre structure of the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*, or conceivably even of Manet’s exploitation of earlier art? Obviously a lot depends on the identity of the pseudonymous critic: if he could be shown to have known Manet personally, hence to have been in a position to have some notion of Manet’s thought, we might be more inclined to attach significance to his choice of words. Now, it turns out that Le Capitaine Pompilius was a journalist and playwright who usually published under the nom de plume Edmond de

Biéville and whose real name was Carle Desnoyers.¹²⁶ And what makes that discovery intriguing is that Carle was the older brother of Fernand Desnoyers, a poet and art critic closely linked with the generation of 1863 and the author of a well-known account of the Salon des Refusés.¹²⁷ Later on in this book I shall suggest that Carle Desnoyers, under another pseudonym, also wrote three short articles on the Salon of 1865, the last of which contains an exceptional response to *Olympia*. To the best of my knowledge these together with his account of the Salon of 1863 are all the art criticism he ever published; intellectually, however, they put Fernand's contributions in the shade, and before I am done I shall be making extensive use of them. In the meantime my point is simply that in Carle Desnoyers's praise of Manet in 1863 we *may* have at least the hint of a contemporary appreciation of his art along the lines of my argument.

Starting in the late 1960s Manet's *Old Musician* (pl. 2), the keystone of my argument in "Manet's Sources," moved from the margins toward the center of discussions of his art. One consequence is that we now know more about its sources than we did before, but the renewed attention has also led, in a manner I take to be exemplary of Manet studies generally, to the eclipse of the larger question of his relations with the art of the past. In bringing this chapter to a close it will be useful to consider how that has occurred.

By far the most important of the new discoveries is a photograph of a specific person, the gypsy Jean Lagrène (fig. 83). Although its date, 1865, means that the photograph itself can't have played a role in the genesis of Manet's picture of three years earlier, Marilyn Brown has argued persuasively that Lagrène, leader of a band of gypsies in Manet's neighborhood and a professional artist's model, was the original of the seated violinist.¹²⁸ (We might say the photograph has certified Lagrène himself as a "source.") Indeed for Reff the discovery that Manet's protagonist was based on an actual person has served to promote a strongly thematic as well as normalizingly realistic reading of the *Old Musician*, according to which the latter, "a picture of haunting, melancholy power," represents

the displaced inhabitants of Petite Pologne, [a] once notorious area of decrepit slums. . . . In it [Manet] describes sympathetically not only those undesirable types Haussmann [the Prefect of the Seine whose grandiose urban projects transformed Paris during the Second Empire]¹²⁹ wished would go away—an itinerant musician, a quack peddler, a chronic alcoholic, an orphan girl—but

also a street urchin whose incongruous, Pierrot-like costume alludes to the Parisian home of the commedia dell'arte, the Théâtre des Funambules, itself a victim of urban renewal; along with other popular theaters on the boulevard du Temple, it was about to be destroyed. Thus the *Old Musician*, far from being "Manet's last portrayal of peasant life in a more romantic manner" before he turned to modern urban subjects later in 1862, is actually his first portrayal of lower-class street life in a manner half romantic and half realist.¹³⁰

Elsewhere in the same text Reff writes, "the iconographic thread that binds [Manet's figures] together is their estrangement from a society that not only rejects them as alien and dangerous, but has literally displaced



Figure 83. Jean Lagrène, photograph, 1865.



them from the slums they once occupied. Each of them was a familiar type in the city whose streets Manet, a ‘perfect *flâneur*’ in Baudelaire’s sense, loved to explore, and some of them can even be named.” Reff goes on to cite not only Lagrène but also other actual persons whose connection with the figures in the *Old Musician* can only be conjectural.¹³¹ Nor is it evident that Manet’s painting depicts either a quack peddler or an orphan girl as Reff confidently claims it does—on what authority?

All this typifies the low-wattage social history of art that was popular during much of the 1970s and 1980s. And what is also typical of Reff’s approach is the absorption of Manet’s allusions to earlier art in and by his thematic reading. So for example Manet’s reference to Velásquez’s *Drinkers* is glossed by the remark that “that picture too shows a group of bohemian characters disposed in a shallow, friezelike space”; Watteau’s *Gilles* is described as “the very image of the alienated individual”¹³² and is associated both with the destruction of the Théâtre des Funambules and with Duranty’s newly opened marionette theater in the Tuileries Gardens (is there a hint of contradiction here?);¹³³ and both Le Nain’s old piper, from an engraving after the painting in Detroit Reff prefers as a source to the *Halte du cavalier* (fig. 84),¹³⁴ and the philosopher Chryseippos, a Hellenistic statue in the Louvre Manet copied in a drawing (figs. 85, 86) and that Alain De Leiris long ago proposed as a source for Manet’s seated violinist,¹³⁵ are held to be appropriate to Manet’s theme in that the type of the itinerant musician was characterized by a contemporary writer, Victor Fournel, author of *Les Spectacles populaires et les artistes des rues*, as “a philosopher: he knows the vanity of worldly glories.”¹³⁶ Even the loosely brushed, virtually featureless, in any case absolutely unspecific setting of Manet’s canvas gets recuperated thematically. “If it is not Petite Pologne,” Reff says, “it may well be the ‘remote street’ beyond the Parc Monceau, surrounded by ‘huge vacant lots,’ where [Manet] had his studio, an area still so undeveloped that it could be described at the time as ‘returning to virgin forest.’”¹³⁷

Considered in its own terms, Reff’s account of the *Old Musician* is unpersuasive for several reasons. First, it asserts connections that seem forced and arbitrary. This is obviously true of his speculations about the picture’s locale, but it holds as well for most of the other real-world associations on which his interpretation depends. Second, Reff is sometimes blatantly anachronistic, as when he speaks of Velásquez’s “bohemian characters” or Watteau’s “alienated individual.” Third, he takes a painting that has always been considered problematic, imputes to it expressive

qualities—“haunting, melancholy power”—no one ever detected in it before,¹³⁸ but makes no effort to explain either how and why those qualities previously went unrecognized or how and why they suddenly became discernible. This is partly what I meant when I called his reading of the *Old Musician* *normalizingly* realistic: his aim is not to account for the painting’s strangeness (my object in “Manet’s Sources”) but rather to dissolve that strangeness through a combination of iconographic linkages (itinerant musicians were characterized as philosophers), blobs of social history (a slum not far from Manet’s studio was razed in the early 1860s), and implicit appeals to unequivocal visual experience (Manet’s picture just looks a certain way). My disagreement is as much with Reff’s procedures as with his claims. Finally, as already remarked, Reff subordinates the question of the meaning of Manet’s use of sources in the art of the past to a pursuit of thematic coherence keyed to the painting’s allegedly realistic and socially progressive content. But such an argument collapses of its own weight: after all, Manet didn’t *need* to refer to works by Velásquez,



Figure 84. Engraving after Louis(?) Le Nain, *The Old Piper*.

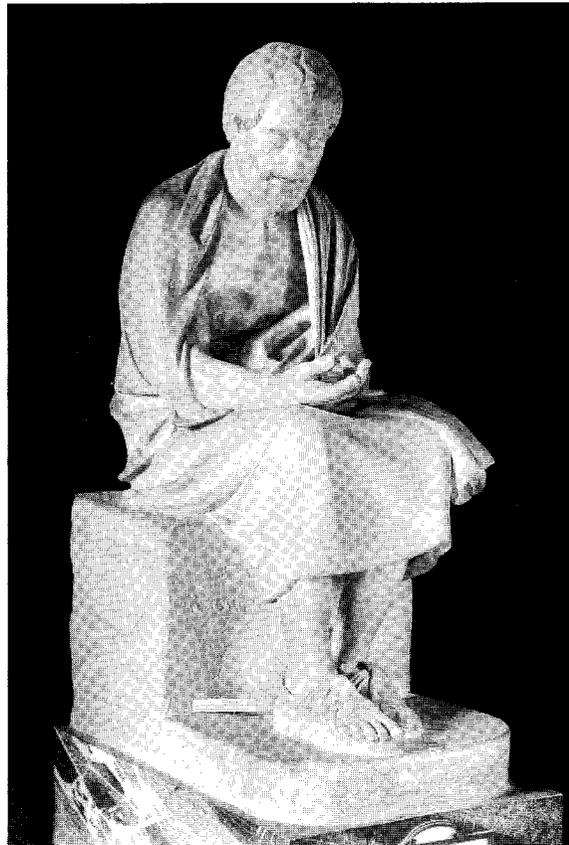


Figure 85. Hellenistic statue formerly thought to be a portrait of *Chrysippos*, as Manet would have seen it.

Watteau, and Le Nain in order to realize the project Reff imputes to him, and when one thinks of what he had to do to declare the connection with the *Drinkers* or to make the boy in white recall the *Gilles* the notion that all this had a merely thematic end in view seems absurd. The absurdity becomes more patent when we bring to mind other works of these years and are thus forced to conclude that Manet's concern with Watteau and Le Nain (to mention only French painters) extends well beyond the *Old Musician*, a fact that Reff's approach, like that of recent scholarship generally, is unable to accommodate.

A related point is that the increasing recognition, starting in the late 1960s, of both the multiplicity and the diversity of the images that can be shown to have played a role in Manet's art has directed attention away from the question of the meaning of his strictly pictorial or say Old Master sources. As regards the *Old Musician* the photograph of Jean Lagrène

Figure 86. Édouard Manet, drawing after *Chrysippos*, 1850s?



is emblematic of that enlarged frame of reference, while the statue of Chrysippos and, still another source, a magazine illustration after a recent painting, Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger's *The Kidnapped Child* (1861; fig. 87),¹³⁹ which provides the closest precedent we have for the figure of the girl holding a baby at the left of Manet's canvas, have seemed difficult to connect other than thematically with the allusions to Velázquez, Watteau, and Le Nain. Indeed the more scholars have become aware of the extent of Manet's interest in various kinds of popular imagery, including photographs, the more they have treated *all* Manet's sources as functionally equivalent—the more they have assumed that *all* the images that went into the making of his paintings mattered to him in exactly the same way: as *mere* images, so to speak.¹⁴⁰ This seems to be the view of one of the most intelligent of Manet's recent commentators, Jean Clay, whose influential essay, "Ointments, Makeup, Pollen," begins:



Figure 87. Wood engraving after Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger, *The Kidnapped Child*, 1861.

Manet does not have a style, he has all of them. “Imitator,” *pasticheur*—the reproach echoes throughout the 1860s in Thoré, Mantz, or Gautier. Manet treats the artistic heritage the way Walter Benjamin’s *flâneur* handles merchandise. The Louvre is a *passage*, a market stand, where the painter strikes his bargain. The history of art is on sale, the past is flattened, desacralized, manipulated, instrumentalized—the end of *aura*. We are no longer in a vein of reverent quotation, but of tapping and recycling. Manet skims from anywhere—he reverses, assembles, tinkers. In this wholly prosaic rapport with tradition, the history of art—its institutions and rules—is denied the silent authority it had exercised on every young painter since his first stroke of the brush.

This flattening entails the end of hierarchies and schools, the end of the great canonical antitheses (Poussin versus Rubens, Ingres versus Delacroix). By drawing simultaneously on Titian, Raphael, Hals, Velásquez, Ribera, Zurbarán, Murillo, Le Nain, Watteau, Goya, Géricault (and countless others, the list of whom grows longer every day thanks to the ferocious effort of the iconographers); by borrowing from Japanese art; and by seeking inspiration in photography, Manet subverts the notions of linear continuity, progress, and source. . . . It is precisely because he quotes—and by his mode of quotation—that Manet breaks with the fiction of an art history always already grounded in precedent. In squandering the past, he only adds to the uncertainty of its future:

all teleology collapses in a chaos of references, into which meaning, plan, and program sink as well (the Enlightenment is still present in Goya, as is the democratic ideal in Courbet).¹⁴¹

In obvious respects I find this more congenial than Reff on the *Old Musician*. But Clay is much too quick to find in Manet’s borrowings and allusions a work of “flattening” and “subversion,” a “chaos of references” inimical to any “meaning, plan, [or] program.” By so doing he anachronistically casts Manet as a *postmodernist*, and one way of characterizing my disagreement with him is to say that I understand Manet’s use of sources as defining a particular moment in the emergence of *modernist* painting (also a particular moment in the history of quotation in art) and that far from seeing him as our contemporary (ca. 1983) I have tried and shall continue to try to install him in the 1860s more firmly than ever before.

On a more modest note, my claim is that it’s necessary to discriminate among Manet’s many sources (using the word in its widest sense) in an effort to determine which were intended by him to play an active role in an ideal viewer’s consciousness and which in contrast may have been useful to him in the painting’s construction but in effect got used up, rendered null and void, in the process (this is more or less the way Wilson-Bareau tends to view *all* his sources). In the *Old Musician* this would distinguish sharply between his allusions to Velásquez, Watteau, and Le Nain on the one hand and on the other, his adaptation of the figure of the girl holding a baby in Schlesinger’s *Kidnapped Child*, which I see as having struck him as suitable for his purposes largely because of its compatibility with various female figures in works by Le Nain.¹⁴² Similarly, I consider it unlikely that the statue of Chrysispos was meant to play an equivalent role to the paintings by Velásquez, Watteau, and Le Nain, though I see no reason to doubt that in the course of working on the *Old Musician* Manet became aware of an affinity between the statue and the “old philosopher”-type figures in the Le Nains and the *Drinkers*. (That the philosopher’s right hand in the drawing is in pencil whereas the rest of the image is in red chalk¹⁴³ suggests that the drawing might have been made at an earlier date and that Manet focused on the hand only after turning to the *Old Musician*.) This is not to make an absolute distinction between Manet’s relation to Velásquez, Watteau, and Le Nain on the one hand and to the *Kidnapped Child* and the Chrysispos statue on the other. The sharpest difference, to my mind, is between his use of the three Old Mas-

ters and his exploitation of the Schlesinger, which I take to have been purely instrumental (he could have had no stake whatever in the *Kidnapped Child* in its own right). His interest in the statue falls closer to his interest in the earlier painters, though I would insist that the *Old Musician* can't quite be said to allude to the statue both because our awareness of a possible relation to the latter is entirely owing to the drawing and because the statue stands significantly outside the network of pictorial citations that the painting manifestly sets in place. The crucial artistic references therefore remain Velázquez, Watteau, and Le Nain—the focuses of my reading of the *Old Musician* in “Manet’s Sources.”¹⁴⁴

My aim in these remarks has not been primarily to show the weakness of Reff’s account of the *Old Musician*. Almost every other commentator on Manet during the past twenty years has ignored, denied, or simplified the problem of his use of sources in an analogous way, Wilson-Bareau’s intensive but curiously limited analyses of X rays of selected pictures and Jean Clay’s sophisticated but ultimately ahistorical Benjaminian reflections being two impressive examples. Nor do I imagine that I have entirely persuaded readers of “Manet’s Sources” of the rightness of my updated arguments. But I would be disappointed not to have made inroads into their disbelief.

3 The Generation of 1863

IN MY INTRODUCTION I advanced the claim that Manet belonged to a specific artistic generation, which I called the generation of 1863. Other members of that generation were Henri Fantin-Latour, Alphonse Legros, and James McNeill Whistler, all of whom are portrayed along with Manet in Fantin’s *Homage to Delacroix*, a picture that in vital respects is emblematic of their commitments. I now want to consider some representative works by Fantin, Legros, and Whistler in an attempt to establish a denser yet more fine-grained artistic context than any we have had for Manet’s paintings of the 1860s. More precisely, I propose to investigate a network of issues that were crucial to ambitious painting in France during those years; to that end I shall be making use of the writings of a number of critics, both friendly and unfriendly to the art in question, and in the case of Fantin I shall be quoting from his letters as well. The issues themselves are complex and do not lend themselves to easy summary. But they all ultimately concern a single fundamental issue, the relationship between painting and beholder—the focus of my previous work on French eighteenth- and nineteenth-century painting and art criticism. Indeed one principal aim of this chapter will be to ascertain Fantin’s, Legros’s, and Whistler’s respective places in what I have described as a central antitheatrical tradition within French painting from the mid-eighteenth century on. For as will become plain, a need to come to grips with the issue of theatricality was basic to the art of all the members of the generation of 1863, and in chapter 4, “Manet in His Generation,” I shall go on to argue that it is only in the context of that shared engagement that the historical singularity—also the ontological complexity—of Manet’s art in that regard can finally be understood.

Legros's *Ex-Voto*

NOTHING more reveals the extent to which art history has still not come to terms with the situation of advanced French painting in the early 1860s than the obscurity surrounding the name of Alphonse Legros.¹ Legros, a prodigiously gifted artist, came from a poor family in Dijon. He arrived in Paris in the early 1850s and enrolled as a student at the so-called Petite École, where he came under the tutelage of Lecoq de Boisbaudran, a teacher who emphasized the training of the memory, and became friends with the young Fantin-Latour with whom he often copied in the Louvre. (Part of Lecoq's training involved drawing from memory after the Old Masters, a discipline in which Legros was adept.)² In 1857 his *Portrait of the Artist's Father* (1856; fig. 88), a work based on Holbein's *Erasmus*, was accepted by the Salon; it was then that the older critic Champfleury is said to have visited him to express his admiration. Two years later a more ambitious painting, *The Angelus* (fig. 142), appeared in the Salon of 1859, where it attracted favorable notice from Baudelaire, who also praised Legros's etchings.³ But more than any other picture of those years, it was Legros's *The Ex-Voto* (1860; pl. 9), exhibited in the Salon of 1861 and hanging today in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon, that established his early reputation as the most promising artist of his generation.⁴

From among various descriptions of that painting by contemporary critics, I want to cite one by Edmond Duranty, who knew Legros personally and who also appears in Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* (he is the bearded figure in profile at the lower left).⁵ His description of the *Ex-Voto* comes from an important but neglected short essay, "Those Who Will Be the Painters (Apropos the Recent Salons)," published in Fernand Desnoyers's *Almanach Parisien* for 1867. The future painters to whom Duranty's title refers are the young realists I have been calling the generation of 1863. His account of that generation begins:

In 1861 a remarkable painting appeared at the Salon, entitled *The Ex-Voto*; it represented some old women, kneeling in the countryside at the foot of a column bearing a votive image. It was signed Legros.

One recognized in it first the temperament of a painter, a painter who knew how to exploit simple and broad resources without falling into the particular techniques of some specific atelier. At the same time, and more important, the feeling of modern life shone forth strongly in this work.

These were *common* old women, dressed in *common* clothing, whom the artist took for his personages, but the rigid and machinelike stupidity that the

painful and difficult existence of the poor gave to their crevassed faces appeared with a profound intensity. The accent of a particular world was completely expressed. Everything that can strike, arrest, and hold one before human beings; everything that is meaningful, concentrated, violent in them radiated from this group of old women, from their faces, their clothing, the countryside, and the votive column.

And by a forced accord, the very means of painting was identified so well with the nature of the personages thus rendered, that one was gripped by one single impression, vivid and clear; one cried out, it's well painted, here is a true



Figure 88. Alphonse Legros, *Portrait of the Artist's Father*, 1856.



Figure 89. Jean-François Millet, *The Gleaners*, 1857.

work, a strong work [*une oeuvre vraie, une oeuvre forte*; the word *oeuvre* here carries something of the connotations of a key eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art-critical term, *tableau*, which in certain contexts—as we shall see—designated a fully unified painting].⁶

Almost every sentence rewards close attention. Consider, to begin with, the statement that “the rigid and machinelike stupidity that the painful and difficult existence of the poor gave to their crevassed faces appeared with a profound intensity.” What Duranty is responding to is the evocation of a certain *automatism* in the women’s expressions and demeanor and the further suggestion that that automatism is visibly a function of their humble and constrained mode of existence. The foremost recent precedent for effects of that sort was the peasant paintings and drawings of Jean-François Millet, whose art was controversial throughout the 1860s precisely because of the single-mindedness with which it sought to evoke the total absorption of peasant men and women in their repetitive, automatic, in that sense machinelike labors (as in *The Gleaners* [1857; fig. 89]); or in simple domestic tasks which were no less mechanical for being physically undemanding (as in *Woman Sewing by Her Sleeping*

Child [1854–56; fig. 90]); or in prayer at the end of the day (as in *The Angelus* [1859; fig. 91]); or, a limit case, in brute physical exhaustion (as in *The Vineyard Worker* [1869–70; fig. 92]).⁷ In French painting from the mid-eighteenth century on, the representation of absorption carried with it the implication that the figure or figures in question were unaware of the presence before the canvas of the beholder; in this sense it was an *antithe-*

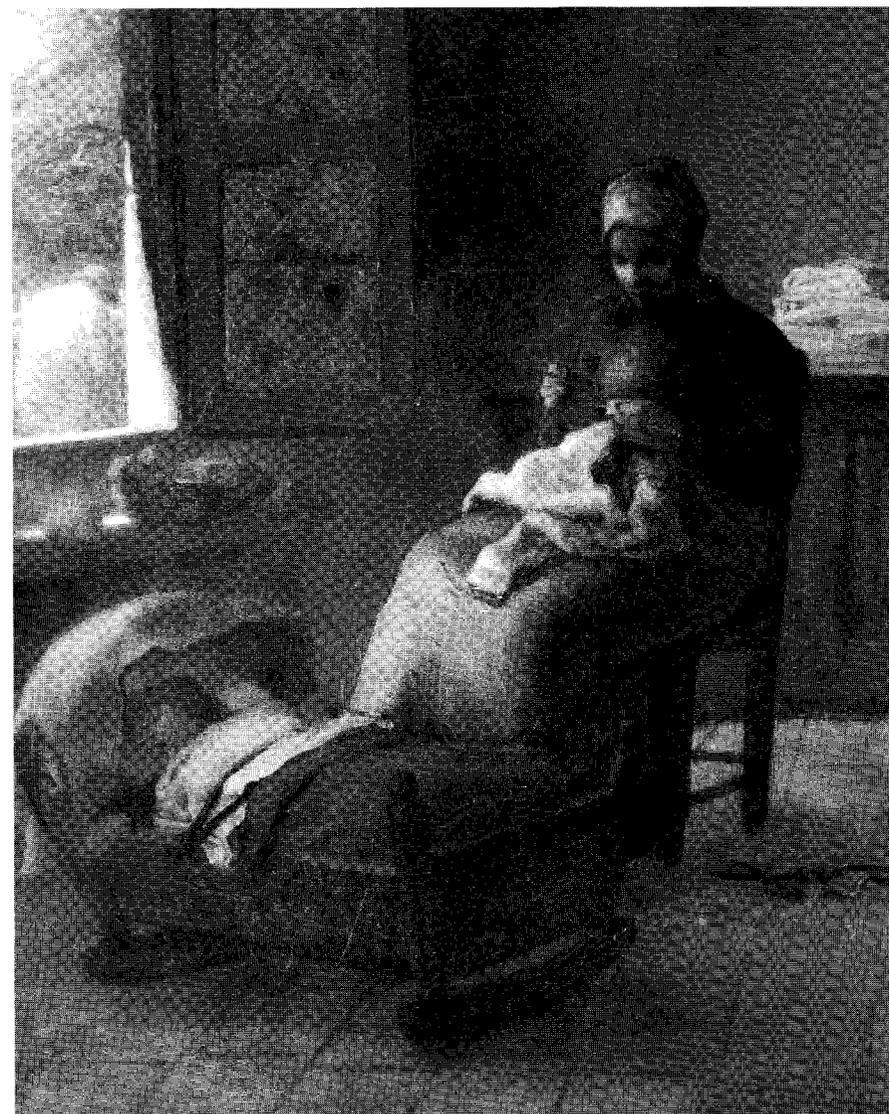


Figure 90. Jean-François Millet, *Woman Sewing by Her Sleeping Child*, 1854–56.



Figure 91. Jean-François Millet, *The Angelus*, 1859.

atrical device, one that was instrumental to attempts by successive generations of French painters to make pictures that would somehow negate or neutralize the primordial convention that paintings are made to be beheld;⁸ and in fact the critics who continued to admire Millet during the 1860s and 1870s—an impressive list that includes Edmond About, Astruc, Maxime Du Camp, Castagnary, Chesneau, Duret, Théodore Pelloquet, Jean Rousseau, Alfred Sensier, and Thoré—praised his art largely on those grounds.⁹ (The presence on this list of Astruc and Duret, two of Manet’s most fervent champions, ought to give us pause. In what sense was an admiration for Millet’s hyperabsorptive works compatible with a taste for Manet’s facing compositions? More on this as we proceed.) Other writers, however, notably Baudelaire, Duranty himself, Théophile Gautier (an early enthusiast but, starting in 1861, a consistent critic), and Paul de Saint-Victor, were repelled by the obviousness of Millet’s ostensibly antitheatrical aims, which for them had the contrary effect of too blatantly seeking to persuade the beholder that the figures in the painting

were oblivious to his presence.¹⁰ So that Millet’s figures seemed to them, not in fact absorbed in their labors and hence unaware of being beheld, but merely pretending to be both—which is to say they found his paintings egregiously, unbearably, theatrical.¹¹ Everything turned, in other words, on a subjective judgment that by the nature of the case ran to one or the other extreme. This is why for viewers in the 1860s and 1870s, as Astruc put it, “One doesn’t like [Millet] halfway: one is either fanatical about him or repelled by him.”¹²

In *Courbet’s Realism* I argued that Courbet pursued a fundamentally different strategy but one that was equally antitheatrical in intent. And I presented that strategy as a response to what I saw as the growing inability of the depiction of absorptive states and activities—most crucially, in Millet’s paintings—to read unequivocally as antitheatrical.¹³ I still think that is largely correct, but what I hadn’t fully appreciated when I wrote those pages was the persistence throughout the 1860s (and after) of the view that Millet’s peasants *did* appear oblivious of the beholder,



Figure 92. Jean-François Millet, *The Vineyard Worker*, pastel and black crayon, 1869–70.

and I certainly hadn't recognized that for some critics in the 1860s the sheer excessiveness of his art—the single-mindedness or all-too-obviousness of his pursuit of absorption—was perceived as a positive virtue. Throughout those years, too, Millet and Courbet were contrasted with one another on the grounds that whereas Millet's art masterfully evoked the total determination of the peasant's actions, gestures, and inner life (however minimal or restricted) by his or her immersion in a brutalizing routine, Courbet's art was exclusively concerned with the quasi-photographic depiction of material surfaces and hence lacked all suggestion of psychological and/or spiritual "depth."¹⁴ Such a view was unfair to Courbet, whose art was far more complex than it acknowledges and who indeed was strongly attracted to absorptive themes and motifs. But for contemporary critics the issue of Courbet's Realism, like that of realism generally, was ideologically overdetermined in ways that foreclosed the possibility that his paintings might be seen in other than the most literal, positivist, and materialist terms. (Baudelaire's failure to recognize the deeply "imaginative" nature of Courbet's Realist pictures shows the process at work.) It didn't help that Courbet in the 1860s exhibited various works that either damaged his reputation—the *Return from the Conference* (1863) and the *Peasant Child Giving Alms to a Beggar* (1868)—or raised doubts about his commitment to Realism—the *Woman with a Parrot* (1866) and to some extent the landscapes—and that that too was in contrast with the consistency of Millet's art during those years. Not that Courbet was artistically spent force; far from it. But starting in the early 1860s his painting ceased to be the focus of artistic controversy it had been throughout the 1850s. Instead, among artists older than Manet and his friends, it was Millet whose work increasingly emerged as that in response to which almost every critic of note defined his or her deepest beliefs about the aims and limits of painting.

These developments were still mainly in the future when Legros exhibited the *Ex-Voto*, however, and critics in 1861 did not hesitate to associate it with Courbet's monumental signature painting, *A Burial at Ornans* (1849–50; fig. 93) and to see in that connection an affirmation of Legros's allegiance to realism.¹⁵ No doubt largely for that reason, they failed to connect Legros's picture with Millet, whose paintings of peasant subjects were much smaller in scale and altogether different in style. But with Duranty's commentary as our guide, it becomes plausible to view the *Ex-Voto* as combining Courbet and Millet: the women in black could have stepped out of the *Burial* (as was said at the time), and the picture's rela-

tively large scale, realist descriptive mode, and frank, painterly execution are closer to Courbet than to any other artist; at the same time, its powerful, explicit thematization of absorption in prayer links the *Ex-Voto* with Millet, whom Legros also admired. (As does its evocation of what Duranty calls "a particular world," by which he means a world *apart*, in that sense a hermetic world, enclosing its inhabitants; more on that further on, and on the related claim, surprising on the face of it, that the *Ex-Voto* expresses "the feeling of modern life.") Not, however, that one would quite wish to endorse Duranty's insistence on the "rigid and machinelike stupidity" of the women: for all the single-mindedness of Legros's evocation of religious devotion, Duranty's language itself seems excessive, as if his own commitment to an ideal of "profound intensity" led him to go beyond what was there to be seen—to treat Legros's picture as even more Millet-like than it is. A similar tendency is at work in his claim that "everything that is meaningful, concentrated, violent in them radiated from this group of old women"—the word "violent" in particular feels overdone. But that is to say that *both* Legros's picture *and* Duranty's essay testify to a shift of taste within the pictorial avant-garde by virtue of which the excessiveness in the depiction of absorption that in the view of certain critics amounted to a fall into theatricality could be recuperated as an artistically legitimate mode of *intensity*.

But Duranty's description of the *Ex-Voto* is concerned with more than just the appearance of the women or the absorptive tenor of the scene as a



Figure 93. Gustave Courbet, *A Burial at Ornans*, 1849–50.

whole. To recall his words: "And by a forced accord, the very means of painting was identified so well with the nature of the personages thus rendered, that one was gripped by one single impression, vivid and clear; one cried out, it's well painted, here is a true work, a strong work." I take the phrase "the very means of painting" (*le moyen même de peinture*) to refer primarily to matters of pictorial structure or composition, which is to say I understand Duranty to be directing our attention to what he saw as a perfect match between the *Ex-Voto*'s stressed thematics of absorption and its overlapping of "flat," silhouetted forms in an extremely shallow space as well as its conspicuous truncation of those forms by the framing edge.¹⁶ Just as in Duranty's view there was something concentrated and violent, rigid and machinelike, in the painting's treatment of absorption, so there was for him something concentrated and violent and perhaps also rigid and machinelike in the way in which no less than eight kneeling women in black have been compressed as if on top of one another into the right-hand third of the canvas (only three or at most four of their faces seem available for our inspection) as well as into just a few feet of depth. Even the kneeling woman in white, set apart from the others, has the lower portion of her body abruptly and severely—in that sense violently—sheared off by the bottom of the picture.

In sum Duranty seems to have been struck by a certain *forcing* both of the painting's thematics of absorption and of the arrangement of the figures of the women spatially and with respect to the framing edge; and what I find significant in turn is that he registers that perception in a phrase that itself makes use of the notion of forcing: "By a forced accord, the very means of painting was identified so well with the nature of the personages thus rendered, that one was gripped by one single impression, vivid and clear" (emphasis added). Here too we observe the recuperation of an excessiveness that at earlier moments in the French tradition was likely to have been perceived as inescapably theatrical. According to Diderot's conception of painting, a dramatic ideal of pictorial unity was equated with an effect of dynamic necessity, but such an effect was supposed never to appear forced or willed, in which case the (antitheatrical) illusion of *internal* necessity would give way to a (theatrical) impression of *external* constraint. Thus for example Du Camp, a strongly Diderotian critic, in 1861 praised David's *Death of Marat* for having "the lugubrious simplicity of death; nothing of the theatrical, nothing of the forced," and criticized the apparent naïveté of Tissot's drawing as in fact "willed."¹⁷ Starting around 1860, however, a new desire for pictorial intensity—

more exactly, a desire for a new sort of pictorial intensity—changed the basic terms of the problem by positively valorizing effects of forcing and willing within an absorptive framework. As I have already suggested, the change is most evident in writing about Millet, who was praised for the strength and, implicitly, the perspicuousness of his artistic will, his indomitable *volonté*: the adjective *voulu*, willed, surfaces around this time as intrinsically good, not bad. Millet's own statement of his artistic project in a much-cited letter to Pelloquet—"That the things [in a picture] don't at all have the air of having been brought together by chance and for the occasion, but that they have between them an indispensable and forced connection"¹⁸—exemplifies the new view of necessity. But no art-critical text of the period is more revealing of the transvaluation of previous values and assumptions than Duranty's discussion of Legros's *Ex-Voto* in "Those Who Will Be the Painters."¹⁹

In fact there is more to that transvaluation than has been remarked so far. The excessiveness and intensity that characterize the *Ex-Voto*'s treatment of absorption find further expression not just in the compositional forcing we have noted but also, crucially, in a *double* or *divided* relationship to the beholder. Under the Diderotian regime, the representation of figures wholly absorbed in what they are doing, feeling, and thinking carried with it the implication that they were unaware of being beheld—more strongly, that for all intents and purposes the beholder did not exist. Accordingly, in Joris-Karl Huysmans's novel, *L'Oblat* (1903), in a scene which takes place in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon, the praying women in the *Ex-Voto* are described as "meditating, absorbed, far from visitors," a phrase that makes sense only if it refers to visitors *to the museum*, where the painting already hung.²⁰ But there is also a sense in which the excessiveness and intensity I have been emphasizing entail a fundamentally different relationship to the beholder. This second relationship is implicit in the silhouetted drawing, shallow space, and cropping of the figures by the framing edge; it is also expressed in the brilliant white form of the kneeling woman in the near foreground; and it is made virtually explicit by the red-framed, gold-ground *ex-voto* itself, above all by the way in which the latter is displayed more or less directly *facing* the beholder. Now, it is at once apparent that the relation of the *ex-voto* to the viewer cannot be said to have been determined by the requirements of the action. On the contrary, there is a palpable tension between the placement and orientation of the group of kneeling women in profile toward the right and the placement and orientation of the *ex-voto* at the left,

which stands further back in space and faces out of the painting. (Note too the slippage between the orientation of the four-sided post supporting the ex-voto and that of the ex-voto itself.) Moreover, the bright, eye-catching colors of the primary image and perhaps also its subject, a crucifixion, bear witness to a desire not simply to face the beholder but as if violently to strike and hold his gaze. In short I find in Legros's *Ex-Voto* a double or divided structure of *denial of* and *direct address to* the beholder, a structure that, by virtue of that seeming contradiction, is consistent with the logic of the excessive thematization of absorption to which Duranty's text first alerted us. Put slightly differently, the excessiveness that I have said turned out to be recuperable as intensity (in the eyes of many critics) also turned out to seek expression in a kind of theatricality: not, however, the theatricality traditionally associated with excess—rhetorical or gestural overkill of the sort often called melodramatic—but the more “abstract” or presentational theatricality of *facingness as such*. My larger claim is that the double or divided structure present in Legros's *Ex-Voto* is, in one way or another, deeply characteristic of the painting of the generation of 1863.

Two further points before leaving the *Ex-Voto*. First, the ex-voto itself is divided between a pictorial upper component, the red-and-gold crucifixion scene, and a nonpictorial lower one, a black rectangle containing in its corners four stylized white tears (fig. 94). This is significant not only because the ex-voto thus embodies the notion of division but also because the second of the two elements, in its blackness and perhaps also on the basis of its imagery of weeping, may be read as emblemizing the blindness to being beheld that I have argued was always implicit in the representation of absorption.²¹ In *Absorption and Theatricality* I discuss an analogous conjunction of elements—two playing cards in a partly-open drawer, one facing the beholder, the other blankly turned away—in Chardin's *The Card Castle* (ca. 1737; fig. 95);²² the parallel in this regard between paintings near the beginning and the end of the absorptive tradition I have been charting is further evidence for the coherence of the tradition as a whole. And second, something akin to Duranty's (and for that matter Huysmans's) response to Legros's canvas is already implicit in Thoré's account of that painting in 1861. Thoré describes the women in the *Ex-Voto* as being “so absorbed in their pious imploring, that they will surely have their wishes granted,” and observes that “one is in white, and seen from the rear”²³—an overstatement that reinforces the notion that

she is wholly caught up in prayer, hence unaware of being beheld, and incidentally provides another parallel to the playing card turned away from the viewer in Chardin's *Card Castle*. Finally, Thoré speculates that “Legros must work all alone, retired from the world, because he seems not to be concerned with other painters or the public,”²⁴ which is to say that Thoré imagines the conditions under which Legros painted as themselves antitheatrical, as if a picture like the *Ex-Voto* could only have been produced under circumstances analogous to those it represents.

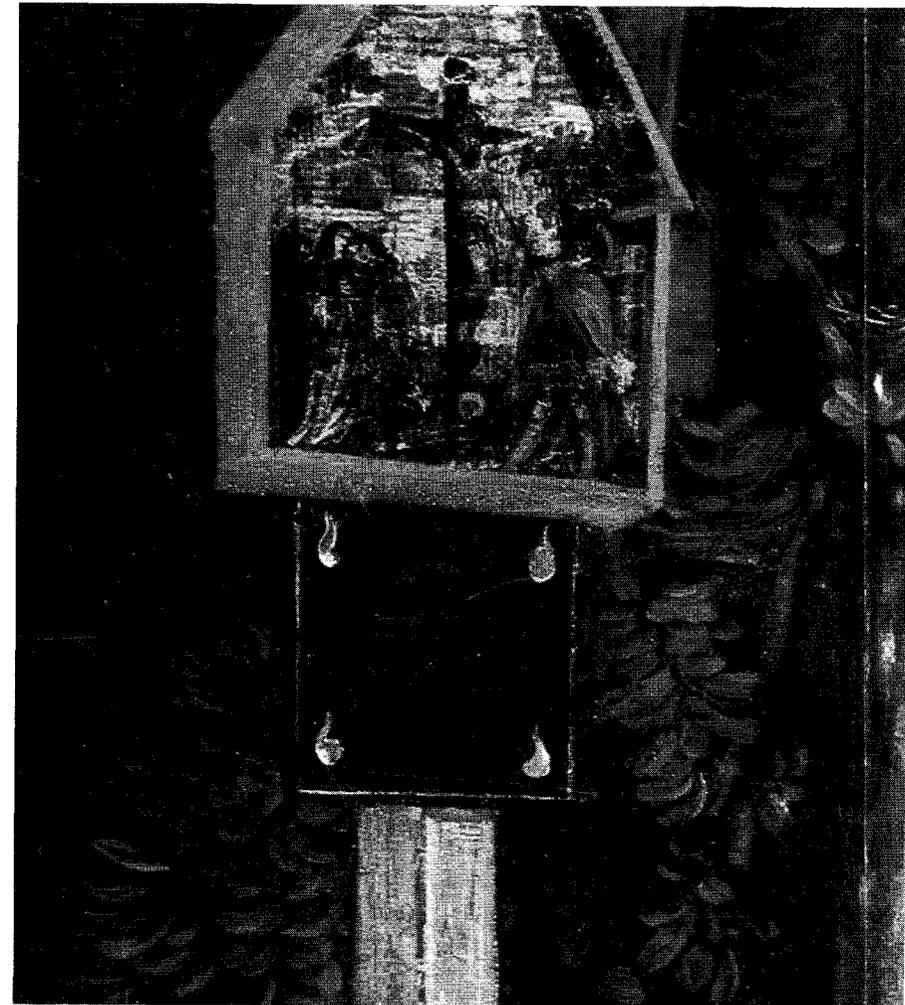


Figure 94. Alphonse Legros, *The Ex-Voto*, 1860, detail of the ex-voto.



Figure 95. Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, *The Card Castle*, ca. 1737.

Fantin-Latour's *Homage to Delacroix*, *The Toast!* *Homage to Truth*, and Other Works

IN THE WORK of Henri Fantin-Latour the double or divided structure I have just evoked tended to be expressed in and through different kinds of pictures; to begin with I will consider two.²⁵ First, Fantin throughout his

career was a master of the absorptive portrait, typically involving a woman reading. Pictures of that type—for example, his *Woman Reading* (1861; fig. 96) and *Reading* (1863; fig. 97), the model for both of which was his sister Marie²⁶—were invariably, infallibly, successful. In that format (both works are just over three feet high), treated with a refined realism appropriate to the genre, absorption never failed to work its



Figure 96. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Woman Reading*, 1861.

magic, which included two distinct but intimately related *effets du réel*: first, persuading the viewer that this is how the world really looked, indeed how it really was; and second, suspending or eliding the distinction between representation and sitter, or at any rate inciting commentators to lose their rhetorical grip on the distinction in their enthusiastic accounts of the picture before them. Here for instance is Thore on *Reading*:

The most charming, the most intimate, the most naturally distinguished of all the portraits of women [in the Salon] is that of a woman reading by Fantin-Latour. A young, fair-haired woman, wearing a modest, loose brown jacket and gray skirt, seated, seen from the knees up, and set against an even, neutral background. No accessories distract the reader, or those looking at her. She holds in her hands her book, foreshortened, the open pages bathed in light. Her small right hand, lying in this light on the pages of the book, is delicious. What attention! How well she reads and how she reflects upon what she is reading! And what breeding, despite her plain clothing! And how just, harmonious, and tranquil are the colors! What a happy woman, with her gray wool skirt and her little white collar!²⁷

In Thore's description, reminiscent of passages in Diderot's *Salons* of a century earlier, we can sense the material painting *almost* dissolving, *almost* being replaced by the young woman herself. (As we shall soon have occasion to confirm, a third reality effect that was a precondition of the first two was that no one seems to have been aware that an absorptive subject such as we find in *Woman Reading* or *Reading* was at all conventional. It appeared ever fresh, purely spontaneous, a found object not a deliberate arrangement, as if nothing like it had ever been painted before. *That* was absorption's strongest magic.)

But pictures like these, just because of their generic character, could not fully satisfy either Fantin's pictorial ambitions or the demands of the critics who expected more of his talent. In his *Homage to Delacroix* of 1864 (pl. 1) he therefore developed a new sort of allegorical group portrait that was conspicuously not absorptive in its composition.²⁸ Rather, seven of the ten personages look directly out of the picture; Manet too stands facing outward but his gaze drifts abstractedly toward the left; at the left-hand edge of the picture two figures, Duranty (seated) and the painter Louis Cordier (standing), look toward the right; and the monochrome portrait of Delacroix gazes proudly off toward the right as well. Nevertheless the overall impression is of a strongly frontal or *say facing* work, and what is fascinating is that contemporary critics seem to have been troubled by that facingness to the extent of denying that Fantin's painting was composed at all. Gautier wrote:

In the foreground are grouped, half-length, turning their backs on the object of their veneration in order to look at the public, friends of the painter, artists and writers, linked by a common admiration for the illustrious master so much regretted by all. Fantin-Latour's work is rather a collection of portraits than a reasoned composition organized according to its motif; but the portraits themselves are very well painted and very accurate. . . . In spite of the bizarreness of

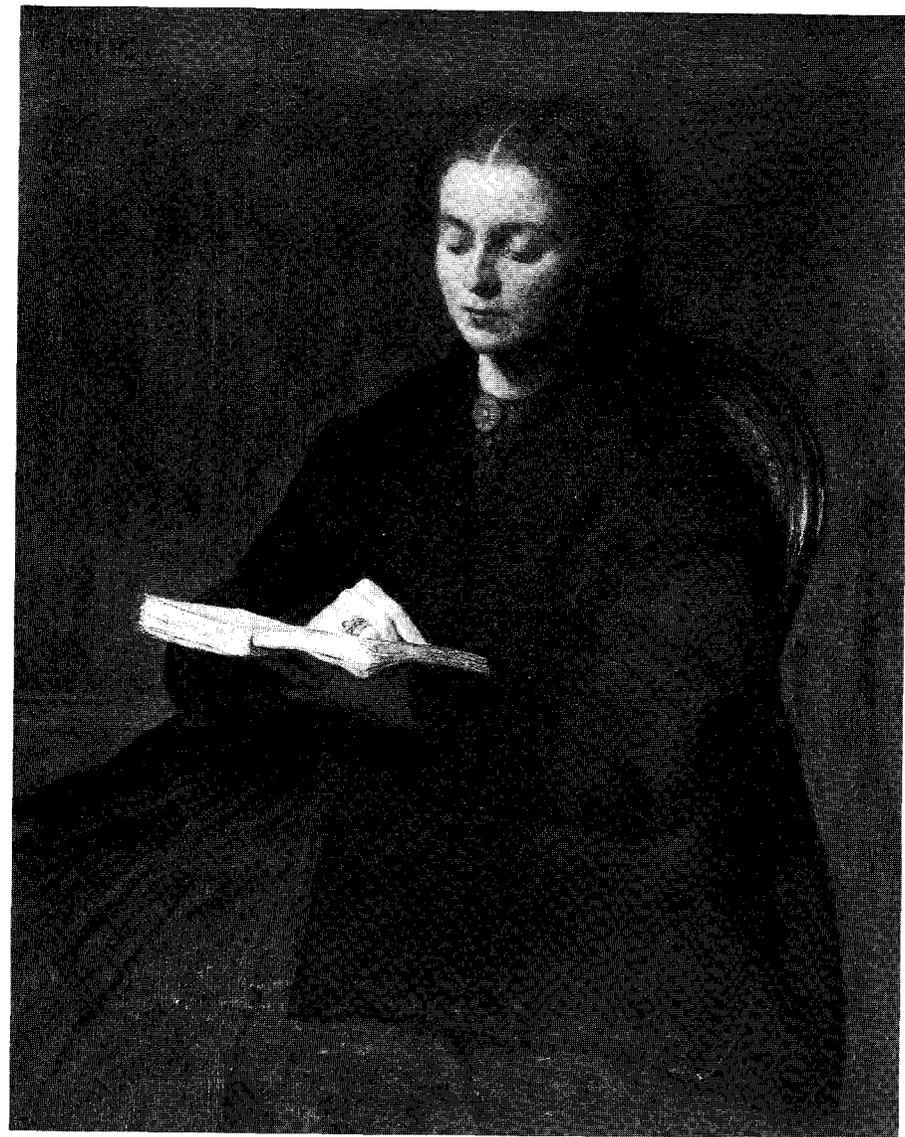


Figure 97. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Reading*, 1863.

the arrangement or rather in spite of the absence of all arrangement, there is true merit in this canvas which has strongly captured the public's interest.²⁹

In Gautier's view, Fantin's canvas, for all the strength of its individual parts, was not a reasoned composition—not a true *tableau*—because it lacked a principle of internal coherence; and it seemed to him to lack such a principle not only because its personages faced out of the painting but also because in doing so they turned their backs on the portrait of Delacroix. (The same complaint was voiced by numerous other critics.) Chesneau too was troubled, writing: “But the *tableau* itself hardly exists as a *tableau*, it's only a pretext for portraits; there is neither composition, nor a clearly marked intention, it's not at all an *oeuvre* in a word.”³⁰ He added, “Doesn't [Fantin] think that it's time to try to present to the public something other than *morceaux* of interest only to a few amateurs?”³¹ (The *tableau-morceau* distinction will be of concern to us later on.) The resulting structure might be said to be *willfully* nonabsorptive, which I take to be the implication of Gautier's statement that Fantin's picture is not “organized according to its motif.” The motif Gautier has in mind is the portrait of Delacroix at which no one looks, and what would have given the canvas the unity it seemed to Gautier and Chesneau to lack would have been if Fantin had found a way to focus the attention of at least some members of the group on that motif while at the same time preserving the portrait character of the individual figures. In the words of another critic, Louis Leroy: “In what way can a portrait of a great artist . . . on which the personages turn their backs constitute a sufficient homage to his memory? I don't get it. Ah! if you would have shown me a statue or bust of the marvelous colorist and around the pedestal I would have seen the master's disciples in admiring or simply meditative poses, I would have understood.”³²

In a sense Fantin had anticipated these objections. He had originally planned a composition depicting the crowning of a bust of Delacroix, featuring a dark-suited man—the one performing the crowning—seen largely from the rear (fig. 98; the drawing is dated January 6, 1864).³³ In another drawing that belongs to this phase of his planning the man seen from the rear occupies the center of the image; to his left and beyond him is a cluster of floating, masklike faces; the bust has been shifted to the right; while in the lower right-hand corner of the composition a figure in white, no doubt Fantin, gestures with his right arm toward the rest of the scene while looking out at the viewer (fig. 99).³⁴ Three weeks later, he abandoned the idea of a crowning in favor of a composition based on a



Figure 98. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for *Homage to Delacroix*, drawing, 1864.

framed portrait of Delacroix hanging on a wall above a table bearing a bouquet of flowers with twelve figures to the right and four to the left (fig. 100).³⁵ Here too, however, a conspicuous dark-suited figure who appears to be honoring the portrait in some way has been depicted from the rear; to his right another figure, seen partly from the rear, sits in a chair so as to look directly at the portrait on the wall; while the rest of the figures seem, if not to be gazing out of the composition, at any rate to be more or less frontally oriented. The exact meaning of the overall arrangement, especially its right-hand half, is far from certain. But these and other preparatory drawings for the *Homage to Delacroix* leave no doubt that Fantin grappled hard with just those issues his treatment of which in the final painting brought him criticism.

He did not cease grappling with them after exhibiting the *Homage to Delacroix*. Almost immediately he began to plan his next painting, another realist allegory to be entitled “Truth,” in which a naked female fig-



Figure 99. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for *Homage to Delacroix*, drawing, 1864.



Figure 100. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for *Homage to Delacroix*, drawing, 1864.

ure of Truth holding a mirror was to be surrounded by a symbolic group of painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, and writers paying her homage (fig. 101).³⁶ Significantly, almost all the preparatory drawings for “Truth” depict Truth more or less directly from the rear, and in several of them a clothed male figure in the near foreground also seen from the rear holds up a standard that we know from still other drawings was emblazoned with the word *Vérité* in capital letters (figs. 102, 103, 104).³⁷ During this same period Fantin also explored a composition based on the idea of a dinner of artists and writers, and on one sheet, dated December 3, 1864 (fig. 105), he made small sketches of both the “Dinner” (with facing figures) and “Truth” (a more absorptive composition; the sheet as a whole exemplifies the double structure noted in the Legros).³⁸ Eventually the project for the “Dinner” gave way to “The Toast!,” a more complex composition in which figures posed around a table (i.e. not simply frontally) were combined with at least one figure seen mostly from the rear



Figure 101. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for “Truth,” drawing, 1864.

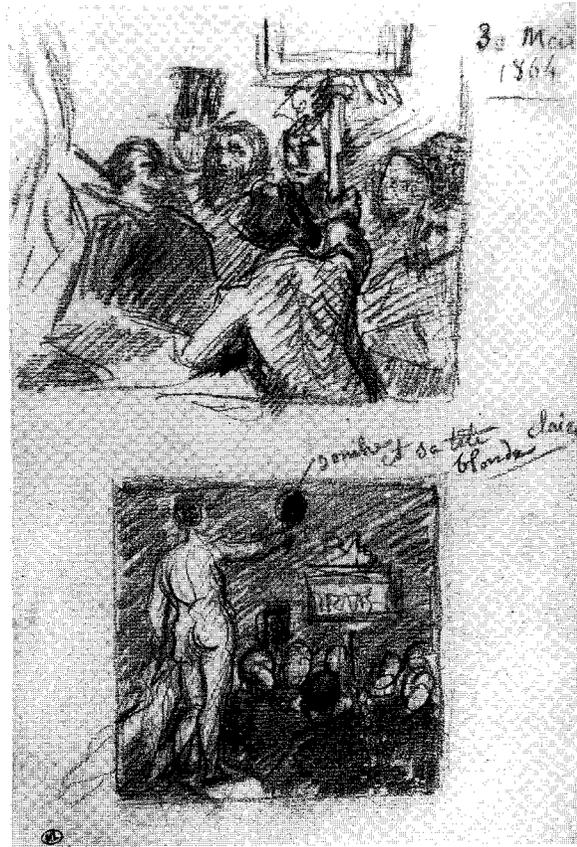


Figure 102. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for "Truth," drawing, 1864.

Figure 103. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for "Truth," drawing, 1864.

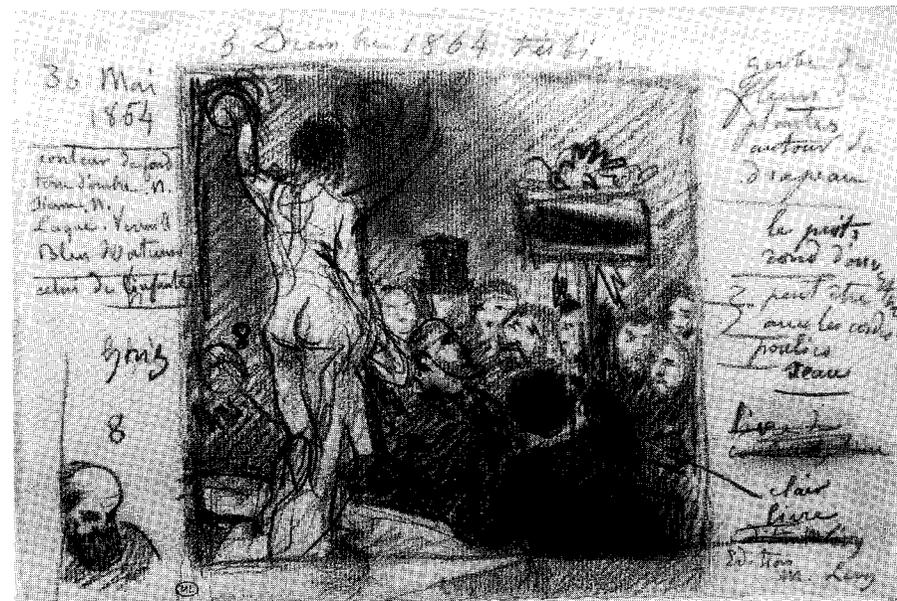


Figure 104. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for "Truth," drawing, 1864.

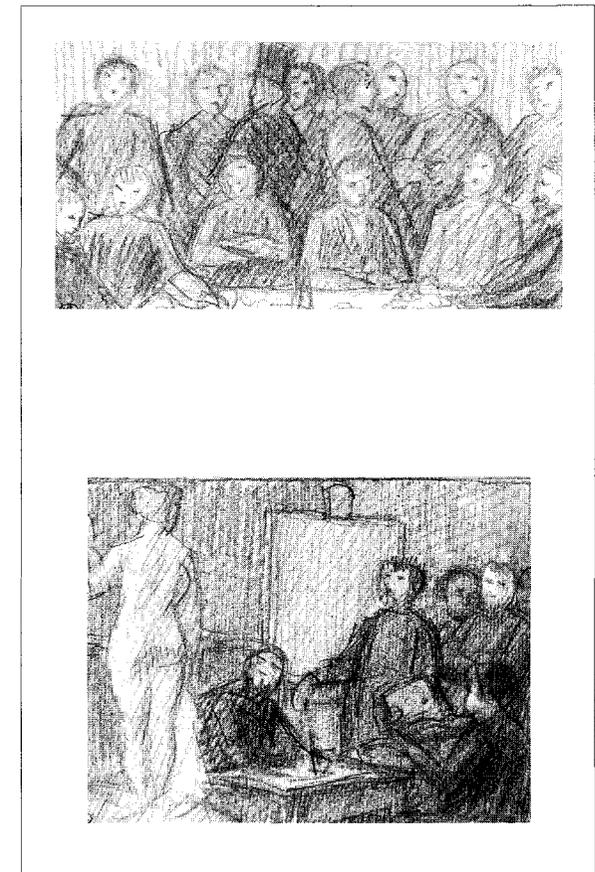


Figure 105. Henri Fantin-Latour, Double study for "Dinner" and "Truth," drawing, 1864.

and in which a toast is being proposed in honor of either one or two Old Masters—Velásquez alone or Velásquez and Rembrandt (we know this from marginal notations to the drawings)—depicted in framed portraits on the rear wall (figs. 106, 107; in the second of these the portrait is draped and the bareheaded figure to its right resembles Manet).³⁹ Finally, Fantin brought together the Toast and Truth ideas in a composition he went on to develop into a large-scale painting that was exhibited in the Salon of 1865 with the title *The Toast! Homage to Truth*.

Because Fantin destroyed that painting soon after the Salon closed (only a few fragments survive), we can never know exactly what it looked like; our conception of it is mainly based on two drawings and an oil sketch (figs. 108, 109, 110), all of which have the figure of Truth turned toward the beholder and on the whole are strongly frontal in organization.⁴⁰ But one previously neglected fact is worth emphasizing: according to two critics, Louis Auvray and Louis de Laincel, the final painting included two men wearing stovepipe hats and portrayed from the rear, and Auvray remarked in addition that they were shown looking directly at the figure of Truth.⁴¹ Men in hats appear in the back rank of several of the drawings we have glanced at, and in the second of the two preparatory



Figure 106. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for “The Toast!,” drawing, 1864.

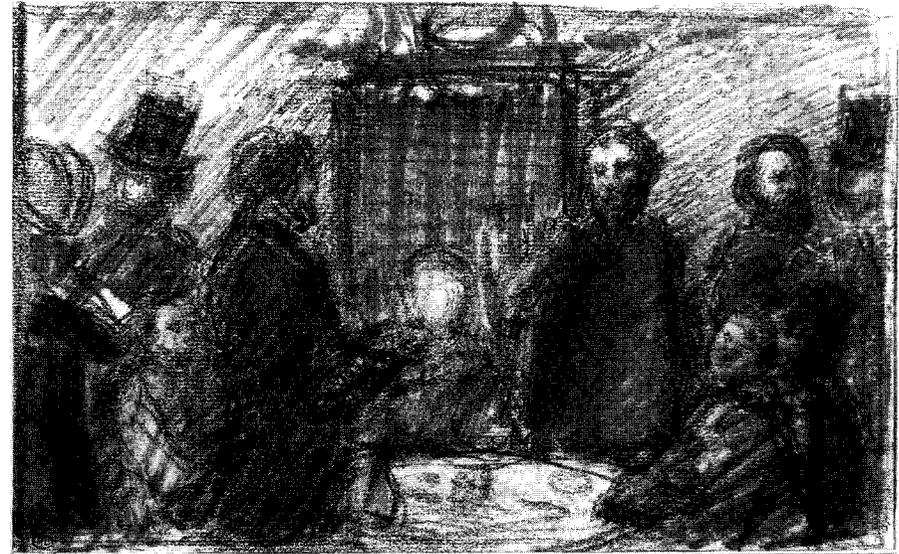


Figure 107. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for “The Toast!,” drawing, 1864.

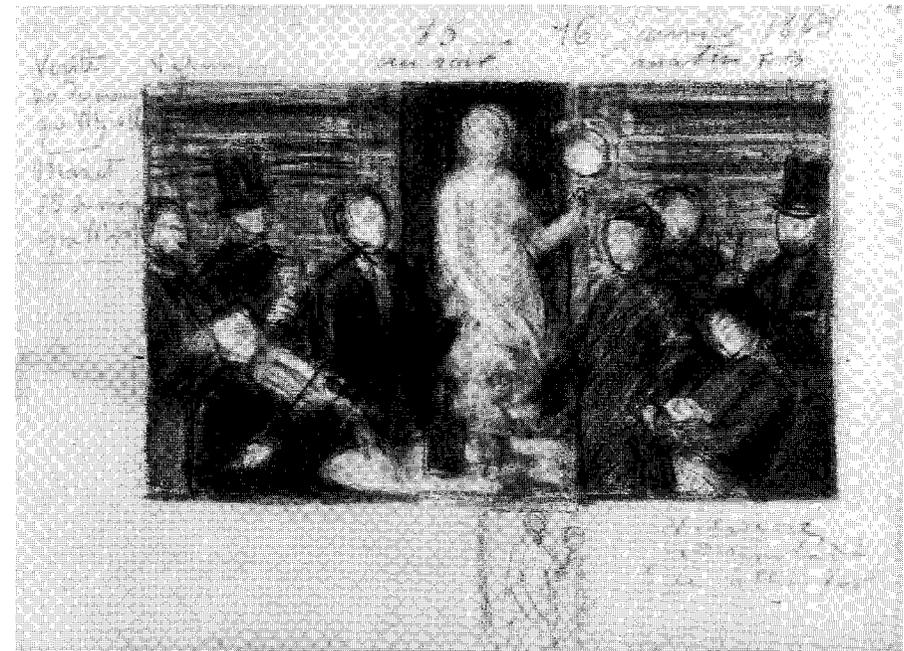


Figure 108. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, drawing, 1865.



Figure 109. Henri Fantin-Latour, Study for *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, drawing, 1865.



Figure 110. Henri Fantin-Latour, *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, oil sketch, 1865.

drawings for *The Toast! Homage to Truth* the hatted figure toward the right is depicted from the rear, perhaps in conversation with another, hatless figure farther to the right. What's new and surprising is the idea that in the final canvas Fantin placed two such personages in positions that both Auvray and Laincel describe as *en face* relative to Truth. This suggests that *The Toast! Homage to Truth* was an attempt to embody in a single ambitious composition the double relation to the viewer that, with Duranty's help, we found in Legros's *Ex-Voto*. But whereas Legros's picture established that relation within an absorptive framework and so was a critical success, Fantin's picture gave pride of place to the naked figure of Truth holding a mirror and facing out of the painting, and so must have struck its viewers as hopelessly confused, even contradictory, in orientation. Indeed the force of the contrast between the top-hatted men depicted from the rear and the otherwise mainly frontal structure of the work as a whole would in effect have cast the men as emissaries from the space *in front of* the picture, which could only have made *The Toast! Homage to Truth* all the more incomprehensible to its public.⁴² Even before the Salon opened Fantin seems to have had his doubts, and when the picture was criticized harshly his doubts deepened. Soon after the close of the Salon he destroyed it. What I want to underscore, however, is not so much the unanimous view that the work was an artistic failure as Fantin's constant engagement throughout 1864 and 1865 with two (or, if we take into account the inclusion-of-the-viewer-in-the-picture implications of the final version of *The Toast! Homage to Truth* and certain of the drawings with figures depicted from the rear, *three*) distinct and competing principles of pictorial organization that he repeatedly sought to fuse together in a single composition.

Some additional observations will help bring out the complexity—also the strongly fantasmatic character—of Fantin's aspirations in *The Toast! Homage to Truth*. First, Laincel comments that the men in the painting seemed neither to see Truth nor to wish to see her,⁴³ and in fact this corresponds with one strand of Fantin's intentions as revealed in his correspondence with the English painter and amateur Edwin Edwards. In a letter of February 3, 1865, Fantin explained to Edwards that the men in his picture “drink to their ideal, Truth, and by one of those licenses that painting is allowed and that is one of its charms, their Ideal, the subject of their toast, appears for him who looks at the painting.”⁴⁴ Edwards replied: “I find it very ingenious that the participants seem not to perceive Truth—she must appear only for the [painting's] beholders and my dear

[Fantin].”⁴⁵ In the same letter he compared the desired effect to the banquet scene in *Macbeth*, to which Fantin responded: “You’re right, it’s only I who see her. Yes, Shakespeare, but I! Banquo didn’t strike greater fear in *Macbeth* than Truth in me.”⁴⁶ But of course the seeming obliviousness to Truth of most of the personages in the painting can only have further confused ordinary viewers.

A second point concerns Fantin’s depiction of himself seated with his back to the public but with his head turned toward the viewer and pointing with his finger at the figure of Truth (somewhat as in fig. 99), which is to say interceding between the painting and its audience.⁴⁷ It’s in that capacity that he alone or, more likely, in company with the two top-hatted figures with their backs to the viewer, could be said to see the figure of Truth (the depicted Fantin didn’t actually look at Truth but he did point to her). But Fantin’s imaginary relation both to his canvas and to the public was even more fraught than this suggests. At work on the painting and already anxious about its basic conception, Fantin in correspondence with Edwards evoked the critical beating he expected to take when the painting was shown in terms of blows that would fall on *his own* back. “But am I going to get beaten up,” he wrote, “oh my back, it aches already, I’m beginning to feel all that on my back.”⁴⁸ It’s as if the painted Fantin’s position in the immediate foreground, or rather the intercessor role the real Fantin devised for himself, allowed him to sacrifice himself (or his back) for his picture. Further on in the same letter, he explained to Edwards that he planned to insert in the Salon catalogue only the words *The Toast*—as in fact he did—“and I, when I point to Truth, that makes Toast to Truth.”⁴⁹ (In the finished painting the figure of Truth had the word “VÉRITÉ” above its head.)⁵⁰ Here also Fantin seems to have imagined himself both inside and outside his painting (the partial quasi-corporeal identification of the painter with his painting amounts to a *fourth* principle of pictorial organization, one that relates closely to my account of Courbet’s Realism), or at any rate he conceived of the full title of the painting as a kind of rebus that called for the viewer to bring together a partial title (in the catalogue) with the figure of Fantin pointing at Truth (within the picture). This also was to ask too much of his audience, but the important point is that Fantin in 1864 and early 1865 was driven to such expedients not by the desire for novelty but rather by the need to reconcile different “solutions” to the problem of the relation of his painting to both artist and beholder.



Figure 111. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Tannhäuser: Venusberg*, 1864.

The stakes are equally high in another group of paintings that Fantin made at this time—those known as fantasies or *féeries* (the sheer diversity of Fantin’s production makes him a uniquely revealing figure). Two in particular deserve notice: *La Féerie* (1863; pl. 10), exhibited in the Salon des Refusés, and *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* (1864; fig. 111), the painted version of a subject he had first broached in a lithograph of 1862.⁵¹ Both are modest in scale and deal with imaginary subject matter: in *Féerie* the action, costumes, and architecture are all invented (more precisely, they are freely derived from Renaissance paintings and, in the case of the architecture, partly from Japanese color woodblocks); while *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* is Fantin’s version of a moment in Wagner’s opera as it was staged in Paris in the spring of 1861. (Baudelaire and Champfleury championed Wagner when his music was first performed in Paris the year before.)⁵² As Douglas Druick has noted, the sharp difference between the early portraits and the *féeries* is emblematic of an emerging conflict in Fantin’s aspirations between an art based strictly on the realistic depiction of persons and things and an art based largely on the imagination—in other

words, between the respective traditions of Courbet and Delacroix, the presiding spirits of the *Homage*.⁵³ The conflict is further expressed on the plane of execution: instead of the sober colors and dry, impersonal facture of the portraits, the *féeries* are painted in a bright, Delacroix-like palette; Fantin's personal touch is everywhere evident; and a mixture of techniques—slurring wet into wet, glazing, scumbling, scraping—dissolves contours and gives the picture surface a heavily worked, in places wax-crayonish texture. Not that Fantin in those pictures positively wished to call attention to their material surfaces. On the contrary, I believe he wanted above all to evoke, to find a pictorial equivalent for, the experience of a dream or imaginative vision (in this sense the *féeries* are a *ne plus ultra* of absorptive painting), which is to say that he wished the material work of art to become as if dematerialized in the viewer's perception of it. Not surprisingly, however, that didn't happen, and contemporary critics were put off by what seemed to them the far too sketchlike, unresolved, and materially obtrusive character of their execution. "It's a marquetry of violent tones," Chesneau wrote at the time, "and, in spite of the abundance of lively colors, it's hardly more than the sketch [*ébauche*] of a colorist's work [*oeuvre*]. Colors aren't color, and the portrait of the young woman holding a book, a painting so sober in effect, proves that Fantin-Latour knows that better than anyone. [The portrait is the one Thoré raved about in his "Salon of 1863" (fig. 97).] It's impossible to guess under what impulsion he has so strangely misconceived the laws [of painting] that he imposes on himself and that he respects so well when he wishes to. . . . Fantin-Latour was wrong to send his *Féerie* in the state of a sketch [*esquisse*]." ⁵⁴ Chesneau's characterization of Fantin's canvas as both an *ébauche* and an *esquisse*—technical terms for which in English we have only the single word "sketch"—testifies to his sense of confusion about what precisely he was looking at.⁵⁵ As for *Tannhäuser: Venusberg*, it too was criticized in this vein when it was shown in the Salon of 1864.⁵⁶ And in fact Fantin later came to rely mainly on lithography, a medium that lent itself far more readily than painting to effects of dematerialization, to convey his exalted feelings about music.

Two other points are worth stressing. First, although the subject of *La Féerie* was described by Mme Fantin-Latour as "A young, fairy-tale princess descends the steps of a fantasy palace, and sees before her a young Prince Charming, with a retinue, offering her precious gifts,"⁵⁷ it isn't obvious to the uninformed viewer that this is what is going on, and even if we accept that scenario the meaning of individual actions and ges-

tures remains unclear. In other words, Fantin has knowingly depicted unintelligible actions and gestures, an esthetic choice that provides an unexpected parallel to Manet's art during these years (more on Manet and unintelligibility in chapter 4). And second, both *La Féerie* and *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* allude more or less freely to other works of art—*La Féerie* to Venetian paintings of the Renaissance, Delacroix, and Japanese prints, and *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* to Watteau's *Embarkation for Cythera* and various paintings by Titian.⁵⁸ Indeed our sense of the unintelligibility of the gestures in *La Féerie* is accompanied by the knowledge that that we have seen those *sorts* of gestures before, in Renaissance paintings and engravings. This too has its parallel in Manet's practice, though in his art the sense of familiarity is counteracted by the shock of modal and thematic displacement (Raphael's classical river gods and water nymph become the contemporary Parisian personages of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, Titian's Venus becomes the modern courtesan/model Olympia/Victorine Meurent) as well as by the encounter with a painterly technique that puzzled and offended his contemporaries and that even today can seem disconcerting.

Fantin's production during the early 1860s was even more diverse than this suggests. For example, I have said nothing about his still lifes and flower pieces, which in fact I shall barely touch on in this book, or about his early, marvelous, deeply absorptive studies of women embroidering. Nor have I mentioned his magnificent *Portrait of Édouard Manet* (1867; frontispiece), inscribed "À mon ami Manet," an act of loyalty and support at a critical moment in his friend's career. But rather than try to be comprehensive I want to consider some aspects of the critical response to his absorptive portraits in the mid- and later 1870s, when he at last won recognition as one of the foremost painters of his generation. Nothing, not even the persistent admiration for Millet on the part of many writers, more plainly illustrates both the continuing power of absorptive themes and effects and, a basic condition of that power, the unavailability to intellectual analysis of the implicit logic of absorption's relation to the viewer, than certain commentaries on Fantin's portraits. Here for example is Castagnary on Fantin's *Reading* (1877; fig. 112):

The color is charming and the drawing sure; but what is incomparable and produces so great an impression on the public is the intimacy, the calm, the peaceful honesty of this interior. I know of nothing more powerfully expressive in this genre. There is a contagion of goodness that overcomes you. After hav-



Figure 112. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Reading*, 1877.

ing contemplated, one feels oneself penetrated by the most virtuous feelings. What is the reason for this? Why does the spectacle of these two humble and discreet girls produce this effect on me, while all the Christs, all the Virgins, all the Saint Stephens, and all the Saint Sebastians leave me indifferent or make me shrug my shoulders? I point out the problem to those who seek to know how art can exercise a direct moral action.⁵⁹

Obviously I think what produced the effect Castagnary described was the representation of absorption, and sure enough a year later he responded altogether differently to a portrait by Fantin in which absorption was absent. Of *The Dubourg Family* (1878; fig. 113) Castagnary wrote, “We know the two young women; this year Fantin-Latour has judged it polite to present to us the father and the mother. The family is complete, but the painting has not gained from this. That *Reading* [of a year ago] was, however, a very pretty interior, its charm was so deep, its intimacy so penetrating. With the newcomers, the perfume has evaporated, and there remain only four personages rather awkwardly grouped and painted without finesse or sparkle.”⁶⁰ Possibly Castagnary would have found fault with the execution of the *Dubourg Family* even had the members of the family

been engaged in some absorptive pursuit. But one suspects that the absence of absorption made it hard for him to approve of the picture even as regards painterly technique.

A year later, however, *The Drawing Lesson or Portraits* (1879; fig. 114) called forth the following from him: “Alone among the men of his time, this original artist possesses the gift of moralizing without preaching. His painting is virtuous and, moreover, excellent. . . . You know the subject? It represents two young girls, two artists, who are at work. The standing one draws after a model that we don’t see; the other, seated, her head a bit bent, copies a plaster cast placed on the table. . . . I don’t much like the standing brunette’s type, but the seated figure, isn’t she a delicious *morceau*, a masterpiece in a masterpiece?”⁶¹ It’s no accident that the seated figure seems the more deeply absorbed of the two, but what I want to stress is the consistency of Castagnary’s critical rhetoric, which is not original with him: throughout the 1860s and 1870s (and after) the term

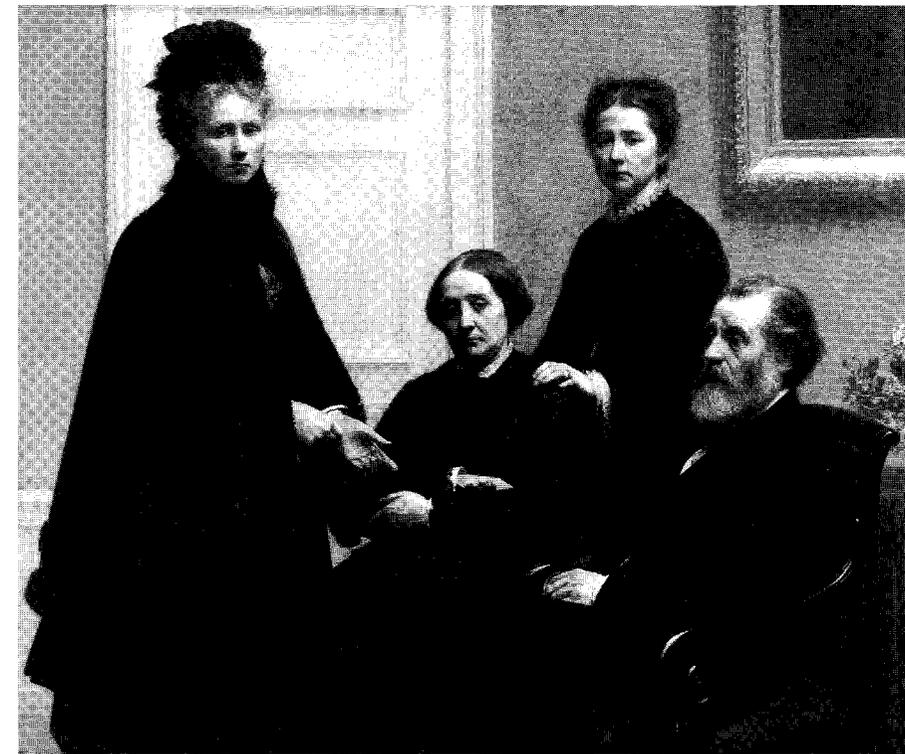


Figure 113. Henri Fantin-Latour, *The Dubourg Family*, 1878.



Figure 114. Henri Fantin-Latour, *The Drawing Lesson (or Portraits)*, 1879.

“intimacy,” *intimité*, was used *only* in connection with scenes of absorption (it is one of the markers of absorption in the criticism of the period), and much the same is true of the term “penetrating,” *pénétrante*, with its suggestion that the effect in question takes place over time. (We shall soon be able to verify both claims, but here I simply note that Baudelaire in 1859, after remarking on the way in which in Legros’s absorptive *Angelus* [fig. 142] the figures seemed to have been laid down over the background, associated that effect with the naïveté of old paintings and remarked, “In a less intimate and penetrating work, it wouldn’t have been tolerable.”)⁶² Also, we earlier saw Thoré in 1863 describe the young woman in Fantin’s *Reading* as “delicious,” *délicieuse*, and although the link with absorption may seem tenuous, for both Thoré and Castagnary it was the sitter’s apparent obliviousness to being beheld that allowed that term to be deployed and, more important, that gave rise to the pleasurable experience it records.

(The affinity between Fantin and Millet because of their shared exploitation of absorption and despite massive differences in subject matter and style may be glimpsed in a long passage on Millet’s *The Knitting Lesson* [fig. 115] in Castagnary’s “Salon of 1869.” After praising the picture for its masterly expression, perfect intelligibility, and depth of feeling, Castagnary wrote:



Figure 115. Jean-François Millet, *The Knitting Lesson*, 1869, retouched 1872–73.

Is she sufficiently a mother, this peasant woman which the sun has browned and whose hands have been calloused by hard work? She is, by virtue of the entire movement of her body and all the attention of her eyes; she is, from the look that guides to the hand that would like to execute. And that child, true offspring of the fields, with her air of a bashful little goat, is she sufficiently virgin and gauche? You can remain there [in front of the picture] as long as you wish, few paintings impose themselves so much or have a more penetrating force. I have returned there, and each time I have been more profoundly moved. Whence does that come? From the beauty of the lines, certainly, from the strength of the modeling, the charm of the color, but most of all, believe me, from the truth of nature. Nothing is factitious here; these aren't models who have left their ordinary habits to come before us and hold an arbitrary pose, these are living beings, envisaged in their natural frame and manifesting themselves to us with their clothing, their habits, their feelings, their ideas, in the normal and ordinary conditions of their country existence.⁶³

Castagnary glosses “the truth of nature” with the absence of posing but doesn't realize, no one then was able to, that in Millet as in Fantin the link between the two was the persuasive depiction of absorption. At the same time, the phrase “their natural frame” comes close to describing nature itself as a work of art, or at least to recognizing that the “truth of nature” was inseparable from an effect of framing, which is to say of closure.)⁶⁴

In another text of the mid-1870s, Chesneau's “Salon of 1875,” the sobriety and austerity of Fantin's absorptive portraits—qualities essential to the “moral” effects Castagnary was soon to attribute to them—are seen not as flowing naturally from the painter's temperament but rather as the result of a self-imposed discipline:

A tenacious and obstinate will, persisting [in its course] despite all irregularities, is what Taine would call this painter's *master faculty*.

Those who aren't driven away by a certain puritan austerity, and who have known how to break the first glass that the artist establishes between the public and his works, as if by *parti pris*, haven't waited until today to proclaim the rare and serious merits of the portraits sent each year to the Salon by Fantin-Latour. They regret only that coldness of their first aspect that the artist imposes on his pictures.

But how many among them are unaware that what in their reflections they must attribute to the painter's temperament, is on the contrary only the effect of the excessive discipline that he has made into a severe, indeed too severe, law.

No one more than this man, who affects a sobriety of colors that comes close to indigence, is at bottom more in love with, more passionate about, all festivals, fanfares, prestiges, and fireworks of coloration.

In the past he sent to Salons, which sometimes accepted them and sometimes rejected them, sketches which he called *Féeries*, where he gave way to all the transport, all the impetuousness, all the ardent follies of his true temperament.



Figure 116. Henri Fantin-Latour, *A Corner of the Table*, 1872.

Did he take a vow? I don't know. But the present restraint of his procedures testifies to the most extraordinary domination of instinct by the will.⁶⁵

The passage is fascinating on several counts. First, it recognizes the conflict within Fantin's art and locates the source of that conflict within Fantin himself.⁶⁶ Second, it sees the austerity of his portraits as the result of a sustained exercise of will, or as Chesneau also put it, of an excessive discipline. By so doing it ties Fantin's treatment of absorption to two of the notions I have claimed played a crucial role in the critical rhetoric of the period, will and excessiveness. (My earlier discussion of them concerned the 1860s, but in vital respects Chesneau, like Castagnary, Astruc, and Duranty, remained a critic of the 1860s throughout his career.) Finally, the passage sums up the effect of Fantin's austerity as “a first glass” (*une première glace*) that comes between his paintings and the public, as if to shield the former from view and indeed to turn the viewer away in disappointment (the effect, one might say, is *chilling*). This would amount to nothing less than a *fifth* strategy with respect to the beholder, in addition to absorptive closure, facing, drawing the viewer into the painting, and moving the painter partly into the painting. Just a few years earlier, Théodore de Banville, after describing still another large group portrait by Fantin, *A Corner of the Table* (1872; fig. 116), added that “it seems that

some sort of light mist, almost invisible, blurs and envelops [the figures]: did Fantin wish to express that veil of public indifference that every poet must shake off and tear apart before entering into the full possession of his powers and the definitive enjoyment of glory?”⁶⁷ Nothing could be less likely than that Fantin intended there to be such a mist or veil, or that he thought of the austere surfaces of his portraits as sealing off the latter from the eyes to which, inescapably, they were addressed. But the fact remains that Chesneau and Banville were struck by the same “almost invisible” tension in his work, a tension that, given the problematic of beholding we have been tracking, we have no choice but to take seriously.⁶⁸

Whistler’s *Woman in White* and Related Works

THE THIRD member of the generation of 1863, James McNeill Whistler, presents a related problem.⁶⁹ Contemporary commentators on the best known of Whistler’s paintings of the early 1860s, *The Woman in White* (1862; pl. 11),⁷⁰ repeatedly note a version of the double or divided structure we have just seen in works by Legros and Fantin; and the question that then must be asked is to what extent that structure inheres in Whistler’s painting and to what extent it is a projection of critical fantasy. What I mean is this: one of the staples of the critical response to the *Woman in White* in 1863 was the notion that the woman herself was distracted, in a trance, sleepwalking, mad. So for example Fernand Desnoyers described her as a spirit or medium;⁷¹ his brother Carle (writing as Le Capitaine Pompilius) called her Ophelia;⁷² the Count Horace de Viel-Castel compared her to Lady Macbeth in the sleepwalking scene;⁷³ Paul Mantz wondered where this “white apparition” came from and asked, “What does she want from us with her unbound hair, her large eyes drowned in ecstasy, her languorous attitude, and that flower without petals in the fingers of her hanging hand?”⁷⁴ while Jules Claretie, less sympathetic than the others, wondered whether she was a madwoman, “this stiff, unmoving figure that one would take for Lady Macbeth or for Ophelia.”⁷⁵ What all these characterizations have in common is the idea that the woman’s state of mind renders her unaware of being beheld; we cannot doubt that that impression, whether intended by the painter or not, was part of the painting’s extraordinary charm.⁷⁶ At the same time, the *Woman in White* was criticized for some of the features we remarked in Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and associated with a different, indeed opposite, rela-

tion to the viewer. Those features include its shallow, “flattened” space—specifically, the carpet on which the woman stands was described as more vertical than horizontal⁷⁷—and its unusually close cropping of the image by the framing edge (one writer thought that the addition of a few inches of canvas above the figure’s head would have given the figure greater brilliance).⁷⁸

But the most telling commentary for my purposes is by Viel-Castel who after comparing Whistler’s figure to the sleepwalking Lady Macbeth went on to discuss what he took to be the wolf’s pelt on which she stands (it’s now thought to be a bearskin), focusing in the end on the animal’s head, “stuffed and furnished with enamel eyes, [which] thrusts menacingly toward the beholder” (fig. 117).⁷⁹ In other words, Viel-Castel found in Whistler’s canvas *both* an absorptive, beholder-denying structure (keyed to the woman’s state of mind) *and* a facing, beholder-aggressing one (based on the orientation of the animal pelt), a combination or division that recalls Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and Duranty’s commentary on it. I don’t quite wish to say that Viel-Castel’s description captures Whistler’s intentions in the *Woman in White* or even, putting the question of intentions aside, that it accurately records the painting’s appearance *tout court*. I myself would never have thought to see the bear’s head in that



Figure 117. James McNeill Whistler, *The Woman in White*, 1862, detail of bear’s head.

light, and I wouldn't even have felt authorized to describe the young woman as absorbed or distracted on the basis of the picture alone; she doesn't seem sufficiently either of those to have justified the use of the terms in the absence of the criticism I have cited. But that doesn't mean that the critics were mistaken or that the qualities they found in Whistler's canvas were simply projected there by them in the first place. Rather, the response to the *Woman in White* makes it plain that there existed in the first half of the 1860s a highly structured discursive field oriented to the issues of absorption and beholding and within which the *Woman in White*, like the other works we have considered and shall go on to consider, was bound to be seen, described, and judged—and, before all these, within which it was painted. As in the case of Duranty's account of Legros's *Ex-Voto*, what may seem a lack of perfect accord between the critical commentary on the *Woman in White* and the painting itself is in fact the sign of a meaningful relation between the two.⁸⁰

Significantly, an analogous double structure is indisputably present in other Whistler paintings of the mid-1860s, such as *Purple and Rose: The Lange Leizen of the Six Marks* (1864), *Purple and Gold: The Golden Screen* (1864), and *Variations in Flesh Colour and Green: The Balcony* (begun in 1864, perhaps finished as late as 1870).⁸¹ In the first of these (pl. 12), a smallish canvas about three feet high by two feet wide, a young woman in Oriental costume sits painting a Chinese porcelain jar; the type of jar she holds was called a “long Lizzie” by Dutch dealers (hence “Lange Leizen”), the “six marks” being the seals of the potter. In contrast to the *Woman in White*, the young woman's absorption has been stressed: her lids droop, as if she were gazing with concentration at her work, though in a way that is reminiscent of Courbet her expression also suggests reverie, even somnolence. Equally, however, the bright colors of her costume (mainly white and red), the carpet (red and white), the jars themselves (blue and white), and the background wall (yellow gold) seem to leap out at the viewer; the floor plane tilts sharply toward the vertical; the woman's form is cropped toward the lower left and the framing edge everywhere presses tightly around her; perhaps most important, the composition as a whole is strongly decorative, by which I mean not only that it juxtaposes broad areas of color but also that virtually everything in it except the woman herself faces the viewer directly. That we are made to feel that this is true even of the round jar at the lower right is a brilliant stroke of compositional *forcing*.

The divided nature of the *Lange Leizen* is all the more significant in

that it depicts a scene of painting and so can be taken as emblematic of Whistler's activity at that moment. This allows us to compare it with Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* of the same year, and indeed Delacroix's status both as the greatest colorist in modern art and as a consummate *artist* (whereas Courbet at his best was considered a master *painter*) is paralleled by Whistler's colorism and self-conscious estheticism. But the *Lange Leizen* bears a positive relation to Courbet as well: it amounts, I suggest, to a revisionist interpretation of the central group in his monumental canvas of less than a decade before, *The Painter's Studio, Real Allegory Determining a Phase of Seven Years in My Artistic Life* (1854–55; fig. 118), and what is especially fascinating is that the most obvious differences between the two works only bring them closer in the end. Thus the seated male artist in the *Studio* becomes a woman in the *Lange Leizen*, a transformation that both expresses something about Whistler's sensibility (or at least asserts the equation decoration = “femininity”) and harmonizes with a distinctive feature of Courbet's own artistic persona (in *Courbet's Realism* I draw attention to his frequent use of figures of women as surrogates for the painter-beholder).⁸² At the same time, the protagonist of Whistler's canvas seems meant to be seen as an artist's



Figure 118. Gustave Courbet, *The Painter's Studio, Real Allegory Determining a Phase of Seven Years in My Artistic Life*, 1854–55.

model in that she is clearly not Chinese (her reddish hair and bold features suggest that she was posed for by Whistler's mistress Jo Hiffernan, the original of the *Woman in White*), which relates her thematically to the figure of the female model in Courbet's central group. In both respects the *Lange Leizen* anticipates by four years Courbet's conflation of the figures of painter and model from the central group in the *Studio* in his own single-figure picture of a seated woman engaged in actions that I have associated with those of painting, *The Source* (1868; fig. 119).⁸³

The other two works mentioned above, *The Golden Screen* (fig. 120) and *The Balcony* (fig. 121), are less resonant in associations than the *Lange Leizen*, but the first takes the basic "formal" idea of the *Lange*



Figure 119. Gustave Courbet, *The Source*, 1868.



Figure 120. James McNeill Whistler, *Purple and Gold: The Golden Screen*, 1864.

Leizen to a further extreme. In it, a woman with reddish hair (doubtless Jo Hiffernan) in a dark plum kimono, white silk shawl, and vermilion scarf—all enlivened with floral patterns—and seated on an Oriental rug or perhaps a low stool that we cannot see examines a Japanese color woodblock that we *can* see (cf. the ex-voto in Legros's canvas of 1860), while the composition as a whole is dominated by large flat planes of color, notably by the reddish hue of the rug, the pea green of the floor, and, most striking of all because most foreign to the traditional color schemes of Western painting, the dazzling yellow gold of the background screen that gives the painting its name. (These in turn are punctuated by the dark plum and white silhouette of the woman's costume, the vermilion of her scarf, and the blue rectangles in the Japanese prints in the right foreground.) The result is not just a more emphatically decorative painting than any Whistler had yet made, but also one whose ultimate effect depends on the contrast between the woman's inward state, itself delicately poised between genuine interest in the print she holds in her hand and an awareness of sitting for the painter, and the strong outward address of its decorative elements. (Nowhere in Whistler's oeuvre, per-

haps, is his mastery of facial expression—also his use of painterly brushwork to evoke subtleties of expression—more in evidence than in the *Golden Screen*. The exploitation of an absorptive matrix to give affective “depth” to a highly decorative gestalt was later to be fundamental to the work of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century artists such as Pis-



Figure 121. James McNeill Whistler, *Variation in Flesh Colour and Green: The Balcony*, 1864–70?

sarro, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard, and Matisse.) The *Balcony* too makes a point of internal division, in this case between the seated and reclining women in Oriental gowns who face the viewer and the standing woman who turns her back and gazes out across the urban river landscape that the balcony overlooks. The division is underscored by the contrast between the evocation of distance in the atmospheric treatment of the landscape elements and the assertion of proximity in the rendering of the flowers at the bottom of the canvas, while certain decorative elements, notably the rectangular awnings at the upper right, the rectilinear railing, and the ungraded blue flooring, notionally locate the picture surface itself “between” those extremes.

Several other pictures by Whistler are worth mentioning in this connection. As is clear at a glance, *Rose and Silver: La Princesse du pays de la porcelaine* (1864; fig. 122), was an attempt to follow up the success of the *Woman in White* with a life-size composition of the same general type.⁸⁴ The main difference is that Whistler costumed his model in a kimono and loose Oriental robe, gave her a fan, and placed her on a Chinese carpet and in front of a decorative screen. He went on to exhibit the *Princesse* in the Salon of 1865 where it was badly received, largely because the woman’s expression failed to lend itself to an absorptive reading, which is to say that instead of striking viewers as in a state of reverie (much less as sleepwalking, distracted, languorous, mad) she appeared merely blank, vacant, without expression of any kind.⁸⁵ Worse, the combination of expressive vacancy and decorative panache led to the charge that the figure itself was bodiless, without solidity, as if under her fabulous silks there were nothing at all.⁸⁶ The criticism is less unjust than it may appear: there is a sense in which Whistler throughout his career was drawn by an ideal of painting as absence or, to take up Mantz’s inspired noun, as pure *apparition*⁸⁷—an ideal that also led him in several canvases of the 1860s, *Harmony in Green and Rose: The Music Room* (1860), *Symphony in White No. 2: The Little White Girl* (1864), and *The Artist in His Studio*, (1865–66), to evoke virtuality or apparitionality through the motif of an image *in a mirror*. (The last of these works will be the focus of a brief analysis in chapter 5.) The French word for mirror is of course *glace*, and we may perhaps think of this aspect of Whistler’s pictorial strategy as the opposite *in an antitheatrical vein* to Fantin’s glacial austerity (cf. the remarks by Chesneau on Fantin discussed above).⁸⁸ If nothing were really there to begin with, if a painting depicted not material beings and objects but mere apparitions (i.e. reflections), and if moreover the painting itself





Figure 122. James McNeill Whistler, *Rose and Silver: La Princesse du pays de la porcelaine*, 1864.

could be made to seem almost immaterial (Charles Bataille described the *Princesse* as “made out of nothing”),⁸⁹ the relationship between painting and beholder might be placed on a new, more rarefied footing: this or something like it often seems to have been Whistler’s aim. Alternatively, a painting might seek to represent the voiding of its own imaginative space, as in the early *Harmony in Green and Rose: The Music Room* (fig. 123), with its seated girl in white absorbed in a book (in that sense “absent”), its standing woman in riding costume who looks out of the picture toward the right and seems about to leave the scene, and its reflection in the obliquely set mirror over the mantle of a third figure whose relation to the

others and the room as a whole is unfathomable but who in any case is not present in the flesh.⁹⁰ Starting around 1870 these aspirations inspired the conspicuously exquisite blue-toned atmospherics of his famous “nocturnes,” in which, as Duret later put it, he explored “that extreme region



Figure 123. James McNeill Whistler, *Harmony in Green and Rose: The Music Room*, 1860.

where painting become vague, taking one further step would fall into an absolute indeterminism and would no longer say anything to the eyes.”⁹¹ (I have chosen to reproduce Whistler’s *Nocturne in Blue and Silver: The Lagoon, Venice* [1879–80; fig. 124].)⁹² But perhaps the most succinct assertion of ambivalence with respect to visibility in all Whistler’s oeuvre is the small etching *Vauxhall Bridge* (1861; fig. 125), in which two taut, crossing ropes make a giant X that effectively cancels the image whose principal motif they compose.

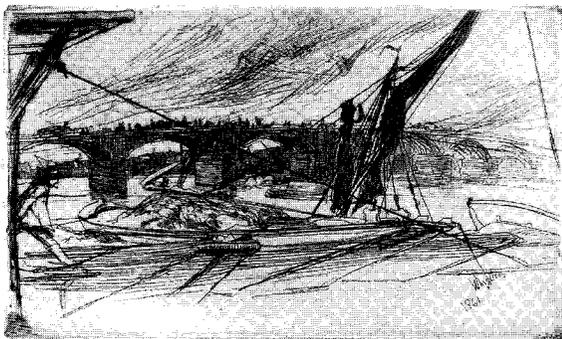
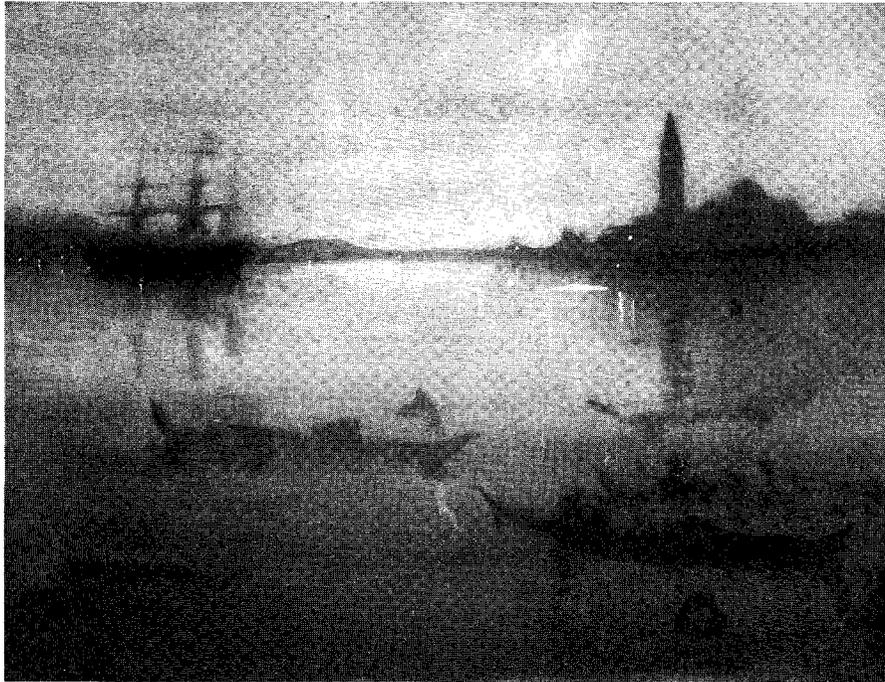


Figure 124. James McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Silver: The Lagoon, Venice*, 1879–80.

Figure 125. James McNeill Whistler, *Vauxhall Bridge*, etching, 1861.

Astruc on the Portrait

A BRIEF consideration of a puzzling crux in Astruc’s writings of the 1860s will return us to the main argument of this chapter. No feature of Astruc’s criticism is more self-evident than his taste for absorptive painting, grounded, as was true of many critics during these years, in an almost unqualified admiration for Millet. Moreover, the terms of that admiration are in the double register of excess and antitheatricity that we first remarked in Duranty’s commentary on Legros. As early as 1860, for example, Astruc praised the depiction of movement in Millet’s *Gleaners* as the product of an “excessive observation,” added that that picture had “an intimate force of the most surprising effect,” and went on to say of the *Return of the Shepherd*, a powerfully absorptive work, “We are no longer before a painting, but before nature” (cf. Thoré on Fantin).⁹³ And in 1868—to show the constancy of his views—he characterized Millet’s genius as “astonishingly willed,” meaning that not as criticism but as praise, and went on to write, “Nothing for the spectator,—here, no theater—everything for the fact in itself [the represented scene].”⁹⁴ (By then these were topoi of favorable Millet criticism.) As in Duranty’s article of the year before, the excessiveness and willfulness (for want of a better term) that one might have thought would be perceived as forms of theatricality—that for decades had been so perceived—were recuperated as intensity of absorptive effect.

What, however, are we to make of another feature of Astruc’s criticism: his advocacy, most forceful in his “Salon of 1868,” of the *portrait* as “the touchstone of perfect and, above all, reasoned creations”?⁹⁵ (Two years earlier he had written that of all genres the portrait “best seizes the gaze.”)⁹⁶ In an obvious sense, nothing could be less absorptive than portraits in which the sitter gazes out at the viewer, though as Fantin’s portraits of women reading or Legros’s *Portrait of the Artist’s Father* suffice to prove, absorptive portraits were certainly possible; but it seems clear that the latter were not what Astruc had in mind. Indeed Astruc in 1868 drew a sharp contrast between the portrait and the *tableau*, which emerges in his text as strongly if implicitly absorptive. “The portrait,” he wrote, “must exhibit itself by the expressive language of the features, and so to speak communicate to us its meaning as soon as we behold it; consequently it must strike us,—and that’s the opposite of the *tableau* which allows its most beautiful parts to penetrate [us] little by little.”⁹⁷ And: “The portrait has none of those resources of tone, felicities of handling, or

surprises of conception, it is powerful, it impresses us like an object that has taken from a living being the intensity of its personal life.”⁹⁸ In other words, whereas for Astruc the *tableau* is “slow,” internally complex, and, if not quite passive, at any rate considerably gentler with respect to its beholder (being in principle unaware of the beholder it works on him as if surreptitiously over time), the portrait, being essentially confrontational, is instantaneous and aggressive, almost threatening, almost *alive*, in its



Figure 126. Édouard Manet, *Portrait of Victorine Meurent*, 1862.

mode of address. (The contrast is embodied in the two verbs Astruc uses here, “penetrating” versus “striking,” the use and connotations of which are consistent in the criticism of the period.) But as I have suggested, there is an important sense in which Astruc’s vision of Millet, to mention only that, implies a conception of the willfully and excessively absorptive *tableau* as itself in crucial respects portraitlike, not because one or more figures in the painting face the beholder (they conspicuously don’t), but because such a *tableau*, like Astruc’s ideal portrait, is particularly intense and *striking*—as if penetratingness could *become* strikingness under the right conditions. Understood in that light, what at first seems merely contradictory in Astruc’s thought—his passion for absorption and his advocacy of the portrait, his idolatry of Millet and his partisanship of Manet—emerges as a further, paradigmatic expression of the new double or divided sensibility I have been evoking.⁹⁹

Astruc’s remarks remind us that the portrait as a genre played a far more prominent role in the respective oeuvres of all four members of the generation of 1863 than in those of their major predecessors, Delacroix and Courbet (for whom the *self*-portrait but not the portrait as such was a primary vehicle),¹⁰⁰ or their successors, the Impressionists. But his theorization of the portrait also imagines the liberation of certain portrait *effects* from the restraints of genre—it imagines, we might say, a new sort of portrait-*tableau*—a possibility that, as will become clear, has special relevance to Manet.¹⁰¹ In fact we can see such a liberation taking place “within” the limits of the genre in one of Manet’s most vivid and characteristic early works, the *Portrait of Victorine Meurent* (1862; fig. 126). In the meantime it’s tempting to compare Astruc’s reflections on the portrait with certain flower pieces by Fantin—for example, the ravishing *Chrysanthemums* (1862; fig. 127)—in which the flowers in their vases, instead of having been depicted from a somewhat elevated point of view as one would expect, are seen close up and as it were face to face (the pictures also feel tightly cropped).*

*Another point of reference for a thematic of the portrait in the 1860s is provided by Claude Vignon’s discussion of a work that enjoyed great success in the Salon of 1863, Hippolyte-Jean Flandrin’s *Portrait of Napoleon III* (ca. 1860–61; fig. 128). Briefly, Vignon wrote that the portrait was widely admired but that she herself believed the artist made a mistake in seeking to portray the real man beneath his famously inexpressive mask or persona:

You have wanted to translate the untranslatable, to penetrate the impenetrable, to put a concrete expression on this face whose proper nature is not to have any. . . .

You have not painted Napoleon III. You have painted the actor who, sixty years from now, will enact on the stage *the man of destiny*, the second of his name! . . .

The basic character of the face and the whole exterior of Napoleon III is a phlegmatic im-



Figure 127. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Chrysanthemums*, 1862.

passiveness, an absolute absence of accent, which seems to enclose the soul within the body as if within a granite casing.

Everyone who approaches the emperor in his official role testifies to that character. Now it is hardly the private man whom Flandrin has wanted to paint [i.e. he has depicted the emperor in uniform, presenting himself for an official portrait]; he doesn't give us the emperor in an intimate moment, but the emperor before history. It's necessary therefore to seize the historical type and to paint, of the emperor, just that which he wishes to be seen of himself. ([Noémie Cadiot], *Le Salon de 1863* [n.p., n.d.], pp. 371–73).

Vous avez voulu traduire l'intraduisable, pénétrer l'impénétrable, mettre une expression concrète sur ce visage dont le propre est de n'en point avoir. . . .

Vous n'avez pas peint Napoléon III. Vous avez peint l'acteur qui, dans soixante ans d'ici, mettra sur la scène *l'homme du destin*, deuxième de son nom! . . .

Le premier caractère du visage et de tout l'ensemble extérieur de Napoléon III, c'est une impassibilité flegmatique, une absence absolue d'accent, qui semble enfermer l'âme dans le corps comme dans un gaine de granit.

Toutes les personnes qui approchent l'Empereur dans son rôle officiel ont pu constater ce caractère. Or ce n'est point l'homme privé qu'a voulu peindre M. Flandrin; il ne nous donne pas l'Empereur dans son intimité, mais l'Empereur devant l'histoire. Il fallait donc prendre le type historique, et peindre, de l'Empereur, ce qu'il veut laisser voir de lui.

As will become clear in chapter 4, Manet's paintings of the 1860s were routinely criticized for their inexpressiveness, characterlessness, and lack of accent, in short precisely those qualities that Vignon associated in a positive way with the official persona of Napoleon III, who thereby

Figure 128. Hippolyte-Jean Flandrin, *Portrait of Napoleon III*, ca. 1860–61.



emerges as Manet's mirror image. By this I mean both that Napoleon III was described by Vignon almost as an artist in his own right, rigorously controlling his outward appearance, and that the version of himself that he allowed to be seen corresponded to features of Manet's art that the critics and public of the 1860s would mostly find incomprehensible. Another intriguing motif in the passage just cited concerns the topos of theatricality. Vignon's remarks would seem to imply that the emperor's public persona represented the triumph of a certain (impassive) theatricality, but in fact she criticized Flandrin for having produced a portrait not of the emperor in his public mode but rather of some future actor who would seek to play him on the stage. This in effect distinguished between *two* theatricalities, one good and one bad, a distinction that has its rough equivalent in my claim that Manet in his paintings of the 1860s embraced a "presentational," not an "actional," mode of theatricality by way of acknowledging the inescapableness of beholding. I don't wish to belabor the parallel, which is meant to be no more than suggestive. But Vignon's commentary is worth keeping in mind, both because of its bearing on issues of portraiture in the larger sense of the term and because Manet will all but directly confront Napoleon III in his most ambitious canvas of the later 1860s, the *Execution of Maximilian*. On Flandrin's portrait see *The Second Empire 1852–1870: Art in France under Napoleon III*, exhib. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oct. 1–Nov. 26, 1978; Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts, Jan. 15–Mar. 18, 1979; Paris: Grand Palais, Apr. 24–July 2, 1979), pp. 302–3, cat. no. VI–55.



Figure 129. Théodule Ribot, *Saint Sebastian, Martyr*, 1865.

Ribot, Carolus Duran, Meissonier—Zola's *L'Oeuvre*— A Deathbed "Portrait" by Fantin-Latour

SEVERAL more instances of the new double or divided sensibility will help bring out further ramifications of my argument. The first concerns the work of the painter Théodule Ribot, who throughout the 1860s was often considered one of the young realists along with Manet and the others (Fantin thought of including him in the *Homage to Delacroix*).¹⁰² In fact Ribot was about ten years older than the painters of the generation of 1863 (he was born in 1823); his early reputation was based on modest-sized, impasto-laden genre paintings of cooks and kitchen workers in which the figures, frequently dressed in white, were all but swallowed up by the surrounding blackness. But he soon expanded his range, and in 1865 his *Saint Sebastian, Martyr* (1865; fig. 129) was the one "realist" painting to be enthusiastically received by the critics. As was mentioned earlier, Ribot was criticized during the 1860s and 1870s for pastiching Ribera, and indeed his persistence in imitating not just the physical types

but also the facture and light-dark contrasts of Ribera's canvases provides one of the most blatant examples of the compulsive involvement of Manet's painter contemporaries with the art of the past. At the same time, Ribot's vigorous paint handling made a powerful impression, as did his exploitation of an extreme chiaroscuro to suggest depths of feeling even as it rendered large areas of his pictures unreadable. "He has the most violent temperament in the French school," one critic wrote in 1865, "and he seems to have painted this year with a chisel."¹⁰³ Another held that the *Saint Sebastian* was "the most prodigious piece of execution in the entire Salon," and went on to say that the "cadaver stiffened by death in the last convulsion of its pain is worthy of the greatest masters"¹⁰⁴ (of course Sebastian is not dead, merely wounded, but as Alfred Sensier remarked at the time, it was hard to tell what the figures in the picture were doing).¹⁰⁵ Ribot interests me both because his subject matter, as in the *Saint Sebastian*, tended to be strongly absorptive and because temperamentally and stylistically his art provides another instance of excessiveness and willfulness recuperated, in the eyes of his commentators, as artistically legitimate intensity.

A more complex case is that of a painter who was for a time a fringe member of the generation of 1863, Émile-Auguste Carolus Duran. He was born in Lille in 1838 and first came to Paris in 1855; while still in Lille he became friends with the young Astruc, who was often to write warmly about his art.¹⁰⁶ In Paris, Carolus Duran met and became friends with Fantin-Latour, Legros, Whistler, and others in their circle, and according to Desnoyers was among the deputation of artists and critics that called on Manet to pay their respects following the exhibition of his *Guitarrero* in the Salon of 1861. An early painting, *Visit to the Convalescent* (1861?), was destroyed by the artist after being exhibited at Martinet's;¹⁰⁷ the fine fragment that survives, *The Convalescent* (1861?; fig. 130), a portrait of the artist in a red shirt asleep before his easel, reveals a close allegiance to the art of Courbet. Had Carolus Duran remained in Paris throughout the first half of the 1860s he would certainly have taken an active part in the struggles of his realist contemporaries. But in 1862 he went to Italy on a prize fellowship from Lille and did not return until 1866. Nevertheless, two paintings from his Italian years made a stir in Paris.

The first, present whereabouts unknown, was *The Evening Prayer; Italy* (1863), a work of large dimensions that Astruc described in detail

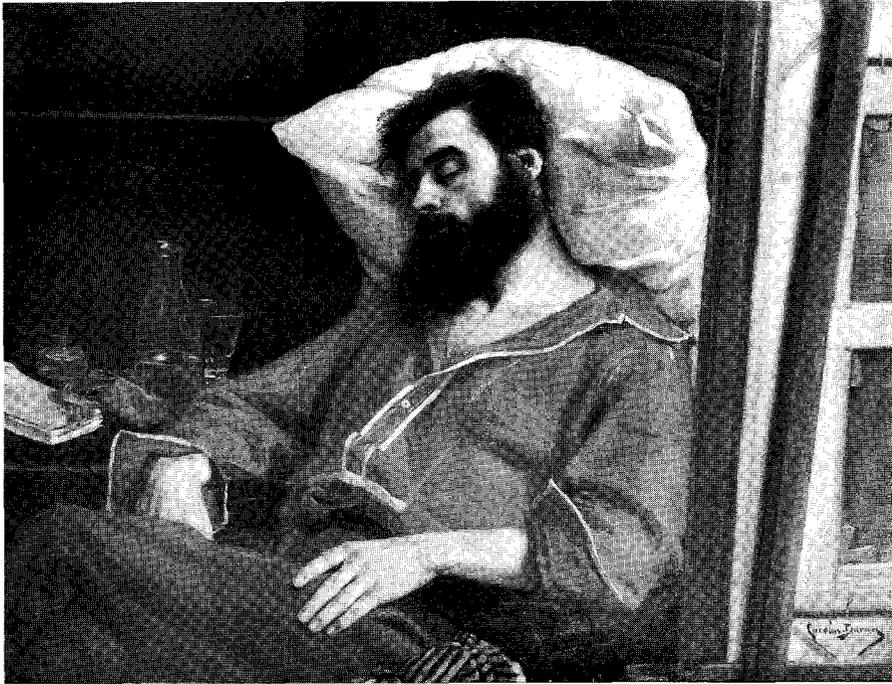


Figure 130. Émile-Auguste Carolus Duran, *The Convalescent*, 1861?

when it was shown in the Salon of 1863. Here is almost the whole of his account:

Several monks of the order of Saint Francis are kneeling at the foot of a cross in an austere landscape. Some stones, some large gray rocks, a bit of grass bathed by thin streams of water that trickle drop by drop, some flowers cheering the turf—then a plain enveloped by the shadow of the evening, a mountain drawing its vigorous line across the horizon, a barely illuminated sky, black—and, in places, torn with blue—there is the site. Daylight fades away; the sun has already disappeared; the monks, silent, rest their gazes on nature, before tasting even sweeter sleep.

One of them holds his head in his hand; another looks backward, traversing the sky with his ardent eyes that would like to contemplate God; this one bends his brow toward the earth, in an attitude of profound humility; the superior, standing, dressed in black, extends his arms toward the wooden cross with a gripping fervor. We see him pray; we hear his voice pronouncing the rituals of the prayer with a violent tenderness and the melancholy that accompanies celestial dialogues in this continual elevation of the creature toward his Redeemer.

This Christian contemplation moves and troubles. One is penetrated with admiration before these innocent and gentle beings, these sublime and sinister

children—gods by virtue of their duty, men by virtue of their monotonous action—these privileged ones of feeling who wish for no other happiness here below than the intimacy of nothingness, than the grace of their fierce virtue or their isolation beneath heaven—and who begin to sigh—lovable maniacs—seeing floating in space the cloud borne by the wind. It's that they believe it is closer to God than they, and they confer on it their thoughts whose only journey is toward heaven.

The painter is inspired by this piety. With what simplicity he has translated its accent, its mystery! How close he is to their soul! How he has heard it tremble! What a beautiful religious style he lends to their prayer! Happy fervent ones, the world scarcely concerns them . . . a single aspiration grips their marveling eyes—the image of angels, the blessed, the martyrs. It isn't the painter who will trouble their beautiful prayer.¹⁰⁸

Astruc's enthusiastic description emphasizes the absorptive character of the monks' states of mind, and in so doing spells out the antitheatrical connotations of the scene as a whole (the monks are isolated beneath the sky, indifferent to the world, unaware of the painter). The key terms "penetrated" and "intimacy" are also in play, and altogether we are reminded of Legros's *Ex-Voto*, a work Carolus Duran would have seen and that surely influenced him. One would like to know to what extent the cross in *Evening Prayer* faced out of the painting; thanks to another critic, Édouard Lockroy, we know that it occupied the center of the canvas, which suggests that it was at least as conspicuous as the ex-voto in Legros's canvas.¹⁰⁹ A third critic, the pseudonymous *Bourgeois de Paris*, saw the *Evening Prayer* as exemplifying an acceptable, not a brutal, realism, and likened its apparent tabula rasa of all refinements and conventions to Descartes's methodical doubt, which is to say that once again the persuasive representation of absorption gave rise to an illusion of the absence of art.¹¹⁰ The tabula rasa metaphor was also used by Claude Vignon, who went on to speculate that walking one evening in the campagna the young painter "encountered his painting completely made" (i.e. he came upon the scene exactly as he painted it).¹¹¹ Still another critic, Olivier Merson, noted the painting's air of "deep meditation," and observed that it wasn't a composition in the true sense of the word because the figures were "disseminated,"¹¹² by which I take him to mean that each appeared lost in his own thoughts and feelings; one suspects that in the absence of absorption, "dissemination" rather than composition would have been registered as a fault. (Merson's remarks also suggest that compositionally the *Evening Prayer* differed from the *Ex-Voto*'s forcing of its figures into a shallow, narrow space.) Finally, Chesneau, another

admirer, remarked on the isolation of the monks as well on their indifference to the passing breeze, so moved were they by their devotions,¹¹³ and concluded by describing the conception of the painting as “frankly original, modern, and very elevated.”¹¹⁴

Even in the absence of the actual picture, we can sense the basis of a double structure in the juxtaposition of a deeply absorptive thematics (connoting closure) and a central cross (addressed to the beholder). Fortunately, Carolus Duran’s next major Salon painting, *The Murdered Man: Memory of the Roman Campagna* (1866; fig. 131) has come down to us and confirms the notion that he was grappling with analogous issues to those we have been following in the work of his contemporaries. The painting depicts a sizable group of highly individualized figures—from the title, peasants in the campagna—gathered around the foreshortened body of a man who has just been killed. Most seem intent on gazing down at the dead man, the absorptive focus of the composition, but a few are in states of grief, notably the woman depicted largely from the rear who has thrown herself on the corpse, the swooning woman to the right, and per-



Figure 131. Émile-Auguste Carolus Duran, *The Murdered Man: Memory of the Roman Campagna*, 1866.

haps the standing man who agitatedly wrings his hands. Gautier’s discussion of the *Murdered Man* is particularly apposite. “The scene is well disposed,” he wrote, “in a manner that’s perhaps a bit theatrical for us, among whom grief expresses itself by grave attitudes, but admissible among the Italians, great gesticulators. The murdered man has just been carried home all bloody, and the family around the corpse gives way to excessive manifestations of despair and anger.”¹¹⁵ This is a different version of the transvaluation of excessiveness and theatricality from any we have met until now, but its bearing on the others is clear enough.

Finally, though, the *Evening Prayer* and the *Murdered Man* are less significant in themselves than by virtue of the contrast they make with the works that were soon to establish Carolus Duran’s reputation: large-size full-figure portraits of elegant women of which the prototype, one of the great Salon successes of the decade, was his *Portrait of Mme **** (1868; fig. 132). (For Viel-Castel, this was a painting that bore the stamp of its time and would “remain in the future like Zurbarán’s *St. Francis*, Ribera’s *Christ*, Titian’s *Man with a Glove*.”)¹¹⁶ In that canvas, a depiction of the artist’s wife, the painter Pauline Croizette, not only is absorption out of the question, the woman herself is plainly aware of being seen and what is more appears to enjoy the experience. And indeed Chesneau in 1873 linked another of Carolus Duran’s portraits of society women with the *portrait d’apparat* of earlier centuries, a type of painting he characterized as seeking “sumptuous exteriority” at the expense of “charming and touching nuances of intimacy.”¹¹⁷ This was said approvingly: in Chesneau’s eyes the artist had brought new life to a tradition that until his intervention had been defunct. (For Castagnary, on the other hand, that the *Portrait of Mme **** was “a completely external portrait, a surface portrait so to speak, the study of a costume, or rather of an elegant pose,” was damning.¹¹⁸ His was a minority view.) It’s hard today to share the contemporary enthusiasm for Carolus Duran’s high-glamor society portraits, competent though they are, but my point is that the contrast between his ambitious absorptive canvases of 1863 and 1866 and the later *portraits d’apparat* is simply a more extreme version of the contrast between, say, Fantin’s absorptive portraits (or for that matter his *féeries*) and the outward-facing *Homage to Delacroix*, and more broadly that we fail to grasp the inner logic of Carolus Duran’s career unless we take into account its relation to the issues that have engaged us. Put another way, both absorption and its opposite were implicit in the double or divided structure we have seen at work in advanced painting and criticism in the



Figure 132. Émile-Auguste Carolus Duran, *Portrait of Mme ****, 1868.

1860s, and although the split within Carolus Duran's oeuvre is unusually wide, his art tells the same story.¹¹⁹

A third painter whose work is worth glancing at in this connection is an older man, Manet's particular *bête noire*, Ernest Meissonier.¹²⁰ On the face of it, Meissonier's small-scale pictures, often based on eighteenth-century motifs and executed in a meticulous, minutely detailed, quasi-photographic manner, could not have been more alien to the ideals that inspired the generation of 1863. And yet they owed much of their remarkable success with critics and collectors to the persuasiveness with which they were seen as representing figures deeply absorbed in a variety of traditional occupations—reading, writing, playing cards or chess, playing music, drawing, examining works of art, smoking, and the like. To cite just one of many examples, Gautier in 1861 noted of a painting of a *Man Reading* (in eighteenth-century costume) that the book “absorbs all [the man's] attention, it isn't a complicated theme but it holds one like life.”¹²¹ (I've chosen to illustrate a representative work, the *Man Reading* of 1862 in the National Gallery of Ireland [fig. 133]. A picture well known in its time but lost today is the *Reading Party at Diderot's*.) Significantly for the present argument, Meissonier's grip on his public seems to have loosened in the late 1850s and early 1860s; Saint-Victor, writing in 1857, complained that the artist's “little personages . . . only know to read, write, smoke their pipe, play the counterbass, and talk between the pear and cheese, their elbows on the table. This is a limited repertoire.”¹²² Mantz asked the same year: “Would one seem too demanding if one asked of this gifted artist to slightly renew his choice of subjects?”¹²³ And in 1861 Saint-Victor reported that Salon goers no longer crowded around Meissonier's works, not because his talent had eroded but because the repetitiousness of his art had begun to tire.¹²⁴ It is in this context that I interpret the picture with which in 1864 Meissonier won back his audience. A painting on wood in his usual small dimensions, 1814, *the Campaign of France* (1860–64; fig. 134), depicts Napoleon and his marshals on horseback at the head of the *grande armée* as it wearily marched through a desolate snowy landscape somewhere in France.¹²⁵ In part its success was due, as has always been recognized, to Meissonier's demonstration that his miniaturist vision could be adapted to a major genre, history painting. But a reading of contemporary responses to 1814 suggests that another, equally decisive factor was Meissonier's portraitlike evocation of his protagonist's indomitable *will*. “Napoleon reflects,” Charles

Beaurin wrote, “full of care, his head inclined, his gaze open before him, before the future, before the fog. Vast thought, profound calculation, powerful will which is unable to prevent his star from dimming on the horizon.”¹²⁶ And Saint-Victor: “His face is sublime with resigned despair; he feels that his genius isn’t dead, but that it is beaten; he sees his star fade in the dark sky. But he still defies fate, and the resolution of supreme struggles imprints a tragic fixity on his features.”¹²⁷ In the terse formula of Gautier *fils*, Meissonier “shows will struggling with fate.”¹²⁸ In other words, Meissonier at that difficult juncture in his career found it necessary to go beyond the more or less neutrally absorptive subject matter that had been the basis of his previous triumphs (by the standards of

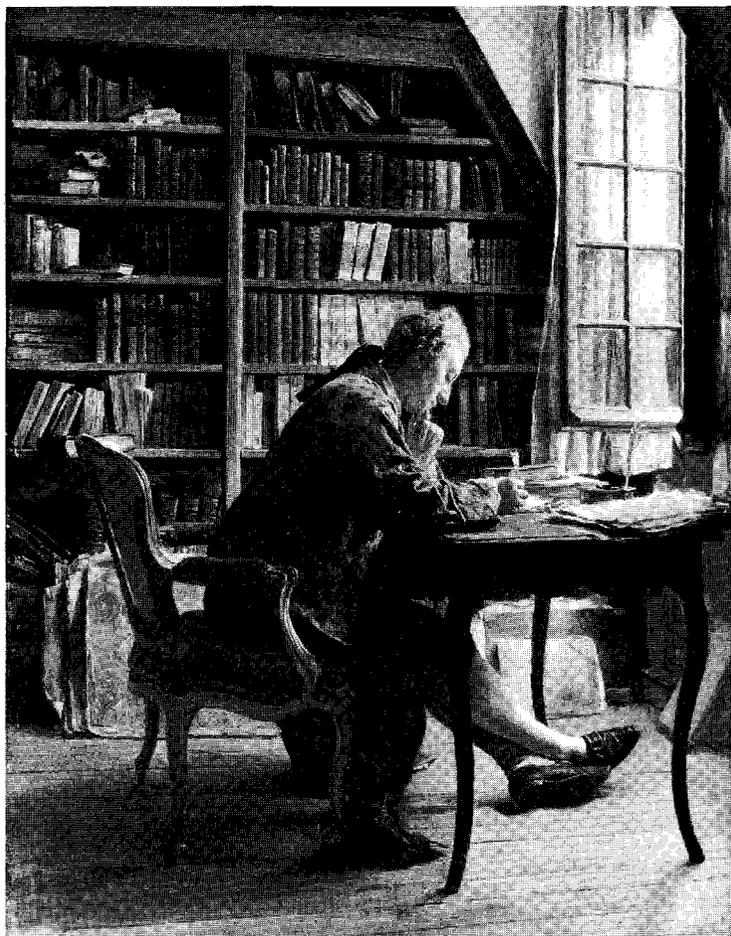


Figure 133. Ernest Meissonier, *Man Reading*, 1862.



Figure 134. Ernest Meissonier, 1814, *the Campaign of France, 1860–64*.

his earlier work, the subject of 1814 is nothing if not “excessive”), and the means by which he did this involved virtually personifying will itself.*

*This isn’t the place for a detailed discussion of Meissonier’s art, but two points related to photography and a third one concerning his attitude toward previous art should at least be noted. First, Meissonier’s quasi-photographic paintings were often praised for the largeness of their touch *on a minute scale* (see Fried 1990, p. 357, n. 79), which suggests that their closeness to photography *as images* directed attention all the more strongly to their identity *as paintings*, that is, as artistic products every bit of which is the product of an act of will (also of execution). And second, as I wrote in *Courbet’s Realism*, “any attempt [by photography] to compete with painting by constructing multifigure compositions even of comparatively simple genre subjects [was] doomed from the start because the absolute verism of the photographic image [was] bound to detect the least failure of [the] sitters to become completely absorbed in their roles” (p. 45, glossing A.-A.-E. Disdéri, *L’Art de la photographie* [Paris, 1862], pp. 299–300). In that regard too the quasi-photographic character of Meissonier’s absorptive pictures would have thrown into relief their ability to accomplish what photography could not. (Disdéri, a leading practitioner, was also the foremost French theorist of photography of the early 1860s.)

As for Meissonier’s attitude toward earlier art, Marc Gotlieb quotes him as having said that “a master is an artist whose works never make one think of those of some other artist,” and stresses that Meissonier believed there was no greater danger to a painter than his own memory, which inevitably was stocked with images of previous works (*Meissonier at the Pantheon* [Princeton, forthcoming]). As Gotlieb remarks, Meissonier’s attempts to defeat or overcome all memory of previous art—for example, by the practice of genre painting and by strict reliance

My penultimate example of double or divided structure comes from the fiction, not the art criticism, of Émile Zola. From the perspective of this chapter, the most salient fact about Zola's criticism of 1866–68, when he dramatically emerged as Manet's impassioned champion, is the absence from it of any engagement with the issues I have been examining. Not only is Zola unsympathetic to painting that relates to earlier painting;¹²⁹ not only do the topics of Frenchness and schools of painting leave him cold;¹³⁰ not only is his use of the term *tableau* here and elsewhere without the least connotation of achieved unity;¹³¹ there is also in his writing not a jot of interest in absorption or the larger problematic of which it was a part;¹³² in short his art criticism stands amazingly detached from the discursive field of contemporary commentary on painting. Indeed Zola's unshakable conviction that considerations of subject matter, composition, and expression have no bearing on questions of art was the basis of his originality as a critic¹³³—it was, to put it baldly, what enabled him not to be put off by Manet. But it is also his peculiar limitation as a guide to the pictorial culture of the 1860s, which as we have seen took all those considerations extremely seriously.

In 1886 Zola published *L'Oeuvre*, a novel about painting set, in its early chapters, in the 1860s. The second chapter opens with the protagonist, the painter Claude Lantier, working on a large canvas called *Plein Air* that he intends to submit to the Salon of 1863; predictably, the painting will be rejected and instead will be shown at the Salon des Refusés, where it will be universally derided. But while still unfinished it is described as follows (Claude and his friend Pierre Sandoz, a writer transparently based on Zola himself, are looking at it in Claude's studio):

There was a long silence, during which they both stood looking, immobile. It was a canvas of five meters by three, entirely covered with paint, though some *morceaux* barely emerged from the *ébauche*. The *ébauche*, flung there at one go, had a superb violence, an ardent coloristic life. In a forest clearing, with thick walls of greenery, the sun poured down; to the left there was a shadowy path with a patch of light in the far distance. There, on the grass, in the midst of the June vegetation, a naked woman was lying, one arm under her head, thrusting her breasts upward; and she smiled, without seeing, her eyes closed, in the golden sunlight raining down on her. In the background, smaller, two other

on the model—contrasts fundamentally with Manet's deliberate exploitation of what I have described as the repetition-structure of European painting from the early Renaissance on (in chapter 2), though I have suggested that for Manet too the ultimate aim may have been a liberation of sorts from the authority of the past (and in chapter 4 I will consider *his* use of the model, so different from Meissonier's but equally central to his enterprise).

women, one dark and one fair, were laughing and tussling, making two lovely patches of flesh color against the green. In the foreground, the painter had need of a black contrast, which led him to insert a seated figure of a man dressed in a plain velvet jacket. This figure had his back turned, one saw only his left hand, on which he leaned, in the grass.¹³⁴

The size and layout of the painting, together with the subsequent account of the mockery with which it was greeted, strongly suggest that its prototype was Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*.¹³⁵ But Zola has altered Manet's canvas in crucial respects: first, by replacing the figure of the seated bather staring directly out of the painting with that of a naked woman who lies back with her eyes closed; and second, by replacing the two “conversing” men in the *Déjeuner* with the figure of just one man seen from behind. (The wrestling women are also new, deriving perhaps from Frédéric Bazille's wrestling men in his *Summer Scene* [1869].) The model for the seated man with his back to the viewer has been Sandoz, who in the succeeding pages resumes posing for his friend.

One way of characterizing the changes would be to say that they make Claude's painting rather more Courbetlike than Manetlike in feeling (alternatively we might say that they suggest a combination of Courbet and Manet).¹³⁶ But what I want to stress is that Zola's revision of the *Déjeuner*, which pointedly eliminates all direct confrontation between painting and viewer, is counterbalanced by a scene in which Claude's *Plein Air* is in effect recomposed in terms of pure facingness. The scene takes place at a later Salon where Claude comes across a picture by the painter Fagerolles, a shallow man and artist whose unique skill is to be able to domesticate the violent innovations of an original painter like Claude and make them attractive to a wide public.¹³⁷ The title (in French) of Fagerolles's canvas is *Un Déjeuner*; some time before he had described it to Claude as depicting “two men and three women under some trees, guests at a chateau who have brought along a collation and who eat it in a clearing.” (“You'll see,” he had added, “it's pretty original.”)¹³⁸ As the reader expects, it turns out to derive from Claude's earlier failure; indeed Claude “rediscovered his *Plein Air* in this *Déjeuner*—the same blonde note, the same artistic formula, but toned down, faked, spoiled, to produce a skin-deep elegance, arranged with infinite cleverness to satisfy the low satisfactions of the public.”¹³⁹ And in fact a large admiring crowd has gathered in front of Fagerolles's picture; after listening to various fatuous comments, all claiming to distinguish one or another of the painting's merits, Claude yields to a strange impulse:

The thought of all that admiration rising from the sea of rounded shoulders and craning necks so exasperated Claude that he felt he must see what sort of faces go to make a triumph. So he worked his way round the fringes of the mass until he was able to stand with his back to the picture. There he had the public in front of him, in the greyish light that filtered through the sun-blind, leaving the center of the room dim, while the bright daylight that escaped round the edges of the blind illuminated the pictures on the walls, where the gold of the frames took on the warm tones of the sunshine. All of a sudden he recognized the men who had jeered him before: if not they, then their brothers; but now serious, ecstatic, embellished by their respectful attention. The malignant looks, that weariness with the struggle, that bilious envy drawing and yellowing the skin he had noted earlier were all softened here in the communal enjoyment of an amiable deception. Two very stout ladies he saw simply gaping in beatitude, and several round-eyed old gentlemen trying to look wise. There was a husband quietly explaining the subject in a low voice to his young wife, who kept tilting her chin with a very graceful movement of the neck. There was admiration on every face, though the expression varied; some looked blissful, others surprised or thoughtful or gay or even austere; many faces wore an unconscious smile, many heads seemed faint with pleasure. The shiny black toppers were all tipped backwards, and the flowers on the women's hats all drooped well down toward their shoulders, while all the faces, after a momentary halt, were continually pushed along and replaced by others that resembled them.¹⁴⁰

I read the conjunction of the two scenes in *L'Oeuvre* as a belated and inadvertent acknowledgment of the pertinence to French painting in the 1860s of the internal divisions we have been analyzing, divisions that left no mark in Zola's art criticism itself. Specifically, I read those scenes as imagining a single large canvas, based on Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, that manages at once to turn away from *and* to face the beholder (think of Fantin's drawings leading up to *The Toast! Homage to Truth*)—though a feature of Zola's criticism of the 1860s that is reflected in the second of the two scenes is that the concept of a single beholder gave way to that of a *multiplicity* of viewers, the public or the crowd.¹⁴¹

Here, finally, is a remarkable passage from a letter of Fantin's to his old friend Otto Scholderer. On April 20, 1875, Fantin's father died at the age of sixty-nine; Fantin and his father had been close, and the son was present at the latter's death. On April 25 he wrote to Scholderer describing his father's last hours:

My God, let him die, I said at each instant; it wasn't until 3 A.M. that he became calm, little by little his breathing became calm, then he signed gently as if saying, "Ah! I'm at last resting." You see, my dear Scholderer, at that moment I was in an extraordinary state; I was so happy, I kissed him, I spoke to him, I

saw him delivered from horrible suffering, he appeared so happy, but I didn't see any trace of consciousness, everything was internal but reflected on his face, then came a state which I can't describe, lightning-flashes that passed across his face, a succession of different expressions; intelligence took the place of imbecility, he became grave. Oh! it was admirable, I watched for several minutes the greatest spectacle one can see; I never stopped saying, "Oh! how beautiful it is, how beautiful it is."¹⁴²

What impressed and moved Fantin, it appears, was the combination of absolute absorptive closure ("I didn't see any trace of consciousness") and the height of expressiveness, instantaneousness, and strikingness ("then came a state which I can't describe, lightning-flashes that passed across his face, a succession of different expressions . . ."). As if Fantin's father in his last moments literally embodied the double structure we first noted in connection with Legros's *Ex-Voto*, and as if Fantin's ecstatic response to his dying father's face ("I never stopped saying, 'Oh! how beautiful it is, how beautiful it is'") bespeaks the depth of his commitment to the "excessive," portrait esthetic that was a hallmark of his generation.^{*143}

A Discursive Chain: Cloisters, Character, Strikingness, Types, Modernity—Duranty's *La Nouvelle Peinture*

BY WAY OF bringing this chapter to a close, consider the following brief quotations:

All etchers should frequent cloisters; there they would find what their capricious and freedom-loving needle seeks: picturesque tatters, characteristic heads, interiors shot through with light and shadow, mystery and strangeness. . . . The *Carthusian Playing a Cello* by Morse [sic: Édouard Moysse (1863; fig. 135)] is modeled with fullness and accuracy. The old man bends

*Here if anywhere there may be a partial convergence between the concerns of this book and the fundamentally different yet not wholly unrelated problematic of facingness and disfiguration as indexes of the materiality, hence visibility, of writing that I have identified in *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration: On Thomas Eakins and Stephen Crane* (Chicago and London, 1987), chap. 2, "Stephen Crane's Upturned Faces"; "Almayer's Face: On 'Impressionism' in Conrad, Crane, and Norris," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (autumn 1990): 193–236; "Response to Bill Brown," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (winter 1992): 403–10; and "Impressionist Monsters: H. G. Wells's 'The Island of Doctor Moreau,'" in Stephen Bann, ed., *Frankenstein, Creation and Monstrosity* (London, 1994): pp. 95–112. (My use of the term "impressionism" in this context has nothing to do with the pictorial movement.) I am working on a book-length study of ten or so English-language writers of the period 1890–1914, provisionally entitled *Almayer's Face: Rewriting Literary Impressionism*.

over his instrument with his head bare. Vowed to the silence by his Rule, he seems to converse with it; deprived of the society of men, he takes refuge in the world of sounds; the voice of the strings takes the place for him of the human voice. (Paul de Saint-Victor, 1863)¹⁴⁴

I understand by realist religious painting a certain genre of painting that depicts current and modern subjects of religion and of *sanctity*, to use the technical word. Processions, ex-votos, consecrations of churches, ceremonies of every kind, the religious events and personages passing regularly under our eyes, constitute a new vein that many artists exploit these days, and they do well. Fully as modern, fully as alive as genre painting as such, this new genre, inaugurated just a short time ago among us, is more elevated and more interesting and acts more efficaciously on the public. [After citing, among



Figure 135. Édouard Moïse, *Carthusian Playing a Cello*, etching, 1863.

others, Jules Breton, François Bonvin, Ribot, and Legros:] the monks, priests, nuns, and choirboys that these artists put before us have a marvelous reality and life. (Dubosc de Pesquidoux, 1863)¹⁴⁵

Character! supreme note, that one must demand less from modes of expression than from the imposing grandeur of a reality pursued in its most fugitive perceptions, and presenting itself to our eyes with that inexplicable personality that strikes, holds, moves. (Zacharie Astruc, 1863)¹⁴⁶

To characterize! That's the goal. (Jean-François Millet, 1863)¹⁴⁷

Taking the four quotations together, a certain discursive chain or network begins to emerge. First, there is the link between an absorptive thematics and Saint-Victor's suggestion that etchers should frequent cloisters: in those closed spaces, shot through with abrupt contrasts of light and dark and cut off from the world, etchers would take as their subject matter monks absorbed in meditation or solemn rituals or, as in Moïse's etching, playing the cello. (The specific topic of Saint-Victor's article was the newly formed Société des Aquafortistes, to which Legros, Fantin, Whistler, and Manet all belonged.¹⁴⁸ But it also adumbrates an informal *theory of the cloister* in modern art generally. "In etching as in painting," Saint-Victor wrote in the same article, "Ribot is dedicated to the white apron [a reference to his then-typical subject matter of cooks, bakers, scullions, etc.]. He is cloistered in the kitchen to devote himself to the unique, exclusive, absorbing study of the baker and the scullion.")¹⁴⁹ Much the same idea is implied by Duranty's remark about Legros's *Ex-voto*: "The accent of a particular world was completely expressed." Such a world, as I noted earlier, was essentially a world *apart*, and what gave it its apartness, and in a sense its worldlikeness, was the absorption of the kneeling women and in particular their seeming obliviousness to everything but their devotions. The association of cloisters with isolation and closure resonates as well in Chesneau's praise of Legros in 1868: "He opened a very special domain of observation which he explores from day to day with a more magisterial liberty; he always had a particular passion for scenes of clerical and monastic life. In etchings and paintings, he has reproduced in turn the great architecture of our churches, the intimate and exterior physiognomy of the men and things that live habitually enclosed in the shadows of cloisters and the half-light of cathedrals."¹⁵⁰ And in a variation on those ideas, Astruc wrote the same year of another lost religious painting by Carolus Duran, *St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata*: "Such works call for a select milieu; it seems to me that they are fatally lost in the midst of those great battles between luxuriously toned

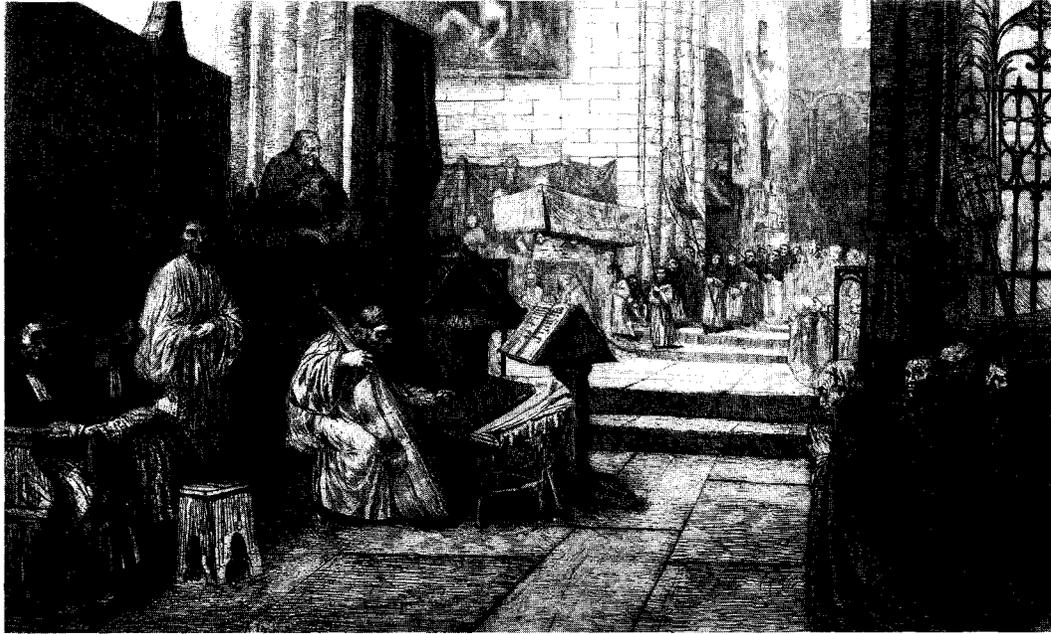


Figure 136. Alphonse Legros, *Procession dans une église espagnole*, etching, ca. 1860.

frames [in the Salon] that solicit much more the sense of curiosity than that of meditation; but take them, place them in the right light, in the necessary frame, and you yourself will approach them with the feeling that animates them; soon you will feel yourself penetrated by their effect. More than ever, the author of the *Murdered Man* circumscribes his drama and gives an intimate vitality, a special tenor to his production.”¹⁵¹ In other words, paintings like Carolus Duran’s not only depicted a world apart but also required to be set apart if they were to have their fullest effect.

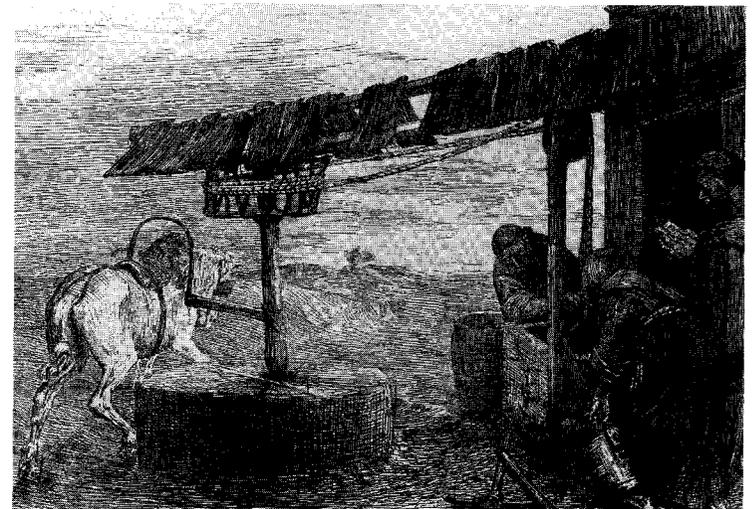
The surprising prominence of a certain sort of religious painting in the young realist circle in the 1860s—of what Georges Lafenestre described in 1869 as “not the religious genre but the genre of *religious persons*”¹⁵²—is thus explained by the extent to which various religious themes and motifs (see Dubosc’s list) lent themselves to effects of absorptive closure or say of *cloistering*. This was clearly the case with Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and Carolus Duran’s *Evening Prayer* and *St. Francis*, though by far the broadest range of such themes and motifs is found in Legros’s etchings of the late 1850s and early 1860s, a rich and varied body of work that has not yet been appreciated for either its artistic worth or its historical impor-

tance (figs. 136, 137, 138).¹⁵³ Indeed the connection with realism is made explicit in Dubosc’s final observation that the monks, priests, nuns, and choirboys in works by Legros, Ribot, Bonvin, and others “have a marvelous reality and life”: this is one more instance of the sort of mystified reality-effect I have associated with absorption, here made all the more intense (it “acts more efficaciously on the public”) by the absorptive closure of the cloistral milieu. Note, by the way, the linkage in Chesneau’s remarks cited above between the confinement within cloisters of Legros’s

Figure 137. Alphonse Legros, *Le Réfectoire*, etching, 1862.



Figure 138. Alphonse Legros, *Le Manège*, etching, 1863.



personages and Legros's "more magisterial liberty" as an artist, which exactly parallels Saint-Victor's association of cloistering with the etcher's "capricious and freedom-loving needle." It is as though the apartness of the milieu and the absorptive, antitheatrical states of its inhabitants are imagined as promoting a heightened freedom of action on the part of the artist.

Another aspect of that mystified reality-effect concerns the revelation of what was then called *caractère*. Saint-Victor alluded to the "characteristic heads" of the personages to be found in cloisters, and of course it is this that Duranty meant when he claimed of the *Ex-Voto* that the "accent" of a particular world was completely expressed and went on to write, "Everything that can strike, arrest, and hold one before these beings; everything that is meaningful, concentrated, violent in them radiated from this group of old women." In fact the notions of character and strikingness are also conjoined in Mantz's recollection, in his "Salon of 1868," of Legros's *Angelus* of 1859 and *Ex-Voto* of 1860: "Legros was then a somewhat barbarous painter, ugliness didn't alarm him; his brush, lacking finesse, yoked together white and black tones; but he went far in the direction of character, he struck hard and he struck true."¹⁵⁴ (Mantz went on to discuss a new religious painting by Legros, *L'Amende honorable*, which he saw as more refined than the earlier work and partly for that reason as standing in need of greater accentuation in the treatment of faces. We shall look briefly at the *Amende honorable* toward the end of chapter 4.) Or as Astruc observed in 1863, although compositionally Legros's *Le Lutrin* gave the impression of fragments added together, "The beautiful things strike—they are absolute."¹⁵⁵ And he went on to note that the beadle in that picture was "full of character," while the priest "imprints on the soul an extreme meditation," imprinting, of course, being a kind of striking.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Saint-Victor admired the "singular force and gravity" of François Bonvin's *Interior of a Hospital* in the Salon of 1869, noting that "all the rigidity of monastic life is imprinted on the austere bearing and on the mortified physiognomy of that old sister of charity who, seated at a table, knits stockings [cf. Duranty on the old women in the *Ex-Voto*]. . . . One can say that [Bonvin] is the Chardin of cloistering and poverty."¹⁵⁷ In the same "Salon" Saint-Victor made clear once again his loathing of Millet's art because of what he saw as its affectation, its "ostentation of a system," in short its theatricality.¹⁵⁸ Because Saint-Victor was ceaselessly critical not just of Millet but also of Manet and other modern painters posterity has esteemed

highly, he has been viewed as a conservative figure of no particular distinction. However, his highly intelligent criticism is always interesting, in part because he held arguably the most rigorously "Diderotian" view of absorption of all the art critics of that moment (his "conservatism" consisted largely in that); no one was less inclined than he to subscribe to double or divided structures or to take part in the transvaluation of excess and willing that marks the writings of Duranty, Astruc, and other "progressive" commentators. On the other hand, he admired the peasant paintings of Jules Breton, whom writers who extolled Millet often deprecated as theatrical—so perhaps the very notion of a rigorously "Diderotian" view of absorption in the circumstances of the 1860s is finally untenable.¹⁵⁹

As the brief quotation from Millet ("To characterize! That's the goal") announces, characterization was at the heart of his project; and the initial quotation from Astruc ("Character! supreme note . . .") indicates that it was basic also for his realist rewriting of Millet's absorptive esthetic. Not surprisingly, such a notion of character was more or less interchangeable with the concept of the *type*. So for example Thoré in 1861 remarked that "in all his paintings, Millet always has an indefinable character which elevates his creation to the heights of a type," before going on to praise the strongly absorptive *Sheep Shearer*, *Woman Feeding Her Child*, and *L'Attente*.¹⁶⁰ Even more interestingly, Mantz in 1863 spoke of Millet's "ardent attempt to bring together intimate expression and the simplified type,"¹⁶¹ while Chesneau, writing in 1879 about the military paintings of Guillaume Régamey, who had been a fellow student with Fantin and Legros under Lecoq de Boisbaudran, remarked that Régamey "shows us at last the true and simple soldier, devoid of posing, naïvely wholly engaged in what he is doing. . . . What dominates everywhere and always, is the essential character of the truth brought back to the type solely by virtue of the extraordinary accuracy of the movements and action."¹⁶² (The military world was as self-contained as the religious world and comprised an even wider range of ranks, divisions, and distinctions, each of which had its own identifying set of professional and personal characteristics.¹⁶³ By virtue of his gifts and training, Régamey was a likely candidate to become an outstanding military painter in a realist vein. In fact his few surviving paintings are impressive; but partly owing to illness he produced little and died at the age of thirty-eight in 1875. His last painting, the not-quite-finished *Cuirassiers au cabaret* [Salon of 1875; fig. 139], could not be more absorptive.) And here is Castagnary in 1875

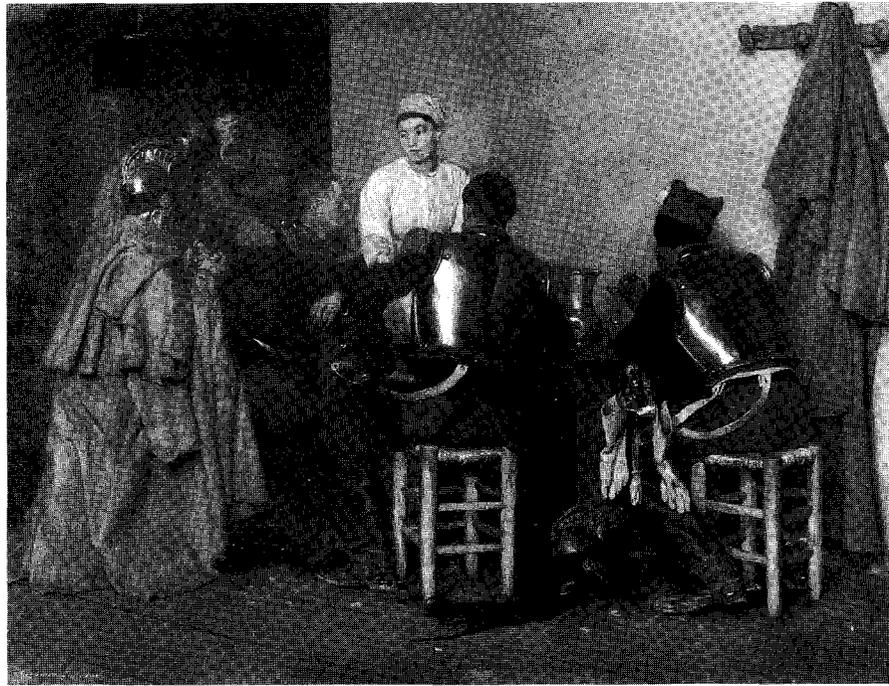


Figure 139. Guillaume Régamey, *Cuirassiers au cabaret*, 1875.

saying of Legros's *Young Women of the Month of Marie*: "On their knees, wrapped in their brown capes, their heads covered in their white hoods, they pray with such fervor that they hear neither the footsteps of those who arrive nor the nasal voice of the chorister. . . . Alphonse Legros has studied these singular states of soul with a scrupulous attention and has rendered them with a rare aptitude. By all the qualities that it possesses, modernity of subject, truthfulness of types, accuracy of expressions, character of the draperies, transparency of the shadows, unity of the impression, his painting is a work of high style and one of those that honor the Salon of this year."¹⁶⁴ Almost all the concepts we have been tracking are in play here, along with one other, modernity, that we first met in Duranty's commentary on the *Ex-Voto* ("the feeling of modern life shone forth strongly in this work") and Chesneau's praise for Carolus Duran's *Evening Prayer* (the conception of which he said was "original, modern, and very elevated"). Dubosc too asserted that what he called realist religious painting was fully as modern and alive as genre painting as such—in fact the adjective "modern" occurs twice in his short paragraph. I find

all this significant and make the following suggestion: for Duranty and other art critics of the 1860s and 1870s the effect of modernity was closely linked with the representation of types, and that in turn was facilitated, if indeed it was not made possible, by the evocation of the particular closed milieux—the absorptive worlds or cloisters—in which those types had their habitual, in that sense automatic place. Or perhaps all that was required was the intimation that the types in question *had* such a place, as in Louis Étienne's comments on Whistler's *Woman in White*. "An entire character, an entire secluded life [*toute une vie à part*] are imprinted there," he wrote, "and force you to remain and to continue to look. She is an apparition, an unknown heroine; and from a pictorial point of view, there emanates from the painting a powerful and knowing artistic savor that announces a strong researcher."¹⁶⁵ Étienne's undeniable mediocrity as a critic only throws into relief the intellectual consistency of the terms dictating his response to Whistler's canvas.

It scarcely needs pointing out that this construal of modernity is at odds with the conventional view that holds to what T. J. Clark has aptly summed up as "the essential myth of modern life: that the city has become a free field of signs and exhibits, a marketable mass of images, an area in which the old separations have broken down for good."¹⁶⁶ I do not say that nothing of the sort took place in the Paris of the 1860s or 1870s or that such a view of the city is not implicit in the work of some artists and writers of the period. But it is an error to flatly assert, as many have done, that that was the entire or even the principal meaning of modernity for the painters and critics we have been considering. (As Clark goes on to say, "Observers agreed that in some important sense the city was more inflexibly classed and divided than ever before; that one was entering the age of the 'residential district' and the 'industrial suburb,' and that those brisk euphemisms disguised an unmistakable sealing and quarantine of the classes.")¹⁶⁷

Here, to clinch the point, is Duranty in his pamphlet of 1876, *La Nouvelle Peinture*:

And what drawing, in its modern ambition, seeks to accomplish is to recognize nature so strictly, to embrace it so strongly that it [drawing] would be irreplaceable as regards the relations between forms, and would know the inexhaustible diversity of characters. Good-bye to the human body treated as if it were a vase, from the point of view of the decorative outline; good-bye to the uniform monotony of the skeleton, to the anatomy figure visible beneath the nude; what we require is the special note of the modern individual, in his



clothing, in the midst of his social habits, at home or in the street. What is done becomes singularly incisive, it's the lighting of a torch with the pencil, it's the study of moral reflections on faces and dress, the observation of the intimacy of man with his apartment, of the special feature that his profession imprints on him, of the gestures that it compels him to make, the various aspects under which he is best developed and put in relief.¹⁶⁸

The consistency of these remarks with the various citations we have just discussed and more broadly with the entire absorptive problematic of the 1860s should be apparent: in fact *La Nouvelle Peinture* singles out Diderot as the theoretical precursor of “all that the art of the nineteenth century will have wanted to realize”¹⁶⁹ (the passage just quoted immediately follows a page from Diderot's *Essai sur le dessin*), and it also includes a revised version of Duranty's original description of Legros's *Ex-Voto*, which confirms my earlier statement that he, like Astruc, Chesneau, and Castagnary, remained a critic of the 1860s throughout his career.¹⁷⁰ What is chiefly new in *La Nouvelle Peinture* is the elaboration of what I have called a theory of the cloister into a theory of the *apartment*, or rather of the relation between the modern urban individual and the particular social spaces—interiors and streets—in which he or she was not just to be found but to be found imprinted, habituated, distracted, absorbed.¹⁷¹ In any case, for Duranty and the other critics whose writings we have studied, the realistic representation of modernity called for absorptive effects of hyperlegibility, not the exploitation of ambiguity or illegibility as is commonly assumed.*

*One last set of remarks. Duranty's pamphlet begins with a reference to an article by the painter and writer Eugène Fromentin in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* that eventually became part of his book *Les Maîtres d'autrefois* (1876; Brussels, 1991). There Fromentin criticized recent realist painting for limiting its aim to that of “striking the eyes with salient, textual [i.e. readable] images, easily recognizable in their truthfulness, denuded of artifice, and giving us exactly the sensations we can see in the street” (*Les Maîtres d'autrefois*, p. 238). ([L]a peinture la plus récente a pour but de frapper les yeux par des images saillantes, textuelles, aisément reconnaissables en leur vérité, dénuées d'artifices, et de nous donner exactement les sensations de ce que nous pouvons voir dans la rue.) *La Nouvelle Peinture* amounts to an extended defense of that esthetic, or rather of that esthetic as redescribed in the terms developed above. *Les Maîtres d'autrefois*, in contrast, is a luminously intelligent and relentlessly judgmental examination of major paintings in Belgium and Holland by Rubens, Rembrandt, and other Northern masters, focusing on questions of execution in the largest sense of the term. It's all the more noteworthy, then, that Fromentin's wonderful book comes to a close on an artfully devised effect of cloistering: a characterization of the fifteenth-century Flemish painter Hans Memling's “spiritual” art as standing apart from its century. Fromentin writes (p. 368):

He abstracts himself in his intimate world, encloses himself in it, develops in it, and pours forth [his art] in it. Nothing of the outside world penetrates this sanctuary of souls in full repose, nor what is done there, nor what is thought there, nor what is said there, and least of all

One somewhat ironic consequence of this view is that almost without exception the critics in question were unable to admire (or at least to defend) Manet's paintings of the 1860s in any but a qualified way. To those paintings we must now return.

what is seen there. Imagine, in the midst of the horrors of that century, a privileged place, a sort of angelic retreat ideally silent and closed where passions are quiet, where troubles cease, where one praises, where one worships, where everything is transfigured, physical ugliness, moral ugliness, where new feelings are born, where simplicity, sweetness, and meekness grow like lilies, and you will have an idea of the unique soul of Memling and the miracle he operates in his paintings.

Il s'abstrait dans son monde intime, s'y enferme, s'y élève et s'y épanche. Rien du monde extérieur ne pénètre dans ce sanctuaire des âmes en plein repos, ni ce qu'on y fait, ni ce qu'on y pense, ni ce qu'on y dit, ni aucunement ce qu'on y voit. Imaginez, au milieu des horreurs du siècle, un lieu privilégié, une sorte de retraite angélique idéalement silencieuse et fermée où les passions se taisent, où les troubles cessent, où l'on prie, où l'on adore, où tout se transfigure, laideurs physiques, laideurs morales, où naissent des sentiments nouveaux, où poussent comme des lis des ingénuités, des douceurs, une mansuétude surnaturelle, et vous aurez une idée de l'âme unique de Memling et du miracle qu'il opère en ses tableaux.

Nothing could be more alien to Duranty's insistence that the artist get out of his studio and into the world than the escape from the world Fromentin fantasized. But Duranty's vision too was of a network of spaces which, for all their seeming openness and accessibility, were fundamentally *closed*.

4 Manet in His Generation

IN *Courbet's Realism* I presented Manet's paintings of the 1860s as responding dialectically to Courbet's Realist canvases of the late 1840s and 1850s. The crucial issue concerned the respective relations in the two bodies of work between painting and beholder, that is, it concerned the fundamentally different strategies by which Courbet and Manet came to grips with the problem of theatricality that had been central to the evolution of painting in France since the middle of the eighteenth century. Briefly, I described Courbet's Realist pictures as the products of an unprecedented attempt on the part of the artist to transport himself as if bodily into the painting on which he was working and by so doing to remove himself as a potentially theatricalizing factor from the scene of representation. Put slightly differently, the strategy with respect to beholding that informs Courbet's Realist paintings is not the classic Diderotian one of absorptive closure, the walling out or curtaining off of the beholder standing before the picture, but something altogether different (and in a sense more radical): the quasi-corporeal *merger* in the act of painting by the painter, conceived now as the painting's *first* beholder or *painter-beholder*, with the painting itself. At least with respect to that beholder the painting would ideally escape beholding entirely: there would be no one before it looking on because the beholder who had been there was now incorporated or disseminated within it.

During the first phase of Courbet's career the drive toward merger—toward physical continuity with the picture on which he was working, or at least toward what Stephen Melville suggests may be called the “prolongation” of the extended act of painting within the work itself¹—was chiefly expressed in and through the genre of the self-portrait, which had the advantage of *conventionally* placing the artist in the picture from the start. But Courbet's breakthrough to full artistic maturity coincided with his discovery of less-obvious means of representing or “prolonging” him-



Figure 140. Gustave Courbet, *The Stonebreakers*, 1849.

self in his paintings. So for example in *The Stonebreakers* (1849; fig. 140) I see the young man depicted largely from the rear and bearing a basket of stones not simply as a figure for or as personifying the painter-beholder's left hand holding a palette but virtually as continuous with that hand and the effort it put forth, just as I see the older man raising a hammer as virtually continuous with the painter-beholder's right hand wielding the brush with which the picture was painted. Note in this connection how left and right inside the painting are congruent with left and right “this” side of its surface (i.e. with the left/right orientation of the painter-beholder at work on the canvas); the difference between such congruence and the opposite relation of mirror reversal will be vital to the analysis in chapter 5 of various self-portrait drawings and paintings by members of the generation of 1863. Indeed that we see neither stonebreaker's face suggests a desire on the part of the painter-beholder to do everything possible to align the representation as a whole with his own bodily orientation as he faced into the canvas.

Similarly, in *The Wheat Sifters* (1854; fig. 141) the central kneeling figure depicted from the rear as she sifts wheat onto a canvas ground cloth may be seen as embodying the actions and orientation of the painter-beholder as he deposited bits of pigment onto the stretched canvas before him (in other words, not just the woman but the sifted wheat and the



Figure 141. Gustave Courbet, *The Wheat Sifters*, 1854.

canvas ground cloth take part in a metaphoric or rather, through “prolongation,” a metonymics of painting);² the seated woman to the left dreamily separating wheat from chaff by hand may be read as a version of painter-beholder’s left hand holding his palette; while the boy peering at close range into the black interior of the *tarare*, an early machine for sifting wheat, suggests the negation of beholding that would follow from the (physically impossible) incorporation of the painter-beholder within his painting.

In another major work of the mid-1850s, the monumental *Painter’s Studio* (fig. 118), the painter seated at his easel at the center of the composition seems all but corporeally absorbed into the landscape he is in the act of painting (his lower body has nowhere to go except into the canvas); the body of the naked model standing behind him watching him paint has been made to rhyme more or less closely both with portions of the painter’s body (her haunches with his shoulder, her breast with his head, her upraised arms with his arms) and with features of the painting on the easel (most obviously, her neck and hair and the tilt of her head with the trees growing out from the hillside at the upper right of the canvas). This

in itself suggests an impulse toward merger, as if the three main components of the central group—painting, painter, and model (the boy was more an afterthought)—were at bottom one. But the dynamics of merger are carried still further by the depicted flow of water within the river landscape out toward the seated painter, as well as by the way in which both the white sheet that the model presses to her breast and the discarded dress at her feet extend the flow and fall of waterlike representations *beyond* both him and her. In this sense the figure of Courbet in the central group is wholly immersed in the painting on which he is working—a painting, moreover, whose material limits appear indefinite—just as the central figure in the *Wheat Sifters* is encompassed by the canvas ground cloth on which she kneels and onto which she lets fall the bits of grain that I have read as equivalents for the bits of pigment that in fact represent them. All this scarcely suggests either the richness of the *Stonebreakers*, *Wheat Sifters*, and *Painter’s Studio* as “real allegories” of the act of their production or the ramifications of this view of Courbet’s project for our understanding of nineteenth-century realism generally. But it explains what I meant when in chapter 3 I cited Courbet as a precedent for Fantin’s attempt to transport both painter and beholder into *The Toast! Homage to Truth*.

In Manet’s paintings of the early 1860s something fundamentally different takes place. As I wrote in *Courbet’s Realism*:

. . . Manet’s masterpieces of the first half of the 1860s would have been inconceivable without Courbet’s pathbreaking example; but the two men could hardly have been more different in origins and manner, and there is an acute sense in which Manet’s version of the pictorial enterprise was antithetical to Courbet’s as concerns the crucial issue of beholding. It is as though Manet intuitively recognized the ever greater difficulty, verging by the 1850s on impossibility, of effectively negating or neutralizing the primordial convention that paintings are made to be beheld; and as though he recognized too that it was therefore necessary to establish the beholder’s presence abstractly—to build into the painting the separateness, distancedness, and mutual facing that had always characterized the painting-beholder relationship in its traditional, unreconstructed form—in order that the worst consequences of the theatricalizing of that relationship be averted. Such a reading identifies Manet’s enterprise as simultaneously antitheatrical and theatrical (and vice versa), which also means as not exactly one or the other as we have been using the terms until now. Thus Manet’s paintings of the first half of the 1860s repudiate the anecdotally theatrical pictures, often costume pieces set in earlier centuries, that enjoyed great popularity at the Salons of the 1850s and 1860s. But they do so by exploiting a strictly presentational—as opposed to “actional”—mode of theat-

ricality, the chief historical source and sanction for which was Watteau, and the principal function of which in Manet's art was to make newly perspicuous, in effect to force on the beholder's attention, certain truths about the painting-beholder relationship it was no longer feasible to deny. It's also at least arguable that one effect of Manet's strategy, and doubtless also a principal cause of the extreme provocation that his paintings typically offered to contemporary audiences, is that the beholder sensed that he had been made supererogatory to a situation that ostensibly demanded his presence, as if his place before the painting were *already occupied* by virtue of the extreme measures that had been taken to stake it out.³

As I also put it, Manet sought to acknowledge, not negate or neutralize, the presence of the beholder. And I went on to suggest that that act of acknowledgment holds the key to Manet's pictures' notorious "flatness": as though what has always been taken as a declaration of flatness is more importantly the product of an attempt to make the painting in its entirety—the painting *as a painting*, that is, as a *tableau—face* the beholder as never before.⁴

One implication of the previous chapter is that simply contrasting Manet and Courbet in this way (not that the contrast is all that simple) will not do. In the first place, in view of the continued viability of absorptive painting in the work of Millet, Legros, Fantin, Bonvin, Ribot, Carolus Duran, and others, it hardly seems accurate to speak of the difficulty *verging on impossibility* of effectively negating or neutralizing the primordial convention that paintings are made to be beheld. To be sure, "excessively" absorptive painting such as Millet's was harshly criticized by writers to whom it seemed theatrical. But Millet's art continued to be widely admired as antitheatrical, and among those who praised it in those terms were critics whose overall allegiances were distinctly avant-garde. Equally important, to focus exclusively on the Courbet-Manet relationship elides the question of Manet's relation to other painters of his generation whose respective responses to the problem of the theatrical differed from his but whose art, like his, signals the emergence of a new pictorial sensibility keyed to the values of excessiveness, willfulness, instantaneousness, intensity, strikingness. In this connection it will be necessary to address an array of questions only some of which are touched on in the passage from *Courbet's Realism* just quoted. For example, what are the chief similarities and differences between Manet's paintings and those of Legros, Fantin-Latour, and Whistler? More precisely, what was Manet's attitude toward absorption, and to what extent does his art exemplify the

double or divided structure we have seen in that of his cogenerationists? For that matter, what relation if any was there between Manet's construction of a new mode of encounter between painting and beholder and what I have tried to show was his programmatic exploitation of sources in older art? What ultimately was at stake for both Manet and his cogenerationists in the notion of a *tableau* to which I allude toward the end of the above remarks and which has already come up more than once in the previous chapters? Finally, to what extent does it make sense today to continue to think of Manet as a modernist painter, indeed as the first modernist painter?—Not all these questions will receive a definitive answer. But I want to enlarge my attempt to see Manet's achievement in historical context, by which I mean in the necessarily partial context of various expressive, compositional, and presentational issues, at once rooted in the mid- and later eighteenth century and specific to the 1860s and 1870s, which despite all the work that has been done on the painting and criticism of the latter period have never been given their due. Accordingly, my focus in what follows will mainly be on Manet himself; but I shall not hesitate to compare his art with that of other painters, and in any case the issues I shall be exploring are often surprisingly wide in their ultimate scope.

The Problem of the *Tableau*

LET ME begin with a topic that obsessed and baffled Manet's generation: that of the *tableau*. In French art theory and criticism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the concept of the *tableau* was often though by no means always a semantically charged term, one whose significance is lost, made invisible, when it is translated into English as either "painting" or "picture." (In the early eighteenth century this led the third earl of Shaftesbury, the foremost English art theorist of his time, to propose the coinage "tablature," which of course never caught on.⁵ The alternative, followed here, is to keep *tableau* in the original French.) Specifically, for French critics of the anti-Rococo reaction, Grimm and Diderot foremost among them, the term *tableau* denoted the achievement of a sufficiently high degree of compositional and coloristic unity (the latter mainly the work of chiaroscuro) to produce a powerful and instantaneous effect of formal and expressive *closure*.⁶ Indeed the term was first mobilized in this way to mark a distinction between the incorporation of painting within a larger decorative scheme, which writers like Shaftes-

bury, Grimm, and Diderot regarded as degrading to the art, and the portable, self-sufficient, esthetically autonomous easel picture, which they strongly advocated. Not that simply being an easel picture sufficed to win the highest approval: only such a work could in principle satisfy the requirements of the *tableau*; but whether in fact a particular easel picture succeeded in doing so—whether it achieved the perspicuous effect of unity, autonomy, and closure that the term implied—was and remained a question of critical discrimination. As has already emerged in chapter 3, considerations of unity and related matters were deeply implicated in the ongoing problematic of the struggle against theatricality. And with the advent of Courbet and the profound transformation of the terms of that struggle on which his art was based, exactly what was at stake in the critical valorization of the *tableau* became more difficult to pin down even as the notion itself continued to dominate a certain reflection on painting among critics and painters of widely disparate points of view.

So during the 1850s, for example, the concept of the *tableau* was most often used by critics as a term of contrast with what they saw as the palpable failure of Courbet's Realist paintings, though often superbly painted, to conform to traditional notions of compositional unity; his canvases, it was typically said, were mere *morceaux*, pieces or fragments, regardless of their actual size.⁷ Now, precisely that opposition, *tableau* versus *morceau*, was deployed by Astruc in *Le Salon intime* to distinguish the art of Delacroix from that of Courbet:

Courbet does not bring to the *ordonnance* of his works as much care as one would like. He doesn't burn with that flame of art that bears down desperately and ceaselessly on each detail. There is a negligence and carelessness, a letting-go, in his conception of the ensemble. . . . In contrast to Delacroix, who only sees an ensemble resonating with the idea, he prefers the particular *morceau* that keeps it at a distance. From the *morceau* we move toward the ensemble, the *tableau*: hence the errors and contradictions of harmony. He doesn't concern himself enough in advance with the disposition of the *tableau*.⁸

What's noteworthy is that this was said by a critic who greatly admired Courbet; his paintings, Astruc wrote in the same pamphlet, were perhaps "the healthiest" in the whole exhibition.⁹

Here it's useful to associate Astruc's remarks with a painting that by now is familiar, Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* of 1864 (pl. 1), and to recall another critic, Jean Rousseau's, comments on that work: "I don't believe that Delacroix's poetic was ever Courbet's. How then has an alliance suddenly been established between these schools that seemed to exclude

one another, and which for such a long time have been at war? It must be that realism has singularly modified its program, and we would be curious to learn about the new formula."¹⁰ Rousseau was right: as Astruc's remarks suggest (taking him as a spokesman for the young generation), realism in the hands of the artists of the generation of 1863 had singularly modified its program, and no aspect of that revision, that new formula, was more fundamental than the aspiration to go beyond Courbet in the direction of pictorial unity, which is to say in pursuit of the *tableau*. I understand Delacroix's exemplary stature for Fantin and the other young realists largely in those terms, even though their most characteristic productions have nothing in common with his from a compositional point of view. (The notion that Delacroix was primarily concerned with the *tableau* was by then a commonplace. In fact Delacroix himself had written, in an essay published posthumously in 1868, that even the most obstinate realist "is not able to make an isolated *morceau* or even a collection of *morceaux* the basis for a *tableau*. It's necessary to circumscribe the idea [of the picture] so that the beholder's mind doesn't simply founder before a necessarily cut-off whole; without that there wouldn't be any art."¹¹ The last phrase is significant: as was mentioned earlier, Delacroix the artist was often contrasted with Courbet the painter.) At the same time, as we have seen, the *Homage to Delacroix* was widely viewed by its critics as utterly failing to be a *tableau* in its own right, mainly because the figures in it not only faced out of the painting but in doing so turned their backs on the portrait of Delacroix. To that extent, the concept of the *tableau* continued to be associated with closure—that is, with absorption—as is also implied by Astruc's theoretical distinction, analyzed in chapter 3, between the instantaneousness and strikingness of the portrait and the relative "slowness" and penetratingness of the *tableau*. (For Grimm and Diderot, as for David in the 1780s, absorption and instantaneousness were reconciled by drama: theirs was an intensely dramatic conception of painting, whereas by the 1850s and 1860s pictorial drama as such stood indicted as theatrical.)

I have suggested, however, that the valorization of excess in the interests of intensity and strikingness that took place in the 1860s went a long way toward blurring the distinction between portrait and *tableau*, or rather toward establishing a new sense of the *tableau* as being in crucial respects portraitlike. Conversely, there is every likelihood that Fantin in the *Homage to Delacroix* imagined himself to be working toward a new conception of the *tableau* in which facing rather than closure would be

the operative principle, or at least in which facing would not be at odds with closure of a certain sort. I take this to be the meaning of the preliminary drawings for the *Homage to Delacroix* with their principal figure in black depicted largely from the rear (it's as if in the final version that figure is replaced by the actual beholder standing before the painting), and of course the subsequent campaign that culminated in *The Toast! Homage to Truth* further exemplifies Fantin's efforts to combine closure and facingness in a single ambitious composition.

Several passages from "Salons" by other critics plus quotations from letters by Legros, Whistler, and Fantin-Latour will help flesh out the issue of the *tableau* in the 1860s. Here, for example, are some remarks from Thoré's highly sympathetic account of the Salon des Refusés:

French art as one sees it in the banned works seems to be beginning, or beginning anew. It is baroque and wild, sometimes very accurate and even profound. The subjects are no longer the same as in the official galleries: little mythology or history; contemporary life, especially that of popular types; little refinement and no taste: things as they ordinarily appear, beautiful or ugly, distinguished or vulgar. And a practice altogether different from the practices hallowed by the long domination of Italian art. Instead of laboring over contours, which is what the Academy means by *drawing*, instead of slaving over each detail, which is what the amateurs of classicism call *finish*, the new artists try to render the effect in its striking unity without worrying about the correctness of the lines or the minutia of the accessories.¹²

Several points deserve emphasis. First, although Thoré doesn't actually use the concept of the *tableau*, something like it is at stake in his claim that the rejected artists seek "to render the effect in its striking unity." Second, Thoré's phrasing expressly does not allow us to reduce the issue of the *tableau* to that of finish, *le fini*. On the contrary, considerations of finish, which will play a major role in Manet criticism throughout his career, are here understood in the larger context of the pursuit of a truly striking mode of pictorial unity. And third, the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* would have been vividly present to Thoré when he wrote the sentences quoted above. In particular the epithets "baroque and wild"—"baroque" meaning extravagant or bizarre—seem to have been chosen with the *Déjeuner* in mind.

In a similar spirit, another critic, Gonzague Privat, wrote of Manet's *Olympia* and *Christ Mocked* in the Salon of 1865, "Manet has sought the *tableau* without concerning himself enough with form or details."¹³ Privat italicized the word *tableau*, making it a technical term and not a simple noun, and although his remarks come across as somewhat critical

where Thoré seems wholly approving, both men concur in seeing Manet's art as intent upon a single overall effect in which details and finish are secondary considerations. Privat's statement is all the more significant in that it is part of a strongly positive assessment of Manet's achievement. For Privat, Manet was clearly the most impressive younger painter on view. Whereas most other critics reviled *Olympia*, he insisted it was full of life. "In Manet's *Olympia*," he wrote, "there is more than just competence, there reign solid and rare qualities of painting. The young woman is of a matte tone, her flesh is of an exquisite delicacy, of a finesse, in perfect relation to the white sheets. The background is charming, the green curtains that close the bed are of a light and airy color. [Have they darkened over time?] But the public, the gross public, who finds it easier to laugh than to look, understands nothing of this art that is too abstract for its intelligence."¹⁴ The issue, in Privat's mind, was essentially one of intelligibility: "The day when Manet will arrive with a work more comprehensible for everyone, that will be the day when he will be celebrated"¹⁵ (that day finally came in 1872 when he exhibited the most conventional of his pictures, *Le Bon Bock*, but it quickly passed). Privat speculated that if only the public who mocked Manet "could know how little it would require to make his too artistic painting readable by them," they would not subject him to their vulgar railery.¹⁶ And he imagined that if Manet had lived in the time of Velázquez, the great Spaniard would have encouraged him to persevere in the following words: "'Continue, monsieur, let them talk while you act! Be persuaded that certain men will understand you; don't exaggerate your qualities, they would become defects; strive to render nature in all its truth; often paint the *morceau*, but be sure to preserve your artistic temperament; walk with conviction on your path.'¹⁷ By artistic temperament Privat meant the determination not to rest content with the *morceau*, the fragmentary realist life study of which Manet was a recognized master.¹⁸ Something more was needed, and what made Manet so unusual in Privat's eyes was that he pursued that something more almost too energetically—as if within a single work like *Olympia* there existed too glaring a disjunction between the realist *morceau* and the artistic *tableau*. Or at any rate, as if the disjunction between them were too glaring for his paintings to be appreciated by all but a handful of painters and connoisseurs.¹⁹

Just how volatile the issue was may be gauged from the following excerpt from a review of the Salon des Refusés by another critic, Théodore Pelloquet:

indeed than does the ex-voto in the painting of that name which Legros was soon to make, but of course the ex-voto is much more vivid and conspicuous, in a word more striking, than the plaques could have been, in part because no one within the *Angelus* is shown looking at them.²³

For all his diffidence, Fantin seems to have provided a fixed center for the Society of Three—the name he, Legros, and Whistler gave to their little band—during those years, and in a highly interesting letter to Fantin written from London while the Salon des Refusés was on in Paris, Whistler said of the contemporary English painter John-Everett Millais: “This year Millais has truly produced a *true tableau*. Finally, something completely artistic, you would like it a lot.”²⁴ Here too we see that an honorific notion of the *tableau* served as common currency among (at least) Fantin, Whistler, and Legros. In addition Whistler’s remarks remind us that the concept of the *tableau* was associated by them with

an ideal of *artistic* painting, which itself was linked with their cult of Delacroix. That is, although all three painters began by thinking of themselves as realists and were deeply influenced by Courbet’s example as regards vision and technique, at least two of them, Fantin and Whistler, came to feel that his work fell short of the fully artistic ideal they now aspired to (the “new formula” of the *Homage to Delacroix* implied precisely that). Indeed Legros’s letter of 1858 was addressed to “Monsieur Henri Fantin Latour Artist Painter,” a designation that already points to Fantin’s ambition to combine the respective excellences of Courbet and Delacroix.²⁵ As later as 1864 Fantin declared to Jean Rousseau that the young realists of the moment (himself, Legros, Whistler, Manet, Bracquemond, and Ribot) “proceeded from the movement imprinted by Courbet,”²⁶ but as time went on the hold of Courbet’s art on the group as a whole seems to have grown weaker. In 1865 Fantin evidently deprecated Courbet, perhaps on the basis of his recent work, in letters to Scholderer in Frankfurt.²⁷ And a few years after that, in 1867 or 1868, Whistler wrote to Fantin denouncing realism and expressing the wish that he had studied with Ingres rather than having been influenced by Courbet.²⁸ (By then Whistler and Legros had broken and the Society of Three was no more.)

But it was Fantin who suffered most from the tension between his two early exemplars and the competing ideals they represented. “More than others,” he wrote to Whistler in 1862, “I debate [within myself] between human life and the life of Art. This simple question, the *study after Nature* [or] the *tableau*, has held me in suspense for more than a year, I’ve been unable to resolve it, and that eats me alive. As soon as I’m not actually painting it torments me.” He continued: “What I seek is to do well, as some great Artists have done. So that one always returns to certain works, to certain Artists who knew what Art really was. To that beauty that is of all times in all countries, that mysterious harmony, those relations, two tones placed alongside one another that produce a true beautiful complete whole.”²⁹ Further on in the same letter Fantin explained that his dream of happiness would be to have a studio with a model available to pose for him whenever he wished and then in the evening to retire to a small room and pore through portfolios of engravings after the Old Masters.³⁰ As we have seen, the divided mind these statements reflect shows up in his art, not just programmatically as in the *Homage to Delacroix*, but in the multiple forms of his production throughout the 1860s and after.



Figure 142. Alphonse Legros, *The Angelus*, 1859.

Another letter, from Fantin to Legros, is pertinent here. Legros had been living in England since the summer of 1863 (he remained there for the rest of his life); the letter is undated but seems to have been written in 1865, perhaps in June. Fantin's reference to his own painting is evidently to *The Toast! Homage to Truth*. The letter includes the following:

No news [of you], no painting [by you] in the Salon; I think you're doing wrong to yourself and to us to abandon us like this, especially at a moment so interesting for everyone. You are, you know very well, one of the rare painters. We say this to each other quite often, Whistler, Manet, Scholderer in his letters, what a shame that Legros, who doesn't do anything any more for us, who isn't any longer the painter he was! In the last Salon [1865], my painting was better, but like your *Lutrin* [a picture Legros had shown in the Salon of 1863], by *morceau*, but not in the ensemble. Whistler somewhat the same [in his *Princesse du pays de la porcelaine*] but it's chiefly because his ideas aren't in the mainstream that that picture didn't have the effect of the *Woman in White*. It's he who is making progress. It's astonishing, the way your paintings used to, his paintings now make a great impression on me. His large colored areas have given me a lot to think about, also Manet's paintings [*Olympia* and the *Christ Mocked*]. You can't imagine the great effect that he had at the exhibition, it was really useful for me to see his pictures, as for the effect on the public it was immense, that gave me pleasure and proved I was right. [It proved Fantin right in that from the moment he saw Manet's *Guitarro* in the Salon of 1861 he was passionate about Manet's art.]³¹

There's much of interest in Fantin's account of his enthusiasm for Whistler and Manet, but what I want to stress is his acknowledgment that *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, like Legros's *Le Lutrin*, was successful only on the level of the *morceau*, not as a whole. The statement is further proof that Fantin and the other painters of the generation of 1863 accepted the *tableau* versus *morceau* distinction, and it also suggests that, as regards the actual making of paintings, Fantin in 1865 was not at all certain what a realist *tableau* was or should be. (Cf. Fantin's etching of 1864, *Un Morceau de Schumann* [fig. 143], which depicts his English friends Ruth and Edwin Edwards playing a piece by Schumann originally written for piano and violin.³² The image itself is absorptive, hence *tableau*-like in that regard at least, but the title associates it with the concept of the *morceau*, perhaps punningly but nevertheless with an explicitness that must be taken seriously. Even more interesting, the writing toward the bottom right of the sheet—"Sunbury Oct 1864 / chez Edwards / Un morceau de Schumann"—is nearly aligned with the plane of the table in the right near foreground and is oriented so as to be legible to the viewer but not



Figure 143. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Un Morceau de Schumann*, etching, 1864.

to the figures in the etching. On the one hand, this suggests a kind of continuity between the “world” of the etching and that of the artist and viewer, or say a Courbet-like “prolongation” of the act of inscription within the etching itself; on the other hand, that the writing in question is not accessible to the figures of the Edwardses effectively seals them all the more hermetically in a “world” of their own. We are dealing here with an unresolvably double or ambiguous structure, not unlike that of the artist, model, top-hatted figures, and indeed the divided title in the final version of *The Toast! Homage to Truth*.³³

A comparable uncertainty about the nature of the realist *tableau* may be implied by Manet's having destroyed or radically cut down at least three works during these years—the *Gypsies* (1862), the *Episode in a Bullfight* (1864), and *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne* (1864)—presumably out of dissatisfaction with their respective compositions (Castagnary praised the dead matador in the second of these as an “excellent *morceau*,” but faulted the picture's perspective and asked “what becomes of the ensemble of the *tableau*?”).³⁴ For his part, Legros made fundamental changes in *Le Lutrin* before exhibiting it again in the Salon of 1868, but they seem not to have helped: in 1868 Chesneau, who admired Legros, characterized the revised version as “a *morceau* of a ta-

bleau rather than a *tableau*” (though he said of another painting by Legros in that Salon, *L'Amende honorable* [fig. 165], that it was “truly a superior *oeuvre*,” a term that, used in this way, as by Duranty apropos Legros’s *Ex-Voto*, had the same connotations as *tableau*).³⁵ Indeed a year earlier Chesneau had criticized the young realists for “their exclusive attachment to painting the *morceau*, their distance—less voluntary than they think—from idea and expression,” and after praising Fantin’s *Portrait of Manet* in the Salon of 1867 had expressed the desire “that he arrive at the *tableau*. That he finally reveal to us the artist, after having once again revealed the painter in that excellent portrait of Manet.”³⁶ In sum the concept of the *tableau* played a significant role in the thinking both of the painters of the generation of 1863 and of such critics as Thoré, Castagnary, Astruc, Pelloquet, and Chesneau, none of whom, painter or critic (except, fleetingly, the young Legros in his letter to Fantin), ever defined that concept in so many words. Indeed I take the centrality *and also the ultimate elusiveness or indeterminacy* of the concept of the *tableau* in the writings we have surveyed to be a primary feature of French painting and criticism of the 1860s.³⁷

A letter from Manet to Fantin, written from Madrid in early September 1865, further illustrates the difficulty of the topic. In it Manet describes various paintings by Velázquez that he had just seen at the Prado. “The most astonishing *morceau* in all that splendid *oeuvre* and perhaps the most astonishing *morceau* of painting ever made,” he wrote, “is the *tableau* listed in the catalogue as the portrait of an celebrated actor from the period of Philip IV [*Portrait of Pablo de Valladolid*]; the background disappears, it’s air that surrounds that figure clothed in black and vividly alive; and the *Hilanderas*, the beautiful portrait of Alonzo Cano, *Las Meninas* (the dwarfs [sic]), an extraordinary *tableau* also, his philosophers, astonishing *morceaux*—all the dwarfs, especially one seated facing the viewer with his fists on his hips, a choice painting for a true connoisseur, his magnificent portraits, it would be necessary to cite them all, they are all masterpieces.”³⁸ It’s not clear what weight the terms *tableau* and *morceau* are meant to bear in this passage; the portraits of single figures are referred to as *morceaux* while the large multifigure *Las Meninas* is called a *tableau*—but so is the portrait of the celebrated actor of the time of Philip IV (it is called both *morceau* and *tableau*). Especially in the latter context the meaning of the word *tableau* may simply be that of “picture,” as is always true in Zola’s criticism and as is sometimes the case in the writings of others. (For example, Chesneau’s dismissive com-

ment in 1864—“This year Manet’s *tableaux* figure among the *oeuvres* admitted to the Salon. The Jury has been indulgent.”³⁹—obviously was not intended to ascribe to his canvases the positive qualities Privat saw in them the following year.)

In any case, Manet on his return from Spain temporarily gave up the two-or-more-figure compositional formats of his more ambitious paintings of the first half of the 1860s (the *Old Musician* with six figures was exceptional among his pictures of relatively large scale) in favor of single-figure paintings unmistakably derived from Velázquez. And in Astruc’s “Salon of 1867,” which purports to be the account of a dream in which he and Diderot journeyed together through a painters’ Hell and Purgatory, Astruc had Diderot say to a young artist: “‘Ah! young men, practice the beautiful while seeking the true, without mannerism, taking inspiration from the simplicities of nature which are so harmonious in their prodigious fecundity. Abandon the detail; enlarge the *morceau* to become the *oeuvre*.’”⁴⁰ I read the last clause as a justification of Manet’s practice in his single-figure canvases of 1865–67 (the *Monk in Prayer*, *Tragic Actor*, *Woman with a Parrot*, *Fifer*, *Matador Saluting*, and the three *Philosophers*), which in turn—bearing in mind the close friendship between Manet and Astruc (one of the shades in Purgatory says of Astruc “‘Manet seduced him early on’”)⁴¹—*perhaps* suggests that Manet himself conceived of his post-Madrid pictures in those terms. By the time Astruc’s words appeared in print, however, Manet had already embarked on an ambitious project to paint a monumental, multifigure painting of the *Execution of Maximilian* (figs. 158, 159, 160, 161, pl. 16); and when that was done he returned, in canvases such as the *Luncheon* (fig. 58) and the *Balcony* (pl. 8), to a compositional mode not unlike that of his pre-Madrid work. But whether or not he understood that return as grappling again with a problematic of the *tableau* must remain speculative.

It should be stressed that the state of affairs I have evoked differed significantly from what was soon to become the discursive field of emerging Impressionism. There the insistence by even sympathetic writers on the supreme value of the *tableau* or *oeuvre faite*, as distinct from the *esquisse*, *ébauche*, *étude*, and the like, implied a critique of the very basis of the Impressionist picture.⁴² By the same token, the Impressionists’ bracketing of the issue of the *tableau*—at least up to a point—was a crucial factor in the radical simplification of the enterprise of painting that they brought about.⁴³ Something more tortuous and ambiguous took place in the 1860s, and in light of my argument in chapter 3 it seems likely that that

something was intimately connected with the emergence of a double or divided sensibility with respect to issues of absorption and closure.*

Manet and Absorption—Instantaneousness as Strikingness

WE ARE NOW in a position to focus more closely on Manet and to begin to assess the relation of his art to that of his cogenerationists. One decisive difference between Manet and the others, it seems clear, is that from the outset he tended overwhelmingly, as if instinctively, to reject the representation of absorption (and *a fortiori* the intensification of absorption) as a vehicle for his painting, though it's important to note—it's one more link between them all—that that rejection wasn't absolute. At least three pictures of the 1860s—*The Reader* (1861), *Monk in Prayer* (1865; fig. 144), and *Boy Blowing Bubbles* (1867)—make use of traditionally absorptive subject matter, though especially in the two later works aspects of both *mise-en-scène* and paint handling are at odds with the ostensibly beholder-denying implications of the theme. For example, in the

*In the first of his two essays on Manet, "Le Jury de peinture pour 1874 et M. Manet" (*Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry [Paris, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1945], p. 699), Stéphane Mallarmé wrote:

In the double judgment rendered by the jury and the public on the painting of the year, what is the task incumbent upon the jury and what is the task of the crowd?

The very bringing together of the recognized talents of an age, each necessarily possessing a very different originality, results in the simple fact that any possible agreement among the jurors concerns not the originality but the talent, even abstract and exact, contained in the work to be judged. . . . The spirit in which a work of art was conceived, traditional or modern, and its resulting character, sensuous or rarefied—everything, in a word, that touches upon the instincts of the crowd or the person: it is up to the members of the public, who pay in prestige and banknotes, to decide whether it is worth paying for and talking about. To this extent the public rules and can demand to see *everything there is*. Charged by the implicit vote of the painters with choosing among the framed canvases submitted those that are actually *tableaux*, in order to bring them before us, the jurors have nothing to say beyond: this is a *tableau*, that is not a *tableau*. They must not hide a single one: as soon as certain of the public's tendencies, latent theretofore, find in a painter their artistic expression or their beauty, the public must be allowed to know that painter; and not to introduce them to one another is not only to blunder but to be both dishonest and unfair.

[Q]uel est, dans le double jugement rendu et par le jury et par le public sur la peinture de l'année, la tâche qui incombe au jury et celle qui relève de la foule?

Il résulte du seul fait de la mise en commun des talents notoires d'une époque, dont chacun possède nécessairement une originalité très différente, que l'accord susceptible entre eux porte non sur l'originalité, mais sur le talent même abstrait et exact, contenu dans l'oeuvre à juger. . . . L'esprit dans lequel a été conçu un morceau d'art, rétrospectif ou moderne, et sa nature, succulente ou rarefîée, en un mot, tout ce qui touche aux instincts de la foule ou de la personne: c'est au public, qui paye en gloire et en billets, à décider si cela vaut

Monk in Prayer the bravura brushwork and seamless, aspatial background seem somehow inconsistent with the devotional motif, while the skull on the ground appears *too near* to both the kneeling figure and the picture plane to be comfortably the object of the figure's meditation. Other paintings, notably the early *Portrait of the Artist's Parents* (fig. 40) and the *Christ Mocked* (fig. 53), bear a more ambiguous relation to an absorptive thematics. But in no Manet canvas of the 1860s is absorption positively stressed as in the works by Legros and Fantin, or indeed Ribot and Carolus Duran, that we have examined. Instead it seems fair to say that Manet in his most characteristic paintings of the 1860s pursued a strategy of denying or voiding absorptive effects while not quite purging his compositions of absorptive motifs; put the other way round, he made use of various motifs that, treated differently, *could* have yielded absorptive effects—for example, the "conversing" figures in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, the grieving angels in the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, the maid presenting the bouquet of flowers to her mistress in *Olympia*, the seated figure of Zola holding an open book in the *Portrait of Émile Zola*, perhaps most tellingly the firing squad in the *Mannheim Execution of Maximilian*

son papier et ses paroles. Il est le maître à ce point, et peut exiger de voir *tout ce qu'il y a*. Chargé par le vote indistinct des peintres de choisir, entre les peintures présentées dans un cadre, ce qu'il existe véritablement, de tableaux, pour nous les mettre sous les yeux, le jury n'a d'autre chose à dire que: ceci est un tableau, ou encore: voilà qui n'est point un tableau. Défense d'en cacher un: dès que certaines tendances, latentes jusqu'alors dans le public ont trouvé, chez un peintre, leur expression artistique, ou leur beauté, il faut que celui-là fasse connaissance de celui-ci; et ne pas présenter l'un à l'autre est faire d'une maladresse un mensonge et une injustice.

Vincent Descombes has rightly emphasized the importance of Mallarmé's distinction between "framed canvases" and "paintings" (i.e. *tableaux*) and has noted that Mallarmé himself does not offer a means of distinguishing between them (*Proust: Philosophy of the Novel*, trans. Catherine Chance Macksey [Stanford, 1992], p. 97). (I have followed Catherine Macksey's translation from Mallarmé in all but a few details.) Descombes takes this to mean that for Mallarmé "there is no non-trivial definition of the painting, that the selection of the paintings from among the painted canvases is made without benefit of a definition. Painters can distinguish the painting from the non-painting, and disagreements among them are possible but bound to be rare. The ontological judgment is made without its being necessary to specify criteria. In order to say 'This is a painting,' the jury does not have to compare the painted canvas submitted to its judgment with a description of the archetypal painting or with a formula for the conditions in which a painting is possible. The jury exists precisely because there are no general criteria available" (ibid.). As a reading of Mallarmé this is acute, and as we have seen the critics and painters we have surveyed seem indeed to have been without such criteria, but the problem Manet encountered was that Salon juries and all but a few critics behaved *as if there were* criteria for *tableaux* which his submissions shockingly failed to satisfy. (Or consider the critical response to Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix*.) Put slightly differently, Mallarmé underestimated the *genuine* difficulty in the 1860s and 1870s of determining, not just theoretically but also practically, what a *tableau* was.

—but that, as they have been rendered, conspicuously do not. In fact Manet's predilection from the first was for compositions, typically involving from one to at most three or four figures, that were to a greater or lesser degree frontal—facing—in orientation. A list of paintings of that type from the 1850s until his visit to Madrid in September 1865 would include his copy after Delacroix's *Barque of Dante* (ca. 1854), *Absinthe Drinker*, *Boy with Cherries* (1859), *Students of Salamanca* (1860), *Guitarrero* (1860), *Boy with a Sword* (1861), *Surprised Nymph* (in which, anticipating the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, the figure sits sideways but turns her gaze on the beholder), *Portrait of Jeanne Duval* (1862), *Gypsies*, *Old Musician*, *Street Singer*, *Spanish Ballet*, *Lola de Valence* (1862), *Mlle V. . . in the costume of an Espada*, *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*, *Woman with a Glove* (1862), *Portrait of Victorine Meurent*, *Portrait of Mme Manet (The Artist's Mother)* (1862), *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia*, *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* (1863), *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne*, and *Christ Mocked*—in short nearly every significant picture he produced during those years.

I have already suggested, in discussing the critical response to Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* and *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, that facing compositions involving more than a single figure were disturbing to contemporary audiences because they could not easily be reconciled with the prevailing demand for absorptive closure. But Manet's paintings presented a far more difficult problem than Fantin's, which were praised for containing fine individual portraits even as they were criticized for being mere assemblages of these. From an early date—starting with the response to the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* in the Salon des Refusés—the personages in Manet's paintings were found to be inexplicably blank, opaque, noncommunicating, without psychological interiority of any kind. Pelloquet, after remarking on Manet's seeming unconcern in the *Déjeuner* with the very idea of the *tableau*, and after criticizing its execution in language we will soon examine, complained that the composition as a whole lacked all life. "One would seek in it in vain for the indication of a movement. In whatever way [Manet] wished to indicate an attitude or a gesture, the limb and the body that he tried to paint remain inert, as if stuffed."⁴⁴ Chesneau was sympathetic to certain "gaucheries" in Manet's pictures that could be seen as naïve, on condition that the naïveté be outgrown and also that Manet learn to depict something other than costumes empty of the bodies that ostensibly supported them. "Manet's figures make one

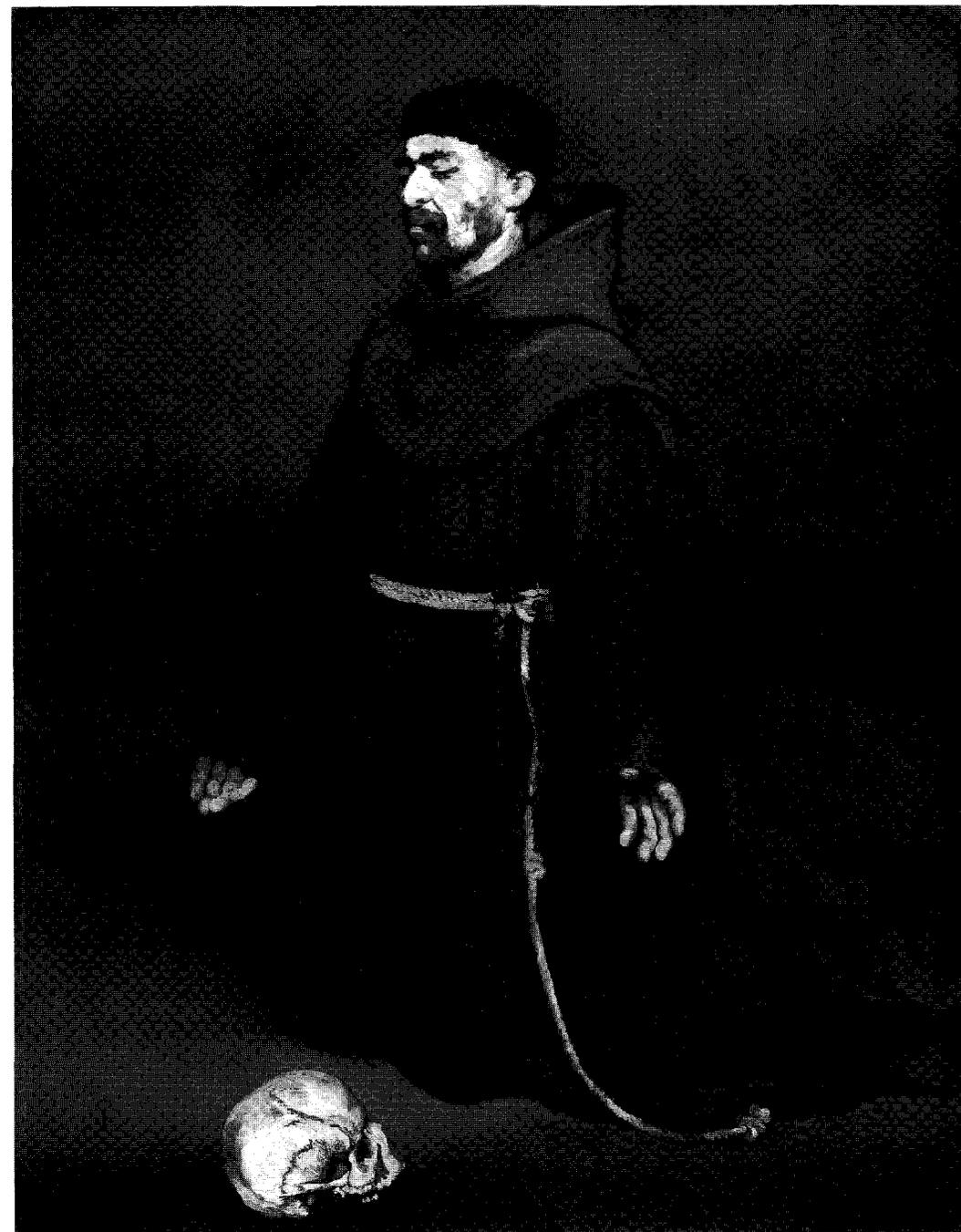


Figure 144. Édouard Manet, *Monk in Prayer*, 1865.

think involuntarily of the marionettes on the Champs-Élysées: a solid head and slack clothing,” he wrote.⁴⁵ Another critic, Adrien Paul, noted in 1863 that Manet treated living beings and inanimate things exactly the same.⁴⁶ (Interestingly, Paul found much to like in the *Déjeuner* but added, “Ah, if only that shameless naiad weren’t there!” The French for “shameless,” *effrontée*, suggests a play on the notion of facing.)⁴⁷ And Thoré, in many respects sympathetic to Manet’s endeavor, remarked of Manet’s other paintings in the Salon des Refusés, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* and *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, “[U]nderneath those brilliant costumes the person itself is somewhat lacking; the heads ought to have been painted differently from the clothing, with more accent and depth.”⁴⁸ In 1867 E. Spuller observed of Manet’s one-man exhibition near the Pont d’Alma that although a first impression was favorable, after a while it became clear that the figures in his canvases were lifeless and without interest. “You will find yourself,” he wrote, “surrounded by personages endowed with all the appearance of reality, [but] at bottom devoid of precisely what constitutes it, I mean expression. Everything there is cold, without accent; nothing is stirred in you, and even your eyes which earlier, patient and docile, accommodated themselves to the artist’s fantasy, soon perceive only sad and graceless figures, of a strange appearance and a black and heavy coloring.”⁴⁹ (Spuller’s account is particularly revealing in that it doesn’t begin by rejecting Manet out of hand; instead it provides a brief narrative of trying to come to terms with his art and of being forced to a negative conclusion.) Finally, a year later Thoré observed less censoriously: “His present vice is a sort of pantheism that doesn’t value a head more than a slipper; that sometimes accords even more importance to a bouquet of flowers than to the physiognomy of a woman, as for example in his famous painting of the *Black Cat* [*Olympia*]; that paints nearly uniformly furniture, carpets, books, clothing, flesh, and accents of the face, as for example in his portrait of Émile Zola, exhibited in the present Salon.”⁵⁰

This makes it sound as if Manet held an extreme version of the modern doctrine of the esthetic neutrality of subject matter, according to which a human face is of no greater inherent interest or value than a piece of furniture or clothing, and in fact we find Zola himself writing in 1867 apropos the *Déjeuner*: “Painters, especially Édouard Manet who is an analytic painter, don’t share that preoccupation with subject matter that torments the crowd more than anything; for them, the subject is a pretext to paint, whereas for the crowd only the subject exists.”⁵¹ For Zola, as we have

noted, considerations of absorption and, more broadly, of psychology belonged to the category of subject matter and hence were unworthy of serious discussion; in his words, “I don’t discuss a piece of drapery, the position of a limb, the expression of a physiognomy”⁵²—implicitly placing them all on the same level of nonimportance. And by the time of Manet’s death in 1883 a Zolaesque but also Impressionism-influenced point of view had evolved that allowed the artist’s seeming indifference to psychology and expression to be viewed as the necessary consequence of a preoccupation with other, essentially pictorial concerns. I have already quoted de Biez’s defense that year of Manet’s deliberate repudiation of “all psychological intention or philosophical subject matter” on the grounds that “Manet was first and foremost a painter, and his highest ambition was to remain a painter in the fullest plastic meaning of the term. Manet was an eye rather than a reasoning.”⁵³ Other critics—Paul Mantz, for example—were more negative about what they too saw as Manet’s sacrifice of human content in the interests of an engagement with technical problems of various sorts⁵⁴ (because the critics emphasized the works of the 1870s and early 1880s, the problems in question were taken to concern the faithful representation of effects of light and air).⁵⁵ But what I want to stress is not the existence of conflicting evaluations of Manet’s supposed elevation of certain painterly or technical concerns over all else but rather that starting early in his career the peculiar psychological blankness of his personages, as well as the resistance his groupings of personages offered to being read in comprehensible narrative or dramatic terms, tended to be rationalized, hence normalized, in that way.

During the past two decades the basic terms of that rationalization have been called into question by social historians of art, who not only have challenged the notion that Manet was indifferent to considerations of subject matter but also have worked to contextualize his painting so as to reveal its connectedness to social, political, and economic aspects of the reality of its time. So for example Reff in 1982 advanced the reading of the *Old Musician* that was summarized and discussed toward the end of chapter 2.⁵⁶ More recently, Herbert in *Impressionism* has interpreted Manet’s citation of Raphael in the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* as a deliberate “send-up of history,” the further aim of which was to mock the guardians of history, the academy; “in so doing he insulted both traditional sources and the manner of presenting them.”⁵⁷ (Herbert compares this aspect of Manet’s art to the composer Offenbach’s “spoofs of the gods, saucily converted to contemporary purposes,” in the operettas *Orphée aux Enfers*

and *La Belle Hélène*.)⁵⁸ Or to take another example from Herbert, he describes the barmaid in Manet's last ambitious canvas, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881–82; fig. 145), as possessing “an immense dignity and self-containment” and also as “disconcerting . . . because her matter-of-fact, cool glance seems to lack expression.” Manet's image, he writes, is one of “remoteness. In his austere figure we find the anonymity and loneliness inherent in the arbitrary encounters of modern life.”⁵⁹ And he suggests that by virtue of the complicated play of reflections in the mirror behind the barmaid, “Manet makes us consider this woman's actual role as professional barmaid, and her potential role as envisioned by [the customer standing before her in the reflection in the mirror]. Her frontal image is correct, even distant from us; nothing hints at her availability after hours. [Herbert earlier disputed the notion that she was a prostitute.] In the mirror, her more yielding nature is revealed, detached as it were from her body by the man's powers of wish-fulfillment.”⁶⁰ In



Figure 145. Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1881–82.

The Painting of Modern Life Clark offers a different, much less readily excerptable interpretation of the *Bar*, one that, usefully for us, focuses at length on the barmaid's face:

The face that the barmaid presents to [the spectacle around her] is, we might think, the only one possible. It is the face of fashion, first of all, made up to agree with others quite like it, the hair just hiding the eyebrows and leaving the ears free, the cheeks pale with powder, the lips not overdone this season, the pearls the right size. Fashion is a good and necessary disguise: it is hard to be sure of anything else about the barmaid, in particular what class she might belong to. She does not seem, as the critics hinted in their choice of language in 1882, to be firmly part of the bourgeoisie; and that fact is the key to her modernity, in [Paul] Alexis's smug sense; it is part of her appeal. The face she wears is the face of the popular, as previously defined, but also of a fierce, imperfect resistance to any such ascription. It is a face whose character derives from its not being bourgeois, and having that fact almost be hidden. For if one could not be bourgeois—if that status was always pushed just a little further out of reach—then at least one could prevent oneself from being anything else: fashion and reserve would keep one's face from *any* identity, from identity in general. The look which results is a special one: public, outward, 'blasé' in [Georg] Simmel's sense, impassive, not bored, not tired, not disdainful, not quite focused on anything. Expression is its enemy, the mistake it concentrates on avoiding at all costs; for to express oneself would be to have one's class be legible.⁶¹

I am not impressed by Herbert's comments on the *Déjeuner*: does it really suffice at this stage of Manet studies to compare fleetingly the allusion to the *Judgment of Paris* with operettas by Offenbach and to ignore the larger question of the meaning of Manet's references to past art? Nor am I persuaded by his ingenious but overly subjective response to the *Bar*; the anonymity and loneliness of modern life are clichés, while his evocation of the customer's sexual fantasy seems arbitrary, unsupported by ancillary material and inconsistent with Manet's practice generally. (It's symptomatic that Herbert in his book makes almost no use of contemporary art reviews, which, he remarks at the outset, “functioned within very limited circles, and more surely reveal the author's attitudes than the inner workings of paintings.”)⁶² Clark's description of the face of the barmaid is a different story, minute and probing and at the same time seeking to orient itself to contemporary accounts of the picture. And yet its basic point—that her face's apparent inexpressiveness and illegibility are functions of her specific social identity—seems to me inconclusive, above all because it fails to relate those qualities to the larger topic of Manet's figures' inexpressiveness and illegibility that was one of the major themes of

his critics from 1863 until well after his death. (This is also true of the discussion of *Olympia* earlier in his book.) Not that I would prefer to Clark's account one by the imaginary commentator he characterizes as "the inveterate modernist . . . who no doubt sees at once that the face is nothing but that of painting itself, the presence of the signifier, the absence of the signified, etc."⁶³ Nor perhaps would I even wish to dispute Clark's "plausible hypothesis," on which as he says his book is based, "that inconsistencies so carefully contrived [as those in the *Bar*] must have been felt to be somehow appropriate to the social forms the painter [chose] to show."⁶⁴ But I nevertheless miss in even the most scrupulous and powerful social-historical accounts of Manet's achievement, which is to say in *The Painting of Modern Life*, a sense of his engagement with a constantly evolving network of artistic issues in relation to which or in interaction with which the social and/or political meaning of particular paintings is ultimately to be understood. Of course, my more or less exclusive concentration on various aspects of that engagement is unlikely to satisfy Clark or other social historians of art, who might be said to be interested in questions that go beyond those I am trying to answer. By the same token, however, the questions that concern me might be said to have a certain historical priority in that unless they are recognized and addressed, however incompletely, our sense of Manet's specifically painterly enterprise is bound to remain somewhat thin.

Here it will be helpful to juxtapose one of Manet's major works of the early 1860s—I again choose *The Old Musician* (pl. 2)—with Legros's finest extant painting, *The Vocation of St. Francis* (1861; pl. 13).⁶⁵ The contrast between them could hardly be more patent: whereas the *Vocation* was clearly intended to be seen as powerfully absorptive—it depicts a decisive event in the youthful Francis's spiritual life—the *Old Musician* seems on the contrary to be the product of a determination to repudiate absorption and its characteristic effects. Indeed so emphatic is the impression that the figures of the seated violinist and his entourage have been lined up before us so we might look at them—so they might be beheld—that it comes as a surprise to realize that only one figure, the violinist himself, gazes directly out of the picture to meet our gaze head on. (This remains a stable feature of Manet's multigure paintings: no more than a single personage ever looks back at us. The nearest thing to an exception is *Olympia*, with its gazing courtesan and startled cat.)⁶⁶ The other male personages look distractedly elsewhere, as if at nothing in particular, an

impression underscored by the divergent gazes of the two boys as well as by the way in which the top-hatted figure to the right, based on Manet's earlier *Absinthe Drinker*, has been given only the vaguest indication of eyes. As for the young girl holding an infant at the left, her *profil perdu* amounts to the subversion of a traditionally absorptive motif. For example, in the art of Watteau, Manet's chief historical source for his presentational compositions, *profils perdus* function as indexes of interiority; in contrast, the profile of the young woman in the *Old Musician* seems merely a silhouette, a surface configuration that, far from evoking features lost to our view—and by implication the state of mind of someone lost in thought or feeling—confirms the facingness and nonabsorptiveness of the painting as a whole. The composition of Manet's painting thus differs fundamentally not only from the absorptive *mise-en-scène* of Legros's *Vocation of Saint Francis* and his immediately previous *Ex-Voto* but also, equally importantly, from the nonabsorptive but everywhere engaging group-portrait structure of Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix*, in which most of the personages look directly out of the canvas and all are meant to be perceived as distinct psychological presences (which is also to say that they seem *capable* of absorption). One way of describing the overall effect might be to say that the *Old Musician*, while voiding or suspending the psychological as such, possesses to a remarkable degree certain qualities Astruc was soon to associate with the portrait: it aims to instantly seize the beholder's gaze, and it seeks by its conspicuous lack of narrative or dramatic coherence as well as by various "formal" devices, such as every figure touching those next to it and the abrupt partial elision of the bearded man at the right by the framing edge, to compel the beholder to take it in as a whole, a single intense facing object of vision—a single *striking* object of vision. In my earlier recapitulation of the contrast between Courbet and Manet drawn in *Courbet's Realism* I said that I regard that too as a recurrent feature of Manet's art. In fact I regard the feature mentioned above—that no more than one figure gazes directly out of any painting of his—to be an expression of that pursuit of wholeness or singleness, so different in kind from the pursuit of unity of effect implicit in the absorptive ideal. It's as if the *Old Musician* itself—the painting, not just the figure—gazes at the beholder through a single pair of eyes, a formulation that makes the parallel with Astruc's theorization of the portrait even more to the point.

In an important sense, however, the differences between the *Vocation of St. Francis* and the *Old Musician* reveal a common aim or function.



Specifically, Legros's placing of four kneeling silhouetelike figures in an extremely shallow space, the cropping of those figures by the framing edge (Manet crops only the bearded man at the extreme right, who was added late in the making of the picture), and the deliberateness with which they have been forced into little more than half the surface area of the canvas, all imply the sort of abstract facing relation to the beholder I attributed to similar features of his *Ex-Voto*. Furthermore, the illuminated missal before which Francis kneels, like the painted image of the crucifixion in the *Ex-Voto*, is partly open to our gaze; not only that, the left-hand page contains a colored illustration of the Mother and Child (like the crucifixion, a picture within the picture); finally, Francis's bright red staff, which he seems to have just let slip from his grasp, all but leaps from the canvas to strike and seize our gaze. So despite Legros's commitment to an absorptive thematics, or rather in keeping with his predilection for an excessive version of such a thematics, the *Vocation of St. Francis* appears no less beholder oriented in certain vital respects than the *Old Musician*. In fact the *Old Musician* may well show the influence of the *Vocation*, which Manet would have seen when it was exhibited at Martinet's, his dealer too, in late 1861.⁶⁷

Now, to compare the *Old Musician* with Astruc's theorization of the portrait, or to say that it aims to instantly seize the beholder's gaze, is also to insist that it exemplifies what I have referred to, in my discussion of Astruc's remarks, as the quality of *instantaneousness*. Here too there is a parallel of sorts with Legros's *Vocation of St. Francis*, which presumably depicts the occasion when, kneeling with two companions before the altar in the church of St. Nicholas in Assisi, Francis opened the Gospels three times to learn from them the principles of the society he went on to found.⁶⁸ Actually, the scene depicted by Legros departs from the historical narrative by giving Francis three companions instead of two and by substituting an image for the text, or at least by suggesting that Francis has been transfixed by the image of the Mother and Child at which he seems to be looking. This contributes to a sense of instantaneousness that is lacking in the *Ex-Voto*: the burden of expression falls largely on Francis's hands, though what most vividly declares his inner excitement is the laserlike brilliance of his toppling staff and perhaps also the extreme forcing and cropping of the scene as a whole.

Manet's paintings aim at a different sort—indeed different sorts—of instantaneousness, but in order to make clear what this means a brief digression on temporality in painting is required. Simply put, there are two

fundamentally different, we might even say *limit* modes of the representation of temporality, each of which is based on a distinct property of easel painting. The first mode is that of sheer duration, keyed to the persistence, essentially unchanged over time, of easel paintings as material objects. To the extent that a painter chooses, consciously or otherwise, to align his representation with that particular fact about or property of the medium, he will depict subjects that are themselves essentially unchanging: still life, landscape, or, in the realm of figure painting, personages either absorbed, asleep (an extreme of absorption), or otherwise unmoving. In the chapter on Thomas Eakins in my book *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration* and elsewhere I have suggested that in Western painting at least since the seventeenth century an absorptive thematics has often provided a representational matrix for pictorial realism.⁶⁹ There are various reasons for this, not least important being the underlying accord between the implied temporality of the representation and the actual (or "material") temporality of the painting itself—which is to say that pictorial realism in the West has often involved a tacit or implicit illusion of the passage of time, of sheer duration, fully as much as a more obvious illusion of the solidity of objects. A large measure of the success of Fantin's absorptive portraits or for that matter his still lifes and flower pieces, which make no great show of the illusion of solidity, is based on the former.

At the opposite pole is the temporal mode of instantaneousness, which is keyed to a different "material" property or rather set of properties: that for all intents and purposes an easel painting is *all* surface, that every bit of that surface faces the beholder, and that, being physically limited in extent, an easel painting can be taken in all at once, "as a whole," in a single immeasurably brief *coup d'oeil*.⁷⁰ (Whether the human eye can actually do this is irrelevant; what matters is the viewer's conviction that it can and does.) The achieved unity of the absorptive *tableau* was meant to facilitate that process or conviction even as absorptive effects conduced to the temporal effect of duration, which is to say that the absorptive *tableau* was designed to offer the viewer immediate imaginative access to the depicted scene and then to hold the viewer indefinitely before a composition that with some exceptions—for example, the *Vocation of St. Francis*—was conspicuously *non*-instantaneous in nature. In the most characteristic of Manet's paintings of the 1860s, on the other hand, the emphasis falls squarely on instantaneousness as such, though exactly how varies from one painting to another (and as we shall see, in a number of his works instantaneousness coexists with something else, a stillness or held-

ness which nevertheless is not absorptive). My comments on the *Old Musician* suggest that instantaneousness there is a function of what, adapting Clement Greenberg, might be called “at-onceness,”⁷¹ but the early painting by Manet that most emphatically thematizes instantaneousness understood in this way is the *Street Singer* (pl. 7), which depicts a young woman (the model for whom was Victorine Meurent) leaving a café gripping a guitar with her left hand and balancing a bunch of cherries wrapped in yellow paper in the crook of her left arm while with her right hand she raises a few cherries to her (seemingly unopened) mouth. The green café doors, which a moment earlier presumably swung outward as she stepped across the threshold, are shown swinging back far enough to reveal a standing waiter in a white apron, one or two customers, and some hats on the far wall. The woman wears a gray dress and jacket with black trim, and from the lift of the folds and the glimpse of a white petticoat toward the front we recognize that she is in midstride. Her front-lit face is expressionless; she looks forward, though not directly at the viewer, as if emerging suddenly into the street she has yet to focus on her surroundings. Typically, the angle of the doors doesn’t quite work: she seems too near the doorway for the doors to have had time to rebound back into the space of the café. But the effect of their “wrongness” in combination with the chalky pallor of her face, the nonseeingness of her gaze, and the momentariness yet containedness of her actions is of a telescoping of time, an exploding into view, that perhaps was meant to capture something of the clamorous dark-into-light excitement of Rembrandt’s *Nightwatch* (a suggestion made in “Manet’s Sources”).⁷² Alternatively, the presentational mode of the *Street Singer* might be characterized as *revelation*—not just of the woman but also of the painting—and indeed I am tempted to compare Manet’s canvas with Raphael’s *Sistine Madonna* (1513?; fig. 146), in which the Virgin and Child in glory between Saints Sixtus and Barbara appear to have just been revealed to the viewer (they also appear to be moving toward him) by the immediately previous drawing of a curtain, and the iconographic meaning of which is precisely revelation, *revelatio*.⁷³ I mean this as an analogy, not as a historical connection, though I also mean the comparison with Raphael to resonate with Manet’s use of his art as a source in the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and elsewhere.

The *Street Singer* is anomalous in Manet’s oeuvre, perhaps because he realized that so direct and “actional” a thematization of instantaneousness would too greatly restrict his choice of subject, perhaps because he soon came to feel the need for a more complex treatment of instantane-



Figure 146. Raphael, *Sistine Madonna*, 1513?

ousness. In any case, his next major painting, the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* (pl. 3), took a different approach to the problem. In the first place, Manet derived from Marcantonio’s engraving the strong figural gestalt of the three seated figures in the foreground of his canvas, a gestalt which was widely perceived as stamping or cutting itself out against the landscape

surround with unexampled force. In the words of one critic, the pseudonymous Bourgeois de Paris: “Manet has the *qualities* necessary to be unanimously refused by all the juries in the word. His sharp and irritating color pierces the eyes like a steel saw; his figures circumscribe themselves as if by a jigsaw, with a roughness unsoftened by any compromise. He has all the harshness of green fruit that will never ripen. The critic-habitués of the cafés are transported by these beautiful canvases whose realism makes Courbet himself appear academic.”⁷⁴ As these remarks suggest, the effect of stamping-out or cutting-out (not to be confused with the modern notion of collage)⁷⁵ was also a function of Manet’s treatment of color, in particular the starkness with which he juxtaposed the light, almost shadowless flesh of the naked woman, the black jackets and gray trousers of the men beside her, and the intense acid green of the grass on which all three figures sit or half-recline. (More on the contrastive nature of Manet’s color further on.) Indeed Manet’s autograph tactic of suppressing half-tones was already evident in the face of the *Street Singer*, as Sandblad has remarked.⁷⁶ But it was first deployed extensively in the seated nude in the *Déjeuner*, and by 1867 if not before it was recognized as a basic feature of Manet’s style. It has usually been viewed as an assertion of flatness, which in a sense it was (or which in early retrospect it became); what has not sufficiently been remarked is that it was also a means of enforcing a certain rapidity of perception with respect to both the depicted figures and, beyond them, the painting as a whole: as if the traditional exploitation of half-tones to evoke solid forms in space had always tacitly invoked an awareness of the time that would be needed to explore so densely and minutely tactile a world (cf. my remarks on the relation between absorption and duration). Also pertinent (and rarely mentioned in this connection), Manet’s eschewal of dark-ground painting with its carefully prepared effects of transparency and opacity in favor of working directly on a white or lightly colored canvas not only facilitated his unorthodox rendering of form but also contributed to a dramatic shift toward temporal immediacy in his paintings, especially when contrasted with Courbet’s. “At first one is disquieted and surprised by its darkness,” Marc de Montifaud observed of one of Courbet’s dark-ground forest landscapes in the Salon of 1867, “but little by little one perceives that those masses of shadows detach themselves in an illumination that comes from the depths of the wood and which, gradually advancing past the background planes, reaches the principal planes by so measured, penetrating, and broadly distributed a transition that there isn’t a moss or a

lichen or a shrub that doesn’t spread out comfortably under the verdant caverns.”⁷⁷ The gradual, almost magical unfolding and resolving of a richly nuanced natural scene that such a passage evokes could not be farther from the abruptness with which Manet’s paintings announce themselves to the viewer.

Still another feature of the *Déjeuner* that conduces to an overall effect of instantaneousness is the notorious spatial ambiguity of the relations between the principal figure group and the bather in the middle distance. Without analyzing that ambiguity in detail, we can say that the bather seems larger than she should be given her apparent distance from the main group; put another way, her size together with her proximity to the gesturing hand of the half-reclining man at the right projects her disconcertingly toward the surface (or what Jean Clay has called the *superficies*) of the picture (see n. 135 below). This too discourages the notion of a slow-paced exploration of the picture space, which instead assumes a “revelatory” character perhaps most vividly expressed in the bullfinch frozen in flight at the upper center of the canvas—a detail I earlier connected with scenes of baptism and with religious painting generally but which I also see as emblemizing the notion of a representational act so lightning fast in its attack (so magical, in an opposite sense to Courbet’s) as to perfectly capture a bird in midflight (more on this shortly). Other paintings of the first half of the 1860s, notably *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* and the *Episode in a Bullfight* before Manet sliced it up, contain or contained similar ambiguities, which seem to have been both willed—Manet could not have been unaware of the sharply canted background in the first—and not entirely under control—hence his decision to destroy the original composition of the second.

So far I have said nothing about the outward gaze of the seated bather, or more broadly about the subversion of narrative and dramatic intelligibility in the figure group as a whole. Here too a certain context, at once historical and theoretical, is pertinent. Briefly, Diderot in the 1760s held that a history painting ought to represent a single narratively critical moment in the unfolding of a significant human action; and as he also made clear, this was possible—a given painting would be felt to dramatize such a moment, which is to say that the figures it comprised would be seen as wholly engaged in the precise phase of the action the painting represented—only if the action itself, and by implication the larger narrative-dramatic framework in which it was embedded, were made intelligible to the viewer more or less at first glance.⁷⁸ David’s major canvases of the 1780s, the

Belisarius Receiving Alms (1781), *Oath of the Horatii* (1785), *Death of Socrates* (1787), and *Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789), embody this conception and testify, by their commanding position within the Diderotian tradition, to its considerable power. By the mid-1790s, however, David himself had come to feel that the depiction of a single, indefinitely brief, psychologically charged, and morally exemplary moment was no longer artistically feasible, largely because the qualities of visual drama which that implied were now perceived by him as theatrical in the pejorative sense of exaggerated and overdone. Accordingly, he moved in the *Intervention of the Sabine Women* (1799) to a far less actively temporal mode of representation, one that would soon come to be seen as theatrical on quite other grounds: that the figures of Romulus, Tatius, and Hersilia appeared merely to be posing for the viewer rather than caught up in their actions and states of mind.⁷⁹ (The role of a dynamic of *posing* in Manet's art will concern us before we are done.)

This is not the place for even a summary history of the evocation of different modes of temporality in relation to various stages of the anti-theatrical project in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French painting, but it can at least be said that major painters as different as David (in the *Sabines* and *Leonidas at Thermopylae*), Géricault (in the *Raft of the Medusa*), Millet (in his peasant pictures), and Courbet (in works as diverse as the *After Dinner at Ornans*, *Wheat Sifters*, and *Sleep*) all found themselves compelled to pursue versions of an absorptive thematics that emphasized protracted temporal effects. In contrast, Manet's involvement with effects of instantaneousness marked a return to one of the basic aims of David's dramatic compositions of the 1780s. But except for a handful of works like the *Street Singer*, his concern with instantaneousness led him not to depict a moment in an action but rather to seek to evoke what came to be understood as the *instantaneousness of seeing, of visual perception, itself* (by "came to be understood" I mean to leave open the possibility that that characterization too need not be regarded as definitive). And one crucial strategy by which in the *Déjeuner* Manet sought to bring that about was by blatantly violating the demand for narrative and dramatic intelligibility. That is, Manet chose a compositional motif—based on Marcantonio's engraving—which, isolated on his canvas and treated more or less realistically, suggested that a conversation was taking place among the seated bather and her male companions. But he also deliberately and provocatively subverted that suggestion in sev-

eral ways: by the scandalous conjunction of carefully dressed men and unclothed women, which shifted the emphasis away from any possible exchange of thoughts to the outlandishness of the group as a whole; by the minutely calibrated nonreciprocity of gazes and gestures, a device that harks back to the *Old Musician* but is even more effective in the *Déjeuner* because the two men seem as if they should be looking at one another and yet are not and because the right-hand figure's "pointing" gesture is at once so attention-getting and so unreadable; by a mode of execution that contemporary viewers found incomprehensible (much more on this too below); above all—because most pointedly nonabsorptive—by the seated bather's deadpan though also slightly amused gaze directly out of the painting, which definitively forestalls all possibility of compositional closure.⁸⁰ And in fact contemporary critics both noted the conversational implications of the figure-group (one referred jokingly to the two men as "philosophers" while another described them as *rapins* talking esthetics)⁸¹ and expressed deep puzzlement over the painting's meaning; Pelloquet, as noted, called the *Déjeuner* a "rebus" and Louis Étienne considered it a "riddle."⁸² Even Thoré, positively inclined toward Manet as he was, complained that the nude was less than beautiful and that it would be impossible to imagine anything uglier than the man stretched out on the grass to the right "and who didn't even have the idea of removing, while out of doors, his horrible padded hat." He went on: "It's the contrast between an animal so antipathetic to the character of a country scene, with that bather without veils, which is shocking. I can't imagine what can have made an intelligent and distinguished artist choose so absurd a composition, which the elegance and charm of the personages might perhaps have justified."⁸³

Not that any critic in 1863 explicitly linked the unintelligibility of the *Déjeuner* with an overall impression of instantaneousness of perception. That would have to wait for the end of the decade, when Manet exhibited the *Luncheon in the Studio* (fig. 58) and the *Balcony* (pl. 8) in the Salon of 1869. Both paintings were widely criticized for the unreadability—also, by no means coincidentally, the facingness—of their subjects. "It's hard to know what these honest people are doing on their balcony," Paul Mantz wrote. "The accentuation of a type, the characterization of a feeling or an idea, would be sought in vain in this mindless painting."⁸⁴ (Accentuation, type, and characterization were notions linked with absorption, as we have seen. It may be, too, that the contrast with Carolus

Duran's immensely successful *Portrait of Mme **** [fig. 132] in the same Salon contributed to Mantz's and other critics' frustration with the *Balcony*.⁸⁵ Castagnary, a more searching critic, was equally puzzled:

What's the source of [Manet's] sterility? It's that while basing his art on nature, he neglects to make its aim the interpretation of life. He borrows his subjects from poets or takes them from his imagination; he isn't concerned to discover them in living usages. Whence, in his compositions, much of their arbitrariness. In the *Luncheon*, for example, I see on a table where coffee is served a half-peeled lemon and fresh oysters, but these objects don't go together. Why have they been put together then? I know very well why. Because Manet has to the highest extent a feeling for colored patches, because he excels in representing that which is inanimate, and, feeling himself superior in his still lifes, he is naturally inclined to paint them whenever possible. . . . And just as Manet brings together, solely for the pleasure of striking the eyes, still-life elements that belong apart, he also distributes his personages haphazardly, without anything necessary and forced in their composition. Whence the uncertainty and often the obscurity of his thought. What is the young man doing in the *Luncheon*, seated in the foreground and seeming to look out at the public? True, he is well painted, brushed by a vigorous hand; but where is he? In the dining room? In that case, having his back to the table, he has the wall between him and us, and his position no longer makes any sense. In the *Balcony*, I perceive two women, one very young. Are they two sisters? A mother and her daughter? I don't know. And then, one is seated and seems to have been placed solely to enjoy the spectacle of the street; the other puts her gloves on as if she is about to leave. These contradictory attitudes confuse me. Certainly, I like the color, and I willingly grant that Manet's sense of tone is accurate, often even pleasant. . . . But a feeling for functions, for appropriateness, is indispensable. . . . Like the personages in a play, it's necessary that every figure in a painting is in its proper plane, fulfills its role, and thereby contributes to the expression of the general idea. Nothing arbitrary and nothing superfluous, that is the law of all artistic composition.⁸⁶

(Actually, the gaze of the young man in the *Luncheon*, like that of the *Street Singer* or the two boys in the *Old Musician*, is not strictly frontal. And note how Castagnary is troubled by the young man's relation to an implied "fourth" wall, a staple of Western representation, only because he is facing out of the picture; if on the contrary he were shown leafing through a journal or peeling a fruit Castagnary would be content.) A few pages before, Castagnary had lauded Millet's *Knitting Lesson* (fig. 115) by saying, "It would be difficult to write a thought with greater precision, vigor, and harmony. Nothing is forgotten, and there isn't a single feature that doesn't contribute to the expression. As soon as you look, the author's intention is entirely revealed to you."⁸⁷ Such an intelligibility effect

was correlated with an impression of total absorptive coherence, and it contrasted fundamentally with Manet's refusal of such coherence—his refusal, on the "dramaturgical" level, of the necessary and the forced.

Or consider Marius Chaumelin's comments on the *Luncheon* and the *Balcony*, both of which exemplified for him Manet's desire to attract attention at any price (by 1869 this too was a cliché of Manet criticism, which endlessly repeated the weary tropes of Alcibiades cutting off his dog's tail so as to be noticed and of Manet firing a metaphorical pistol in the Salon for the same purpose).⁸⁸ "The first aspect of these two canvases is not agreeable, it must be recognized," Chaumelin wrote. "The personages, with the exception of the seated woman [Berthe Morisot in the *Balcony*], are not at all handsome, their faces have something morose and disagreeable about them, like the faces of persons who pose, and in fact all these figures have the air of saying to us: Look at me! They think of nothing else; we exclude from this criticism the man waiting for his coffee who tranquilly digests his luncheon without concerning himself with us [the smoker at the right of the *Luncheon*, who might be described as absorbed in reverie]. Thus, no expression, no feeling, no composition."⁸⁹ He went on to criticize Manet for insisting, despite his painter's temperament, "on reproducing subjects of repulsive vulgarity, types without character, scenes devoid of all interest."⁹⁰ And in a second "Salon" of that year he summed this up—more interestingly than he knew—by saying, "Manet has made the portrait of a *Balcony* and a *Luncheon*."⁹¹

A suggestively different note is struck, however, in Duranty's comments on the *Balcony*. "If one saw people on a balcony quickly in passing," he wrote, "one would have roughly the same impression as in Manet's painting, but if one prolonged the look, the impression would change; the whites and greens, for example, would lose their value, and the other colors would take on new values of their own. This is part of the secret of Manet's painting and of the opposition it arouses. He has always seized an impression of nature more quickly than, and therefore otherwise than, his critics."⁹² For Duranty the unintelligibility of the ensemble was the hallmark of a new, artistically legitimate, rapidity of seeing; put another way, what in this account of Manet's art took the place of the larger narrative of the *histoire* in David's history paintings of the 1780s was an implied narrative of perception in which the painter sought to represent a scene as it appeared to him *at a glance*. (Duranty's defense of the *Balcony* is all the more impressive in that he continued to prefer absorptive painting. The following year, after saying of Manet that "he throws

down [the heads in his paintings] promptly, summarily, brutally, and boldly, in a matte brightness, slightly chalky, suppressing the details” and “the violent effect of nature, the intense cruelty of its aspects, of its opposed notes, grips and dominates him,”⁹³ he all but pleaded with the painter to seek at last to evoke “the *expressive* feeling of modern life” by means of an imagery “admirably finished, admirably *drawn*, and complete in its power.” Otherwise, he wrote, “we won’t know any longer how to defend ourselves, how to justify ourselves in the face of the accusation ‘of liking the *incomprehensible* superiorities’ of a man for whom we have wished and predicted the triumphs owed to one of the foremost painters of our time.”⁹⁴

In the same spirit as Duranty in 1869, Armand Silvestre wrote in 1874 of *Le Chemin de fer* (1873; fig. 147): “If you happened to perceive a



Figure 147. Édouard Manet, *Le Chemin de fer*, 1873.

woman seated on the stone base of an iron railing and a child by her side, would it occur to you to analyze in depth this casual spectacle? Nevertheless it could happen that the scene would remain several moments before your eyes. It's that instantaneous impression that Manet has wanted to render, and there isn't any reason to defend him for not having pushed further the execution of such a motif." And a few lines further on: "One can regret that Manet didn't seek something else; but it's clear that he has rendered what he sought, that is, an immediate and very distinct impression."⁹⁵ (As it happens, another critic, Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, puzzled by and hostile to the *Chemin de fer*, raised the question of *its* status as a portrait, inadvertently echoing Chaumelin on Manet in 1869. "Is it a portrait of two persons or a *tableau* in a particular style?" he asked. "We don't have the information to resolve that problem; we hesitate even more in that as far as the young girl is concerned hers would be a portrait seen from the back. Manet has made so many innovations that nothing he might do could astonish us."⁹⁶ Duvergier de Hauranne was being ironic, but in the context of the argument I have been developing the notion that the young girl's back *faces* the beholder is far from absurd.)⁹⁷

As Silvestre's use of the term "instantaneous impression" might lead one to expect, the rise of Impressionism in the 1870s made the rapidity of perception an issue as it had never been before,⁹⁸ and by the 1880s it was widely accepted among Manet's admirers that the *speed* of his vision—even greater, it was sometimes said, than the speed of his hand—was a key, perhaps the key, to the look of his art.⁹⁹ My point, of course, is not that Manet actually saw nature faster than other artists but rather that, starting in the late 1860s, this was one of the effects his paintings produced.

Finally, though, it was Astruc who in 1863 had the most arresting things to say about Manet and what I have been calling instantaneousness:

Something worth noting is that, contrary to those great natural talents who prompt us at first to study their art in its material practice, he imposes and shows only its vital accent so to speak. It is the soul that strikes, it is the movement, the play of faces breathing life and action; the feeling that their looks convey, the expressive singularity of their roles. He pleases or displeases immediately, he charms, attracts, or repels quickly. The individuality is so strong that it escapes the mechanism of construction. The role of painting effaces itself to grant the creation all its metaphysical and corporeal value. Only much later does the gaze discover the forms of the execution, the elements which give meaning to the color, value to the relief, truth to the modeling.¹⁰⁰

In an obvious sense, as I suggest in “Manet’s Sources,” Astruc’s remarks contrast Manet with Courbet, the exemplary instance of those “great natural talents” whose work emphasizes “its material practice.” But what I want to stress is Astruc’s insistence on the “vital” immediacy of Manet’s art as well as his suggestion that that immediacy was intimately linked with the play of physiognomy, gesture, and gaze in the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and other works on view. Astruc doesn’t offer a narrative or dramatic reading of the *Déjeuner* however. Rather, his insistence on the “expressive singularity” of Manet’s figures comes close to attributing to them (and to the painting as a whole, or at least its “individuality”) a vitality that *precedes*, in the viewer’s experience, the “mechanism of construction” as regards not only the technical means of painting but also the relations among those figures and indeed the composition itself. Such a view was at odds with the prevailing opinion that Manet’s figures lacked vitality because their gestures and expressions were unreadable and because his execution systematically failed to discriminate between the faces of living persons and mere inanimate objects or accessories. But rather than discount Astruc’s observations as special pleading on behalf of his friend, we would do better to see in them a uniquely revealing response to the *Déjeuner* and its companion works and, what is more, an anticipation of his own distinction of five years later between the instantaneousness and strikingness of the portrait and the relative “slowness” and penetratingness of the *tableau*. (The verbs “impose” and “show” in the first sentence of the quoted passage point toward the facingness of the portrait, as does, in another register, the verb “effaces” a few sentences further on.) And this in turn suggests that Astruc’s theory of the portrait, which I have analogized to the abstractly facing aspects of the canvases of the generation of 1863 as well as to the *radically* facing character of Manet’s pictures of the 1860s, was largely based on his experience of Manet’s work.

The Question of Execution—Manet’s *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* and Moreau’s *Oedipus and the Sphinx* at the Salon of 1864

ASTRUC’S response to Manet’s paintings of 1863 was unusual in that it bracketed, made secondary, matters of execution and technique. Even Astruc, however, remarked in passing on certain “too-relaxed habits” in the

Déjeuner and added that he would have like to see “fewer of those qualities that belong to the spirit of art”—a reference, I assume, to Manet’s allusions to earlier painting—“and sometimes more consistency.”¹⁰¹ For Étienne the landscape in the *Déjeuner* was well treated but the figures were too slack, and in a rhetorical turn that would be repeated endlessly by Manet’s critics he offered as a corrective example Manet’s own early and relatively tame *Boy with a Sword* of 1861.¹⁰² Other writers too were uneasy with Manet’s execution, not only because of the absence of half-tones, the jarring colors, and the violent contrasts of light and dark, but also, crucially, because he appeared to stop too soon, leaving his canvases in an unfinished state—mere *esquisses* or *ébauches*, it was usually said. So for example Castagnary conceded that Manet’s paintings in the Refusés were good *ébauches* but felt that that was not enough. “Is that drawing?” he asked. “Is that painting? Manet thinks himself resolute and powerful, he is only hard; and the amazing thing is that he is as soft as he is hard. That is because he is uncertain about some things and leaves them to chance. Not one detail is given its precise and rigorous form.”¹⁰³ He added other criticisms and concluded by accusing Manet of lacking conviction and sincerity.¹⁰⁴ Ernest Fillonneau in 1863 associated Manet and Whistler with a way of painting “by *approximations* [*à peu près*], in which *parti pris* and will evidently play a larger role than knowledge and study.” One must not confuse, he added, “bizarreness with originality, rigidity with style, brutality with frankness, exaggeration with character.”¹⁰⁵ Gautier in 1864 said that Manet boldly attacked the *morceau* and that his coloristically unified figures resembled “the preparations of a master” (i.e. *ébauches*). “Unfortunately,” he added, “Manet systematically abandons them in that state and doesn’t push his work any further.”¹⁰⁶ (One year later his judgment was much harsher: Manet had lost the battle under the most favorable circumstances, his originality had become deformed and monstrous, the qualities that connoisseurs had discerned amid the chaos of his earlier work had been displaced by faults both natural and deliberate, etc.)¹⁰⁷ Also in 1864 Thoré alluded, not unsympathetically, to Manet’s *débauches*, an obvious play on words,¹⁰⁸ and in 1866 he wrote of Manet’s *Woman with a Parrot* (fig. 56), which he had seen in the painter’s studio, that it was an “*ébauche*, it’s true, like Watteau’s *Isle of Cythera* [*Embarkation for Cythera*] in the Louvre. Watteau would have been able to push his *ébauche* to the point of perfection. Manet is still struggling with that extreme difficulty of painting, namely how to finish certain parts of the picture in order to give the ensemble its



effective value.”¹⁰⁹ As I remark near the end of “Manet’s Sources,” Manet would have appreciated the comparison with Watteau, which perhaps reflects a conversation in the studio. But nothing more strongly underscores the difficulty of Manet’s project with respect to facture than that Thoré, wishing to support him and perfectly understanding the general terms of the problem, nevertheless felt that the *Woman with a Parrot* left something to be desired.

Another critic, Amédée Cantaloube, wrote in 1864 of Manet’s “impulsive, barbarously drawn *ébauches* and improvisations, where one discovers, it is true, some confused traces of the temperament of a colorist.”¹¹⁰ The next year, 1865, Cantaloube referred to “certain formless and grotesque *ébauches* that are causing a true scandal.”¹¹¹ In 1867 Théodore Duret wrote: “The worst reproach that can be made to Manet is perhaps that he works too fast and treats his *tableaux* too much as *esquisses*. His execution isn’t pushed to a sufficiently resolved point, his modeling lacks firmness, and these defects are particularly visible in his treatment of figures. For an artist to give his best, he must push qualities of form as far as possible, and Manet is self-condemned to remain well below what he could be because of painting too quickly and hastily.”¹¹² Duret was to become a passionate advocate of Manet’s painting and in fact was already a supporter in 1867 (the two had met in Madrid in 1865). But his natural taste was for absorptive painting (his admiration for Millet had no limit), and what we see in his comments on Manet is a not always successful attempt to come to terms with work he found difficult to understand. Castagnary, too, eventually came to appreciate Manet’s achievement across a temperamental divide that made aspects of the painter’s execution forever incomprehensible to him. In 1874 he praised Manet’s *Chemin de fer* for its treatment of light and tone, adding that “a lost profile gracefully indicated, a blue linen dress amply modeled, makes me overlook the unfinishedness of the faces and the hands.”¹¹³ And a year later he argued that Manet deserved a medal not only because of his influence on contemporary art but also because he was an absolutely conscientious artist who spared neither time nor effort to make his paintings as good as possible—but even then Castagnary could not resist adding that he wished Manet would “set the day further off when he judges he has attained the goal he set for himself.”¹¹⁴ In other words, he wished Manet would take still longer and finish his paintings.

The problem of Manet’s paintings’s execution—of their facture—continued to engage critics throughout his career and indeed after his

death. Two especially revealing responses appeared in 1863, that epochal moment not just for Manet but for his entire generation. The first comes from Pelloquet’s account of the Salon des Refusés, and it follows the passage cited earlier in which he took the *Déjeuner* to task for its failure even to seek to establish itself as a *tableau*. In that connection he complained that he couldn’t figure out Manet’s intention, with the result that the picture seemed to him nothing more than a large rebus whose meaning could never be guessed. He went on:

The execution [of the *Déjeuner*] is far from offering me sufficient compensation; it’s a rebus too. Here and there I see *morceaux* that come close to nature, particularly in one of the naked women and one of the heads in the foreground, but that’s not enough, the rest of the picture is of a wholly inexplicable incoherence. One can’t really designate this product of Manet’s labors as an *esquisse* or an *ébauche*. In an *esquisse* properly understood and properly executed, all the parts are rendered to the same degree.

Nothing explains or justifies Manet’s incoherence, his inequality of execution.¹¹⁵

This shows that for at least one critic in 1863, Manet’s violation of current norms of finish consisted, not in leaving his pictures in the condition of mere *esquisses* or *ébauches*, the usual complaint, but rather in eliciting an “inequality of execution” that made those paintings radically unintelligible on the plane of technique—a useful if largely negative insight.

The second, more complex response is by Carle Desnoyers (writing as Le Capitaine Pompilius), who, it will be recalled, compared Manet to Delacroix and said he possessed “the conviction, the power, the universality, that is to say, the stuff of great art.” Nevertheless, Desnoyers expressed certain reservations about Manet’s work:

If Manet’s *tableaux* were enveloped in their definitive form; if, down to that supreme touch that closes a work by energetically signing it with a magisterial stroke [*griffe*, literally “claw” or “talon,” figuratively “signature”], they affirmed the young master’s new principle, one might believe that the look of this healthy and vigorous art confounded or horrified the representatives of the moth-eaten school. Unfortunately, that’s not the case: the connoisseurs comprehend the exceptional qualities of this admirable *ébaucheur* with their first *coup d’oeil*; but for the public, for whom it’s necessary to dot the i’s, for the Institute, which esteems only painting that smacks of study and research, Manet’s compositions are barely able to pass, with respect to how they rendered, for approximations [*des à peu près*].¹¹⁶

And a paragraph further on:

He sees nature clearly and translates it simply, luminously. His large *tableau* of *Bathers* [the *Déjeuner*], placed on the wall at the rear of a room, creates, in the eyes of the beholder, the effect of an opening onto the countryside. All around it, the coarsest landscapes seem like faces that its male and vigorous colors have made go pale; but again, monsieur [Desnoyer's articles are ostensibly addressed to the editor of *Le Petit Journal*], you would see in it, like me, only a surprising, an admirable, *ébauche*; but no one could recognize in it the triumphant affirmation of a new art, because if everything that art requires of a master is indicated, nothing in it has the seal of work that has arrived at its completion.

In a word, such a work truly finished would be a solemn event. In the state that Manet has left it to us, it is only interesting; it is conditional, it is not effective.¹¹⁷

Like most other critics, Desnoyers called Manet an *ébaucheur* and the *Déjeuner* an *ébauche*. But he nevertheless saw in that canvas something like a new paradigm for ambitious painting—"the triumphant affirmation of a new art"—*except* for the matter of its execution, and even with respect to that he states that for a certain class of viewers, "connoisseurs," Manet's distinction was not in question. (These and similar remarks in numerous articles of the 1860s show that from the start Manet was supported by a not inconsequential group of viewers called "connoisseurs" or "amateurs," who, not being critics in the ordinary sense of the term, have left little written evidence of their activity. Among the critics, Duret and Philippe Burty were perhaps the closest to that group. Eventually, the point of view of the "connoisseurs" would be thematized by Duret in his preface to the catalogue for Manet's posthumous exhibition and sale of 1884.) This comes astonishingly close to ascribing to the *Déjeuner* the historical significance it acquired only decades later, if indeed the greater celebrity of *Olympia* hasn't led scholars permanently to underrate its predecessor—but the interest of Desnoyers's commentary doesn't stop there. His observation that the *Déjeuner* for all its virtues lacked or eschewed "that supreme touch that *closes* a work by energetically signing it with a magisterial stroke" (emphasis added) suggests that what contemporary viewers saw as the bizarreness of Manet's paintings' facture—the problem his execution offered even to those critics who, like Desnoyers, most believed in his abilities—may be understood as a further manifestation of his radical rejection of the ideal of closure that was both ground and aim of absorptive painting. ("Among all of them," Astruc wrote of Legros in 1863, "I recognize in him a strongly marked character:—the accent;—it [or he] is distinguished by a tighter facture, by a profoundly

studied construction."¹¹⁸ A tighter facture is exactly what Desnoyers missed in the *Déjeuner*.) And this suggests in turn that Manet, in his struggle against absorption, found himself compelled to seek not just an alternative compositional route to intensity and strikingness, but also an alternative mode of execution, one that would be consistent with, that would somehow "project," the facingness and instantaneousness that were his main resort. And it also suggests that the means by which he tried to bring this about not only were powerless to enforce such a reading, they threatened, by their glaring departure from traditional norms of finish, to doom his already difficult art to total incomprehensibility. Carle Desnoyers was one of several critics in 1863 who weren't personally repelled by Manet's technique (the truly violent reaction against it was still to come). But he recognized that the denial of closure on the plane of facture—a denial Pelloquet's remarks help us to understand—meant that Manet's paintings would appear to the public as settling for the *à peu près*, the merely approximate, which is exactly what happened. They would seem, they did seem, in Desnoyers' uncanny formulation, at best conditional, not effective: it would require the Impressionists and subsequent developments to *make* them effective, as if by deferred action—in French, *après-coup*—and at the cost of a massive simplification of Manet's achievement.

Two further points before leaving Desnoyers. First, the statement that the *Déjeuner* had the effect of making the coarsest landscapes in its vicinity seem like faces that had turned pale invokes the motif of faciality in an indirect but significant way. And second, I detect Desnoyers's authorial presence behind a highly intelligent paragraph on Manet's pictures in the Salon of 1865—*Olympia* and the *Christ Mocked*—by another pseudonymous critic, Rapinus Beaubleu. The paragraph reads:

My dear director [of the journal in which the review appeared], Manet surely doesn't pretend to have made two masterpieces, and I even think he could have gone much further with his paintings which, in certain parts, remain almost in the state of *esquisses*. A painter of such value ought to distrust his extreme facility which comes close in a way to improvisation. But that fault evinces an ardor, a vigor, and a temperament not at all common in our time. Manet is making great progress in his art: in the canvas *Christ Mocked*, there are *morceaux*, mainly the head of the soldier at the right, that are treated in an extremely remarkable manner. Also in *Olympia*, where the chest, the hands, in a word all the completed *morceaux*, could serve as a lesson to those malicious critics who, grimacing, work up the stupid crowd against an extremely live and original personality.¹¹⁹

Rapinus Beaubleu's remarks express the same support for Manet and the same mixture of sympathy and reservations regarding his execution as did Le Capitaine Pompilius's article of two years earlier. This in itself was unusual in 1865, but even more unusual was the view that Manet had been making great progress that could be seen in his treatment of various *morceaux* in both the *Christ Mocked* and *Olympia*. (Among those *morceaux* were Olympia's chest and hands, two areas that other critics singled out for abuse.) Indeed only one other writer, Alfred Sensier, had a good word to say about the *Christ Mocked*.¹²⁰ To the best of my knowledge, Carle Desnoyers's "Salons" of 1863 and 1865 are the only pieces of art criticism he ever wrote. But they establish him as potentially one of the most insightful and independent critics of his time.

As Alan Krell has remarked and as my citations of Thoré, Astruc, and Carle Desnoyers have shown, the critical response to Manet's works in the Refusés was far from uniformly negative.¹²¹ True, the *Déjeuner* in particular was treated roughly by the critics and provoked derisive laughter from the public. But Manet had his defenders, and the comments of various writers both for and against his art make clear that he was already viewed as the leader of the new generation of realists. The response to *Olympia* and the *Christ Mocked* in 1865 was much more negative, even violent, to the extent that the government was forced to post a gendarme to protect *Olympia* from angry viewers. But rather than add my own analysis of the criticism of that year to those of other historians,¹²² I shall look instead at the critical reaction to Manet's paintings in the previous Salon, that of 1864—the *Episode in a Bullfight* and *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* (pl. 6). The first of these was widely faulted for its treatment of spatial recession, and Manet subsequently cut it up, isolating and partly repainting the figure of the dead matador, which became the masterly *Dead Torero* in the National Gallery (fig. 51).¹²³ The *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* also took a critical beating, but what is fascinating and so far unnoted is that the terms in which it was attacked involved a highly charged comparison with another work, the sensation of the Salon of 1864 and quite possibly the painting that enjoyed the greatest success at any Salon of the 1860s: Gustave Moreau's *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (1864; pl. 14).

This may seem surprising. We tend to think of Moreau, the presiding genius of Huysmans's *À rebours* (1884), as the Symbolist painter par excellence. But in fact a major segment of his career belongs to the 1860s,

where it intersects dramatically with Manet's. Born in 1826 (six years before Manet), the young Moreau studied at the École des Beaux-Arts before becoming close to the painter Théodore Chassériau, under whose influence he painted several large canvases shown in the Salons of 1852 and 1853.¹²⁴ The death of Chassériau in 1856 and also, apparently, some mysterious disappointment the following year brought about a personal and artistic crisis; and in October 1857 Moreau left Paris for Italy, where he spent almost two years, visiting major centers and studying Renaissance and earlier art. On his return he worked laboriously, methodically, on various ambitious canvases until at last, with the *Oedipus*, he emerged from his self-imposed isolation.

In the most general terms, the *Oedipus* was hailed as an idealist work in opposition to the art of the young realists.¹²⁵ But the one large fault some critics found with it and the overriding virtues for which it was enthusiastically praised (and nothing is more impressive than the uniformity of the language of praise) both have close equivalents in contemporary discussions of their paintings. The fault concerned the *Oedipus*'s apparent stylistic dependence on Mantegna, still another example of the obsessive interest of painters of the 1860s in the art of the past. A few commentators were put off by this, and even Moreau's most fervent admirers found it necessary to defend the *Oedipus* against the dread charge of pastiche.¹²⁶ How persuasive their arguments seem today doesn't matter; what matters is that, as in the case of Ribot (and, in different ways, Legros, early Tissot, and Puvis de Chavannes), Moreau's involvement with earlier art colored the *look* of his painting and so attracted widespread notice—much more notice than was drawn by Manet's use of sources in his pictures in the same Salon.

Most critics, however, were swept off their feet by Moreau's canvas. Here for instance is Maxime Du Camp, whose admiration for the artist then and later was nearly boundless: "Moreau has left nothing to chance; everything he has done, he has willed to do like this. Each part of his painting is reasoned and pondered with serious concern."¹²⁷ The same thought was voiced by Saint-Victor: "The first impression is grand and profound: the painting springs out from among the canvases that surround it with a gripping strangeness. It gives off that idea of force that the will imprints on his works. Everything is concerted and premeditated in the work of Moreau; not a useless feature, not a detail that doesn't bear the imprint of reflection."¹²⁸ And here is Chesneau, a friend of the painter and a passionate admirer: "All the details, their form and disposition as

well as the general arrangement of the painting, have been meditated upon, reflected upon, and set down with intention. Every bit of the work from the smallest to the largest has been seriously *willed*.”¹²⁹ We might say that for most critics in 1864 Moreau’s canvas epitomized, gave ideal form to, the *transvaluation of willing* that I have argued was one of the key developments of the decade. And in fact much of the praise for the *Oedipus* involved a response to its powerfully absorptive interpretation of its subject. Even Thoré, who felt that as an specimen of the art of painting the *Oedipus* virtually didn’t exist (he contrasted it with Rembrandt’s *Syndics*), nevertheless acknowledged the power of its *mise-en-scène*: “[The Sphinx and Oedipus] are head to head, profile to profile, nose to nose, eye to eye. She magnetizes him with her feminine gaze, the irresistible one!”¹³⁰ Jean Rousseau too extolled the drama of their eye-to-eye encounter, adding that “Oedipus, who seems to look at [the Sphinx] without seeing her, appears wholly lost in the profound contemplation of a problem of life and death.”¹³¹ And de Sault described the picture’s overall effect in terms that we recognize as those of absorption: “One feels in it something at once profound, solemn, and intimate that conduces to reflection and imposes itself on the beholder’s meditations.”¹³² There is an element of fortuitousness in all this: the paintings Moreau went on to exhibit in subsequent Salons mainly departed from absorptive frameworks (the *Orpheus* of 1865 is an exception), and so increasingly were criticized as difficult and obscure, rebuses in their own right, although they also continued to have passionate supporters. The *Oedipus*, being strongly absorptive, was perfectly intelligible. Thus Cantaloube: “The subject treated by the painter is conveyed in the first impression and strongly strikes the mind, because the idea of it is plastic and not literary.”¹³³ But fortuitous or not, the runaway success of Moreau’s canvas had immediate consequences for Manet.

Partly because Manet’s *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* hung in the same room as the *Oedipus* (the Salon was organized alphabetically), the two works were widely viewed as contending with one another—which turned out to mean that the *Oedipus* was seen as showing up the many weaknesses of Manet’s art. The *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, it was felt, carried realism to an offensive extreme in its deliberately brutal treatment of the figure of Christ.¹³⁴ Nor could it in any sense be construed as absorptive: whereas the *Oedipus* staged a point-blank locking of gazes between two antagonists depicted in absolute profile, the composition of the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* stressed the principal figure’s facingness,

a quality further emphasized by the absence of shadows, by the surprisingly broad expanse of dazzling white drapery against which the dead Christ is displayed, and by what Jean Clay has described as the implied but also constrained movement of the figure of Christ and the drapery toward the painting’s *superficies*.¹³⁵ Moreover, the exact subject of Manet’s picture was felt to be obscure, not without good reason. On the basis of a letter from Baudelaire to the Marquis de Chennevières, I argued in “Manet’s Sources” that the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* depicts Christ’s resuscitation (a reading now generally accepted), but it can’t be said to do so perspicuously, and in any case the viewer remains unsure how to understand the actions of the angels and their relation to Christ (the angel with blue wings is clearly in motion, but how can that be reconciled with Christ’s mainly static pose?), the setting (inside a cave?—the lighting seems far too brilliant, and besides, there is the suggestion of a dark cave-mouth *behind* the figures), the significance of the inscription on the rock, and even the snake and snail shells in the extreme foreground.¹³⁶ (Not to mention the placing of Christ’s wound on the left-hand side of his body, which might or might not have been deliberate.)¹³⁷ No wonder critics were at a loss how to describe such a picture. Chesneau’s dismissive remarks about both Manet’s entries have already been quoted. For Castagnary the *Dead Christ* was simply “a nightmare upon which it isn’t good to rest your sight.”¹³⁸ And Saint-Victor, having criticized Ribot’s *Song of Songs* for burying itself in blackness and having said that the “faith of the coal man reigns in this school that would need to be chimney swept,” went on to exclaim, “But after Manet’s *Christ in the Cave*, supported by two winged chimney sweeps, *holà!*”¹³⁹—in effect throwing up his hands before a picture that was out of bounds.

Two further points of contrast were equally important. As we have seen, admirers of the *Oedipus* insisted, first, that its composition gave every indication of having been deeply pondered over a period of time, as if the picture’s interpretation of its subject were itself the outcome of a drawn-out absorptive process; and second, a related claim, that its character of having been manifestly *willed* in its entirety extended even or especially down to the most minute accessories, details, and incidents of facture, which are described in commentary after commentary as the ultimate *bearers* of the artist’s will, the sites where that will becomes most nearly palpable. The second point in particular caught the imagination of the critics. “The *rendering* is as finished as possible,” Du Camp said, “nothing has been neglected; the accessories as well as the personages

have been pushed to the extreme limit.”¹⁴⁰ Rousseau wrote that the *Oedipus* “shocks almost as much as it strikes the gaze by the inexorable authority of its drawing and the imperious precision of its facture . . . [Moreau’s painting] doesn’t try to succeed by strangeness [*bizarrieries*] of effect or of accessories, which is always easy, but by the pure perfection of the rendering, which is of the most obstinate degree of finish.”¹⁴¹ The word *bizarrieries* suggests that Rousseau had Manet in mind as Moreau’s antithesis, and in a second account of the same Salon Rousseau not only criticized Manet’s pictures for their looseness and for the lack of study that went into them but went on to say of Moreau: “One would have to be blind not to see in this work, so profoundly felt and so strongly, *surely* executed, the evidence of patient observation and long contemplation. Its unexpectedness has nothing eccentric about it; it’s that novelty which is encountered in truth itself, when one investigates in depth, and which in the sciences takes the name of discovery.”¹⁴² To quote Du Camp once more, this time from his “Salon of 1866”: “[Moreau] is in flagrant opposition to all his colleagues; he lets them pursue easy success, spend themselves on the sensual aspects of painting, and content themselves with equivocal approximations [*à peu près*] that attract some notice to their name. . . . He *wills*, that is visible, and I believe that he stops working on a painting only after having expended on perfecting it the entire sum of efforts of which he is capable.”¹⁴³

Elsewhere the contrast with Manet was more explicit. Lagrange contrasted “the *ébauches* by Manet, who will pardon us for leading him into such good company, [with] the serious attempt by Gustave Moreau.”¹⁴⁴ And de Sault, after noting that Manet’s picture hung near Moreau’s, addressed the reader directly:

Please, therefore, dear reader, pass from one to the other without transition. You recoil, the contrast shocks you? Ignore your disgust. You are the public, you have the mission of judging. Courage, then! Direct your gaze to the *Oedipus* that we leave to the right of this supposed Christ: compare feet with feet, hands with hands, drapery with drapery, the head of the sphinx with the heads of the angels.

—Ah, you will say, Manet or someone else could make lots of paintings like that in a year. —No doubt, and so much the worse. —But a painting like the *Oedipus* can’t be made so frequently. —Still worse; but at least the artist who would consecrate ten years to such a work would not have lost his time.¹⁴⁵

De Sault’s reference to hands and feet was not at all irrelevant. The rendering of extremities had been one of the keys to David’s pictorial reforms

in the 1780s—Paillot de Montabert, a former student of David’s, wrote in his *Traité de Peinture* that the right foot of the eldest of the three Horatii “contained an entire course of painting”¹⁴⁶—and eighty years later it was still widely considered that the treatment of hands and feet was an index of draughtsmanly and painterly skill. (The hands in Legros’s *Vocation of St. Francis* are superb, as are those in virtually any painting by Courbet.) What, then, are we to make—more important, what did Manet mean his viewers to make—of his depiction of Christ’s feet, one of the main focuses of the composition? (The right foot in particular seems about to move if it isn’t already taking a first, tentative, seated step.) We might think to say that the obvious distortions in their contours are an attempt to depict the swelling associated with the wounds from the nails; but that scarcely accounts for all that is odd about them, and it specifically doesn’t explain the strangely blurred “ball” that appears to float like a displaced extra toe toward the front of Christ’s right foot (fig. 148). (Or is it meant to be his big toe, seen as if partly from underneath?) Christ’s hands too present problems, with unreadable areas of fleshy paint compassed by too-thick lines, though their being shown palm up

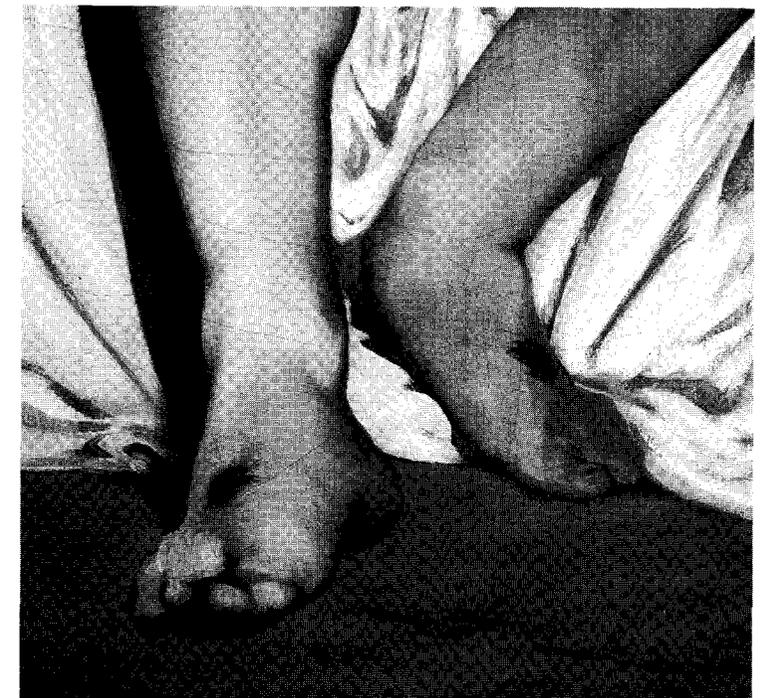


Figure 148. Édouard Manet, *The Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, 1864, detail of Christ’s feet.

meant that Manet was compelled to forego one of the most egregious features of hands in his pictures—the absence of fingernails.¹⁴⁷ The latter is perhaps the most distinctive marker in his work of a certain refusal to finish, to demonstrate the skill of his own “hand” in a manner that contemporary critics and the more sophisticated fraction of the public could have recognized as authoritative. But even without that negative detail the execution of the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* was if anything more conspicuously problematic—more resistant to closure—than that of the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*, while the contrast with Moreau’s *Oedipus* not only drew attention to its “unfinished” or, following Pelloquet, its “unequal” character (the modeling of much of the body having been done with great care and skill, albeit within Manet’s controlled tonal range) but also made that inequality seem even more arbitrary and indefensible than would otherwise have been the case.

(Manet’s unconventional attitude toward the depiction of hands may be sampled in four major pictures: *Olympia* [pl. 4], in which the aggressively foreshortened and vigorously brushed but nevertheless summary left hand jumped out at critics as a definite, toadlike presence against a body felt as pale, smudged, and unformed;¹⁴⁸ the closely related *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* [fig. 81], in which on the contrary the sitter’s left hand has been abandoned in the condition of the barest sketch; the *Chemin de fer* [fig. 147], in which the treatment of the young girl’s left hand and in particular of her thumb is sufficiently clawlike to keep open the question of sheer draughtsmanly competence; and *In the Conservatory* [1879; fig. 149], an almost excessively “finished” work but one in which the deliberate omission of Jules Guillemet’s fingernails is made all the more conspicuous by that fact, as well as by the prominence given to his and his wife’s hands at the center of the canvas.¹⁴⁹ By the same token, when Manet seemingly did “finish” a hand—significantly, one made loosely into a fist, with no fingernails showing—in the *Portrait of Émile Zola* (fig. 65; cf. Manet’s father’s hand in the *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* [fig. 40])—it was noted with approval by several critics, including Zola himself who called it “a marvel of execution” and went on to say, “If the entire portrait had been able to be pushed to the point [of finish] of that hand, the crowd itself would have cried out that it was a masterpiece.”¹⁵⁰ Did Zola mean to imply that the entire portrait *ought* to have been “pushed” that far, or that there was something in its internal logic that properly kept that from happening? Another critic who admired the depiction of Zola’s hand but in general was frustrated by Manet’s systematic neglect of extremities was

Castagnary.¹⁵¹ In his view Manet had never painted better than in *Le Bon Bock* [1873; fig. 150] but a question remained: “Why was it necessary for him to so neglect the extremities? The hands, being nearer than the rest of the figure, should logically be more tightly drawn than the latter. Why are they so deplorably slack? Given the progress that contemporary taste has made, I see only this cause of a quarrel between Manet and the serious portion of the public. Even if it were to cost him dearly, he should force himself very quickly to eliminate it.”¹⁵² Manet of course did nothing of the kind.)

Let me be clear about what I am saying. I am not claiming that Manet’s *Episode in a Bullfight* and *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* would not have come in for abuse if Moreau’s canvas had not been in the same Salon. I am suggesting that the comparison with the *Oedipus* crystallized an incipient frustration with Manet’s art—above all with its execution—and,



Figure 149. Édouard Manet, *In the Conservatory*, 1879.

one year before the scandal of *Olympia*, gave it much of its definitive rhetorical form (for the 1860s, at any rate). Moreau's was an intensely absorptive picture, wholly—in effect instantaneously—intelligible as regards subject, action, and *mise-en-scène*, and executed with a dry scru-

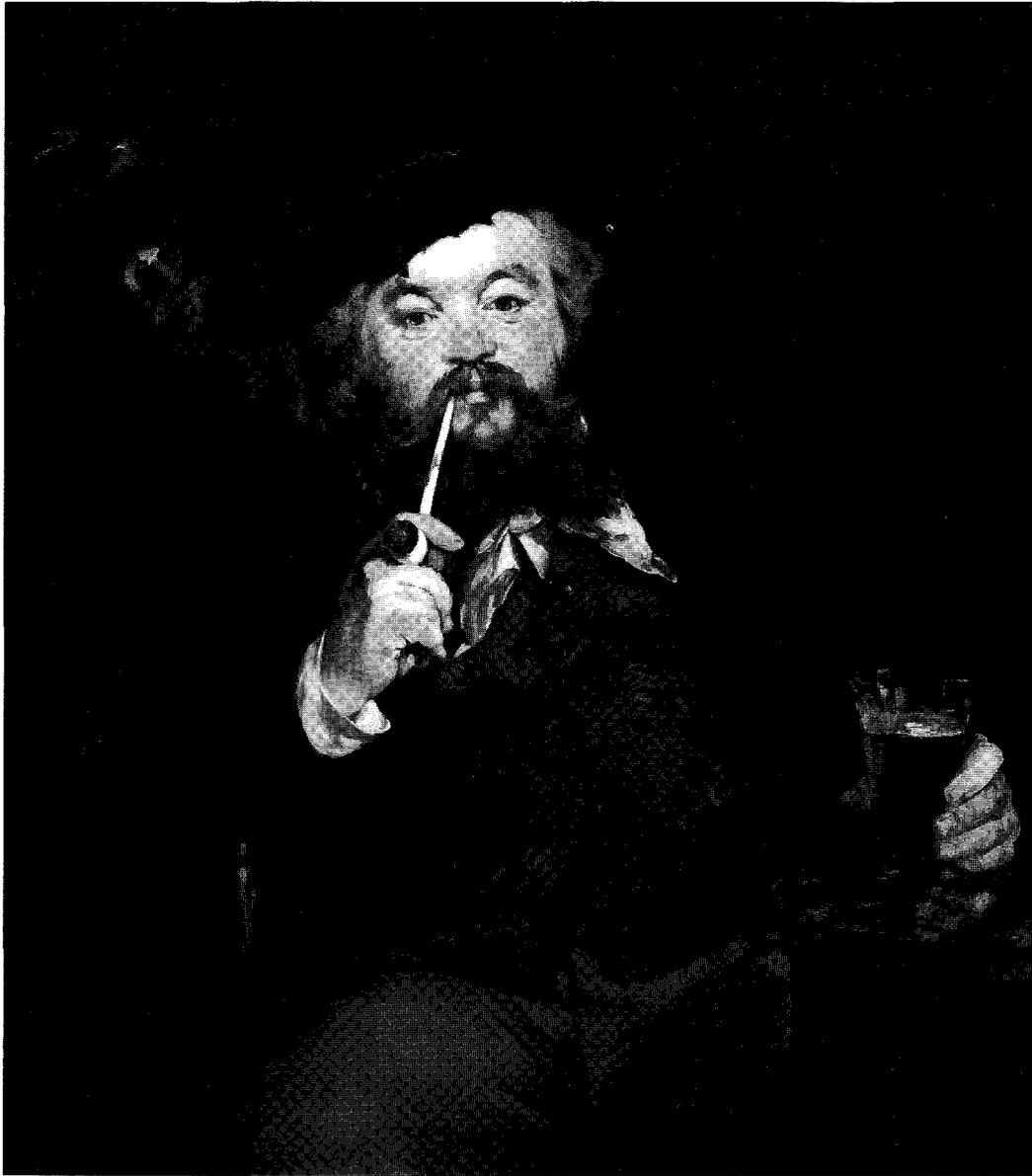


Figure 150. Édouard Manet, *Le Bon Bock*, 1873.

pulousness that seemed to the many critics whom it swept away to enforce, by a sovereign artistic will that determined even the smallest jewel-like details and incidents of handling, precisely the effects of closure that Carle Desnoyers had missed in the *Déjeuner* and that Manet in my account found it necessary to forgo. (Such a totalization of the dynamics of closure may perhaps be thought of as standing apart from the tendency toward internal division that I have associated with works by Legros, Fantin, Whistler, Ribot, and Carolus Duran and that the *Oedipus*'s own hypostatization of willing would seem to have made inevitable.) Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* in contrast seemed incomprehensible, provocative, crudely drawn, hastily painted, in short conceived and executed with blatant disregard for accepted norms of intellectual decorum, pictorial coherence, and technical competence. It may even be that comparison with Moreau's art then and later promoted a further distinction, between *will*, understood as the strong form of an artistically legitimate intention, and mere *parti pris*, understood as a perverse taste for extremity for its own sake or say a desire to attract attention at any price. "Manet's talent has a decisive aspect that strikes," Astruc had written in 1863.¹⁵³ The contrast with Moreau helped ensure that that aspect would for a time mainly be seen in negative terms.*

*The critical "competition" between Manet and Moreau that began in 1864 had other consequences as well. For example, Gautier in 1865 described Moreau's particular audience as follows: "[His art is] a dish for the delicate, for dreamers, for the blasé, for those for whom nature isn't sufficient any more and who seek beyond it a sharper, more bizarre sensation. To these minds the true appears common; they have need of the strange, the supernatural, the fantastic; hashish suits them better than wine. Their favorite author is Edgar Poe; their painter might well be Gustave Moreau. Don't his figures have, like those of the American poet, the character of an apparition, a sort of death in life, disquieting, a mysterious pallor and a taste for precious and baroque apparel?" ("Salon de 1865," *Le Moniteur universel*, July 9, 1865). (C'est un mets pour les délicats, pour les rêveurs, pour les blasés, pour ceux à qui la nature ne suffit plus, et qui cherchent au delà une sensation plus âpre, plus bizarre. A ces esprits le vrai paraît commun; ils ont besoin d'étrange, de surnaturel, de fantasmatique; le haschisch leur va mieux que le vin. Leur auteur favori est Edgar Poë; leur peintre pourrait bien être M. Gustave Moreau. Ses figures n'ont-elles pas, comme celles du poète américain, le caractère de l'apparition, une sorte de vie morte, inquiétante, une pâleur mystérieuse et un goût d'ajustement à la fois précieux et baroque?) Gautier's description of Moreau's Poe-like figures seems alien to Manet's art, though his remarks about their "apparitional" character recall others' accounts of Whistler's *Woman in White* in the Refusés. But what leaps to view is that the ideal audience Gautier assigned to Moreau was markedly *Baudelairean*, which is to say that it was one that, characterized slightly differently, might have been expected to support Manet's art. (A further sign of this is that the epithets *âpre* and *bizarre* had previously been applied to Manet's painting by various critics.) With Baudelaire *hors de combat* in Brussels, there was no one to protest this deed of gift by the dedicatee of *Les Fleurs du mal*.

Stillness versus Speed—Internal Disparity and the Idea of a “Remainder”—Photography and Japanese Prints—The Question of the Model

IN DISCUSSING the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* (pl. 6) I mentioned the difficulty presented by the juxtaposition of the brightly lit angel with blue wings, whose flowing hair and golden yellow garment imply that it has just entered the scene from somewhere off to the right (and perhaps also from above), and the figure of Christ, who may be in the first stages of resurrection but whose seated pose impresses the viewer as mainly static. Moreover, one’s sense of difficulty is heightened by the mystery of the angel’s left arm as it disappears behind some folds of white drapery: are we meant to think that it supports Christ’s left arm from behind? But how exactly would that work? And in any case the unreal treatment of the white drapery and characteristically oversoft—too gently curving—drawing of the angel’s arm discourage us from taking this portion of the scene literally, so to speak. It’s as though the angel and Christ are simply sutured together, without regard to any credible dramatic or “actional” relation between them.

Now, the juxtaposition in question—roughly speaking, of movement and stillness—is emblematic of a fundamental tension in Manet’s art, where it takes a variety of forms. In *Olympia* (pl. 4) for example, there is a similar failure of fit between the static, facing figure of the naked courtesan and the much less stable figure of the black maid, who presents or rather displays a bouquet wrapped in paper to her mistress, who in turn pays her not the slightest attention, as a journalist remarked in 1882.¹⁵⁴ (Even if we imagine that a spectator or customer has just appeared on the threshold of Olympia’s bedroom, attracting her attention and that of her cat, Olympia’s pose and gaze resist being read in terms of a momentary response.) Moreover, the bouquet itself is extremely thinly painted, as if to reinforce the sense of lack of coordination, of unspecifiable disparity, between the two figures. (The bouquet is a more conspicuous emblem of inequality of execution than anything in the principal figure group in the *Déjeuner*.)¹⁵⁵ The original version of the *Episode in a Bullfight* with its dead matador, striding bull, and attendant *toreros* may have offered a comparable effect of internal disparity, all the more so in that its highly problematic treatment of space seems to have had the effect of pitting foreground and background (in Hector de Callias’s account, foreground, middle distance, and background) against one another.¹⁵⁶ Finally, the

Balcony (pl. 8) from the end of the 1860s juxtaposes the darkly handsome, strongly gazing, and, partly for that reason, vividly “present” seated figure of Berthe Morisot with the much less assertively rendered (Georges Bataille’s term is “atonic”) standing figures of Antoine Guillemet and Fanny Claus,¹⁵⁷ both of whom seem in actual or imminent motion, but of what sort and to what end? (The deliberate minimizing of Guillemet’s and Klaus’s gazes—also the mutual divergence of all three gazes—recall similar tactics in the *Old Musician*.) The tiny dog at Morisot’s feet presents a further challenge to accepted norms of artistic competence; even today it may be felt to ask too much of the most sympathetic viewer. And the small tricolor ball at the bottom of the canvas is, as Françoise Cachin says, “at the same time a patch of color, an ironic period to Morisot’s grave presence, and a tribute to the passing moment”¹⁵⁸—which is to say that it too takes part in the tension between movement and stillness that threatens to divide the painting from within. (How, we may ask, does all this bear on the impression of instantaneousness of perception that Duranty attributed to the *Balcony*? It *might* be argued that a rapid glance at an actual scene could focus at most on a single figure, in this case Berthe Morisot, leaving the rest comparatively unresolved. That would be a “realist” or proto-“impressionist” reading of the aspects of the *Balcony* I have been describing. But by now it should be clear that they are far too extreme and unsystematic to be rationalized in that way.)

A related form of internal disparity is the contrast in Manet’s art between a static figure or figure-group, typically representing figures the “originals” of whom one feels to have posed for the painter, and the seemingly rapid, quasi-improvisational paint handling with which that figure or figure-group has been depicted. More broadly, the contrast is between the implied *stillness* of a given motif and the apparent *speed* of the brushwork. The awareness, conscious or subliminal, of such a contrast produces a “moment” (of indefinite duration) of cognitive dissonance that Manet’s critics found disorienting and that is by no means simple to conceptualize. May we say provisionally that the effect is of a kind of *freezing*, both on the level of execution, the rapidity of which is at odds with the static forms it describes, and that of the motif, the stillness of which is made to seem conspicuous, even in a sense obtrusive, by the speed of the paint handling? Sometimes the situation is even more complex than such a formulation suggests. Consider two small but significant motifs in the *Déjeuner* that by virtue of subject matter and placement invite being seen in relation to one another: the meticulously rendered bull-



Figure 151. Édouard Manet, *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, 1862–63, detail of bullfinch.

finch in flight at the upper center (fig. 151) and the loosely brushed frog at the lower left (fig. 152).¹⁵⁹ In obvious respects, both emblemize “speed”—in the first case, speed of *seeing*, capable of freezing the bird visually in flight, and, in the second, speed of *rendering*, expressed in the dashing, calligraphic brushwork. But the distinction isn’t absolute: to capture the bird in its fullness of detail *in the moment of vision* would require an even greater speed of execution than would calligraphically depicting the squatting frog, while seeing the frog in a way that would match or motivate the rapidity of the brushwork with which it has been painted would require a preternaturally fast or rather *fleeting* act of vision as well. In the end one can only say that the bullfinch and the frog may be understood as two mutually complementary emblems of speed or instantaneousness or freezingness in painting, but that the terms of that complementarity cannot be reduced to or stabilized as an opposition between eye and hand; rather, each motif implies a different and equally hyperbolic concatenation of the two. Put slightly differently, the juxtaposition of the two motifs in the *Déjeuner* insists on the mutual *entanglement* of eye and hand, seeing and rendering, as against any clear-cut distinction between them. This will be pertinent to the brief discussion of Manet’s *Self-Portrait with a Palette* in chapter 5, and it also should be borne in



Figure 152. Édouard Manet, *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, 1862–63, detail of frog.

mind when reading the sentence in Mallarmé’s “Édouard Manet” (one of the epigraphs to this book) in which he recalls Manet saying “‘The eye, a hand . . .’”¹⁶⁰—the ellipsis perhaps implying that the connection between the two remained mysterious even to the painter.

Contrast or opposition between stillness and speed is also brilliantly thematized in one of Manet’s most original works of the first half of the 1860s, *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne* (1864).¹⁶¹ The canvas itself no longer exists; after exhibiting it at Martinet’s in 1865 (if in fact it was not among several works Manet withdrew at the last moment), he soon cut it into pieces of which only two survive. Fortunately we have a highly finished watercolor of the entire composition, usually called *Races at Longchamps* (pl. 15), which may be taken as indicating the principal features of the oil painting. Those features include unusual proportions—Reff has estimated that the original painting measured about two and one-half feet high by six and one-half feet wide—and a daring division of the composition into two roughly equal halves, that on the left comprising a view of the grandstand full of spectators and that on the right offering a vista down the racetrack where, in the middle distance, six horses gallop directly toward the viewer. What is more, Manet exploited the division to juxtapose two fundamentally different modes of execution, the



first, descriptive of the spectators, relatively careful and deliberate, the second, rendering the horses and their riders, extremely rapid and sketchy. (The two halves of *Races at Longchamps* thus thematize the difference in execution we have been discussing more systematically or mimetically than the bird and frog in the *Déjeuner*: deliberateness is aligned with stillness, sketchiness with speed, whereas in the *Déjeuner* it was the other way round. At the same time, the starkness of the opposition between the two halves of the painting gives that difference in execution a perspicuousness that goes far beyond anything in Manet's previous work.)

The overall impression is that most of the spectators are looking away from the viewer up the track (several carriages in the left foreground and middle distance have been depicted largely from behind). Typically, however, Manet has minimized one's sense of the spectators as engrossed in the spectacle by focusing primarily on a small group of fashionable figures in the middle foreground—two women with umbrellas and a man in a top hat—who bear a different, not quite specifiable, relation to the scene as a whole. In particular the woman nearest us seems detached from the race itself (her face, turned toward us, is featureless, though of course it would not have been in the finished oil), as does the mounted horseman in profile over toward the left, who, we feel, could not see the race from where he sits even if he wished to do so. One might think that the central figures would moderate the abruptness of the disjunction between the two halves of the pictorial field, but that isn't the case; rather, they exacerbate it by focusing attention on the zone of suture as well as by declining to take part in an absorptive dynamics that could at least have unified the audience of spectators in something like psychological terms. This suggests that what would perhaps have been most difficult about the *View of a Race* for contemporary audiences would not have been the impression that the horses were thundering directly toward the beholder, or the boldness with which the composition was divided, or even the starkness of the distinction between different modes of execution, so much as the painter's refusal to allow the two halves of the composition to *simply* contrast with one another, that is, to fit together without a certain obdurate, unsumable, in that respect unintelligible *remainder*.¹⁶² A further operator of that refusal in the watercolor is the upright distance marker topped with an open circle just to the right of the center of the composition. Not only does the circle (which rises just above the curving hillside in the distance and so is silhouetted against the sky) magnetically attract the viewer's gaze, drawing it away from both the onrushing horses and the

mass of spectators; it also might be said, without stretching the facts, to *gaze back* at the viewer, which is to say that it plays an equivalent role to that of the deadpan facing gaze of Victorine Meurent in the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*. Indeed in its emptiness and abstractness it may be the purest emblem in Manet's art of a face or an eye that, for all its liveness of address, lacks the merest hint of a psychology, of subjective "depth" (cf. the featureless face of the nearest woman).^{*} Nothing in the finished painting would have been more striking than that circle, the eccentric force of which possibly exceeded Manet's calculations. At any rate, in the narrow-focus version in oils of the *Races at Longchamps* that Manet painted around 1867 (fig. 154), he not only brought the horses and jockeys much nearer the viewer, he also lowered the marker and circle, thereby diminishing their allure.¹⁶³

A more general expression of the contrast or opposition between stillness and speed in Manet's art concerns the relation of his painting to photography on the one hand and to Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints on the other. As regards the first of these, Manet undoubtedly made use of photographs to supplement or take the place of working from the live model in at least a few paintings of the 1860s. So for example Sandblad, Aaron Scharf, Boime, Wilson-Bareau, and others have stressed his reliance, in the course of working on the *Execution of Maximilian*, on photographs of Maximilian, his generals Mejía and Miramón, and members of the firing squad that performed the execution.¹⁶⁴ More recently, Elizabeth Anne McCauley in her study of A.-A.-E. Disdéri has shown the likelihood that Manet's paintings of Mariano Camprubi and his troupe of Spanish dancers who performed at the Hippodrome in August 1862 were based in part on *carte de visite* portrait photographs of the dancers, and has argued that other *cartes* of women in the dress of Spanish bullfighters were

^{*}Two other such emblems in Manet's art come to mind. First, the hovering "eye" in the lower of the two peacock feathers that, wedged behind the frame containing several prints at the upper right of Manet's *Portrait of Émile Zola*, arch directly over Zola's head. As Reff has remarked, the feathers can more readily be seen in old photographs of the picture (fig. 153) than in the latter in its present state ("Manet's Portrait of Zola," *Burlington Magazine* 117 [Jan. 1975]: 43). Reff has also suggested that the feathers represent "a modern version of the crowning of the triumphant poet" (pp. 43–44). Whether or not this was Manet's intention, the "eye" in the feather may be seen as looking at the viewer, unlike the figure of Zola, whose abstracted, off-canvas gaze was felt to be unreadable.

A second, more complex instance is that of the sunflower at the upper right of *Le Lingé* (1876; fig. 188), a motif that connotes gazing at, hence stands for, the sun, source of daylight and therefore, indirectly, of both vision and painting (see coda, fn.).

among Manet's sources for *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*.¹⁶⁵ (Actually she goes further, claiming that in view of such sources "there is no need to posit the influence of Raimondi prints or popular images on this figure, as Beatrice Farwell and others have done."¹⁶⁶ There is every



Figure 153. Édouard Manet, *Portrait of Émile Zola*, 1868, early photograph showing ostrich feathers clearly.

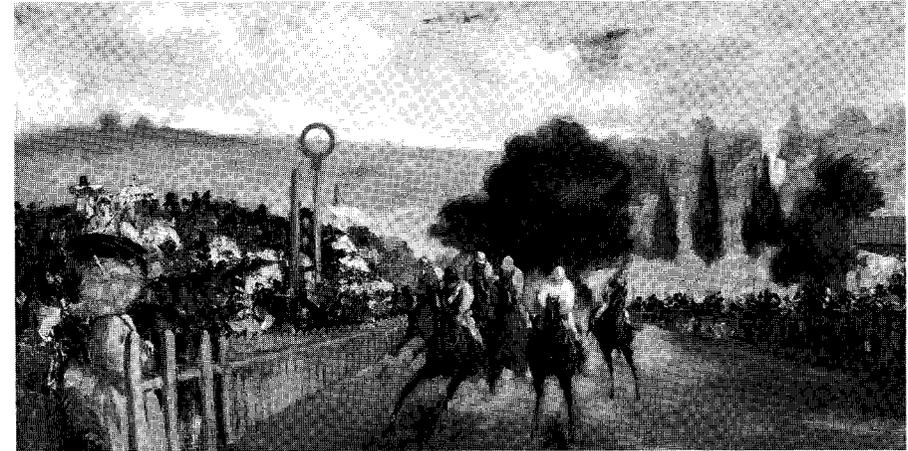


Figure 154. Édouard Manet, *Races at Longchamps*, 1867.

need to do so, for reasons that don't call for reiteration.) In addition, Farwell, Gerald Needham, and McCauley have drawn attention to certain obvious affinities between the depiction of Victorine Meurent in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia* and the pose and lighting in various photographic studies of nudes of the 1850s and 1860s.¹⁶⁷ In fact Farwell has published a group of photographs taken in 1852–53 of a young woman in various stages of undress whom she identifies as the youthful Meurent, which would make Manet's favorite model of the early 1860s a photographic model as well, and has suggested that *Olympia* in particular may partly have been based on a photograph that no longer survives.¹⁶⁸ (Cf. Jean Clay on *Olympia*: "In some way, what [Manet] painted was not Victorine Meurent but her photograph, not her image but a reproduction of it—in accordance with the code for pornographic albums of the period.")¹⁶⁹ But more important than Manet's use of specific photographic images or, in *Olympia*, his adaptation of various conventions of pornographic or near-pornographic photography is what Farwell and others have seen as his deliberate exploitation in a number of paintings of the 1860s of certain broadly photographic effects, above all, first, the contemporary photograph's emphasis on abrupt contrasts between areas of light and shadow with a consequent suppression of half-tones and interior modeling,¹⁷⁰ and second, the impression the *carte de visite* inescapably conveyed that the sitter knowingly posed for the photographer. (By the early 1860s exposure times for the portrait photograph were down to a few seconds, but that was long enough to rule out all spontaneous facial

expression and to require the sitter to make an effort not to move; Disdéri and other operators employed chairs equipped with headrests to help their clients hold still.)¹⁷¹ As Disdéri recognized, a highly problematic consciousness of being beheld was thus inescapably inscribed within the contemporary photograph,¹⁷² which is to say that Manet's engagement with the photograph was, also inescapably, an engagement with its particular mode of theatricality.

As for Manet's involvement with Japanese woodblocks, exact information has proven hard to come by. Owing largely to Sandblad, it is now recognized that Japanese woodblocks and other art objects began to enter Paris in the mid-1850s, and that Manet, Fantin, Whistler, Tissot, Degas, Astruc, Burty, and Chesneau were among the earliest enthusiasts for them.¹⁷³ Sandblad also argued that Manet's interest in the woodblocks' "simplified form, concentration on surfaces, completely undifferentiated areas of color, and circumscribing contours" made its first appearance in some of the faces in the *Music in the Tuileries* and quickly became a major factor in works such as the *Street Singer*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, *Olympia*, and *Episode in a Bullfight*.¹⁷⁴ (Recall my claim in chapters 1 and 2 that Manet began to acknowledge Japanese art, as distinct from simply make use of it, only after the Exposition Universelle of 1867, in which Japan was strongly represented. The *Portrait of Émile Zola*—with its conjunction of a Japanese woodblock, an etching or lithograph of Velásquez's *Drinkers*, and an etching or photograph of *Olympia* within a frame in the upper right-hand portion of the picture—set a seal on that development.) Except for the image in the *Zola*, which has been identified as a portrait of a sumo wrestler by Kuniaki II,¹⁷⁵ we don't know which particular woodblocks Manet most admired, but it seems likely that he was impressed by the many prints that portray the actors, famous beauties, courtesans, wrestlers, and other types who peopled the pleasure quarter (or "floating world," *ukiyo-e*) of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Edo (modern Tokyo), a realm, as Stephen Melville has noted, that itself was quintessentially theatrical. Indeed in woodblocks by Sharaku and others of actors in their roles the already heightened theatricality of Kabuki is further intensified to a degree that in the West could only be described as caricatural.¹⁷⁶ Inasmuch as theatricality implies awareness of being beheld, we might say that the exaggerated, grinning facial expressions and elaborate surface patterning and detailing of the *ukiyo-e* woodblock and the sense of a pose being held in the conspicuously *inexpressive* and generally "inartistic" *carte de visite* photo-

graph have something basic in common across the obvious differences between the two classes of artifacts.¹⁷⁷ But there is more than that to the relation between contemporary photography and Japanese woodblocks in Manet's art.

I suggest that in Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s photography and Japanese woodblocks *interpret* one another. More precisely, I suggest that they may be seen as analogous to one another not just as kinds of images but as *technologies*, and that on the strength of that analogy each became the vehicle of the other's pertinence to and utilization within his art. What does this mean? It means that for all intents and purposes Manet imagined photographs—which in the early 1860s visibly bore the marks of a certain constitutive duration (i.e. stillness, heldness)—to have been produced *as if* instantaneously, in a flash or rather by a blow, a single powerful woodblock-like *impression*. (In fact a multicolor woodblock required separate impressions for different color areas. But the conviction the finished work gives rise to is of a single act of stamping out.)¹⁷⁸ Conversely, it means that for all intents and purposes Manet imagined the woodblock's continuous contours and clearly demarcated zones of strong, mostly ungraded color to be not just equivalent to but so to speak a version of the simplified "drawing" and abrupt light-dark zoning of the contemporary photograph. This is why those features of his works of the first half of the 1860s that seem most woodblock-like—in *Olympia*, for example, the sharply contoured areas of unmodulated color—also seem most photographic: for all their coloristic intensity, the areas in question are first and foremost contrasted as regards light and dark, so much so that the dark brown face of the maid all but disappears into the dark green curtains behind her at the same time as her bright pink gown and the white paper around the bouquet threaten to come detached from her face and hand and to meld spatially with the figure of Olympia and the shawl on which she lies. This is also why the shock of red brown hair to the right of Olympia's head that T. J. Clark was the first to draw attention to is so difficult to see and, once seen, to keep in focus.¹⁷⁹ (Note by the way that fully as much as the absence of half-tones it's the extreme value contrast between adjacent areas in the *Olympia* that provokes the view that the two figures are flat: the silhouette of the maid's hand and fingers seems paper-thin. Here as elsewhere in this book I have resisted construing "flatness" as a primary aim of Manet's procedures.) More important, imagining Japanese woodblocks as virtual photographs carried with it the extraordinary suggestion that the act of imprinting by which

they were produced was in crucial respects the work of *reality itself*: as though *only* reality could have been fully adequate to the strikingness Manet sought, that is, could have stamped itself out (and *in*, compelling conviction) with sufficient force to make up for the sacrifice of the “excessive” effects of absorption that were the pictorial matrix—the source of the strikingness—of the art of other members of the generation of 1863.* (Cf. Stanley Cavell: “Painting, in Manet, was *forced* to forgo likeness exactly because of its own obsession with reality, because the illusions it had learned to create did not provide the conviction in reality, the connection with reality, that it craved.”¹⁸⁰ The temporary recovery of both in a new form stares boldly from the *Portrait of Victorine Meurent* [fig. 126], a work that encapsulates Manet’s involvement with photography and Japanese art.) In sum, it was by reconceiving the contemporary portrait photograph as a special sort of color woodblock that Manet was able to reconcile the former with his pursuit of the instantaneous and the striking, just as it was by reconceiving the Japanese color woodblock as a special sort of photograph that he was able to make it serve his fundamental, generational, commitment to pictorial realism. (Mary Cassatt’s “Japanese” color prints of 1890–91 show that neither connection was inevitable.¹⁸¹ The same might be said about various Bracquemond etchings of the 1860s.) Nothing better illustrates the particular historicity of

*The phrase between parentheses is taken from the first paragraph of my essay “Shape as Form: Frank Stella’s New Paintings” (originally published in *Artforum* in 1966), in Henry Geldzahler, ed., *New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940–1970* (New York, 1969), p. 403. The essay opens as follows:

Frank Stella’s new paintings investigate the viability of shape as such. By *shape as such* I mean not merely the silhouette of the support (which I shall call literal shape), not merely that of the outlines of elements in a given picture (which I shall call depicted shape), but shape as a medium within which choices about both literal and depicted shapes are made, and made mutually responsive. And by the viability of shape, I mean its power to hold, to stamp itself out, and *in*—as verisimilitude and narrative and symbolism used to impress themselves—compelling conviction. Stella’s undertaking in these paintings is therapeutic: to restore shape to health, at least temporarily, though of course its implied “sickness” is simply the other face of the unprecedented importance shape has assumed in the finest Modernist painting of the past several years—most notably, in the work of Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski.

I recycle my earlier language in the present context not just to dramatize what I take to be a shared concern with *stamping* (out and *in*) on the part of “advanced” painters of the 1860s and the 1960s but also by way of suggesting that the topos of “conviction” as I have repeatedly invoked it in my writings on abstract painting and sculpture bears an affiliation with the same network of concepts (e.g. strikingness, facingness, character, etc.) I have been exploring in this book. I owe to Stephen Melville the recognition that that network in turn belongs to what Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe has characterized as an “onto-typological” perspective (see Lacoue-Labarthe, “Typography,” in *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics*, trans. Christopher

Manet’s endeavor in the first half of the 1860s than its dependence on the altogether contingent availability—as well as the equally contingent combinability—of those two “foreign” representational technologies.¹⁸²

Some additional aspects of the complementary relation of his paintings to photography and Japanese woodblocks should be noted. First, the resulting emphasis not just on light-dark contrast but on the seeming instantaneousness of the production of that contrast gave Manet’s paintings an assaultive force far beyond anything else in the art of his time. Thus Castagnary could write of Manet’s *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* (1863; fig. 155) in the *Refusés* (not a painting we would consider among his most aggressive) that “the system of coloring by black and white wounds my eyes,”¹⁸³ while Gautier *fills*, who was not unappreciative of Manet’s gifts, observed that the same picture was “treated by a vigorous hand guiding a brush enraged with contrasts, but which tends to forget that there is in nature something other than black and white.”¹⁸⁴ Similarly, Adrien Paul wrote apropos the *Episode in a Bullfight* of 1864, “It’s solid painting, if you like, but with lights and darks that clash brutally,” and went on to say, “Manet’s Spanish paintings don’t just attract attention, they seize it by force; one feels oneself stopped as at some corner of a wood [i.e. by a highwayman], and one comes back stripped bare.”¹⁸⁵ The conjunction of the two statements is not fortuitous: more than any

Fynsk, with an introduction by Jacques Derrida [Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1989], pp. 47ff.). See too Lacoue-Labarthe’s *Musica ficta (Figures de Wagner)* (Paris, 1991), esp. chaps. 1 and 2, on Baudelaire and Mallarmé respectively, in which the issue of theatricality (and apropos Mallarmé, of a nontheatrical theater [p. 141]) also comes to the fore. “I forged [the term onto-typology] in ‘Typography,’ on the model of the Heideggerian philosopheme ‘onto-theology,’ to designate the ontology that subtends both the most ancient reflection on *mimesis* and the modern reflection on shape (*Gestalt* [figure in French, which also means “face”]) that stems from it,” Lacoue-Labarthe writes in that book (p. 122, n. 42, transl. mine). Against that “onto-typological” concept of “mimesis” Lacoue-Labarthe evokes a different, “pre-originary” “mimesis” whose effects are abyssal and radically destabilizing (Derrida speaks of the subject’s “desistance” under its impact [“Introduction: Desistance,” in Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, pp. 1–42]) but which need not concern us here, though there is a sense in which the explicitly antispectacular reading of Courbet’s Realism developed in my book on Courbet is on the side of “mimesis” in the second sense of the term. (In *Courbet’s Realism* I characterize that reading as “nonmimetic” [p. 277, emphasis added] on the basis of a specular understanding of “mimesis” as “mere” imitation; these are difficult matters but see Melville’s review of *Courbet’s Realism*, “Compelling Acts, Haunting Convictions,” 116–22). It was Melville too who drew my attention to the rapport between my account of Manet’s and his cogenerationists’ preoccupation with strikingness and facingness and the language of my opening paragraph on Stella’s eccentric polygons, in an unpublished paper, “Postface: The Interests of Modernist Painting,” a commentary on my “Manet in His Generation: The Face of Painting in the 1860s,” written for a symposium on modernism at UCLA organized by the late Joseph Riddel in April 1992 and subsequently published in *Critical Inquiry* 19 (autumn 1992): 22–69.



Figure 155. Édouard Manet, *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, 1863.

other formal or stylistic feature of Manet's paintings of the 1860s it was the unprecedented "instantaneization" of contrasting values, colors, lines, and contours that compelled the attention of contemporary viewers even as they experienced it as an act of sheerest aggression. I have already quoted the *Bourgeois de Paris* in 1863 on the way Manet's color pierced the eye like a steel saw and his figures circumscribed themselves as if cut out by a jigsaw. In 1865 Geronte, in the course of heaping derision on *Olympia* and *Christ Mocked*, wrote: "His color of sour grapes, harsh and acid, penetrates the eye like the saw of a surgeon penetrating flesh."¹⁸⁶ In the words of another critic, Félix Deriège, on *Olympia*, which he detested: "The white, black, red, and green create a frightful racket in this canvas; the woman, the negress, the bouquet, the cat, all the confusion of disparate colors, of impossible forms, seizes the gaze and stupefies you."¹⁸⁷ It was of course *Olympia* that provoked the harshest reaction on the part of the public, leading Alfred Sensier (writing under the nom de plume Jean Ravenel) to call it "the scapegoat of the Salon, the victim of Parisian lynch law. Each passerby takes his stone and throws it in her face."¹⁸⁸ Two years later the image was adapted by Zola, who imagined seeing a troop of urchins throwing stones at Manet while the police (the critics) not only didn't try to stop them but themselves joined in.¹⁸⁹ But Sensier, more than Zola, recognized that the violence directed at the painting from without was the reflection of an act of violence *it* was the first to commit. Almost in the same breath he continued, "Armed insurrection in the camp of the bourgeois: it's a glass of ice water that each visitor gets in the face when he sees blooming before him the BEAUTIFUL courtisan."¹⁹⁰ Sensier's metaphor of an exchange of insults *to the face* confirms the importance of the dual problematics of faciality and strikingness we have been tracking, just as the responses of the other critics I have cited suggests that what may have been most offensive about *Olympia* was the way in which its self-possessed protagonist could be seen as personifying effects that were not essentially a function of its subject. (For Paul Mantz writing in 1884 the "cruelty" and "brutality" of Manet's paintings of the 1860s was still a live issue.)¹⁹¹

A second point worth stressing is that contrast and opposition were the traditional resources of pictorial drama, and that their mobilization in the *Déjeuner*, *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, *Olympia*, *Episode in a Bullfight*, and *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, to mention only those works, marks a return, on the plane of "form" rather than that of subject matter and *mise-en-scène*, to the valorization of drama that took place in

David's history paintings of the 1780s.¹⁹² Earlier in this section I said something similar apropos Manet's pursuit of instantaneousness via unintelligibility (which however did involve considerations of subject matter and *mise-en-scène*), and what I now want to suggest is that the "instantaneization" of contrast in his most characteristic pictures of the first half of the 1860s was perceived by certain critics as going *too far* in the direction of dramatic intensity. So for example Mantz, reviewing Manet's one-man show at Martinet's in April 1863, complained that after having made a promising start with his *Guitarrero* in the Salon of 1861, "Manet with his instinctive bravery has entered the domain of the impossible." He went on:

We absolutely refuse to follow him there. All form is lost in his large portraits of women, especially in that of the *Street Singer* [pl. 7], where, by a singularity that profoundly troubles us, the eyebrows renounce their horizontal position to place themselves vertically on both sides of the nose, like two shadowy commas; there is in that picture only the the discordant struggle of chalky tones with black tones. The effect is livid, hard, sinister. At other times, when Manet is in a happy humor, he paints the *Music in the Tuileries*, *Spanish Ballet*, or *Lola de Valence*, that is to say paintings that reveal that he has abundant strength but which, in their motley of red, blue, yellow, and black, are the caricature of color and not color itself.¹⁹³

Later the same month Saint-Victor wrote of Manet's exhibition:

Imagine Goya transferred to Mexico, gone wild in the middle of the *pampas*, and smearing canvases with crushed cochineal and you will have Manet, the latest realist. His paintings in the exhibition on the boulevard des Italiens are charivaris of the palette; *no one has ever more horribly made lines grimace or tones howl*. His *Toreros* would frighten Spanish cows; his *Smugglers* [the *Gypsies*] would only have to show itself to make the most intrepid customs officers flee before it; his *Music in the Tuileries* flays the eyes as fairground music makes the ear bleed. And yet there is a certain talent in these incoherent pochades, but we doubt whether Manet will ever apply himself to refining it.¹⁹⁴

In the Diderotian and Davidian lexicon both "caricature" and "grimace" were explicitly theatrical pejoratives, and the use of them by critics with grave objections to Manet's art invokes a set of values that, translated into the context of the 1860s, could not have been more apt.¹⁹⁵

Third, not all of Manet's paintings of the 1860s or even of the first half of the 1860s bear the complementary relation to photography and Japanese prints that I have just described. In particular the *Christ Mocked* (fig.

53), exhibited along with *Olympia* in 1865, is in various respects the most straightforwardly photographic of all his works, but there is not a trace in it of interest in Japanese woodblocks. Consequently the photographic elements in the painting—the enlarged scale of the kneeling soldier in the left foreground, the uncharacteristically unified *mise-en-scène* of the composition as a whole, the sense that the originals of all the figures were actual persons dressed in makeshift costumes and holding poses in the artist's or photographer's studio (the model for Christ was recognized to be one Janvier, a locksmith),¹⁹⁶ and a particularly revealing detail, the embarrassingly contemporary character of Christ's overlarge *feet*, which the critic Leroy correctly recognized show unmistakable signs of having worn modern shoes¹⁹⁷—are all the more obtrusive and disturbing for not being subsumed in the sort of highly contrastive and instantaneously striking (also internally disparate) pictorial gestalt that I have associated with Manet's great paintings of the period. Indeed it is in the *Christ Mocked* that Manet goes farthest toward seeking to create (or *re-create*: I am thinking of its relation to its sources in earlier painting) an essentially absorptive multigure composition; Christ's pathetic, upward-turned gaze is like nothing else in Manet's oeuvre, and even the soldier at the right who gazes directly out of the picture seems on the brink of making the kind of psychological connection with the viewer that the artist is usually at pains to avoid. This suggests that the amalgam of photography and Japanese woodblocks which we have seen at work in *Olympia* and other paintings of the first half of the 1860s had become unstable—more broadly, that Manet's art was in disequilibrium even before his visit to Madrid in the aftermath of the Salon of 1865.

Not that encountering Velásquez's masterpieces in Madrid resolved his problems. On the contrary, I see Manet's single-figure paintings of the next two years—his attempts to "enlarge the *morceau* to become the *oeuvre*," as Astruc had Diderot put it in 1867—as marking a falling off from the two-or-more-figure compositions of the first half of the 1860s, largely because the unitary nature of the later works, with their neutral, aspatial backgrounds (adapted from Velásquez's *Pablo de Valladolid*), gave him only limited opportunity to develop formal equivalents for the internal tension between stillness and rapidity (to mention only that) that had structured his most ambitious works of the previous five years. The problem is particularly evident in the three *Philosophers* of 1865–67, in which a double involvement with Velásquez and photography (but not Japanese woodblocks) locates the work of the brush on the side of stillness



—even, in a sense, of darkness, contrast itself being kept to a minimum. Indeed the protagonist of the *Philosopher (with Beret)* (1865; fig. 156) not the only peers narrowly at the viewer but also holds out his open right hand as if asking for alms, producing an overly literal effect of confrontation that I see as analogous to the conventionally photographic, hence “wrongly” theatrical, character of the *Christ Mocked*. (Judging from the heavily reworked paint, Manet had trouble with the hand, perhaps because the uniformly “slow” or still character of the picture as a whole didn’t quite allow it to become the token of instantaneousness of execution and refusal of closure that hands in Manet mainly are. In fact the hands in the *Philosopher (with Beret)* bear unmistakable traces of fingernails!) In the *Fifer* (fig. 57) Manet took an exactly opposite approach, bringing together Velázquez with Japanese prints in a work that is nothing if not instantaneous in its mode of self-presentation. The result is dazzling, virtuosic, one of Manet’s most brilliant performances, but for me at least the brilliance verges on excess (to use a loaded word) and the painting as a whole perhaps assumes too much the character of a triumphant demonstration (need I add that this is an intensely subjective judgment and that it recklessly ignores the fact that only Zola and a handful of other viewers saw the *Fifer*’s merit at the time?). In my eyes, the most successful painting of those years is the *Woman with a Parrot* (fig. 56), in which the interplay between the figure of the woman raising a small bunch of violets to her face with her right hand and the parrot stand and parrot to her side allows a certain contrast between the methodicalness of the rendering of the latter—despite some awkwardness in the spatial relations among the horizontal perches—and the more fluid, *ébauche*-like handling of the woman’s pink peignoir. (As if that contrast or disparity makes up for what Thoré saw as Manet’s failure to sufficiently finish parts of his painting “in order to give the ensemble its effective value.”) Note, by the way, how the woman’s gesture directs the viewer’s attention to her face and so can be seen as insisting on the portrait character of the picture as a whole. As such, it harks back to similar hand-to-face gestures in earlier paintings, notably those of Victorine Meurent in the *Street Singer* and *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*, and underscores my claim that Astruc’s theorization of the portrait in 1868 had special pertinence to Manet’s art. The raised hands in *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* are also to the point, as are those in a later canvas that is almost a reprise of the *Mlle V. . .*, the marvelous *Nana* (1877). (The *Fifer* too is a hands-to-face af-

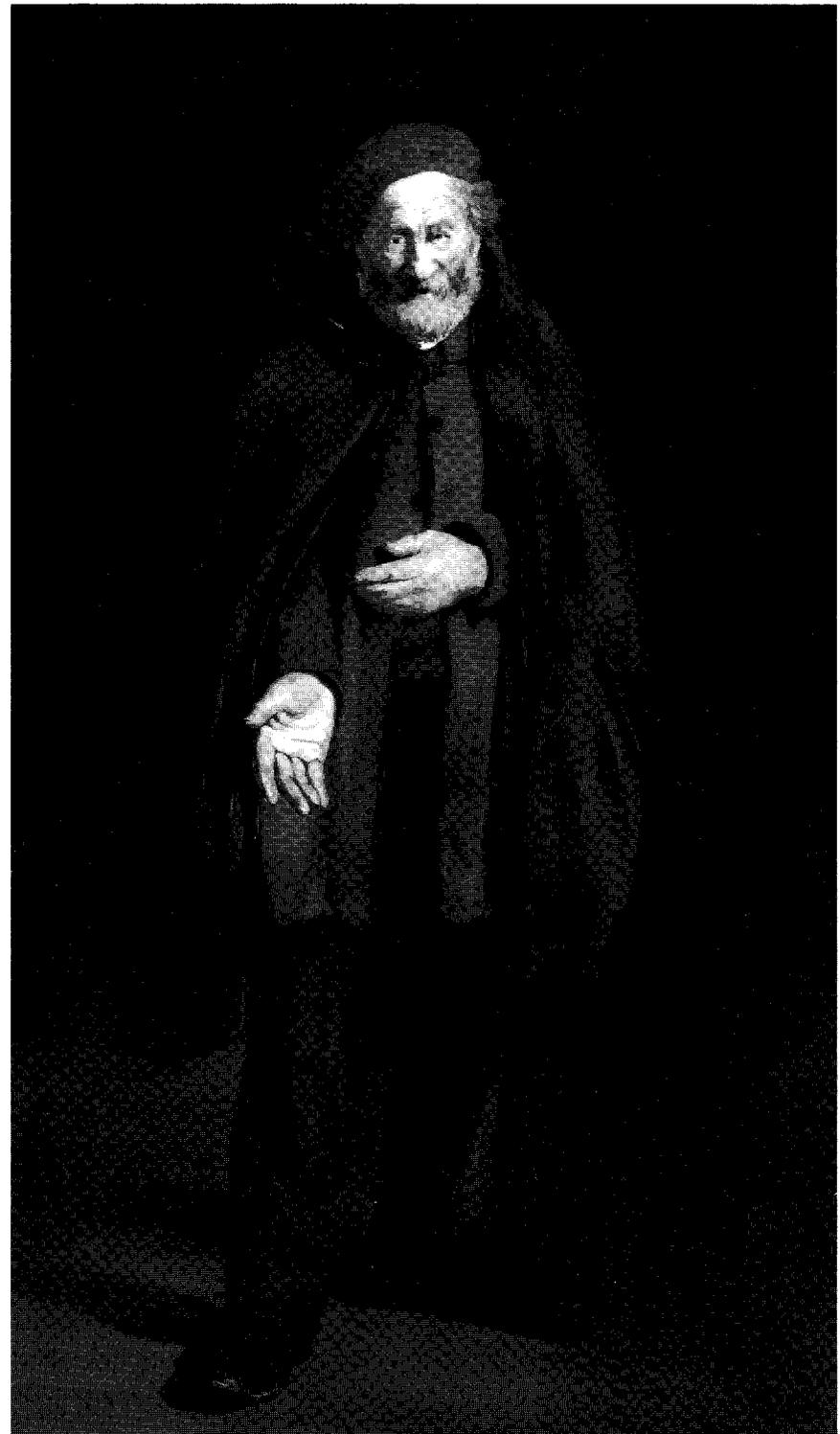


Figure 156. Édouard Manet, *Philosopher (with Beret)*, 1865.

fair.) In any case, the period between Manet's visit to Madrid—or shortly before—and the later spring and early summer of 1867, when he opened his one-man exhibition on the avenue d'Alma and began work on the *Execution of Maximilian*, forms a distinct unit within his career.

Finally, the opposition between stillness and speed decisively inflects one of the most vital but also hardest to conceptualize aspects of Manet's art: his use of the *model*. The question of the status of the model had been raised by Diderot as early as the 1750s and 1760s and was in a sense unresolvable within the framework of his thought.¹⁹⁸ On the one hand, the commitment of the Diderotian tradition to values associated with verisimilitude placed the model on the side of nature as a seemingly indispensable support; on the other, that the role of the model was chiefly to hold a stationary pose under the eye of the artist for long periods of time aligned the model with theatricality, that is, with the very qualities that the tradition was committed to abolishing. (Diderot himself was implacable on this.) With the emergence of various realisms around the middle of the nineteenth century, not to mention the development of photography, the problem of the model became more pressing, until by the 1860s it loomed as critical.¹⁹⁹ The discussion in the previous chapter of the work of Manet's cogenerationists bears closely on the topic. In particular the growing importance attached to the portrait as a sort of master genre justified installing a certain relation to the model or sitter at the heart of the pictorial enterprise even as it offered the painter two main options: to absorb his sitters in reading, listening, writing, drawing, knitting, weaving, and so forth, which is to say to attempt to maintain the ontological fiction that they were unaware of being beheld (Fantin's strategy in his most admired portraits); or to have them face directly out of the painting, taking advantage of another of the portrait's traditional formats to avert the charge of theatricality (but recall the uncomprehending response to the *Homage to Delacroix*).²⁰⁰ Legros's *Ex-Voto*, an exemplary work, opted squarely for the first choice: no one in 1861 would have doubted that the figures of the women had been based on actual persons, but the persuasive evocation of the women's absorption in prayer before a roadside image of the crucifixion divested them of any taint of having posed for the artist. May not the need to come to grips with the question of the model, which threatened to destabilize realist painting from within, partly account for

the continued viability of an absorptive thematics for realist painters and critics of the 1860s?*

In any case, Manet in his most characteristic works pursued an altogether different strategy with respect to absorption, and therefore with respect to the model. Indeed I can think of no previous canvases in the Western tradition, with the exception of various works by Caravaggio, that direct attention quite so forcefully to a (real or imagined) relationship between the painter, the painting, and the model or models that served the painter in its making.²⁰¹ Nor is this merely a retrospective view. Contemporary critics frequently commented on Manet's models, usually with distaste. Moreover, as Manet's most recent biographer has stressed, his choice of models, especially in the 1860s, was highly personal:²⁰² to begin with he favored Suzanne Leenhoff, his secret fiancée

*Two novels about painters by authors closely linked with the painting of the 1860s make engrossing reading in this connection. In a frequently cited chapter in the Goncourts' *Manette Salomon*, the authors imagine the title character, a strangely compelling artist's model, assuming various poses before a mirror *in the absence of any other beholder* (Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *Manette Salomon* [1867; Paris, 1979], pp. 213–15). Although brief, the chapter is too long to quote in its entirety and too much of a piece to be represented by excerpts; suffice it to say that the terms in which Manette's activity is described leave no doubt that we are meant to regard her as an artist, specifically a sort of painter, in her own right. Manette's personal stake in the solitariness of her image making is spelled out in the chapter's closing sentences (p. 215):

Sometimes, Coriolis [her painter-lover], returning brusquely with his key, surprised her. He said nothing. But Manette hastily said to him:

“Beast! since there is only the mirror that sees me!”

Quelquefois, Coriolis rentrant brusquement avec sa clef, la surprenait. Il ne disait rien. Mais Manette se dépêchait de lui dire:

— Bête! puisqu'il n'y a que la glace qui me voit!

The chapter suggests that one solution to the problem of the model would be to do away with both painter and painting, or rather to merge painter and model in the single figure of a model who paints with her own body and to replace the canvas with a *psyche*, a mirror, in which she alone could see and admire her work. We might think of this as an alternative to the merging of painter-beholder, model, and painting in the central group of Courbet's *Painter's Studio* or indeed in his *Source*, a work exactly contemporary with *Manette Salomon* (*Courbet's Realism*, pp. 155–71). Cf. also my reading of Whistler's *Lange Leizen*, chap. 3.

A second, rarely cited novel, Philippe Burty's *Grave Imprudence* (Paris, 1880), also engages explicitly with the problem of the model. Its protagonist, an “impressionist” painter named Brissot, comes to feel that landscape isn't enough and that ambitious painting demands the figure, but soon discovers the difficulty in finding a model “who knew how to provide a true, healthy, original movement” (pp. 62–63). (Pas un, pas une qui sût donner un mouvement vrai, sain, original.) This leads him to study the actions of ordinary workers. “But his quality as ‘artist’ followed him. Whatever they did, in front of him they weren't nature. He sensed that he would always be limited to the outer shell, that he would wound his models even as he would be misunderstood by the public in representing them as they were” (pp. 65–66). (Mais sa qual-

(the *Surprised Nymph*), and Léon Koëlla, the young boy who is thought to have been her son either by Manet or by Manet's father (the *Boy with a Sword* and the *Luncheon in the Studio*), then Victorine Meurent, a professional model but one who was particularly suited to Manet's unorthodox vision (the *Portrait of Victorine Meurent*, *Street Singer*, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and *Olympia*),²⁰³ his brothers Eugène and Gustave (the *Déjeuner* and the *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*), and somewhat later on Berthe Morisot (the *Balcony*, *Le Repos*, several portraits)—the list could be extended. This suggests that despite the cool, impersonal emotional tenor of Manet's art, his early works in particular are not devoid of autobiographical resonances (Darragon is good on these). But it also suggests that the demands Manet placed on his models were, especially at the outset, best satisfied by per-

ité 'd'artiste' le suivait. Quoi qu'on fit, devant lui on n'était pas nature. Il sentit qu'il lui faudrait toujours s'en tenir à l'écorce, qu'il blesserait ses modèles autant qu'il serait peu compris du public en les représentant tels quels.) He concludes "that a sincerely popular art could not be made except by the people themselves, perhaps in the near future" (p. 66). ([Il] conclut . . . que l'art sincèrement populaire ne pourra être écrit que, dans un jour peut-être prochain, par le peuple lui-même.)

But the crucial pair of scenes occurs further on. Brissot becomes infatuated with a countess, and on one occasion, having arrived too early for a soiree, is seated in one part of a double salon where he dozes off. When he opens his eyes he sees someone (the countess, but at first she isn't identified; the entire description is given in "impressionistic" terms) adjusting her toilette before a mirror in the next room (pp. 110–11). Some time later he shows the countess an *ébauche* of a woman seen from the rear, her head in *profil perdu*, which she admires; he explains that the original of the woman was the countess herself and requests that she take up the same pose so that he can make the *ébauche* into a finished painting for the Salon (pp. 239–41). Eventually she agrees (whereupon the novel abruptly ends), but her ultimate consent to posing matters far less than the triple remove from all consciousness of being beheld that Burty found it necessary to build into the initial donnée. As Brissot explains to the countess: "I painted this *ébauche* from memory, one day when I tried to recall the beautiful movements that you made while arranging your hair, that evening, in your second salon. You didn't know that I was there" (pp. 240–41). ("J'ai fait cette *ébauche* de souvenir, un jour où je cherchais à me rappeler les beaux mouvements que vous donniez en arrangeant vos cheveux, le soir, dans votre second salon. Vous ne saviez pas que j'étais là.") In other words, the countess had been unaware of being beheld (she had been absorbed in her own image in a mirror); Brissot had seen her from the rear (and at a distance, literally from another room); and he had painted the *ébauche* from memory (i.e. in the absence of the countess herself). It is as if nothing less than that concatenation of antitheatrical conditions could suffice to produce an antitheatrical result. And still the problem of the model remained if the *ébauche* were to be transformed into a *tableau*.

A third novel about painting, Zola's *L'Oeuvre* (1886), also engages with issues of modeling, as my earlier discussion of Sandoz posing for the seated man in Claude's *Plein Air* plainly suggests. Those issues come to a head in the protracted struggle between Claude and Christine, Claude's model, mistress, and eventually wife, over the female figure in his projected masterpiece, but they are everywhere inflected by concerns peculiar to Zola's personal obsessions and the thematic demands of the Rougon-Macquart series, and so are too complex to be summarizable here.

sons who were already sympathetic with his project. An exhaustive study of Manet's treatment of the model would make a book in its own right, but several points are worth stressing:

1. The forcefulness with which Manet's works of the first half of the 1860s asserted the reality of their models may be thought of as a "photographic" effect, apparently confirming the existence of the paintings' ultimate referent. But it is also clearly a function of the frequency with which a key figure in those paintings gazes directly out toward the viewer, a feature I have previously associated with the portrait: as Meyer Schapiro has noted in his pioneering essay on the semiotics of the image, a basic characteristic of the frontal view is that it is felt to address the viewer, to "interpellate" the latter in an I-you relationship with the facing element itself.²⁰⁴ At the same time, as I have remarked more than once, the terms of that relationship in Manet's art have been left undefined. More precisely, the notorious blankness or inexpressiveness of the outward gaze in such paintings as the *Old Musician*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and *Olympia* distanced and alienated the beholder even as it was felt to solicit his presence. Much the same can be said of the figures' gestures, which, divorced from any intelligible narrative or dramatic context, attracted the beholder's attention to themselves with a force that contemporary audiences found disturbing. (The "pointing" gesture of the half-reclining man in the *Déjeuner* exemplifies that effect.) Here one might wish to say that what distinguished Manet's use of models is that he portrayed them as self-evidently posing before the painter—that his figures' gazes are blank, their expressions are impassive, and their gestures are unreadable because those were the gazes, expressions, and gestures of models costumed or disrobed for the occasion and holding static poses for long sessions in the artist's studio.²⁰⁵ But this won't do—the obdurate expressive opacity of his paintings can't be rationalized in these terms. (The atypicality and, to my mind, the relative weakness of the *Christ Mocked* is not unrelated to the fact that it *can* be understood in these terms, or rather as an attempt to render "photographically" a group of models acting out a largely absorptive scene.) As Gautier astutely said of *Olympia*, "it is inexplicable from every point of view, even taking it for what it is, a wretched model stretched out on a sheet."²⁰⁶ What's astute about his remark is that it recognizes that, although in a literal sense *Olympia* was and is a realistic portrayal of a model on a sheet ("wretched" seems a bit harsh), to settle for that description—to take that as capturing its essence—fails to acknowledge the painting's perverse allure, its uncanny and disturbing

power, above all its complex relation to the viewer. (Perhaps Bataille meant this when in a superb phrase he referred to Manet as “the painter who introduced disorder into the pose.”)²⁰⁷

2. Much of the strangeness and uncanniness derives from the sense that in the pictures in question Manet’s models have been represented not simply as posing before the painter but as somehow frozen or immobilized—we might say petrified, if it were not that the suggestion of stoniness seems out of place. It’s as if the viewer is made conscious of a fundamental tension or contradiction between the inherent temporality of posing, the heldness and stillness it implies, and the rapidity or instantaneousness of visualization and execution that Manet’s contemporaries came increasingly—not without reason—to regard as his ideal. (Again, the *Christ Mocked* is the exception that helps disclose the rule.) Fascinatingly, a version of that tension or contradiction was registered as a problem by Philippe Burty in 1870:

There is one reproach that is leveled at this very militant and very convinced artist every year: it’s that he works too fast. Nothing could be more false.

His painting isn’t made for the crowd. Manet proceeds by *partis pris* that are too willed for his system to be, I don’t say admissible, but easily comprehensible.

Doing everything possible to translate the external sensation received by the eyes when his gaze is thrown on an individual, a flower, a drapery, a piece of furniture, he seems to stop at the stage of the *esquisse*. I know however that he poses his models for several sessions, several weeks, even several months. But the result sometimes appears too hasty.²⁰⁸

Burty wasn’t exaggerating. We know, for example, that both Antoine Guillemet and Fanny Claus became exhausted from posing repeatedly for their portraits in the *Balcony*,²⁰⁹ even though the portraits themselves give no hint of the effort that went into their making. (Mallarmé attributed to Manet’s eye the ability to preserve “the immediate freshness of the encounter, in the claws of a laughing look, to treat as nothing, in the pose, the fatigue of the twentieth session.”)²¹⁰ In the same “Salon,” however, Burty detected in Fantin’s *An Atelier in the Batignolles* (1870; fig. 157), a group portrait centered on Manet and including the future Impressionists, “a certain hollowness in the ensemble. Those friends have a somewhat embarrassed air. Each one is preoccupied by his own thoughts, and no general conversation justifies this almost fortuitous reunion. One is too aware that Fantin summoned them, one after the other, to come and take their place in the painting.”²¹¹ For Burty, in other words, not only

did Fantin’s picture fail to compose an absorptive unity (no general conversation); the characteristic meticulousness of its execution was also at the farthest pole from Manet’s rapid technique, with the result that the *Atelier* distractingly recalled the actual, sequential use of individual models that lay at its core. In contrast, Manet’s paintings effectively masked the truth of their laboriousness, but they did so at the price of producing both a sense of freezing or immobilization and an impression of haste and sketchiness that were themselves deeply problematic. The implication of Burty’s remarks would seem to be that the strikingness and instantaneousness Manet sought could manifest themselves no other way.

(Fantin’s canvas depicts Manet painting a portrait of Astruc, further testimony to the friendship between painter and critic and perhaps also to the centrality of the genre of the portrait in their respective projects. The other personages in the room are Monet, Renoir, Bazille, Zola, and

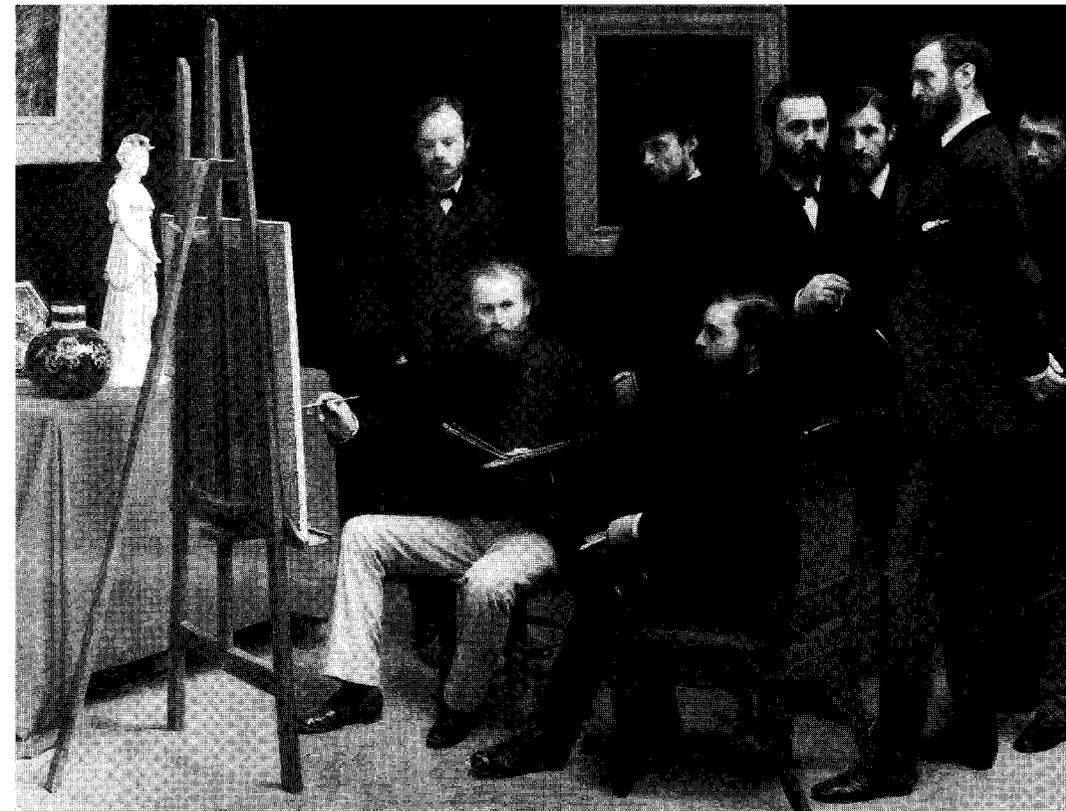


Figure 157. Henri Fantin-Latour, *An Atelier in the Batignolles*, 1870.

the musician Edmond Maître, all younger men, and Otto Scholderer, a former student with Fantin under Lecoq. The *Atelier* thus may be seen as an ideal image of a desired continuity between artistic generations, with Manet, Fantin's contemporary, as *chef de file*.²¹²

3. The viewer's uneasy awareness of the frozenness of Manet's models' poses was at least in principle made even more acute by the dynamics of the derivation of those poses from one or more Old Master paintings. For one thing, Manet's citations from past art typically involved a radical shift of thematic context that was tantamount to a freezing or fixing, followed by a cutting-out, of a figural or other motif that therefore became even more definite, more perspicuous *as* a motif, in Manet's picture than in the original source. (The *Déjeuner*, again, is a case in point.) For another, as I have said, apart from his allusions to Velásquez and Goya, Manet's recyclings of motifs bore no relation to the way his pictures were actually painted: in that sense too the motifs in question were cut out from the larger systems of representation to which originally they belonged and for which contemporary painters such as Legros, Fantin, Ribot, Tissot, Puvis de Chavannes, and Moreau actively sought modern equivalents. (As I've also remarked, the lack of stylistic resonance between most of Manet's allusions to past art and the art itself helps explain why those allusions went largely unnoticed. Hence my use of the qualifying phrase "in principle" earlier in this paragraph.) Finally, although the aim of Manet's tactic of juxtaposing or overlaying multiple citations in a single work was to totalize across the different national schools, such a tactic inevitably further emphasized discontinuity, in this case among the sources themselves rather than between the recycled motifs and their original thematic or stylistic contexts. Put another way, Manet's unique sensitivity to what Thoré called "the analogies and harmonies that bind together [the different epochs and national schools] in a great unity" presupposed the availability of all previous painting in an imaginary museum space, one in which the internal temporal sequencing of the various schools was much less important than the sheerly motivic connections that could be drawn—that leaped to view, laterally and as it were instantaneously—between individual works regardless of school or period. (These were also Astruc's *redites*.) The result of Manet's practice of undisguised quotation was therefore sharply different from Baudelaire's ideal memory-effect without conscious memory, keeping the past alive in the present by ruthlessly suppressing all awareness of the past as such. By Manet's day it was too late for such a project to have the remotest chance

of succeeding: Thoré's metaphor (for a future art history, but extended by me to the enterprise of painting) of a Last Judgment implies that the past was no longer alive, no longer capable by mere connectedness, mere contact, of giving life to the present (hence the obsession of Manet and his contemporaries with explicitly recycling it in their work). But it also suggests that the task of making such a Judgment, of definitively coming to terms not just with this or that previous painter or school of painting but with the history of painting in its entirety, was still to be realized. It was a task that Manet alone, in my account, took on in his ambitious canvases of the 1860s, and the status of the models in those canvases as *intermediaries* between the Old Master sources from which their poses were largely taken and the final work is perhaps emblematic of the changed relation to the past that his art embodies.

4. In the works by Manet we have been discussing as well as in numerous other works throughout his career the ternary relationship painter/painting/model takes ontological precedence over the binary relationship painting/ beholder. This may seem at odds with my claim at the outset of this chapter, in the long quotation from *Courbet's Realism*, that Manet "found it necessary to establish the beholder's presence abstractly—to build into the painting the separateness, distancedness, and mutual facing that had always characterized the painting-beholder relationship in its traditional, unreconstructed form—in order that the worst consequences of the theatricalizing of that relationship be averted." But in fact it isn't: my claim at this juncture is simply that one important means by which that was done involved the assertion of an ontologically prior three-part relationship that *excluded* the beholder, or say that forever separated him from the ostensible scene of representation. Or perhaps, following on from my argument that in Courbet's work the painter himself was defined as the painting's first beholder or painter-beholder, we may think of the painter of Manet's pictures too as a painter-beholder, with the stipulation that his aim was not, as it was for Courbet, quasi-corporeal merger with the painting on which he was working but rather a more complex relationship involving the painting and the model, both of which were before his gaze. In contrast, Courbet in the *Painter's Studio* (fig. 118), his most explicit allegory of his own activity, placed the naked female model *behind* the seated painter-beholder and (as we have seen) rhymed the model visually with both the painter-beholder and the painting on the easel, making the central group as a whole into a single "blind," indefinitely expansive unit. Manet's response to Courbet's art,

his reaction against it, can thus be described not only as reversing or liquidating the entire antitheatrical project—addressing or “interpellating” the beholder rather than seeking to neutralize or negate him—but also as introducing the model as an active, constructive, though also in a sense obstructive element in the operation by which this was accomplished. (In Fantin’s *Atelier in the Batignolles* Manet is shown seated on a chair before a canvas on an easel with Astruc, posing for him, almost directly to his left. There is no knowing whether that arrangement accurately represents Manet’s preferred relation to a model or sitter, but it has the effect of establishing a situation of maximum tension among painter, model or sitter, and canvas.)

Toward the end of the quotation from *Courbet’s Realism* I also suggested that Manet’s viewers have always sensed that they have been made “supererogatory to a situation that ostensibly demanded [their] presence, as if [their] place before the painting were *already occupied* by virtue of the extreme measures that had been taken to stake it out.” I think this too is right, and would now add that among the factors producing that impression is the treatment of the model, who the viewer is made to feel was present before the painter—the painter-beholder—and *by virtue of that fact* is not present to him (another “photographic” effect).²¹³ (In the *Atelier* the standing figures of Scholderer and Renoir who look on as Manet paints and who in that sense may be taken as representing the beholder aren’t even in a position to see Astruc, or at least not as Manet sees him.) To the extent that the viewer nevertheless feels *summoned by Manet’s figures in the name of the painting*, and everything I have said until now argues for that conclusion, he is faced with an ontological double bind that cannot easily be resolved. Put slightly differently, Manet’s most characteristic paintings insist *both* on the model’s nonpresence *and* on the painting’s presence to the beholder,²¹⁴ and what makes the cumulative effect of that double insistence truly uncanny is that the first insistence is crucial to the second.*

*In *Painting as an Art*, Richard Wollheim claims that Manet’s paintings often “present us with figures characterizable in the same mental terms. They are figures who, at the moment at which we see them, are turned in upon themselves by some powerful troubling thought: they are figures who are temporarily preoccupied, figures who have retained and cherished, who cosset, a secret, to which their thoughts have now reverted. A moment later and the mood may dissipate, but, until it does, they are absent from the world” (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1984 [Princeton, 1987], p. 141). Wollheim then considers the question of the means by which Manet achieved this alleged effect and proposes the following answer: “Get the spectator to imagine someone in the represented space, someone who tries, tries hard, tries importunately, and fails, to gain the attention of the figure who is represented as there in the space; get the

In the implied *mise-en-scène* of Manet’s valedictory masterpiece, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (fig. 145), the top-hatted customer in the mirror both “is” and “is not” standing before the barmaid: he “is” if we regard the reflection as veridical, which is to say if we imagine placing ourselves sufficiently off to the right for the reflection to make geometrical sense; he “is not” if we stand in the beholder’s traditional position directly in front of the painting, in which case it is we who either “are” the customer in the mirror or have somehow usurped his place, even if the reflection fails to record the fact. But then our very access to the reflection of the customer in the mirror will have become problematic to say the least. A further complication is that as viewers of the painting we would naturally stand further back than he appears to do. Not only that, the barmaid in the mirror appears to be leaning slightly toward the customer, whereas the “real” barmaid stands more or less erect. All this is well known (it was in part the basis for Herbert’s reading cited earlier in this chapter), and I raise it here not only because the *Bar* may thus be seen as making explicit the double relation to the beholder I have ascribed to Manet’s paintings generally but also because the identification of the customer—the barmaid-model’s “first” beholder—as someone other than the painter suggests

spectator moreover to imagine this spectator from the inside so that, this imaginative entry into the picture over, it will then be for him as if he had himself experienced some of the tedium, some of the frustration, some of the sense of rejection, that must attend any attempt to establish contact with the represented figure—and then the content of the picture will be brought home to him with clarity and cogency. In other words, Manet’s ruse is to introduce a spectator into the picture, whose bafflement will trickle back into the spectator of the picture as he identifies with him” (p. 160). (The chapter in which this appears is entitled “The Spectator in the Picture.”)

Wollheim goes on to discuss various aspects of the paintings that lead him to this conclusion, but rather than consider his observations in detail I want to make a few points. First, his notion that Manet’s figures are lost in thought is at odds with the terms in which those figures were seen by Manet’s contemporaries, and of course it is also incompatible with what I have tried to show was the artist’s systematic rejection of absorption. Second, Wollheim’s claim that Manet’s paintings spur the viewer to imagine a spectator in the picture with whom the viewer proceeds to identify is similarly at odds with the critical literature, which repeatedly expresses frustration *in the face of the paintings themselves*; their resistance to familiar modes of pictorial intelligibility, involving far more than simply the psychological opacity or “absence” of the figures, has been discussed here at length. Nor does Wollheim give weight to the historical problematic of beholding developed in *Absorption and Theatricality* and various of my essays on Courbet (*Courbet’s Realism* had not yet been published), a problematic that presents significant difficulties for his views. (In particular it calls into question the very grounds of his distinction between external and internal spectators.) Finally, I want simply to suggest that the brief scenario Wollheim provides whereby the imagined spectator tries in vain to establish psychological contact with Manet’s figures may be read as responding to the double logic of (absent) model and (present) painting I have just adumbrated. See in this connection the brief commentary on Wollheim’s views on Manet by Norton Batkin, “. . . a presence of absence,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 24 (summer 1990): 14–24.

that in this final major work Manet in effect painted *his own absence* from the ternary relationship on which, I have suggested, his art crucially depended. To what extent this may be read as acknowledging the gravity of the illness—syphilis and its complications—that was soon to lead to his death at fifty-one is of course unfathomable.²¹⁵

The Execution of Maximilian

TO BRING this chapter to a close, I will consider the most ambitious project of Manet's career. During the summer of 1867 he embarked on a large contemporary history painting, *The Execution of Maximilian*.²¹⁶ The political circumstances surrounding the project have been the focus of intensive study, and I won't rehearse them in detail here. Suffice it to say that following the decisive victory of the Republican army over the forces supporting the Emperor Maximilian, formerly archduke of Austria, who been placed on the Mexican throne by the imperialistic designs of Napoleon III, Maximilian along with two of his generals, Tomas Mejía and Miguel Miramón, was put to death by a firing squad on June 19, 1867. The first news of the event reached Paris on July 1, just as Napoleon III was presiding over the prize-giving ceremony of the Exposition Universelle. Because of his involvement in the Mexican situation—not only had he made Maximilian emperor, he had also subsequently withdrawn the French military force needed to maintain Maximilian's rule—the event was deeply embarrassing, and was soon perceived as exposing the adventurism and irresponsibility of his foreign policy. Over the next weeks and months increasingly exact (though also sometimes contradictory) information about the execution became available, along with a variety of images, including carte de visite photographs of the firing squad, Maximilian, his bullet-pierced coat and vest, the two generals, and even plausible-seeming but factually inaccurate reconstructions of the execution itself. Manet apparently began work on the first (Boston) version of the *Execution* (1867; fig. 158) sometime in July; at the start he pictured the firing squad in guerilla costume, with short jackets, flared trousers, and sombreros; when it became known that the members of the squad wore uniforms that closely resembled those of the French army, he at first tried to make the change in his canvas (for example, by converting the sombreros into peaked caps), but before long abandoned that version (in the state in which it has been left it is a true *ébauche*) and began work on a

second that incorporated the new information from the outset. The second version—which survives incompletely in four fragments in London (1867–68; fig. 159)—also saw the invention of a new, essentially lateral composition, with Maximilian standing between Mejía and Miramón at the left, then the firing squad of six plus a seventh figure, the directing officer in a red kepi and with raised sword, almost wholly hidden from view behind the squad, then finally the NCO who would shortly administer the coup de grace also in a red kepi and cocking the hammer of his musket. This version Manet completed and abandoned, perhaps because he came to feel that the group of victims needed to be moved farther back in space (the figure of Miramón in one of the London fragments seems too large relative to the soldiers) or because the arrival of more accurate information about the execution site made his choice of setting inappropriate. In any case, in the course of working on the second



Figure 158. Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 1867.



version Manet is supposed to have arranged with Commandant Lejosne, a friend of the family, for a squad of soldiers to come to his studio to model for the firing squad. We also know that Manet hoped to exhibit that version in the Salon of 1868, but in the end he submitted two other works, one the *Portrait of Zola*.

The third and last of the large-scale versions of the *Execution* (1868–69; pl. 16), in Mannheim, retains the lateral format of the second while situating the victims farther from the viewer than the firing squad and altering the setting to a walled space with a hillside rising beyond it. A group of peasants is shown looking over the top of the wall as the execution takes place; farther up on the hillside two other groups seem to be seated on the ground; while to the left stone cemetery monuments stand among dark green cypresses against the background of a cobalt sky. Two other images in the *Execution* series should be mentioned: a lithograph (1868; fig. 160), not printed until after Manet's death, and a small, rather sketchy oil painting in Copenhagen (1868–69; fig. 161), whose precise

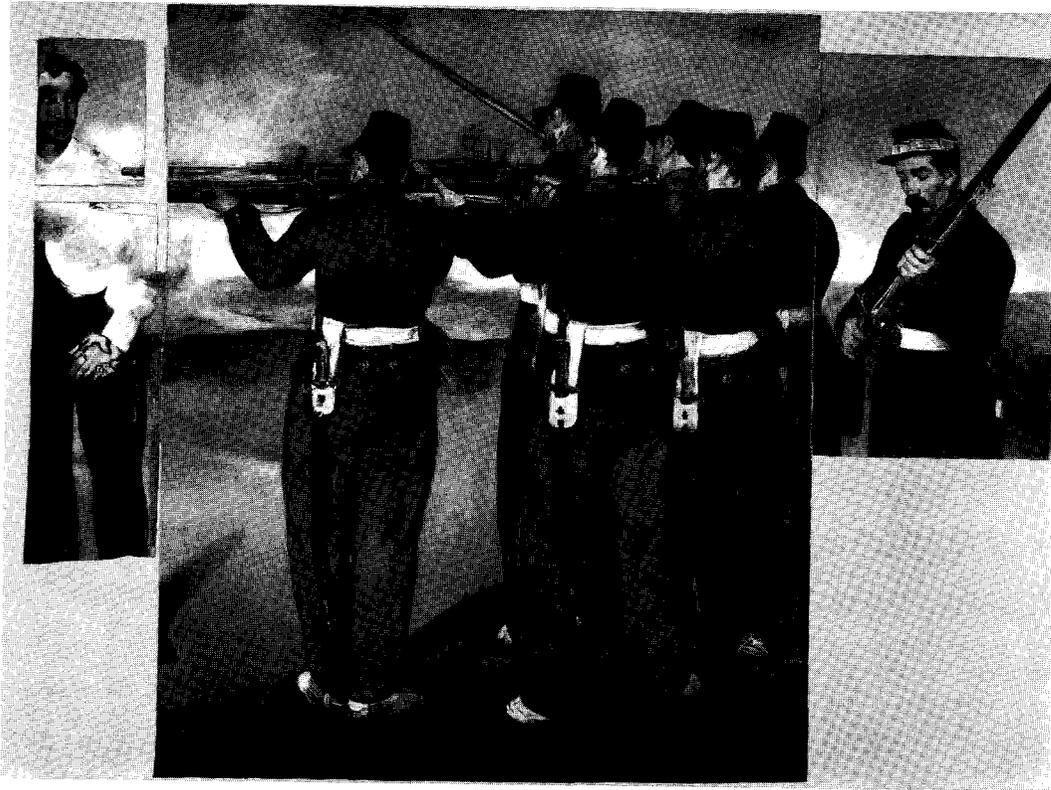


Figure 159. Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 1867–68.

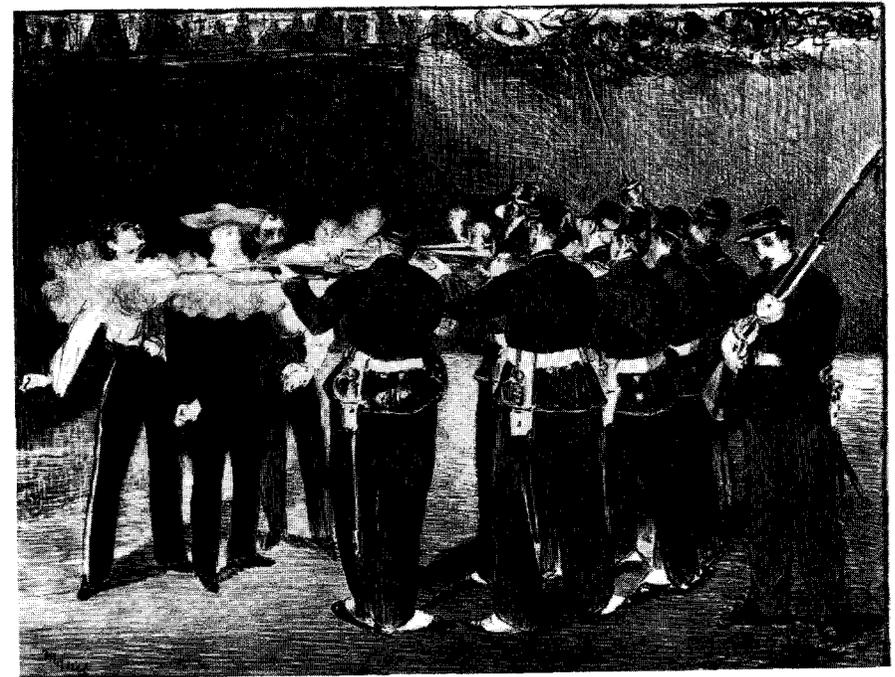


Figure 160. Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, lithograph, 1868.

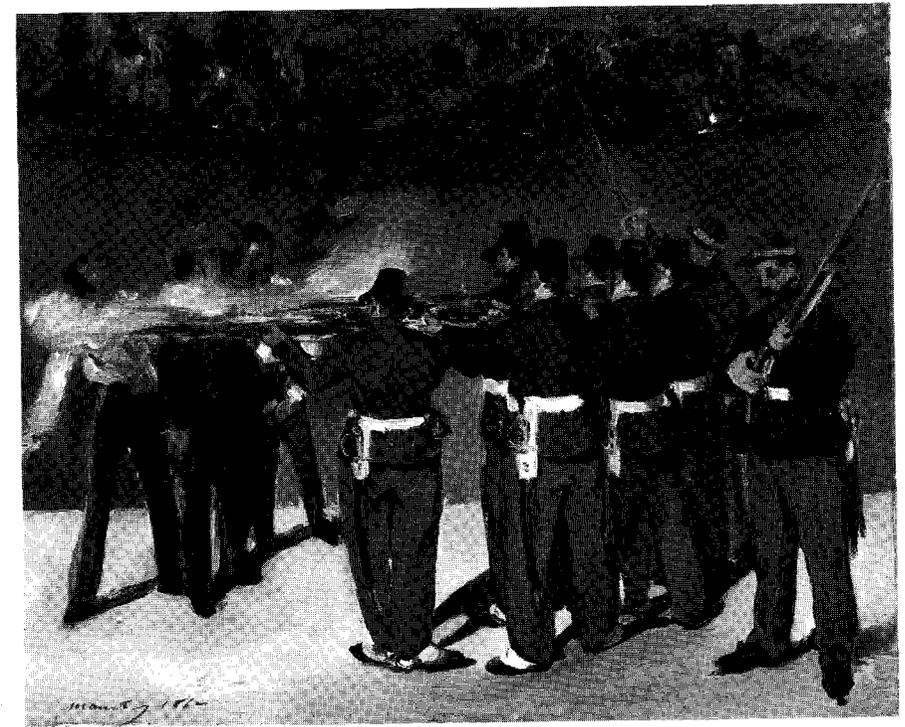


Figure 161. Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 1868–69.

relation both to the Mannheim canvas and to the lithograph has been a matter of conjecture.²¹⁷ The most important difference between the Copenhagen picture and the Mannheim *Execution* is that, like the lithograph, it depicts the so-called sword officer raising his sword just to the right of the firing squad, a figure originally present in the same position in the Mannheim canvas but subsequently painted out, exactly when we do not know.²¹⁸ Presumably on that occasion Manet reverted to the formula of the London version, minus the raised sword—that is, he inserted just enough of the image of a red kepi between the caps of the second and third soldiers from the right of the firing squad to indicate the presence of the sword officer on the far side of the squad (or at least to do so if we know to look for him), and added a streak of red paint (the officer in the Copenhagen sketch wears red trousers) between the legs of the second soldier from the right. Manet seems to have worked on the third version throughout 1868 and to have hoped to exhibit it in the Salon of 1869. By early 1869, however, the government made it clear that if submitted to the jury it would be rejected, and also forbade the printing of the lithograph, with the result that the Mannheim canvas was not shown in France until the Salon d'Automne of 1905. From the point of view of the present study, this is regrettable: I can think of nothing potentially more instructive than the critical response to the *Execution* on the part of both admirers and detractors. Even in the absence of that response, though, I shall end this chapter with some remarks relating the *Execution* project as a whole and the Mannheim canvas in particular to the account of Manet in his generation I have been developing.

First, the *Execution* project marks a break with Manet's post-Madrid practice of making single-figure paintings, the ultimate models for which were Velázquez's *Pablo de Valladolid*, *Aesop*, and *Menippus* in the Prado. In an obvious sense, the break was necessitated by the subject he now wanted to tackle. But I think Manet was already on the lookout for a subject that would do this, and that a factor predisposing him in that direction was the overview of his oeuvre to date provided by his one-man exhibition of 1867. By this I mean that seeing so many of his paintings of the 1860s under a single roof led him to feel that his pre-Madrid work with its more complex compositions and multivalent relation to its sources was pictorially richer than his more recent canvases, or at least that it represented an approach he wished to resume. (I make a similar point in "Manet's Sources" apropos the *Balcony* and *Luncheon in the*

Studio; a less ambitious but significant work of the moment immediately following the exhibition is his *Boy Blowing Bubbles* [1867], which reprises his earlier involvement with the French tradition through an unmistakable reference to Chardin.)²¹⁹

And in fact the *Execution* project mobilized several sources in something like the spirit of the pre-Madrid paintings. The most obvious one, the picture that has always been recognized as largely determining the composition of the London and Mannheim versions, is Goya's *The Third of May* (1814; fig. 162), which Manet could have seen in the Prado in 1865 but which had also recently been illustrated in a book on Goya by Charles Yriarte, whose name appears in Manet's address book.²²⁰ But as Kathryn L. Brush, writing in the Brown University catalog *Edouard Manet and the 'Execution of Maximilian'* acutely observes, the *Third of May* itself reveals the influence of David's *Oath of the Horatii* (1785; fig. 163), which is to say that "Manet was a third generation Davidian in more ways than one" (i.e. not just by virtue of having studied with Couture).²²¹ The implication is that Manet would have been aware of that



Figure 162. Francisco Goya, *The Third of May*, 1814.



Figure 163. Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Horatii*, 1785.

connection, but even if that were not the case he would surely have wished the London and Mannheim canvases to be seen in relation to David's history paintings of the 1780s—not just the *Horatii* but also, I think, the *Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789; fig. 164), whose three-part composition might be compared with that of the London and Mannheim canvases. In particular the detachment of the figure of Brutus from the lethal exchange of gazes between the lictors and the swooning women provides a rough parallel to that of the NCO cocking his musket from the rest of the scene of which nevertheless he is a part. In short, we find in the London and Mannheim versions a doubling of allusions to French and Spanish painting which recalls the strategic use of sources in Manet's paintings of the first half of the 1860s. In addition, as Pamela M. Jones notes, the group of victims in the Mannheim canvas harks back to Manet's *Old Musician* of 1862 (pl. 2),²²² the fair-haired, light-skinned Maximilian in an upturned sombrero being a close equivalent to the Gilles-like boy in the earlier picture. Not only that, Maximilian's position between his two darker generals recalls the juxtaposition of the

Gilles-like boy and his "Spanish" companion in the *Old Musician*, just as the handclasp linking Maximilian and Miramón may be seen as a displacement of the earlier gesture by which the second of the two boys put his arm around the back of the first. The *Old Musician*, of course, played a decisive role in "Manet's Sources" because of the clarity with which it brought together French and Spanish sources within the framework of a republican account of the French pictorial tradition. Its recycling in the *Execution* might be said to make that latent political content explicit even as the overtly political nature of the *Execution* project may well have facilitated Manet's return—with a difference, to be sure—to the multisource strategy of his pictures of the first half of the 1860s. (Significantly, the *Old Musician* imposed itself on Manet's imagination of the *Execution* fairly early on. In the Boston canvas, the officer in profile cut in half by the right-hand framing edge is based on the bearded figure at the extreme right of the *Old Musician*, and it may be that the NCO to his left who faces out of the painting was inspired by, though not derived from, one or another figure in that work as well.²²³ Both the officer and the NCO were added after the soldiers firing their muskets were already painted in, perhaps in



Figure 164. Jacques-Louis David, *Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons*, 1789.

response to new information about the exact composition of the firing squad. It may be that the initial conception of the trio of victims *facing* their executioners, which remained more or less consistent throughout the different versions, brought the *Old Musician* to mind—and as though the unfolding of the project made that association ever more emphatic.)

Now, it has always been recognized that the Mannheim *Execution*—the definitive version—is altogether different in expressive tonality from the passionate and tragic *Third of May*, and it hardly needs saying that it also lacks the electrifying dramatic qualities of David's history paintings of the 1780s. For Bataille, who regards the *Execution* as one of Manet's signature works, the key term—we have met it before—is “indifference.” He writes: “Manet deliberately rendered the condemned man's death with the same indifference as if he had chosen a fish or a flower for the object of his work.”²²⁴ And: “A priori, death, coldly, methodically dealt out by a firing squad, is unfavorable to indifference: it's a subject charged with meaning, giving rise to violent feelings, but Manet appears to have painted it as if insensible; the spectator follows it [i.e. takes it in] in that profound apathy. This painting strangely recalls the anesthetizing of a tooth: we get the impression of an all-engulfing numbness, as if a skillful practitioner had applied, habitually and conscientiously, the basic precept: ‘Take eloquence and twist its neck.’”²²⁵ Elsewhere in his short book on the painter Bataille distinguishes his view of Manet's attitude toward subject matter from that of André Malraux, who, he argues, didn't quite appreciate the importance that subject matter (in Bataille's terminology, “the subject”) retained for Manet. In Manet's painting, according to Bataille, the traditional subject is still present but it has been stripped of its traditional meaning; what distinguishes Manet's relation to the subject is precisely the “operation” of stripping, or say the intensity generated by a willed and systematic negation of expected significance.²²⁶ As he also remarks: in the *Execution* as in *Olympia*, “the text is *effaced* by the painting. *And the meaning of the painting is not the text, but the effacement.*”²²⁷ Failing to grasp this, Malraux mistakenly associated Manet's art with what he took to be the Impressionist attitude of *simple* indifference to subject matter in the interests of an exclusive concern with form and color.

It scarcely needs to be said—it didn't require the work of social historians of art to show—that Bataille's notion of Manet's active destruction of meaning is itself somewhat simplistic (it doesn't differ enough from

Malraux's less-nuanced account), but what Bataille has right is the insistence that Manet's paintings perform a certain “operation” and that the nature of that “operation” is in important respects negative, repudiatory, destructive. (Also that there are vital differences between Manet's art and that of the Impressionists.) My way of putting this has been to say that Manet's paintings seek to void or otherwise neutralize the absorptive potential of their subjects and more broadly to find an alternative to the *excessively* absorptive effects by means of which his closest contemporaries, Legros in particular, sought at once to adhere to the basic premises of the antitheatrical tradition and yet generate the added intensity that was now required to strike and hold—to hold by striking—the beholder. (It was largely by means of an absorptive dynamics that traditional painting had achieved its effects of “significance” or “meaning.”) As Bataille's remarks suggest, the subject of the *Execution* put Manet's anti-absorptive strategy under extreme pressure. For one thing, the event itself—the execution by firing squad of a man of high though deluded ideals along with his heroic generals—could not have been more dramatic, tragic, absorbing. For another, the collective action of the members of the firing squad—aiming and firing—was itself absorptive. And the victims could not plausibly be shown as unconcerned with the proceedings. Manet's solution to the problem was ingenious, starting with his decision to depict the members of the firing squad not exactly from behind, which is what we are largely made to feel is the case in the Boston *ébauche*, but as it were from the *side*, with their backs facing the viewer and their heads turned toward the victims just far enough to allow a glimpse of something less than their *profils perdus*; the emphasis falls on their identical uniforms, on the similar tilts of their heads, on the Watteau-dancer-like splaying of their feet (the white spats were added by Manet to complement the belts), in short on a series of repetitions that range from the impassive to the slightly comic and that effectively divest a motif that could have yielded a strongly absorptive effect of any but the most vestigial relation to inwardness. (The soldiers' profiles, if they may be called that, are another link with the *Old Musician* by way of the girl holding a baby at its left. And might there not be, in the very motif of repetition, in a painting about death, with a cemetery in the background, the trace of a memory of the *Burial at Ornans*?) As for the victims, Manet deliberately blurred their features, especially Maximilian's, while at the same time superbly evoking the involuntary spasmodic reaction of Mejía, on Maximilian's right (our left), as the fusillade

strikes home (the three men were executed in turn, Maximilian last).²²⁸ The result is virtually a group portrait of one man dying and two others about to die, but the subtle distancing of all three figures as well as the minimizing of their gazes goes a long way toward neutralizing their status as the painting's expressive focus. (The London fragment bearing a portrait of Miramón suggests that the muted treatment of the victims was an innovation of the Mannheim version.) Finally, the prominent figure of the NCO cocking his musket for the coup de grace he will soon be called upon to give (in fact the real NCO had to fire more than one shot into the fallen Maximilian before the latter died) does indeed seem absorbed, but only in that mechanical task and at the cost of seeming oblivious to the violence and horror of the execution itself.²²⁹ Traditionally, as we have seen, obliviousness to one's surroundings was a hallmark of deep absorption, but in the context of the *Execution* it serves rather to equate absorption itself with indifference (to use Bataille's word). Put more strongly, it's as if in the Mannheim *Execution* Manet definitively emptied absorption itself of all connotation of psychological depth, as if he rendered it perfectly "flat," which is to say made it equivalent to the conspicuously inexpressive, barely inflected, almost mechanically repetitive paint handling (or execution: might he been aware of the pun?) by which the soldiers if not the victims were depicted. (We might think of this emptying or "flattening" of absorption as the diametrical opposite of the operation by which, at the beginning of the antitheatrical tradition, Chardin's genre paintings invested the most ordinary, everyday modes of absorption with unprecedented "depth.")²³⁰

But it was not enough for Manet to come to terms with absorption in this way. His larger aim, the aim of his generation, was strikingness, and as soon as this is said it becomes clear that of all Manet's paintings of the 1860s it may be the Mannheim *Execution* that comes closest to being a "real allegory" of his enterprise. The painting depicts the instant when Mejía was struck by the bullets of the firing squad: it thus not only thematizes strikingness (as Legros's *Vocation of St. Francis* may be said to do), it also *literalizes* it (cf. the pun on "execution"), and what is more, it does so within the framework of a thematics of instantaneousness, keyed to the flame and smoke issuing from the muskets (the most declarative markers of instantaneousness in all his art)²³¹ and of a structure marked by an internal division between stillness and its opposite. (One is tempted to associate stillness chiefly with the victims waiting to be shot, but Mejía's sudden movement as well as the somewhat blurred treatment of the

victims as a group, in contrast to the methodicalness and precision with which the firing squad has been depicted, complicate the issue in a way that recalls the chiasmatic exchange of properties between the flying, frozen bullfinch and squatting, calligraphic frog in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. Then too there is what one feels to be the separate or *disparate* temporality of the NCO cocking his weapon. And there is also a sense in which the cloud of smoke that drifts upward to the left of the middle of the picture appears to belong to a slightly later, more protracted moment than the flame and smoke issuing directly from the muzzles. It's hard to think of another picture in all Western art that so determinedly draws attention to the inevitably aporetic nature of the fiction of instantaneousness even as it appeals to that fiction for its basic structure.)

Another "allegorical" feature of the *Execution* is the point-blank range at which the firing squad performs its task. I take that range to be something like *picture-viewing distance*. Seen in that light, and if we take the figure-group of Maximilian and his generals as emblematic of Manet's art generally (as the association with the *Old Musician* authorizes us to do), the nearness of the firing squad to the victims belongs to a metaphoric of spectatorly aggression against Manet's paintings: think of the frequent rejection of his works by Salon juries, of the hostility of critics and public to the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, *Olympia*, and other works of the 1860s, of Sensier's assertion that each viewer of the *Olympia* cast a stone in its face and Zola's more elaborate stone-throwing metaphor of two years later.²³² But it's also possible, by virtue of the kind of reversal of perspective that in Zola's novel *L'Oeuvre* would later allow the flawed innovator Claude Lantier to gaze back at the crowd that had gathered to admire the opportunistic Fagerolles's *Picnic* (a version of his own earlier *Plein Air*), to regard the three victims as emblematic of *the public* and the firing squad as in some sense Manet's emissaries on the grounds that the widespread revulsion toward his works had been largely provoked by the works themselves: think of Manet's deliberate courting of unintelligibility, of what was seen as the extreme violence of his paintings' contrasts and oppositions, of the use of the word "cruelty" in connection with his art, of Thoré's claim in 1864 that Manet's painting was a deliberate provocation and that he wanted to torment the public as a picador torments a bull, of Sensier's claim that *Olympia* was like a glass of ice water dashed in the viewer's face, indeed of the full thematic implications of the *Execution*'s literalizing of strikingness. Seen in *that* light, the violence that since David or even Greuze had been part of the central French

tradition and that surfaced one last time in the *Execution* as that tradition reached its point of absolute crisis becomes readable as the violence of a conflict *between painting and beholder*—very much as if the Diderotian imperative to negate or neutralize the beholder, to establish the fiction of his nonexistence, had all along entailed relations of deadly mutual hostility between the two.²³³ (In a less lethal register, Astruc in 1870 remarkably evoked the sufferings of Manet's paintings at the hands of the unflagging hostility and incomprehension of the public. "With all the qualities and bizarrenesses of a lightning bolt, he fills the shivering room with cold," Astruc wrote. "What can I say of a man attacked in this way—beaten on by every pen, except three or four, atoning for his talent for many years, severed from the smallest artistic joy, except for that of doing right, of being a man. By an inconceivable fatality, one would say that his gifts cannot communicate themselves to the crowd. It observes, gazes, smiles, doubts—and gives, you will admit, some discomfort to the artist. Someone becomes awkward when he doesn't feel sympathy around him. One would say that Manet's paintings have a soul and that they experience in themselves the effects of that hostility."²³⁴ What Astruc doesn't say but is perhaps implicit in his remarks is that experiencing the effects of that hostility meant that the paintings reflected it back at the public.)

All this is to interpret the *Execution* as a field of multiple, labile, and conflictual identifications and counteridentifications, with Manet himself—Manet as painter-beholder—at once everywhere and nowhere. As a victim of the jury system and a target of public outrage and on the basis of the link with the *Old Musician*, he belongs with Maximilian and the two generals. At the same time, as an aggressor against the public, which after all is how most critics and virtually the entire exhibition-going public insisted on viewing him, he is aligned with the firing squad, which would give ironic force to the often-repeated charge that his attempts to draw attention to himself at any cost were tantamount to discharging a pistol at the Salon. ("A pistol?" I imagine him thinking. "Why not a whole firing squad?") In another, subtler sense, Manet may be associated with the figure of the NCO cocking his musket, who at first appears simply to epitomize detachment and indifference (itself a "progressive" esthetic attitude: think of Flaubert and Baudelaire), but who by virtue of his stance and action might almost be an image of a painter standing back and partly turned away from his painting while he mixes colors on his palette; indeed insofar as the NCO will soon be required to ensure that Maxi-

milian is dead, he also represents the job of *finishing*, precisely what Manet himself was regularly accused of not being willing or able to do (another pun to go with those on "execution" and "strikingness").²³⁵

But perhaps the most compelling figure for Manet is the nearly invisible sword officer, who as I have said is present in the Mannheim version only in two vanishingly slight traces: the hint of a red kepi toward the rear of the firing squad, and the streak of red paint between the legs of the second soldier from the right. Among the reasons that have been proposed for the officer's having been painted out of his initial position at the rear of the squad are, first, that Manet came to feel that the still-elevated sword was at odds with the muskets having already been fired, and second, that a figure in red trousers would have been too clearly identifiable as a *French* officer.²³⁶ Another possibility is that in his initial incarnation the sword officer was too vivid and particular an image of executive agency, and that by all but eliminating him Manet greatly reinforced the mood of implacable mechanism presiding over the painting as a whole. But if that is right, it matters all the more that the sword officer has not been entirely done away with—the mood of implacable mechanism should not be equated with the painting's "truth"—just as it matters that the NCO may be seen, as it were against the grain, as a figure for the painter at work on his picture. And it also matters that we cannot tell what the streak of red paint between the soldier's legs represents. Jones has suggested that it depicts the officer's sword,²³⁷ but this seems improbable. On close inspection the streak of paint is merely that and nothing more: it absolutely resists being assimilated to the work of representation, by which I also mean that it escapes the categories of finish and nonfinish that indefatigably structured contemporary responses to Manet's work; it's impossible to imagine what would have had to be done to "push" the red streak further, to make it more "complete." Perhaps it too is best thought of as a *remainder* (cf. my remarks on the distance marker with circle in the Fogg watercolor of the *Races at Longchamp* as well as on the figure-group in the middle distance), something left over after the task of representation was done and which stands for everything in Manet's art which adamantly resisted closure, which was irremediably disparate, which pursued a strikingness that could not be kept within the bounds even of the excessive, which repeatedly interpellated the beholder in ways the latter could only find offensive and incomprehensible, and which in fact continues to defeat our best efforts to make reassuring sense of his paintings by inserting them in a historical context, no matter how that

context is defined. (Cf. Bataille: “Manet unsettles and has no wish to satisfy; he even seeks to disappoint.”)²³⁸ The streak of red paint also brings to mind a recently discovered fact about *Olympia*: the original of the bracelet worn by Olympia on her right wrist contained a lock of Manet’s baby hair.²³⁹ This could not have been known apart from the discovery of the bracelet itself—it amounts to a personal secret at the heart of Manet’s most provocative painting²⁴⁰—and my thought is that the red streak in the *Execution* can perhaps be considered an *open* secret of this type: as if as a mark or trace of Manet “himself” the streak were equivalent to the lock of hair but, being unreadable, could be displayed frankly instead of being sealed away in a bracelet. A thematics of secrecy is however hinted at by the nearly complete concealment of the sword officer behind the firing squad—and, in his original position to the right, beneath at least one layer of paint (in an oblique light raised traces of the original figure of the sword officer can be made out).

I have not yet mentioned one conspicuous feature of the *Execution*: the peasants looking on over the top of the wall. To be blunt, I regret them, partly because the indication of emotional response on the part of the man with a head bandage and the gesturing figure to his left feels out of place,²⁴¹ partly because the looseness and rapidity with which all the onlookers have been brushed in seems superfluous to the contrast in technique between the firing squad and the victims, perhaps most of all because as representatives of spectatorhood they themselves are superfluous to the “allegorical” drama of identifications and counteridentifications that I have suggested structures the final composition. (Significantly, “our” position before the canvas is nowhere addressed within that composition, a conspicuous and for Manet highly unusual absence that further points up the polyvalent “allegorical” nature of the *Execution* as a whole and therefore militates against the *limiting* thematization of spectatorhood that the peasants represent.) Not that I think it’s obvious how the upper zone of the canvas ought to have been handled; but I wish Manet had found a more *indifferent* solution to the problem.

A final comparison with Legros will prove useful. I mentioned in passing that there exist certain obvious analogies between the composition of the *Execution* and those of Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and *Vocation of St. Francis*, both of which depict figures in profile in the right-hand half of the painting gazing absorbedly at or, in the *Vocation*, being palpably struck by a paintinglike object facing them at the left. Equally to the point, a work by Legros almost exactly contemporaneous with the Mannheim *Execution*,

L'Amende honorable (1868; fig. 165), depicts in the left foreground a mostly naked bearded man who kneels with his hands tied behind his back and who, having confessed his sins, waits to hear his punishment pronounced by the bishop seated at the extreme right. The monk seated next to the bishop holds a pen and book in his hands and turns toward his superior so as not to miss a word of the judgment; a second monk raises his hand to his chin as if reflecting on the question of the proper punish-

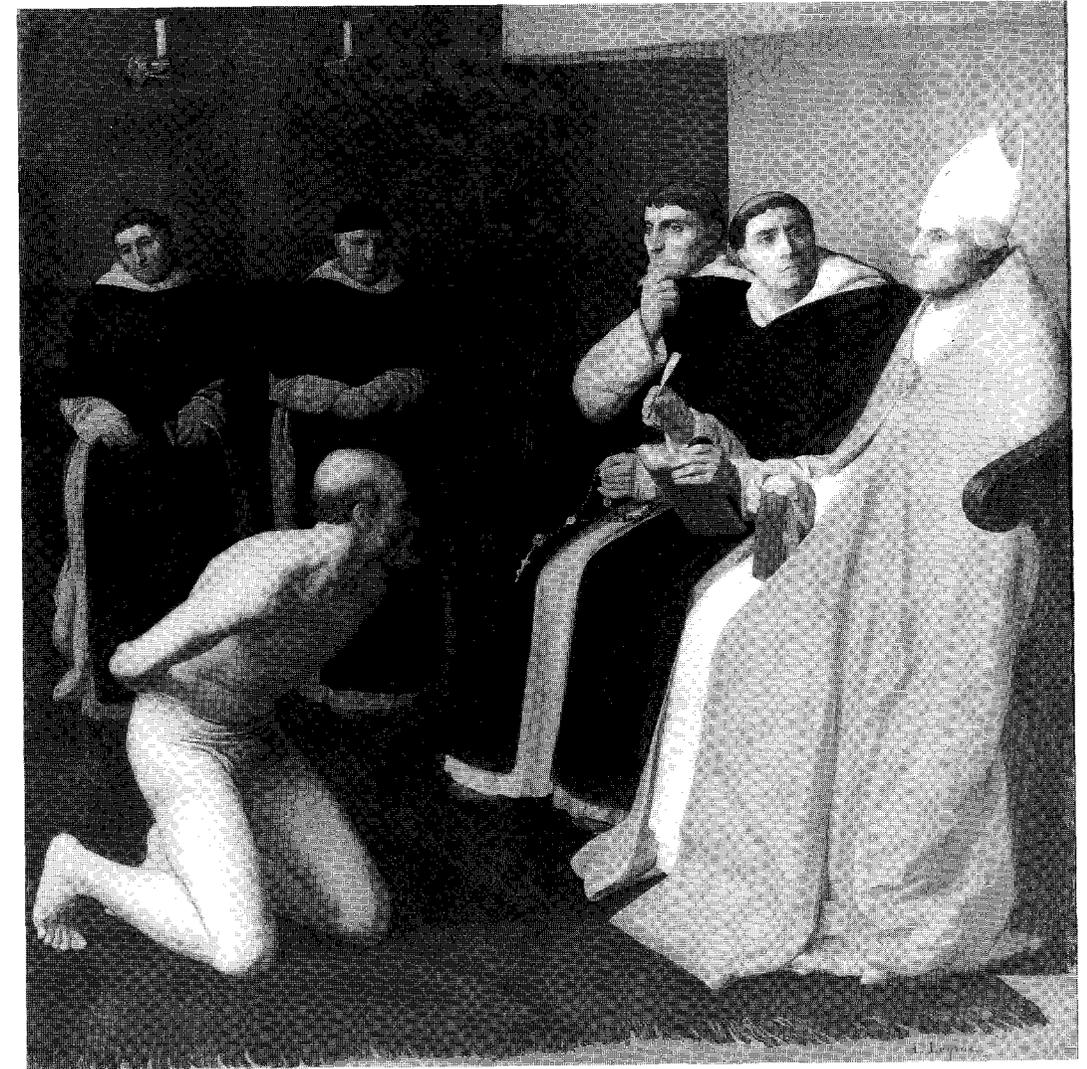


Figure 165. Alphonse Legros, *L'Amende honorable*, 1868.



ment while two other monks sit in shadow against the rear wall. Stylistically, the *Amende honorable* is unusually restrained: it is painted in broad, matte, uninflected expanses of wine red, pink and gold, dark green, white, and black; its format is almost square, and the kneeling man's clarity of silhouette together with the muted treatment of color and an almost total absence of detail (at least in the picture's present condition) evoke the feeling of painting on a wall rather than on canvas, though in fact the presiding Old Master is clearly Zurbarán. The overall effect is and was surely meant to be absorptive, but the critical response to Legros's canvas is nevertheless pertinent to the argument we have been pursuing. Paul Mantz, for example, after praising Legros's early paintings for their character and strikingness, noted that more recently he had refined his manner—excessively, it's implied—but that his submissions to the Salon of 1868, *L'Amende honorable* and *Le Lutrin*, were remarkable. "The figure of the bishop, in the *Amende honorable*, has a lot of finesse and distinction," Mantz wrote. "Legros ought to take one further step and accentuate more deeply the physiognomies of his models."²⁴² In *L'Artiste* Montifaud briefly described the picture and concluded: "There is a sobriety of tint, a severity, a conciseness of touch, all of which makes one believe that Legros wanted to reawaken the idea of a monastic creation. It truly captures the stiff and solemn stamp of episcopal arrogance in its epochs of high inquisition. The costumes are treated with scrupulous care; although a little cold, this conception is alive and strongly characterized; we find in it a reflection of that age in all its imperative rigor."²⁴³ Finally, in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* J. Grangedor wrote: "Legros, following Zurbarán and Le Sueur, seeks to rediscover the faces, impassive and hard as monastic discipline itself, of priests-turned-judges in an ecclesiastical tribunal. The very care with which the least features of these men who represent an uncontrolled authority are accentuated detracts from the ensemble of the scene the unity, the depth, and the mystery that would complete the expression seriously pursued by the painter."²⁴⁴ The three commentaries are revealing in that they show a range of plausible responses to a painting as *restrainedly* absorptive as, it seems clear, Legros's *Amende honorable* was meant to be. For Mantz, it wasn't quite expressive enough, he wished that (like Legros's paintings of the early 1860s) it had gone farther in the direction of accentuating effects of character; for Montifaud, it was both a little cold and strongly characterized, a combination that reflected the severe *moeurs* of an earlier age; and for Grangedor, who also took seriously the painting's attempt to recapture

the affective tonality of monastic life and who associated its asceticism with the art of two seventeenth-century masters of absorption, it was precisely the accentuation of extremely slight facial and other features that interfered with the expressive unity he took the painter to have been after.

Had Manet completed the *Execution* in time for the Salon of 1868, as he at first apparently hoped to do, and had he been allowed to show it, it seems likely that the dominant view of that work would have been in line with Mantz's dismissive comments on Manet's art in his "Salon" of that year. "Nature scarcely interests him," Mantz wrote, "the spectacles of life don't move him. That indifference will be his punishment. Manet appears to us to be less an enthusiast than a dilettante. If he had even the smallest bit of passion, he would make someone else passionate, because there are still some twenty of us in France who have a taste for novelty and audacity. But Manet can't even exploit the modest resources of his palette. With the little he possesses he could say something—and he says nothing."²⁴⁵ It's a devastating judgment, one whose tone of exasperation suggests that Mantz might have been allowed to glimpse and have been puzzled by the seeming impassiveness of the London version of the *Execution* before its rejection by the painter, but my point in quoting Mantz is not to dwell on his views but rather to suggest that it would have been impossible for all but a few critics—Astruc (if only out of loyalty), Zola (but could he have continued to maintain that subject matter for Manet was merely a pretext to paint?), perhaps Castagnary (on political grounds), and Thoré (whose last "Salon" was that of 1868)—to have viewed the *Execution* other than in those terms. Indeed my further point is that Legros's project in the *Amende honorable* of simultaneously restricting the range of expressive effects to an extremely narrow band and of painting his picture in a conspicuously broad and uninflected manner provides an analogy *in an absorptive register* to Manet's attempt in the *Execution* to "flatten" absorption almost beyond recognition. In the words of another critic, Chesneau, who admired the *Amende honorable* without reservation: "The intention of this beautiful page is very curious to study; the artist has manifested in this work no preference, no partiality, whether for the condemned man or for the tribunal; as a conception it's grand, simple, and dramatic, precisely by virtue of the absence of all dramatic intention."²⁴⁶ The drama, to paraphrase Chesneau, consisted in a certain deliberate indifference, but the positive relation between that effect of indifference and the absorptive framework within which it was produced meant that the *Amende honorable* elicited an altogether different set of

responses from its viewers than the *Execution* would have done had it been shown in 1868 or 1869.²⁴⁷ But the *Execution* wasn't shown, and modern commentators, myself not excepted, have been slow to realize the extent to which it may be seen as reflecting almost point by point—almost methodically—on Manet's pictorial aspirations in the 1860s.

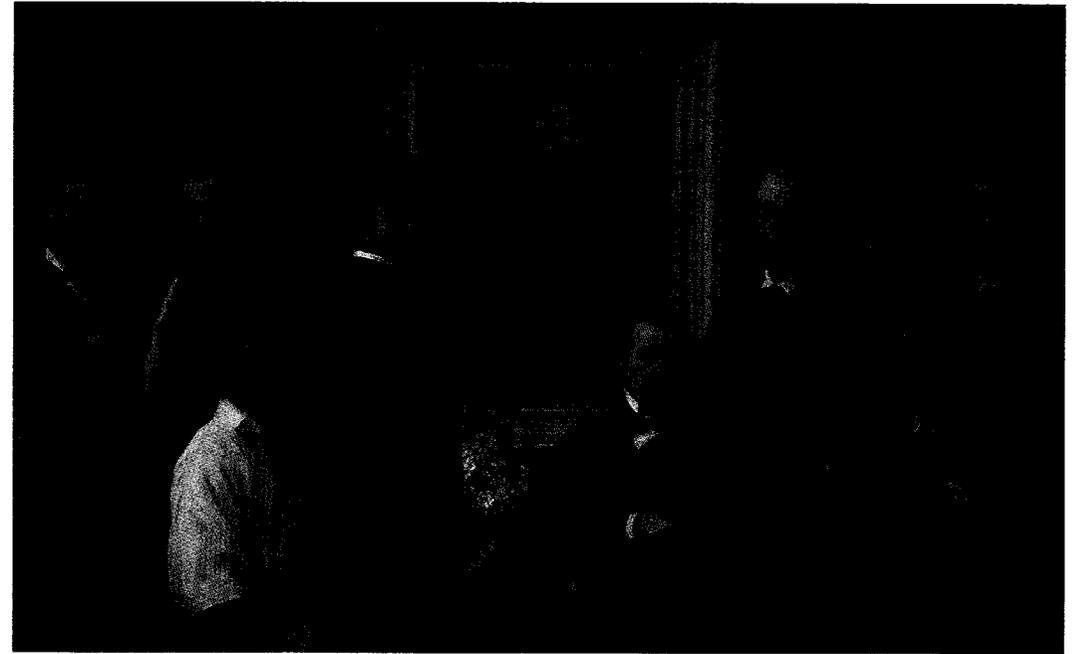


Plate 1. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Homage to Delacroix*, 1864.

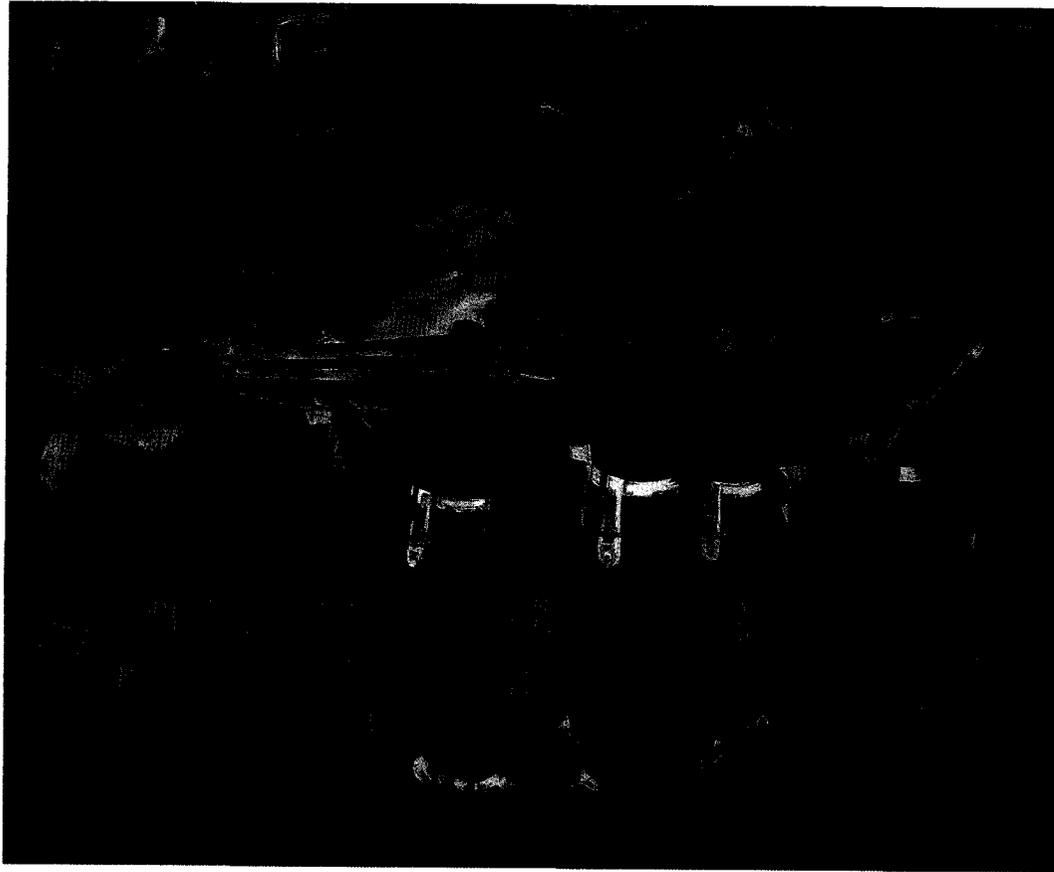


Plate 16. Édouard Manet, *The Execution of Maximilian*, 1868–69.

HALFWAY through *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, Jacques Derrida briefly considers several remarkable self-portrait drawings by Fantin-Latour.* He does this in the context of a discussion of what he calls the “*retrait transcendantal du trait*”—the “*transcendental retrait* or *withdrawal* of the *trait*” (a basic term in Derrida’s lexicon that carries a range of meanings from a trait or feature to a line, stroke, or mark). Roughly, the necessity of such a *retrait* follows from the inherently differential structure of the *trait* in Derrida’s account. Because the *trait*, once drawn, ideally has no thickness but instead only marks the separation between the inside and outside of a figure (“the single edge of a contour”), it cannot strictly speaking manifest itself.¹ In Derrida’s words: “*Nothing belongs to the trait*, and thus, to drawing and to the thought of drawing, not even its own ‘trace.’” And: “The outline or tracing separates and separates itself; it retraces only borderlines, intervals, a spacing grid with no possible appropriation. The *experience* or *experimenting* of drawing (and experimenting, as its name indicates, always consists in journeying beyond limits) at once crosses and institutes these borders, it invents the *Shibboleth* of these passages.”² And that “*transcendental retrait* or *withdrawal*” in turn

*Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, trans. Pascale Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago and London, 1993), pp. 57ff. (*Mémoires d’aveugle: L’Autoportrait et autres ruines* [Paris, 1990]). The present chapter, in a somewhat different form and minus some of the material in the last section, was originally written for a conference on Derrida’s work since 1980, held at the Centre Culturel International de Cerisy-la-Salle, July 11–21, 1992. The overarching theme of that conference was a notion taken from Derrida’s writings, “the crossing of borders,” *le passage des frontières*, which accordingly recurs as a motif in these pages. A French translation of the original essay appears in the collective volume, *Le Passage des frontières*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet (Paris, 1994); also, a version of this chapter, “Between Realisms: From Derrida to Manet,” was published in *Critical Inquiry* 21 (autumn 1994): 1–36. Derrida’s text opens with an epigraph from Diderot and refers in several notes to *Absorption and Theatricality* and *Courbet’s Realism*.

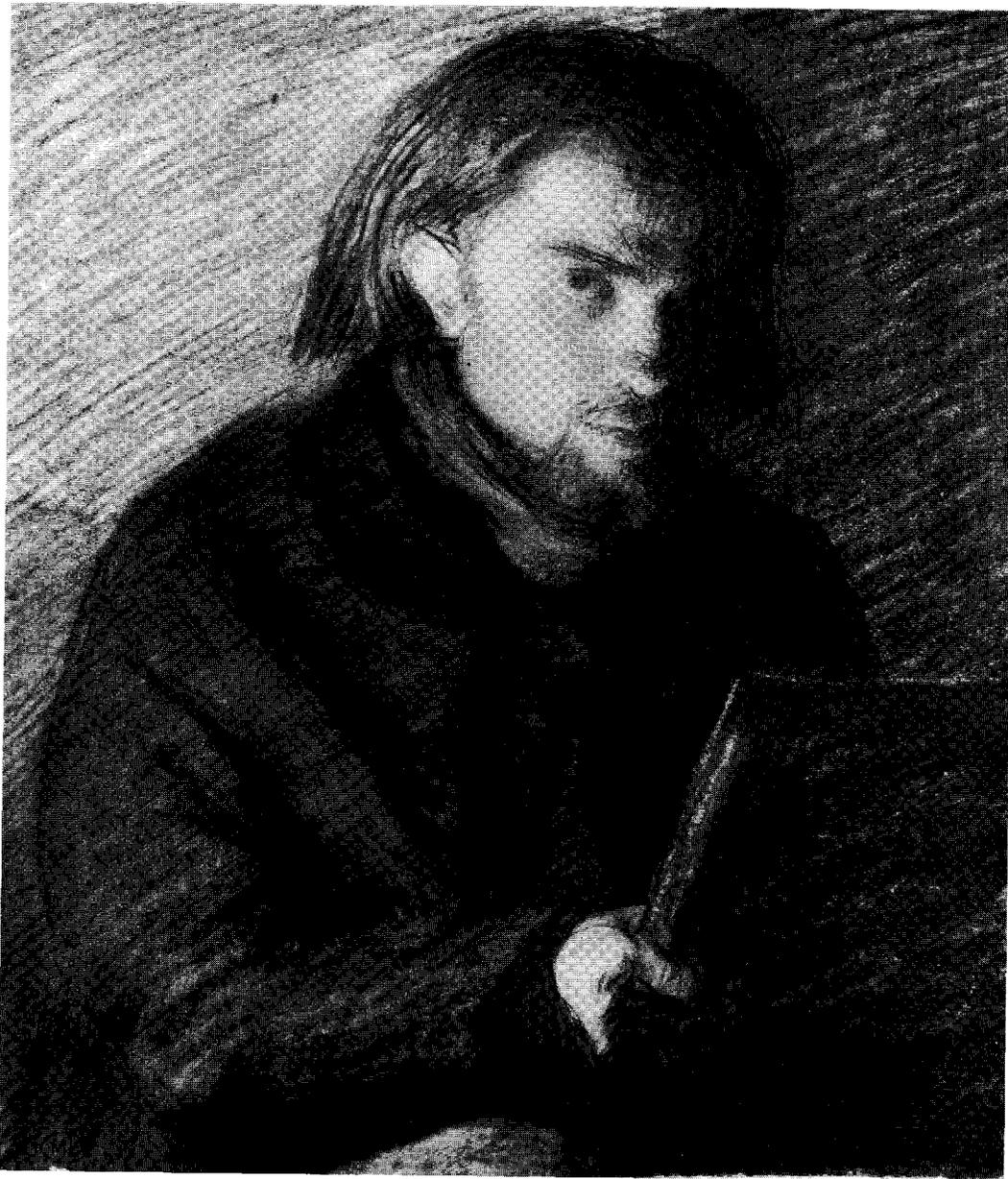


Figure 166. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait*, drawing, ca. 1860.

calls for and forbids the self-portrait. Not that of the author and presumed signatory, but that of the “source-point” of drawing, the eye and the finger, if you will. This point is represented and eclipsed at the same time. It lends itself to the autograph of this wink or *clin d’oeil* that plunges it into the night, or rather, into the time of this waning or declining day wherein the face is submerged: it gets carried away, it decomposes itself or lets itself be devoured by a mouth of darkness. Certain self-portraits of Fantin-Latour show this [figs. 166, 167, 168]. Or rather, they would be the figures or the de-monstration of this. Sometimes invisibility is *shared out*. . . , if one can say this, right between the two eyes. There is on the *one hand*. . . the monocular stare of a narcissistic cyclops: a single eye open, the right one [this will be important], fixed firmly on its own image. It will not let it go, but that’s because the prey necessarily eludes it, making off with the lure. The *traits* of a self-portrait are also those of a fascinated hunter. The staring eye always resembles an eye of the blind, sometimes the eye of the dead, at that precise moment when mourning begins: it is still open, a pious hand should come to close it; it would recall a portrait of the dying. Looking at itself seeing, it also sees itself disappear right at the moment when the drawing tries desperately to recapture it. For this cyclops eye sees nothing, nothing but an eye that it thus prevents from seeing anything at all. Seeing the seeing and not the visible, it sees nothing. This seeing eye sees itself blind. *On the other hand*. . . , and this would be, as it were, the eye’s nocturnal truth, the *other eye* is already plunged into the night, sometimes just barely hidden, veiled, withdrawn . . . , sometimes totally indiscernible and dissolved into a blotch, and sometimes absorbed by the shadow cast upon it by a top hat shaped like an eyeshade. From one blindness, the other.³

Derrida goes on to say that Fantin’s drawings epitomize what he tentatively names the “*hypothesis of sight*—or the intuitive hypothesis, the *hypothesis of intuition*.”⁴ Derrida’s point concerns the inescapableness of hypothesizing (of conjecturing, presupposing) at the heart of the act of intuiting (that is, of seeing, as it were immediately and without reflection) the subject of Fantin’s self-portrait drawings. For as Derrida remarks, we can only conjecture that the protagonist of those drawings is actually delineating his own image as he perceives it in a mirror, thereby portraying himself in the act of making his self-portrait—the one before us. In fact, we are shown neither the surface of the sheet of paper on which he is drawing nor the mirror itself, whose presumed place we occupy and which indeed we effectively replace and obscure, or as Derrida also says, which we make one blind to “by producing, *by putting to work*, the sought after specularity.” He continues:

The spectator’s performance, as it is essentially prescribed by the work, consists in striking the signatory blind, and thus in gouging out—*at the same stroke*—

the eyes of the model, or else in making him, the *subject* (at once model, signatory, and object of the work), gouge out his own eyes in order both to see and to represent himself at work. *If there were such a thing*, the self-portrait would first consist in assigning, thus in describing, a place to the spectator, to the visitor, to the one whose seeing blinds; it would assign or describe this place following the gaze of a draughtsman who, *on the one hand*, no longer sees himself, the mirror being necessarily replaced by the destinatory who faces him,



Figure 167. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait*, drawing, ca. 1860.

that is, by us, but us who, *on the other hand*, at the very moment when we are instituted as spectators *in (the) place of the mirror*, no longer see the *author* as such, can no longer in any case identify the object, the subject, and the signatory of the self-portrait of the artist as a self-portraitist. In this self-portrait of a self-portrait, the figure or face of Fantin-Latour should be looking at us looking at him according to the law of an impossible and blinding reflexivity. In order to see himself or show himself, he should see only his two eyes, his own eyes—



Figure 168. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait*, drawing, ca. 1860.

two eyes that he must, however, get over mourning just as soon, and precisely in order to see himself, eyes that he must just as soon replace, to this end, with this representation in sight, and in (the) place of the mirror, by other eyes, by eyes that see him, by our eyes.⁵

Derrida concludes further on: “Even if one were sure that Fantin-Latour were drawing himself drawing, one would never know, *observing the work alone*, whether he were showing himself drawing *himself* or *something else*—or even himself *as something else, as other*. And he can always, in addition, draw this situation: the stealing away of what regards you, of what looks at you, of what fixedly observes you not seeing that with which or with whom you are dealing. Does the signatory himself see that which he makes you observe? Will he have seen it in some present?”⁶

I was struck by Derrida’s remarks when I first read them, both because of their characteristic brilliance and subtlety and because the works they treat as exemplary—Fantin’s self-portrait drawings—were already of urgent interest to me. Need I say that the problematic I shall be exploring in this chapter is not the same as Derrida’s? I am not concerned with a “*transcendental logic* of drawing” and hence shall not engage with his framing notion of the “*transcendental withdrawal* of the *trait*.” Rather, my concerns here as throughout this book are essentially historical, which however does not mean that they are devoid of quasi-transcendental implications.⁷ Specifically, I want to return to the question of the historical identity of the generation of 1863, and I want to broach that question in this final chapter by way of Derrida’s comments on Fantin’s self-portrait drawings. Without getting ahead of myself, let me add that my reading of Fantin’s drawings complements Derrida’s, which focuses on the sitter’s gaze as it hypothetically is given back to itself by the action of a mirror, by calling attention to another, equally important operation of that presumed mirror as well as to certain no less hypothetical actions of the sitter’s *hands*. (A terminological note: instead of Derrida’s three-part distinction among “object,” “subject,” and “signatory”—he also refers to the “object,” “model,” and “signatory”—of the drawings, I shall call the figure *in* the drawings the “sitter” and the drawings’ *maker* the “artist-model.” This in effect presumes that the drawings *are* self-portraits, a presumption that Derrida’s nomenclature holds in suspense. But not only do I have no theoretical stake in maintaining that suspense, I am compelled to dissolve it in order to conduct the argument that follows.)

The two drawings I want to begin by discussing were made around 1860, when Fantin was twenty-four (figs. 166, 167). The first was done in

charcoal (with stump) and pencil, the second in pen and black ink. Both are instances of the young Fantin’s drawing style at its most authoritative, and both exemplify the hypothetical logic that Derrida analyzes in the passages quoted above. That is, both drawings convey the impression that the sitter is striving to portray his own image in a mirror, an assumption which, as Derrida shows, the drawings by themselves are powerless to confirm. He does not contest that this is how the drawings were made; his point is that the dynamic of their making—assuming them to have been made in that way—is not and could not be fully and indubitably manifest in the drawings themselves. I take his arguments in this regard to be irrefutable, and I want to open my own analysis by focusing on certain features of both drawings which further exemplify the effects of a mirror whose presence in the drawings must nevertheless remain a matter of conjecture.

The effects I have in mind are of *reversal of left and right*, effects Derrida brackets when, seemingly not wishing to imply the presence of the mirror before developing its hypothetical status, he describes the *right eye* (in fig. 166) as “fixed firmly on its own image.” Now, it has always been recognized that Fantin was right-handed.⁸ And yet the second of the two drawings portrays the sitter drawing with his left hand, while in the first we are shown his right hand grasping the tablet on which we *presume* he is drawing, for in fact we aren’t shown his left hand or the act of drawing at all. This apparent reversal of left and right (from which we also deduce that it is the artist-model’s *left eye*, relayed by the sitter, that stares so intently from the sheet) may be taken as further, perhaps stronger, evidence of the presence of the mirror, reinforcing that of the sitter’s gaze and apparent action.

Today the mirror-reversed portrayal of the painter in the act of painting has come to seem a characteristic feature of the self-portrait as a genre, but the surprising historical truth is that it became fairly common starting only around 1860, the moment we are considering; as Zirka Zaremba Filipczak has observed, earlier self-portraits reveal “no such conflation of the viewer with the artist.”⁹ This is probably why a similar instance of mirror reversal in one of Fantin’s early *painted* self-portraits appeared conspicuous enough to be remarked by a contemporary critic.¹⁰ But what I want to emphasize is that Fantin’s embrace of mirror reversal introduces an aspect of irreality into works of seemingly uncompromising realism. I mean that what we take to have been his fidelity to visual experience—to what he saw in a mirror before him—gave rise to works

that not only elide the presence of the mirror and allow at most partial access to the act of representation but also exactly reverse the facts of his appearance, as seen by everyone but himself gazing into the mirror. Put more strongly, the realist self-portrait—rather, what might be called the *visual realist* or *ocular realist* self-portrait—emerges as a contradiction in terms. For either it represents the image in the mirror, in which case it reverses the ordinary appearance of the artist-model, or it reverses that reversal in the interests of a broader, more impersonal or “universal” kind of truth, in which case it is no longer faithful to what the artist-model sees. Within the framework of the ocular realist project there is no escaping that double bind. (As Merleau-Ponty observed, human beings have no direct, unmediated perception of their own faces;¹¹ the ocular realist self-portrait makes that natural condition a problem for art.)

But at the same time as the effects of reversal confirm the (still entirely hypothetical) presence of the mirror, another feature of Fantin’s self-portrait drawings counters those effects by getting right and left back where they belong. I refer to the emphatically slanting *hatching*—a mode of shading, of signifying degrees of darkness—that intervenes dramatically in both drawings, as well as in a third drawing in pen and ink from roughly the same moment (fig. 168). For reasons that are probably both natural and conventional, right-handed artists in the Western tradition have tended to hatch from upper right to lower left while left-handed artists (notably Leonardo) have tended to hatch from upper left to lower right.¹² The vigorous upper-right-to-lower-left hatching that threatens almost to collapse the different planes of Fantin’s drawings into a single screen or grid of oblique marks may thus be read as evidence of the artist-model’s actual bodily orientation relative to the sheet of paper, in contrast to the reversal of that orientation implied by the representational mirror image. Possibly other artists have made self-portrait drawings in which both components, mirror reversal and hatching that expresses their own bodily orientation, can be found. But I see these particular works as thematizing the tension between the two with exceptional force—as yoking together a singularly persuasive representational image with exceptionally assertive hatching—to the extent of virtually dividing the drawings from within. And the question that then must be asked is, what does that internal division mean? What are the larger implications of the extreme contrast between mirror reversal and its opposite that our analysis has brought to light?

Before answering that question, two points should be stressed. First,

my discussion so far, like Derrida’s in *Memoirs of the Blind* but on different grounds, seriously complicates the conventional view of what may be said to lie “this” side of the drawings’ respective surfaces. Following one line of argument (taking the drawings as ocular realist images), what lies there—more precisely, what hangs or stands there, facing the sitter—is a mirror; following another line of argument (taking the drawings as indexes of their making), what is to be found there is the artist-model’s right hand drawing with a pencil, pen, or charcoal, and by extension (i.e. by continuity or metonymy) his entire body, and “beyond” his body a chair, a table, a room (in which of course there is also a mirror) . . . In short, even leaving aside the role of the viewer—a crucial and disruptive one, as Derrida has shown—*there is no* “this” side of Fantin’s drawings in a simple, unproblematical sense. Rather, the drawings posit a network of hypothetical real-world relationships among at least three elements: the embodied artist-model in the act of making the drawing; the drawing itself on its block or support, held by the artist-model neither vertically nor horizontally but somewhere in between; and the mirror into which the artist-model gazes. Certainly nothing less than those elements can begin to account for the dynamic of the drawings’ production insofar as the circumstances of their production are taken to be represented in and by the drawings themselves.

A second point to be stressed (it’s already implicit in my description of the second of the three elements just mentioned) is that the enterprise of drawing portrayed in these works is a *two-handed* operation. The drawings present themselves as the product not only of the actions of the artist-model’s right hand drawing with a pencil or pen but also, equally, of the actions of his left hand gripping the block. This feature of Fantin’s self-portrait drawings is by no means typical of the genre and reveals an affinity with oil painting, which in Fantin’s time, as it had for centuries, involved the right (or dominant) hand wielding a brush and the left (or subordinate) hand holding a palette. In fact, I want to go further and suggest that what is at stake in the two-handedness of the act of drawing as pictured in Fantin’s self-portraits is a relation not so much to painting generally as specifically to Courbet.

In my earlier summary of Courbet’s Realism I neglected to mention the extraordinary role played in his art by self-portraits.¹³ This is true both literally—self-portraits dominate his oeuvre throughout the 1840s—and figuratively—my reading of his art construes some of his most ambitious canvases, including the *Stonebreakers* (fig. 140) and *Wheat Sifters* (fig.

141), as “real allegories” of the activity that produced them (my account of Manet’s *Execution of Maximilian* partly derived from those readings).¹⁴ A cardinal feature of the *Stonebreakers* and *Wheat Sifters*, it will be recalled, is that the thematization of left and right in each of them is congruent with what we imagine to have been the left/right orientation of the painter-beholder at work on the painting: thus in the *Stonebreakers* the painter-beholder’s left hand holding a palette found expression in the figure of the young man carrying a basket of stones in the left-hand half of the canvas, while his right hand wielding a brush was represented by the old man raising a hammer in the right-hand half. The *Wheat Sifters* is more complex, both because the small boy peering into the *tarare* is included and because the kneeling sifter uses both hands to work her sieve, but the depiction of her from the rear together with the placement to her left of the seated, drowsy sifter—a figure for the painter-beholder’s left or palette hand—keys the painting’s structure to the bodily orientation of its maker. In Courbet’s self-portraits proper, however, he was faced with another version of the double bind I touched on earlier: either be faithful to what he saw in the mirror, in which case the reversal of left and right would make him a stranger to his own image; or reverse that mirror reversal, in which case he could identify bodily with the painted image as regards the depiction of right and left but at the cost of locating the depicted figure’s right hand opposite his own left hand and vice versa, thereby disrupting the congruence of left and right on which the possibility of quasi-corporeal merger equally depended. The solutions to this problem Courbet was led to devise were sometimes brilliant. In the early *Self-Portrait with Black Dog* (1844; fig. 169), for example, the sitter’s bodily orientation allows his right hand holding a pipe to be portrayed in a way that suggests an analogy not only with the orientation but also with the activity of the painter-beholder’s right hand holding a brush. (The landscape vista can almost be seen as a painting on an easel in its own right.) Or again, in perhaps the most important self-portrait of the 1840s, the *Man with the Leather Belt* (1845–46?; fig. 170), the sitter’s dramatically lit and sculpturally powerful right hand and wrist have been turned back into the picture space, with the result that they are now wholly congruent with what we take to have been the orientation and in a sense the action of the painter-beholder’s right hand and arm as they reached toward the canvas bearing a brush loaded with paint. In that painting, too, the otherwise inexplicable action of the sitter’s left hand gripping his belt may be read as a figure for the action of the painter-beholder’s left hand holding



Figure 169. Gustave Courbet, *Self-Portrait with Black Dog*, 1844.

his palette, even though in this instance the two left hands are spatially misaligned. Finally, a third self-portrait, *The Cellist* (1847; fig. 171), shows how the struggle with mirror reversal could produce effects that are not just odd but disorienting: the obviously “incorrect” actions of the cellist’s right and left hands—the first too forcefully depressing the strings, the second unconvincingly bowing—seem to obey an implicit imperative—to “represent” the actions of the painter-beholder’s hands in the act of painting the picture—that could not quite be reconciled with the latter’s ostensible subject.¹⁵

Viewed in this context, the upper-right-to-lower-left hatching in Fantin’s self-portrait drawings of around 1860 expresses a similar impulse toward quasi-corporeal merger with the work in progress, or at least toward a relation of continuity or “prolongation” between artist-model and drawing. A previously unmentioned feature of the second drawing (fig. 167) also bears on this issue: the depiction in its lower left-hand corner of a partial object, most likely the dishlike base of a small candlestick (the





Figure 170. Gustave Courbet, *Man with the Leather Belt*, 1845-46?

candle being just beyond the edge of the representational field). I suggest that that partial object may also be seen as an image or imprint of the artist-model's *left thumb*, which, if we trust the drawing as a faithful record of mirror reversal, would have gripped the sheet of paper precisely there. By the same token, though requiring a greater leap of the imagination, the largish indeterminate object that partly supports the drawing pad or block toward the lower right may be seen as a figure for the artist-model's *right thumb*, or indeed his entire right hand wielding the pen, or perhaps for the weight or pressure of that hand against the sheet. (The

relatively large size of that object as compared to the rest of the image would then be an expression of the particularly intense effort put forth by the artist-model's right hand.) In a third self-portrait drawing (fig. 168), also of these years, the sitter has turned toward his right (the artist-model having turned toward his left), and there is nothing that can plausibly be taken as a figure for the artist-model's hand or thumb (unless it is the

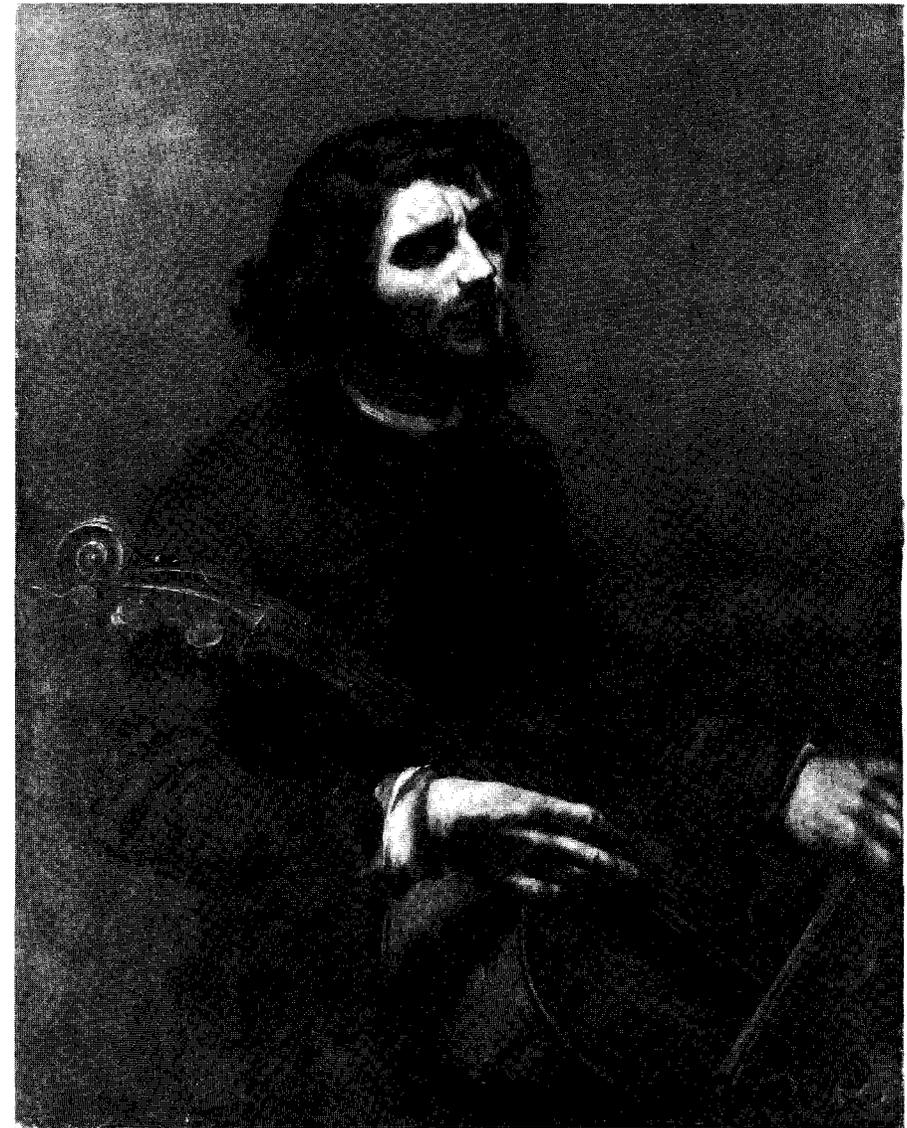


Figure 171. Gustave Courbet, *The Cellist*, 1847.

formless darkness beneath the paper on it block); but the ink bottle near the bottom of the sheet has been depicted largely from above as if to make it available for use *both* by the sitter in the drawing and by the artist-model outside it. Note too the combination of upper-right-to-lower-left hatching with *horizontal* hatching across the table- or desktop on which the bottle rests; I take the horizontal hatching to define the bottom of the drawing as a transitional zone between the “world” of the image and that of the image’s maker. The use of the ink bottle as a switch point between opposed but intimately related “worlds” can plausibly be seen either as qualifying or as exacerbating our sense of the conflict between them.

One other pencil-and-ink drawing of roughly this time, although not strictly a self-portrait, belongs with the three we have just examined. In it Fantin has depicted what seems to be a smallish room at the top of a house (fig. 172). The scene takes place at night; the room is dark except for a single source of light, a candle in a candleholder, which stands near the right-hand edge of a table or desk. The ceiling toward the left slopes inward, and on the far wall two darkish rectangles are juxtaposed with a lighter one that appears to lean against the wall rather than to be hanging on it. We cannot say with certainty what any of those rectangles represents (the larger rectangle toward the right bears an especially confusing relation to the shadows around it), but it seems possible that one of them, maybe the rectangle at the lower left, is a mirror (looked at closely it gives the impression of being framed, as does the larger rectangle on the wall). In addition something large, flat, and rectilinear, perhaps a blotter or a sheet of paper, can be made out lying on the table’s surface. And there are a couple of chairs, one to the left of the table and the other in front of it. Although it can’t be proved that this is the room in which Fantin made the self-portrait drawings we have been examining, the inference that it is seems nearly irresistible; in any case, we feel that it must have been a room just like this one.¹⁶ We might think of this drawing as a “supplement” to the others, which is to say both as a further expression of Fantin’s sense of embodiedness and as an acknowledgment that the self-portrait drawings alone are powerless to convey the full bodily circumstances in which they were made.¹⁷ Seen in these terms, the darkness of the room—in both the drawing of the room and the self-portraits—belongs on the side of the body: as if the hyperbolic desire to evoke corporeal presence called for darkness as a means of minimizing eyesight in favor of an emphasis on bodily experience.

Here it should be recalled that the presumed date of all the drawings,



Figure 172. Henri Fantin-Latour, Drawing of a room, ca. 1860.

circa 1860, places them if not literally on the border of Impressionism at any rate within just a few years of the public debuts of the painters who will soon thereafter become the Impressionists—Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, et al.—and that Impressionism as an artistic movement was from the first understood as valorizing, even heroizing eyesight, visual perception, as such. In my introduction I quoted Montifaud who in 1874 called the new movement “the school of the eyes,” and she was by no means exceptional. Both supporters and detractors held that Impressionism put a new premium on a sheerly visual order of experience, which also meant on an unexampled rapidity of seeing and execution (the “impression” was conceived of as essentially instantaneous). And yet Fantin’s drawings, for all their commitment to what I have called perceptual or ocular realism, seem also to be in the grasp of an altogether different representational regime. How are we to understand this?

That question brings me to the central claim of this chapter. Simply put, Fantin’s self-portrait drawings conjoin two fundamentally different

modes of realism: first, a *realism of the body*, expressed by a variety of means and derived ultimately from (or at least consistent with the practice of) Fantin's chief immediate realist predecessor, Courbet; and second, a *realism of eyesight, of visual perception*—an ocular realism—based on an ideal of exact fidelity to appearances and issuing in masterly transcriptions of the artist-model's reversed image in a mirror. What must be stressed—what makes these drawings remarkable—are not only the *co-existence* in them of the two modes of realism but also the extent to which those modes define themselves *against* one another and so remain distinct, separate, juxtaposed rather than intermixed. Or to interpret that mutual opposition diachronically by placing it in a strongly vectored historical narrative, Fantin's drawings demonstrate the *emergence* of an ocular, perceptual realism *from* a corporeal one. Framed in that way, the intensity of the sitter's gaze—as of “a fascinated hunter,” in Derrida's phrase—suggests not only the artist-model's will to record as veristically as possible the surface facts of his appearance but also, so to speak, the gaze's own will to come clear of the body—of the depths of the body, of the body's darkness and blindness¹⁸—by fastening onto the image in the mirror. For precisely the logic of mirror reversal enables the act of seeing (and of drawing exactly what one sees) to declare itself as such against the background, the persistence, of a bodily mode of realism that, as in the paintings by Courbet we have looked at, rejected left/right reversal in the interests of left/right congruence and for which, as in Courbet's art generally, the faculty of vision was in the end secondary. In fact, I want to claim that the negotiation of a “crossing of borders” between bodily and ocular realism—ultimately, between Courbet's Realism and the realism of the Impressionists (or at least of early Impressionism)—was a crucial aspect of the historical task of the generation of 1863. The unique significance of Fantin's self-portrait drawings is that more perspicuously than any other works of their moment, they allow us to intuit—to hypothesize—if not the invisible border itself, at any rate the act of passage from one side of that border to the other.¹⁹

THE RAMIFICATIONS of all these claims are far-reaching. For example:

1. Mirror reversal of right and left also characterizes Fantin's early painted self-portraits, one of which in particular invites our consideration. In his *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush* (1859; fig. 173)

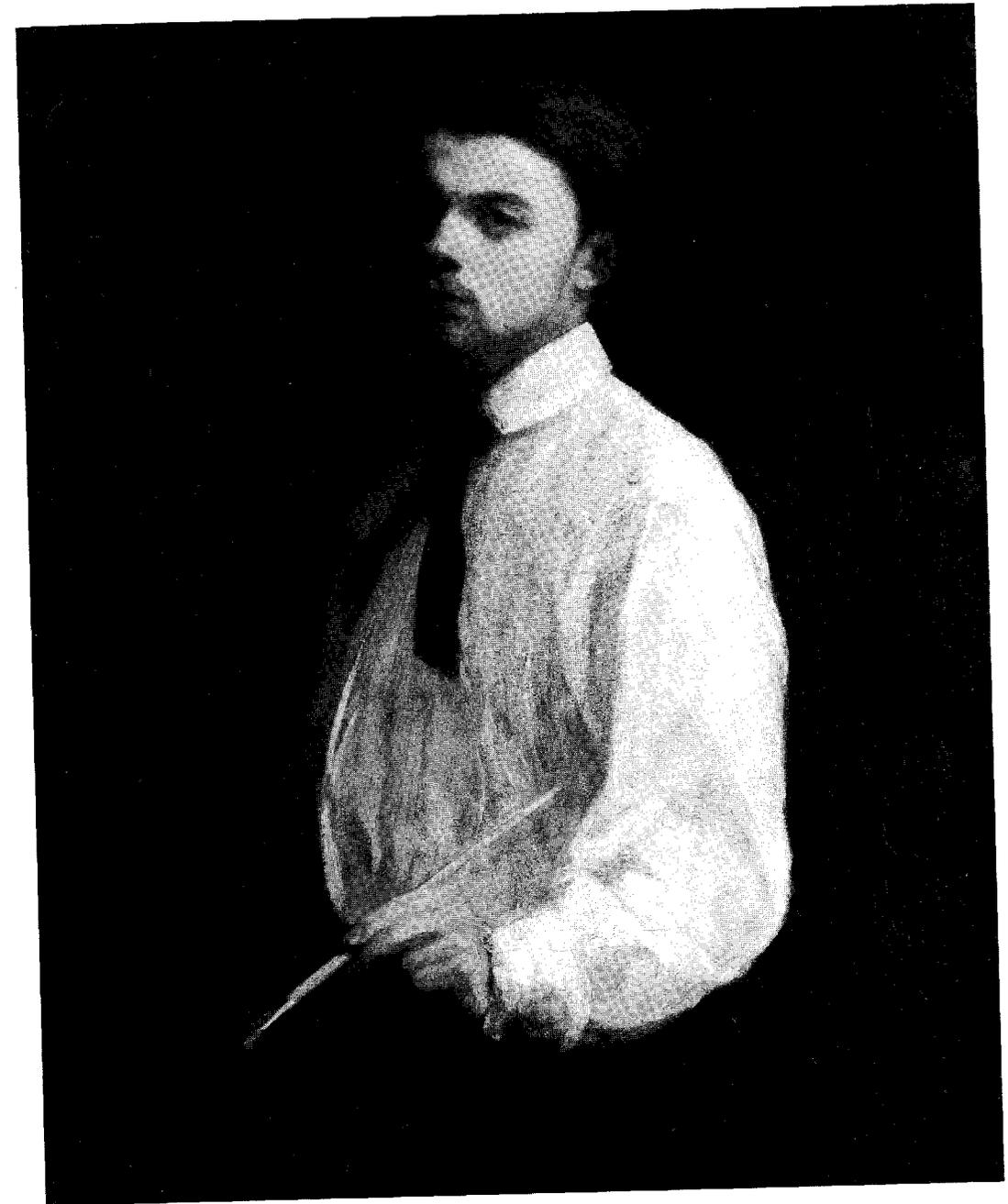


Figure 173. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush*, 1859.

Fantin depicted himself just over half-length in the act of painting, a slender paintbrush poised roughly at waist level in his left hand. The sitter's expression—alert, concentrated, critical—suggests that he has just applied paint to the canvas and has stepped back, or at least paused, to gauge its effect. At the same time, his upper body has been turned toward the viewer just far enough to exclude almost wholly his right shoulder and arm from view. But of course, assuming the presence of a mirror, the brush would actually have been held in Fantin's right hand, just as it would have been his left arm and shoulder—and his left hand, gripping a palette—that he omitted from the picture. Why would Fantin have done this? Perhaps because it was only by removing his left arm and hand from the field of view that he was able to acknowledge the action of his *right* arm and hand in the making of the painting: for just to the left of the sitter's missing arm and hand, as if compensating for their absence, the painting is signed, in an upward direction, with the name and date "Fantin 1859" (fig. 174). I take that highly unorthodox position and orientation to be a means of calling attention to the act of inscribing (i.e. painting) the signature and date, an act, moreover, that presumably proceeded from left to right (even if "left" and "right" are here transposed to a vertical axis) and so is imagined as exempt from the logic of mirror reversal determining the representational image. The signature and date thus fulfill an analogous function to that of the upper-right-to-lower-left hatching in the self-portrait drawings, but it is hard to decide whether their taking the place of the sitter's right arm and hand is itself to be understood as ascribing right-handedness to the act of painting. Such a reading may be unavoidable, but it necessarily ignores the work of reversal at least for a moment (it's not in conflict with but parasitic on the mirror-reversed image), which suggests that Fantin the self-portraitist in oils was unable to find a painterly device signifying corporeality that functioned as economically—as indexically—as slanted hatching in the drawings.²⁰

Moreover, we are now able to make sense of a feature of Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* that was mentioned but left unexplained in the introduction to this book: the figure of Fantin in that picture—wearing a white shirt and seated in the foreground to the left of the portrait of Delacroix—holds a palette, not a brush, in his right hand (pl. 1, fig. 175). In the light of his self-portrait drawings and the *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush*, this seeming error may be taken as declaring his commitment to painting only what he himself could see even at the price of falsifying the impersonal or "universal" truth of appearances—a falsification un-

derscored by the implied contrast between the figure of Fantin and those of his companions. The other sitters he had observed directly; hence none is mirror reversed, as is shown by the left-over-right (or "masculine") buttoning of their jackets. But his own image he had been able to see only with the aid of a mirror, and by insisting on that dependence in a group

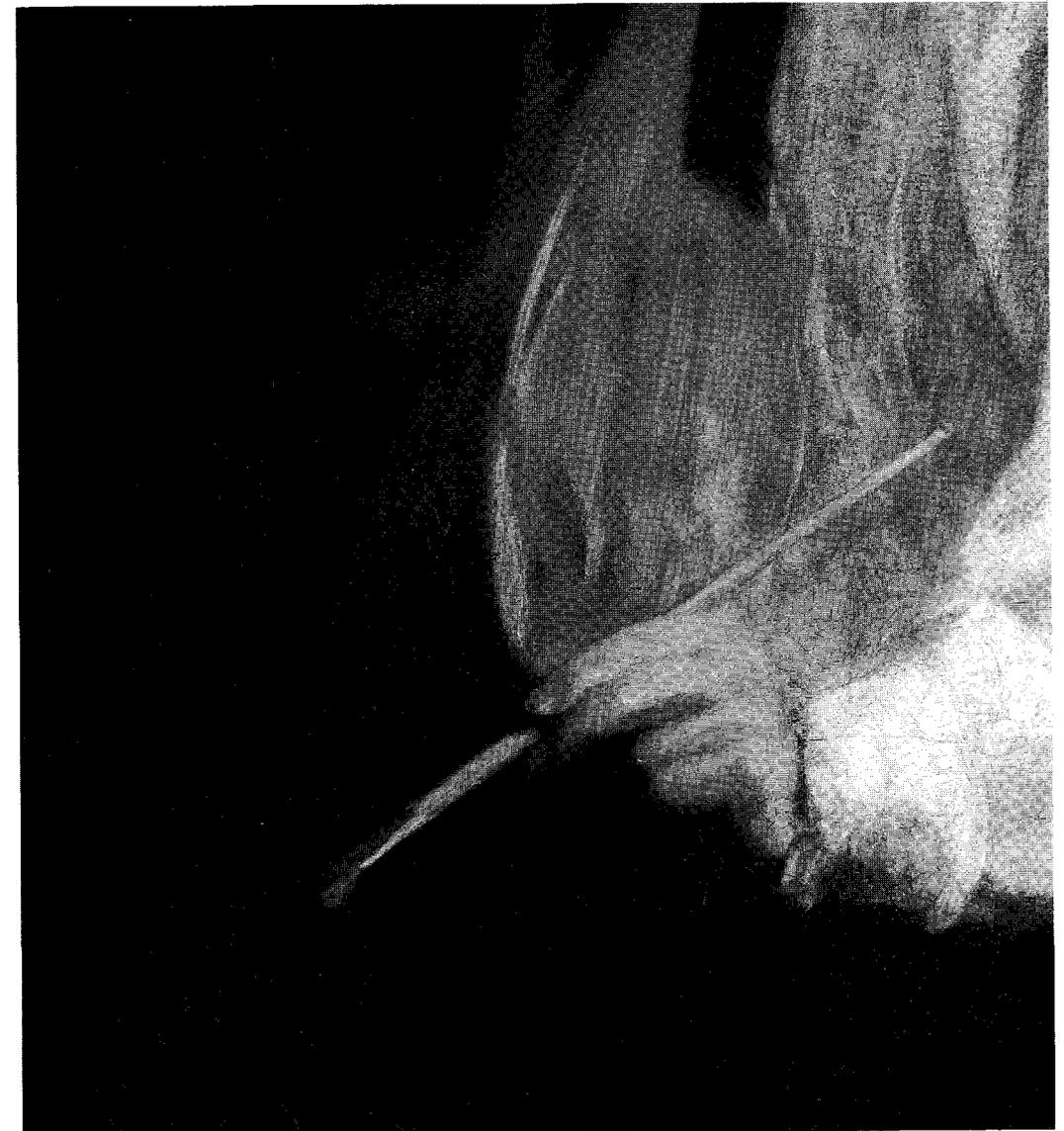


Figure 174. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush*, 1859, detail of signature and date.

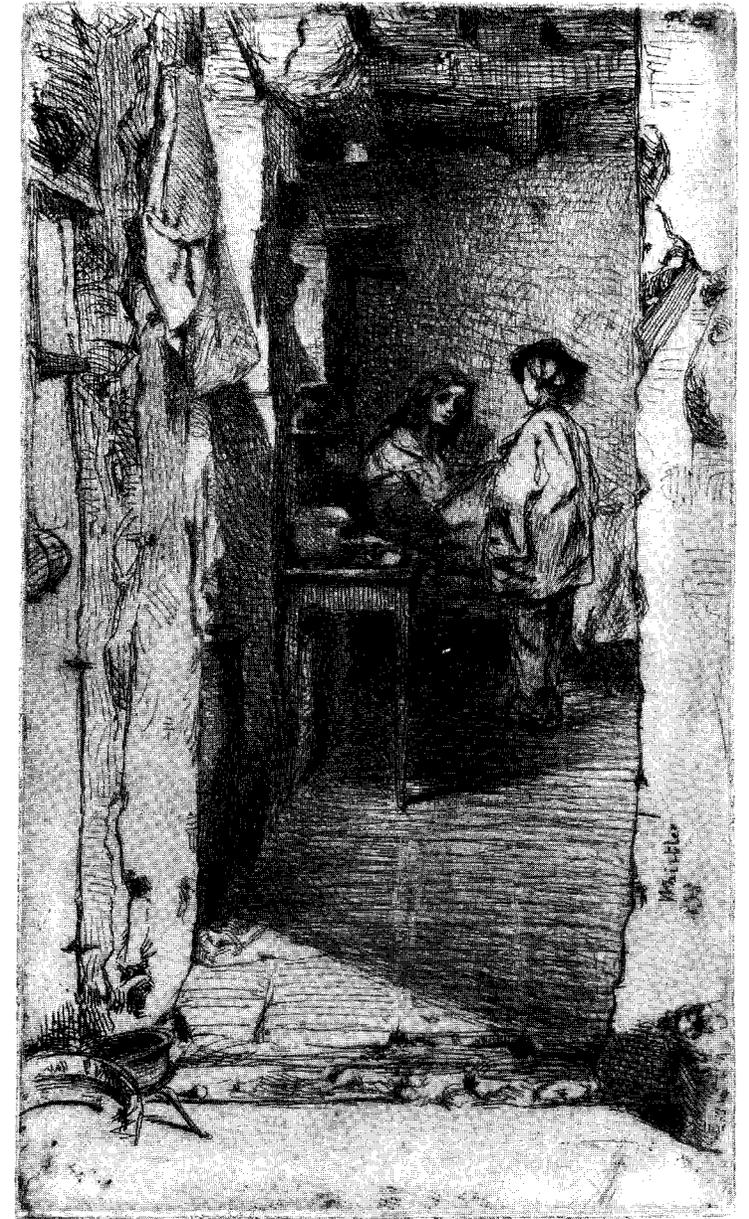
portrait obviously not presenting itself as the record of a mirror image of the group as a whole, he evidently wanted to give the fact of reversal a programmatic significance it couldn't quite assume in self-portraits of himself alone. A further implication is that Fantin by 1864 had come to recognize the significance of mirror reversal for his art, perhaps because in preparation for the *Homage* he had studied his previous self-portraits and been struck by their unanimity in that regard.

2. The findings of this chapter bear closely on the work of another member of the generation of 1863, Whistler. In chapter 3 I discussed Whistler's *Woman in White* and other figure paintings of the early and mid-1860s. But Whistler at the outset of his career was also active as an etcher, and I want to propose that various basic differences between the first two published sets of his etchings—the French Set of 1857–58 and the Thames Set of 1859–61—exemplify the distinction between a realism of the body and a realism of visual perception.²¹ So for example *The Rag Gatherers* (1858; fig. 176), from the French Set, is full of shapes and contours that suggest organic form to the extent of verging on outright anthropomorphism. This is evident in the treatment of the doorway hung



Figure 175. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Homage to Delacroix*, 1864, detail of Fantin-Latour holding a palette.

Figure 176. James McNeill Whistler, *The Rag Gatherers*, etching, 1858.



with rags: the crumbling plaster hints at the yieldingness of flesh; particular configurations evoke human faces, organs, body parts; indeed so intense are those effects that the image as a whole assumes the character of a single internal corporeal space—a kind of bodily cavity—in relation to which the act of seeing narrowly defined comes almost to seem beside the point.²²



Figure 177. James McNeill Whistler, *La Vieille aux loques*, etching, 1858.

Much the same observations might be made about a more important etching, *La Vieille aux loques* (1858; fig. 177), which also includes conspicuous traces of Whistler's fingerprints and palm prints, the result of a technical accident—"foul biting"—that occurs with suspicious frequency in the French Set.²³ ("Foul biting" occurs when the coated metal plate has

been manipulated too much by the artist; when it is then placed in the acid bath, the acid eats through the coating where the latter has been worn away by fingerprints, palm prints, and the like.) The usual explanation is that because similar prints are sometimes found in etchings by Rembrandt, whom Whistler greatly admired, he was willing to allow them to remain in certain of his own early images.²⁴ But in the context of the present argument (think of the "thumbprint" in the lower left-hand corner of the second Fantin self-portrait drawing), those fingerprints and palm prints seem further evidence of something like bodily continuity or "prolongation" between etching and etcher, almost as if *La Vieille aux loques* were a body part in its own right, *un morceau de Whistler*, so to speak.²⁵

Something altogether different is at stake in the etchings of the Thames Set. Take for example two of the finest, *Eagle Wharf* (1859; fig. 178) and *Black Lion Wharf* (1859; fig. 179). Both insist on the clear separation of spatial planes, on a sharpness and minuteness of detail in the middle and far distance that suggests the view through a telescope or pair of binoculars, above all on the unflagging precision of a line or *trait* whose firmly volitional character is at the farthest pole from the automatic, in that sense somatic, line of the French Set.²⁶ Moreover, the diffuse, evenly distributed light draws attention to the blankness and integrity of the sheet of paper, whereas the etchings of the French Set seem to allude back, almost to regress, to the working of the metal plate and its immersion in an acid bath (i.e. to the etchings' "bodily" origins). All these points are driven home by the legibility of the relatively minute signs and lettering that decorate housefronts in the Thames Set, a feature as characteristic of it as Whistler's fingerprints and palm prints are of the French Set. The small scale of the lettering enforces a sense of what might be called ocular distance; while the inherent directionality of the lettering suppresses the thought of the reversed image that the artist actually incised on the plate and so reinforces the emphasis on the sheet of paper. (This is to say that because the medium of etching comprises a stage—the printing of the image—that necessarily involves left-right reversal, ocular realism in Whistler's Thames Set etchings is associated with an opposite relation to reversal from ocular realism in Fantin's self-portrait drawings—or as we shall see, in Whistler's own *Artist in His Studio*. By the same token, the unidirectionality of writing in Fantin's *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush* is aligned with bodily not ocular realism. In other words, the meaning of left-right reversal in the art of the generation of 1863 is a func-

tion of medium as much as of anything else.) Finally, figures in the foreground of the Thames Set etchings tend to appear aware of the artist-viewer; this too is a distancing device, in contrast to the somnambulistic absorption of the old woman in *La Vieille aux loques*. (Even when, as in *Black Lion Wharf*, the foreground figure seems momentarily lost in thought, there is something in his expression, a hint of nervous intensity waiting to explode, that puts the viewer on guard.)²⁷ Students of Whistler have of course recognized the stylistic disparity between the French and Thames sets. But they have missed its significance, which cannot be accounted for in merely stylistic terms.²⁸

One more early graphic work by Whistler is relevant to these concerns. In *Becquet the Fiddler*, a drypoint of 1859 (fig. 180), Whistler has portrayed a French musician-friend playing a sort of cello—and has almost completely omitted the cellist's hands as well as the instrument itself. Or rather the characteristic outline of the cello is barely discernible, while the cellist's left hand (plying a phantom bow?) is a mere abbreviation and his right arm and hand (the latter pressing down on phantom

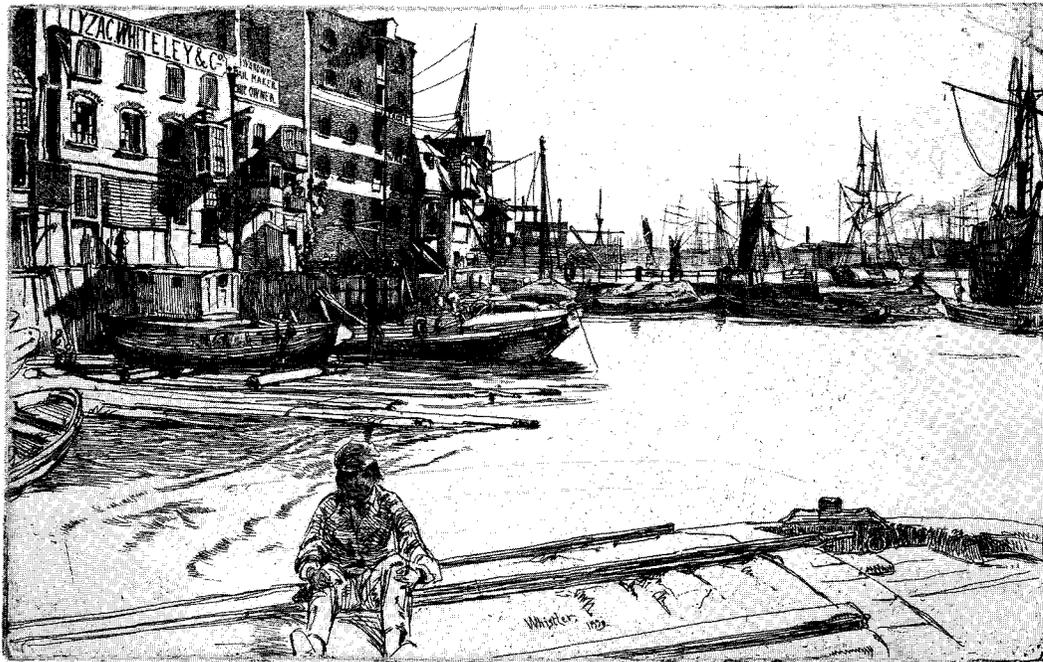


Figure 178. James McNeill Whistler, *Eagle Wharf*, etching, 1859.

strings at the base of the cello's neck?) seem drastically misconceived. In my brief remarks on Courbet's self-portrait as a *Cellist* of a dozen years before, I noted the difficulty he had in correlating the player's right and left hands with his own right and left hands wielding a brush and a palette. Something not dissimilar takes place here. It's as though Whistler sought to identify his own action of marking the metal plate with the represented action of playing the cello, but found himself prevented from doing so—blocked from taking up the corporeal realist mode such an identification would have entailed—either because the image as a whole belonged to an ocular, not corporeal, register, or because the sheer difference (for example, of scale) between playing a cello and incising a plate was too stark for such an act of identification to succeed. At any rate, the violent scoring of the plate to the left and right of the seated musician suggests a displacement of representational energies and perhaps also feelings of frustration at an experience of blockage the artist cannot have understood. Significantly, however, Whistler not only didn't discard *Becquet the Fiddler*, he included it in the Thames Set, perhaps recognizing



Figure 179. James McNeill Whistler, *Black Lion Wharf*, etching, 1859.

that the breakdown of representation at its center was no ordinary failure. (A further, more extreme possibility is that coexisting with the image of Becquet and his instrument is a larger-scaled, somewhat spectral image of a hand, the thumb of which seems almost to take the place of the cello. Note too the vestigial presence of a prior image “beneath” the portrait of Becquet, mainly visible toward the bottom of the sheet and above Becquet’s left shoulder. What exactly did Whistler think he had done in this print?)

These remarks no more than tap the significance of Whistler’s early etchings and drypoints, but one last painting by him bears too closely on



Figure 180. James McNeill Whistler, *Becquet the Fiddler*, drypoint, 1859.

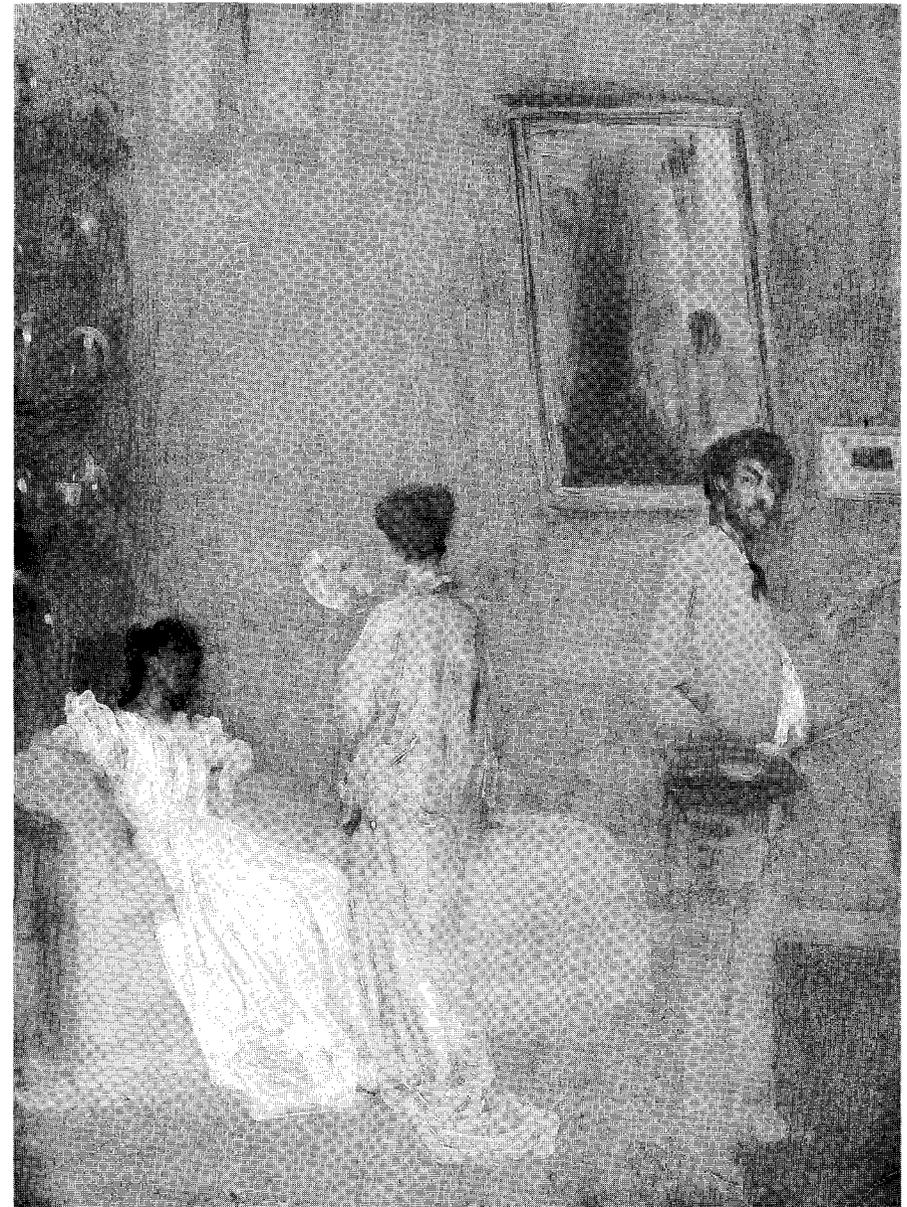


Figure 181. James McNeill Whistler, *The Artist in His Studio*, 1865–66.

the argument of this chapter to go unmentioned. Like the works by Fantin we have looked at, *The Artist in His Studio* (1865–66; fig. 181) is a self-portrait—the painter at the right who seems to be adding a brushstroke to a canvas on an easel just beyond the right-hand framing edge is unmistakably Whistler—as well as a mirror-reversed image—although

Whistler was right-handed, the painter holds the brush in his left hand.²⁹ Behind the painter and seemingly unaware of what he is doing, two women are conversing: one, standing, in a light robe (she has perhaps just been posing for the painter), the other, seated, in a white frock (it's possible she too is a model, but the impression we get is that she is a visitor). The implicit narrative of the picture therefore reads as follows: Whistler and his model or models have taken a break, and the two women have become engrossed in conversation; he meanwhile has glimpsed the scene as a whole in what would have had to have been a large mirror roughly in the position of the viewer standing before the painting, and has seized the opportunity to capture it in a few rapid, airy, lightly brushed strokes, the result being the *Artist in His Studio*. (It's hard to tell exactly where the painter's gaze is directed; close up it seems not quite to be directed toward the viewer, but the looseness of the paint handling makes that slight deviation less important than the overall impression of a dynamic of reflection and reversal based on a mirror located "this" side of the picture surface.) The *Artist in His Studio* thus possesses a triple significance for the present study: it fills out the account given in chapter 3 of Whistler's predilection for the "apparitional" character of mirror images; it goes farther than any other work by him toward an explicitly antitheatrical *mise-en-scène*; and together with the Fantin self-portraits we have examined it suggests that mirror reversal was nothing less than a generational trope.³⁰

3. As for Legros, one work in particular is emblematic of the issues I have been analyzing. In *Le Souper* (fig. 182), a small etching made between 1858 and 1860, Legros has depicted four figures in a humble interior dining around a small round table illuminated by a candle. Two of the seated figures are men; each is absorbed in eating, the one at the left cutting something on his plate and the one at the right either lifting a bowl to his lips or setting it down. The seated figure in the left foreground seems to be a woman; we see her mainly from the rear and no more than glimpse her *profil perdu*. Beyond the man at the right and looking directly at the viewer (a snapshot effect *avant la lettre*), a standing woman seems to pause in the act of placing a small dish on the table (though here too it's possible that she is removing it). But a fifth personage is indicated as well: whoever is meant to sit at the place that has been laid in the center foreground, a place whose orientation—into the space of the image—matches that of the artist. In fact, the implication is strong that the place in the foreground has been set for the artist, for Legros, who thereby posits himself in a Courbet-like relation to the etching as a whole, enter-



Figure 182. Alphonse Legros, *Le Souper*, etching, 1858–60.

ing and in effect completing it. (Somewhere in the prehistory of *Le Souper* is Courbet's *After Dinner at Ornans* of 1848–49; out there in the not-too-distant future is Monet's enigmatic *Déjeuner* of 1868; and less than a decade beyond that is Gustave Caillebotte's *Déjeuner* of 1876, in which the identification of the foremost place setting as the painter-beholder's is all but physically explicit.) At the same time, the outward gaze of the standing woman posits a more distanced—in the terminology of this chapter, a more visual or ocular—relation to the artist and viewer, while the quiet absorption of the other figures in their meal suggests the obliviousness to being beheld that I have associated with the Diderotian tradition in its classic form. In other words, Legros's little etching provides a kind of summa of relational structures with respect to the beholder, combining in a single work the range of possibilities we saw expressed in different genres of Fantin's oeuvre.

Finally, *Le Souper* implicitly figures the enterprise of etching in terms of the activity of *eating*: as if the modest scale of etching in general and this etching in particular thematizes the virtual continuity between artist and work that corporeal realism evokes as *physically incorporating or ingesting* the work of art. (It may not be irrelevant that the production



Figure 183. Camille Pissarro, *Sente de Justice, Pontoise*, 1872.

of an etching also comprises a stage when the line is eaten—“bitten”—by acid.) But this in turn implies a considerable restriction of ambition in comparison with Courbet’s monumental Realist canvases of the late 1840s and 1850s, in which the (literally unrealizable) project of incorporation—painter into painting—is vectored the other way. A comparable restriction of ambition marks Fantin’s self-portrait drawings and Whistler’s *French Set* etchings, and it may be that that narrowing down—that self-limitation of corporeal realism to the confines of the artist’s body—presaged the development of the *expansive* phase of ocular realism that we call Impressionism.

4. Although I have come close to saying that the advent of Impressionism in the first half of the 1870s marked the full emergence of ocular as opposed to corporeal realism, I want also to stress that a certain relation to the body persisted within and beyond Impressionism, which is to say that the opposition between the two modes of realism was not and indeed could not have been absolute. (Vision is a bodily faculty, as Merleau-Ponty never ceases to remind us.) Among the Impressionists proper the implied presence of the body is most evident in the work of Camille Pissarro, who in pictures such as *La Route de Louveciennes* (1870), *Sente de Justice, Pontoise* (1872; fig. 183), *Côteau de l’Hermitage, Pontoise*

(1873), and *Rabbit Warren at Pontoise, Snow* (1879; fig. 184), apprehended his chosen motifs as if from the rear. More precisely, I see Pissarro as often having sought out “views” of the world (the French term is *aspects*) which allowed him to establish relations of congruence—of matching, not facing—between himself as embodied perceiver and the motifs that offered themselves to be painted.³¹

5. So far in this chapter I have said nothing about Manet, who from the start maintained a greater distance from Courbet’s example than Fantin and Legros and perhaps Whistler as well. But the transition from a corporeal to an ocular realism that has been brought to light constitutes a new framework within which Manet’s art will need to be rethought. One work by him that invites being seen in those terms is his *Self-Portrait with a Palette* (1878–79; fig. 185), which although outside the time frame of most of this book is too important to ignore. In it, the right-handed painter has represented himself with right and left hands reversed, no doubt because he relied on an image of himself in a mirror. But the overall effect of Manet’s canvas differs sharply from that of Fantin’s self-portrait

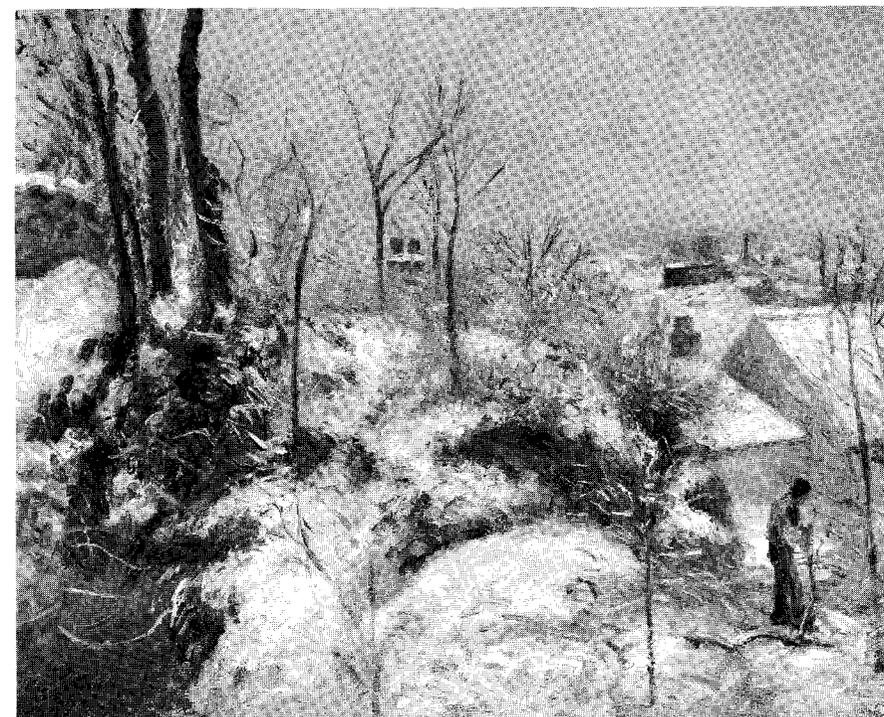


Figure 184. Camille Pissarro, *Rabbit Warren at Pontoise, Snow*, 1879.



Figure 185. Édouard Manet, *Self-Portrait with a Palette*, 1878–79.

drawings, with which it is most usefully compared. Instead of the opposition noted in the drawings between the exact portrayal of what the artist-model saw in a mirror (in which the body is subordinated to the eye) and the act of upper-right-to-lower-left hatching (in which the orientation and in a sense the reality of the artist-model's body are brought into play), in Manet's self-portrait a primary commitment to what I have described as speed or instantaneousness both of seeing and of execution places eye and body, or rather *eye and hand*, in exactly the same situation or at least under exactly equivalent pressure. ("Hand" rather than "body" in that the *Self-Portrait with a Palette* foregrounds manual dexterity rather than mobilizing the work of the hand or hands in the interest of embodiedness; cf. Mallarmé's *portrait* of the painter, which recalls him saying, "The eye, a hand. . .")³² More precisely, the implied fiction of the *Self-Portrait with a Palette* is that Manet *no sooner* glimpsed his reversed image in a mirror than he rendered it in paint by the virtuoso action of his hand and brush; put slightly differently, that undoing the effects of mirror reversal would have required *more time* than was available to him: the extremely summary nature of the painted Manet's left (the actual Manet's right) hand holding a paintbrush endorses such a fiction by intimating that being in rapid ceaseless motion—being everywhere at once—the hand could not be captured in paint and fixed in place. (The sense of an unbreakable link between the fact of mirror reversal and a commitment to speed of seeing and of execution is only sharpened by an awareness of the *Self-Portrait with a Palette*'s historical prototype, Velázquez's *unreversed* self-portrait in *Las Meninas* [fig. 186], the commitment to speed taking precedence even over a conceptually prior reference to the earlier work.) This may seem to imply the subordination of the hand to the eye, or say to the instantaneousness of seeing at its most unimpeded. But Manet's profound involvement with instantaneousness—also with strikingness—as a marker of the primordial encounter, the inescapable or quasi-transcendental relation of mutual facing, between painting and beholder was a decisive feature of his work from the beginning, and one of my main points in the previous chapter, indeed a major reason behind my refusal throughout this book to accept an "Impressionist" reading of Manet's art, is that it would be simplistic to think of that involvement as essentially visual. In any case, the *Self-Portrait with a Palette* engages head on with the issues we have been tracking even as it inflects those issues in ways that are nothing if not characteristic of its maker. (Something should also be said about the paintbrushes held both in the painted Manet's volatilized left hand



Figure 186. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656, detail of painter.

and in his right or palette hand, most of which is elided by the bottom framing edge. One has the impression that those were the last elements—the last brushstrokes—added to the painting, and since they slant forcefully from upper right to lower left, they perhaps suggest the inscription of a certain bodily register almost as an afterthought, and of course under the sign of speed.)³³

Coda: Manet's Modernism

IN THIS BOOK I have tried to accomplish three aims, though not in this order: (1) analyze in considerable detail the particular artistic concerns of the group of painters I call the generation of 1863; (2) present a fuller and more nuanced account than any previously available of the discourse of French art criticism in the 1860s; and (3) develop, partly on the basis of those two endeavors, a new set of terms for understanding the novelty, force, difficulty, and significance of Manet's art during that crucial decade. Having arrived at this coda I want to acknowledge that, for all the efforts I have made to come to grips with individual canvases by Manet as well as to trace the parameters of certain of his overarching (though far from unchanging) intentions and preoccupations, my chapters on his art do not culminate in any single, sustained account of his extraordinary achievement. The present work thus differs sharply from *Courbet's Realism*, which is nothing if not relentless in its tracking of a single, fundamental problematic throughout virtually the whole of Courbet's oeuvre. But my claim is that Courbet and Manet are very different painters precisely as regards the degree that their respective oeuvres lend themselves to intensive interpretation of the sort I practiced in my previous book.

One way of glossing that difference would be to recall my emphasis in chapter 4 on the resistance Manet's paintings of the 1860s offered to what were then the available modes of intelligibility. In particular I described Manet's art as seeking to deny the values and effects of absorptive closure at a historical moment when the alternative values and effects he put in their place were literally indescribable except in negative terms, as faults, ineptitudes, violences, approximations, *bizarrieries*, attempts to gain attention at any price, and so on. I have, naturally, made the most of those instances where one or another critic, in a flash of insight, contrived to say something positively useful about his work. But flashes of insight seem to

have been the best that even the most astute critics could manage—Zola, for all his limitations, is the exception—even though, as we have seen, the general standard of French art criticism in the 1860s was high. (Basically, the more absorptive in intention was the painting under review, the more relevant a piece of criticism is likely to seem to us today.) It doesn't follow, of course, that modern accounts of Manet's enterprise are doomed to an equivalent inconsistency, and in fact my entire purpose in stressing his relation to other painters of his generation and to contemporary writing about those painters has been to make his art intellectually accessible as never before. But it shouldn't be surprising that that purpose has turned out to be realizable only up to a point.

More broadly, there is a sense in which the need to see Manet's enterprise within the framework of a contemporary discourse of painting with its own history (or rather within the framework of a multiplicity of such discourses, the respective histories of which bear intricate relations to one another) militates against the feasibility of providing exhaustive, internally seamless readings of individual works. Not that detailed accounts of Manet's paintings are impossible or unrewarding: Sandblad's chapters on the *Music in the Tuileries*, *Olympia*, and *Execution of Maximilian* and T. J. Clark's on *Olympia*, *Argenteuil*, and *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* amply prove that that isn't so. In this book, too, without focusing in a comparably intensive way on individual canvases (except for the *Old Musician* and *Execution of Maximilian*), I nevertheless engage at some length with such pictures as the *Street Singer*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia* (at least with respect to its use of sources), *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, *Races at Longchamps*, *Balcony*, and *Self-Portrait with a Palette*. But I have already suggested that even Clark's strong and nuanced readings proceed in part by bracketing the possible implication of the works he discusses in certain larger, explicitly pictorial problematics. And I am all too aware that my own accounts of individual works are fragmentary (for want of a better word) and that my attempt to do justice to a broad spectrum of critical and historiographical issues—for example, those of artistic nationality and its complement, universality (as distinguished from eclecticism); of the proliferation of genres and the desire for the résumé; of absorption, theatricality, and related concepts; of the *tableau*, in all its elusiveness; of the *voulu* and its changing valences; of the question of execution, especially as regards issues of closure and conviction; of a new, expanded notion of the portrait; and of excess, intensity, facingness, instantaneousness, strikingness, and so on—has meant that my chapters

on Manet, while mutually reinforcing, can't be said to produce the effect of a unified whole. (The relatively late addition of chapter 5, with its shift of focus back toward Fantin, Whistler, and Legros, has made this even more apparent than would otherwise have been the case.) And yet a certain absence of unity, in a study that nevertheless aspires toward it as an ideal, is not wholly inappropriate to my subject.

It is as though as regards Manet's canvases of the 1860s, at least at the present stage of our knowledge and understanding, a fundamental tension exists between the desire to read individual works in depth (from whatever point of view or combination of points of view) and the need to come to terms with their place within both Manet's oeuvre and the larger artifactual and discursive field of French painting and art criticism between Realism and Impressionism. Put more strongly, it is as though something—an obduracy or opacity (or “blankness” or “indifference”) not unrelated to what I earlier thematized by the notion of a “remainder”—in the nature of Manet's enterprise during that decade, and to a lesser extent throughout the rest of his career, rebuffs or at least strongly resists all attempts at hermeneutic *penetration*. The unreadability of the red streak between the trousered legs of one of the members of the firing squad in the *Execution of Maximilian* may be taken as exemplifying that quality. But perhaps its most direct expression in Manet's oeuvre is appropriately to be found in the most inspired, lyrical, and matter-of-fact of all his paintings—the quarter-smile on the face of Victorine Meurent in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. If it were practicable—it isn't—this book would conclude by returning once more to the *Déjeuner*, the summa and epitome of the young Manet's dream of painting. If the *Execution* allegorizes the conditions of painting and spectatorship in the way I have claimed it does, the *Déjeuner* incomparably projects a sense of those conditions being features of a world (sans quotation marks), with all the largeness and complexity of feeling that implies. Not a world apart, like that of Legros's *Ex-Voto* as described by Duranty, but one lacking in closure in every dimension, including that of time: for all the *Déjeuner*'s canonical prestige, it remains disconcertingly “provisional,” in Desnoyers's inspired formulation. Look, in parting, at the folds of flesh at the back of Victorine's neck (fig. 187): is there even today a point of view that can reconcile those with the demands of painterly “effectiveness”? (The bullfinch hovers over an abyss.) All this, however, could not be farther from Jean Clay's idea that Manet had no more constant purpose than simply to oppose every conceivable structure of pictorial meaning.



Figure 187. Édouard Manet,
Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe, 1863,
detail of head of Victorine
Meurent.

There is a fourth ambition at work throughout the present book, one touched on in the introduction but not yet mentioned here, and in obvious respects it is the biggest of all—to relay the foundations of our imagination of pictorial modernism. So the question must be addressed: What are the implications of the present study for our understanding of Manet's modernism? Put slightly differently, in light of the arguments advanced in this book and especially given my insistence that we view him neither as an Impressionist nor as a wholly solitary figure but rather as a member of a specific generation, what does it mean to characterize Manet

in the 1860s (unlike other members of that generation) as a modernist painter? Indeed does it still make sense to describe him in those terms? I think it does, but no longer on the basis of a single, comprehensive definition of modernism *tout court*. Instead there are three partly overlapping sets of considerations that must be stressed.

First, Manet in the first half of the 1860s sought to establish what I have called, following Théophile Thoré, the *universality* of his painting with respect to the major national schools—French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Flemish—as well as to the major pictorial genres. (The inclusion of Japan came only later, after the Exposition Universelle of 1867.) He did this, as regards national schools, by a practice of deliberate quotation of and allusion to earlier works of art; at the same time, he programmatically worked in all the major genres except landscape in its traditional form, and in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, arguably his most ambitious painting of the decade, he brought together a wide range of genres, including landscape, in a single composition that may be thought of as either transcending, hence notionally liquidating, individual genres as such, or acknowledging their inevitability even as it aspired to overcome the divisions among them.

As I suggest in chapter 1 and confirm elsewhere in this book, Manet's aspiration toward universality must be seen against the background of a widely shared intuition of contemporary painting's deeply problematic relation to the great art of the past. That intuition was sometimes made explicit, as in the writings of Baudelaire, Thoré, and Astruc, and was sometimes acted out, as in the art of Manet's contemporaries: I attach particular importance to the fact that so many of the most interesting and ambitious painters of the 1860s conspicuously adapted earlier painting in one way or another, often in the teeth of repeated critical disapproval. Another concern of the art criticism of the time was the vertiginous proliferation of individual genres, a development also described in terms of the immense expansion of the portmanteau category of "genre painting." This too threw into relief the incommensurableness of most contemporary painting with the art of the museums, which is to say that Manet's attempt at once to revalidate and, in the *Déjeuner*, to totalize across the traditional genres was a further expression of the need he clearly felt to retain or restore connection with the art of the Old Masters even in those pictures (*Music in the Tuileries*, *Olympia*) the subject matter of which was most conspicuously of his time.

Perhaps the notion of totalization, even more than that of universality, is what should be stressed. The attitude toward the past I have tried to define has nothing in common with the usual formalist-modernist emphasis on ascesis, reduction, radical simplification. What we find instead is a deliberate marshaling and combining of resources, as if with a view to forging a new, more inclusive, if also necessarily tentative and short-lived, conception of the art of painting than any currently available. (One name for the conception, I suggest in "Manet's Sources," is "painting *altogether*.") Moreover, the resources in question were defined in strongly historicist terms: the late 1850s and 1860s saw noteworthy developments in the area of proto-art history in France—the revival of the Le Nains and Vermeer, the celebration of Watteau and the French eighteenth century, the conflict between opposed views of Frenchness in painting, the publication of Charles Blanc's *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles*, the founding of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, the holding of major exhibitions of older art—and as I have tried to show, those and similar developments were exploited by Manet to the extent that his paintings of the 1860s, and specifically his use of sources in earlier art, cannot be understood apart from them. I have also stressed the evident affinities between his practice of quotation and Thore's and other critics' articulation of a "republican" account of the French pictorial tradition (as well as, at a remove, between Manet's concern with Frenchness and Michelet's vision of France as *la patrie universelle*), and have suggested that in these as in other respects Manet's personal republicanism played an active role in his art. If we are to think of Manet's engagement with previous painting as essentially modernist, and I believe we must do so, it is on the basis of an idea of modernism that defies easy summary and has no precise equivalent in the work of any other painter, writer, or composer.

A second set of considerations concerns what I have described, in *Courbet's Realism* and elsewhere, as a crisis within the antitheatrical tradition that I have claimed was central to the evolution of French painting starting around the middle of the eighteenth century. Put as briefly as possible, by 1860 the means and conventions by which French painting for more than a century had sought to establish the ontological illusion (in *Absorption and Theatricality* I called it a "supreme fiction") that the beholder did not exist had come nearly to the end of their efficacy. In particular Courbet's project of quasi-corporeal merger with the painting on which he was working had become increasingly untenable for the artist himself (*The Quarry* of 1856 is perhaps the last work in which that proj-

ect was fully in force), and in any case the conspicuous materiality of his pictures, along with their primary reference to the painter-beholder, meant that they failed to make themselves felt as neutralizing beholding generally. Originally I thought it sufficed to contrast Manet's paintings of the 1860s with Courbet's Realist canvases, but in the present book I greatly complicate the story, in the first place by showing the continued viability of Millet's art in the eyes of many sophisticated viewers, and in the second by characterizing a crucial dimension of the practice of Manet's cogenerationists Fantin-Latour, Whistler, and Legros as one in which an "excess" of absorption (as in Millet) gave rise to effects of intensity, instantaneousness, facingness, and strikingness (*the* key term throughout this book). In other words, I show the operation in their art of a certain double structure, at once ostensibly denying and implicitly acknowledging the beholder's presence.

Manet's response to the crisis, however, was more extreme than theirs. Not only did he systematically avoid or subvert absorptive or potentially absorptive motifs; he also deliberately courted unintelligibility on the plane of subject matter and internal disparity on that of *mise-en-scène* as distancing and freezing, one might almost say medusizing, devices; his execution was almost invariably seen as deficient with respect to finish, which I have interpreted in terms of a refusal of absorptive closure on that plane also (cf. Carle Desnoyers's brilliant, pseudonymous text of 1863 reproduced in appendix 3); in painting after painting he depicted figures, the model for whom was often the compelling Victorine Meurent, gazing directly out of the painting (and thereby thematizing the painter-model relation even as the rule that no more than one such figure at a time ever confronts the beholder in this way suggests that the painting itself does the confronting); his combination of strong figural and drawing gestalts with abrupt, quasi-photographic (also quasi-Japanese woodblock) light/dark patterning promoted an experience of the instantaneous stamping- or cutting-out of the image as a whole (a kind of strikingness, often described as assaulting the beholder); and in general he appears to have done all he could to underscore, in a sense to dramatize, what I have called the primordial convention that paintings are made to be beheld. I have associated that aspect of Manet's endeavor with his friend Astruc's theorization of the portrait in the latter's "Salon of 1868" as well as with the interest of other painters in his generation, notably Fantin-Latour and Whistler (Degas too is an example, and in a less adventurous vein Carolus Duran), in the portrait as the basis for a rethinking of the *tableau*. In

Manet's art, the pursuit of a new form of *tableau* or *portrait-tableau* was linked—I have not been able to say exactly how—with both the impulse toward totalization and the concerns with facingness, instantaneousness, strikingness: as if only a *tableau*, not a *morceau*, were capable of responding to those concerns with sufficient focus and force, and as though a substitute had partly to be supplied from “outside” (via national schools and, in the *Déjeuner*, genres) for the absorptive/dramatic unity that had always been the essence of the *tableau* and that his eschewal of absorption prevented him from mobilizing. It's likely, too, that the consistent facingness of the works of earlier art and/or motifs in that art (notably including French art)¹ to which he found himself drawn sanctioned his privileging of facing structures, hence also his association of the portrait and the *tableau*. But we are on speculative ground.

All this may be understood, as I say in *Courbet's Realism*, as an embrace of theatricality in the presentational rather than “actional” meaning of the term; Manet's involvement with Watteau, whose art Diderot had criticized as mannered, is altogether to the point. At the same time, I suggest there that the very extremity of the measures by which Manet's paintings acknowledge beholding as inescapably the fate of painting can have the effect of making the actual beholder feel excluded or supererogatory, and that it may be *that* experience that Manet's viewers have found more disorienting than any other. (I also describe Manet's intentions as at once theatrical and antitheatrical, hence as neither one nor the other in the sense I had been giving the terms until that moment.) In any case, Manet's modernism, with respect to the issue of beholding, consists precisely in the doubleness of its relation to the Diderotian tradition: on the one hand, marking the close of that tradition by insisting as never before on the “truth” about painting that the tradition had come about to deny or forestall; on the other hand, demonstrating by example that there could be no mere laying bare of that “truth” and therefore no entire extinguishing of that tradition, which is to say that “presentationality” in Manet's art is itself not simply presented (what could that have meant?) but rather is *represented* (not that the opposition “present/represent” is other than unstable, but precisely that constitutive instability is my point). For all its radicalization of theatricality, in other words, something in Manet's art was in the profoundest tension with the latter (cf. my discussion of his courting of unintelligibility, subversion of potentially absorptive motifs, denial of individual psychology, refusal of closure on the plane of technique; all such operations imply the “presence” of the sup-

pressed term, as does Bataille's insistence that Manet's art “effaces” traditional subject matter). Painting after Manet would be severed from the Diderotian tradition that had made it possible (it would no longer be a requirement of ambitious painting that it defeat theatricality, though antagonism to the latter would remain a live option).² But painting after Manet would not be liberated from the concerns of that tradition (it would not thereafter be indifferent to problems of beholding), least of all when a final step in a formalist-modernist evolution would purport to go beyond painting into Minimalist objecthood.³

And what of Manet's cogenerationists? May we say that they are not or not quite modernist painters because they remained less radical than he in their relation to the antitheatrical tradition, that is, because they remained committed to a pictorial dynamics of absorption, inwardness, closure, character, and the like, even though in their work that dynamics was partly transformed from within? I think we may. And yet it is no accident—nor is it a matter of contrivance—that my chapter “Manet in His Generation,” after looking briefly at a few works by Courbet, begins with a consideration of Legros's *Angelus* and concludes with an analysis of his *Amende honorable*. (The two-part title of this book is meant to make the same point.) For all the uniqueness of his art and the salience of his historical position, Manet belongs in, and with, his generation. (A question that I have held off posing until now: Does what I have described as internal disparity in Manet's work amount to still another version of what, in the work of Legros, Fantin, and Whistler, I have called a double or divided structure with respect to the treatment of absorption? I'm not sure; I think not.)

A third aspect of Manet's modernism concerns the dual thematics of flatness and viscosity that we find in Greenberg's “Modernist Painting” and that I argue in my introduction should be understood as an artifact of Impressionism. Put baldly, it was Impressionism, much more than Manet, that simplified the art of painting. But the logic of Impressionism's indebtedness to Manet's pictures of the 1860s was such as to attribute that simplification to them, an attribution that has stuck, as a casual survey of the memorial articles of 1883 and 1884, Matisse's interview of 1932, and Greenberg's essay of 1960 suffices to show. In its early phase this development was abetted by Manet's quick acceptance of certain “impressionist” means and ambitions (a lightened palette, the use of broken brushstrokes, a willingness to work *en plein air*), with the result that by the time of the first Impressionist exhibitions (1874, 1876, 1877), and

although he abstained from taking part in them, he was viewed as the nascent movement's *chef de file*.

Also pertinent here is the extreme rapidity with which the import of the new style was correctly grasped by its commentators. From the outset, critics recognized that the new painting was addressed to the sense of sight virtually to the exclusion of other faculties; that its basic assumptions were realist in that it sought to capture as directly and "naïvely" as possible the truth of the painter's instantaneous *impression* (an ostensibly simple but in fact ambiguous notion), and that in particular instances (e.g. Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines*) the illusionistic effect was astonishing; that it placed special emphasis on the harmonious relations of tones and colors (which caressed rather than assaulted the eye), and more broadly that it aspired to a new, essentially surface mode of unity which the critics called "decorative" (the terminology was in use as early as 1874); and that in these and other respects it involved a considerable simplification of the aims of painting, or as was also said, an attempt to return painting to its basic elements (propaedeutically, so to speak).⁴ So immediate and acute an uptake contrasts dramatically with the incomprehension that greeted Manet's paintings of the 1860s and that would largely continue to greet his work, despite the critical assimilation of aspects of his style to that of Impressionism. And my claim has been that between the "system" of Manet's paintings of the 1860s and that of early Impressionism there existed fundamental differences that have never fully been given their due.⁵ The fact remains, however, that the discourse of Impressionism provided contemporary critics with a way of approaching Manet's achievement (his pursuit of strikingness and facingness was viewed as a concern with visuality and "decoration," just as his pursuit of instantaneousness, a complex and many-sided affair, was registered as a simpler concern with the instantaneousness of perception and/or of appearances), and as the 1870s went on and his own work became more consistently "impressionist" in subject matter and handling, the discourse in turn became increasingly able to respond to nuances in his art, though not without signs of strain precisely as regards the question of the relation of his painting to that of the younger men. (Stéphane Mallarmé's article of 1876, "The Impressionists and Édouard Manet," is a case in point.)* Beyond that, as was noted in the introduction, the Impressionist

**The Art Monthly Review* 1 (Sept. 30, 1876): 117–22; rpt. in *Documents Stéphane Mallarmé*, ed. Carl Paul Barbier, 7 vols. (Paris, 1968–80), 1:59–86. The text in question is an English translation by one Arthur O'Shaughnessy of the lost French original; the former has itself been

reading of Manet provided a basis for the upward revaluation of his oeuvre in the 1880s. And beyond *that* the Impressionist emphasis on visuality and "decoration" led in just a few steps to what became the standard formalist-modernist account of the essence of painting, an account that was then able to return to and claim for modernism Manet's pictures of the 1860s, indeed that recognized in them the first modernist paintings "by virtue of the frankness with which they declared the surfaces on which they were painted."⁶

It may seem to follow that Impressionism, not Manet, should be considered the fountainhead of formalist-modernist painting or at least theory—that formalist-modernism got it wrong not only about the meaning of Manet's art but also about its own historical origins. But it would be more accurate to say that Manet's priority as the first formalist-modernist painter should be shared with the Impressionists (from an Impressionist point of view his paintings do have that significance), and on somewhat different grounds with Courbet, whose Realist paintings, the *Burial at Ornans* especially, frankly and massively declared, if not the sur-

translated back into French, but of course the new French version has infinitely less authority than the English version, which Mallarmé read and approved. (See Mallarmé, "Les Impressionistes et Édouard Manet," trans. Philippe Verdier, *GBA*, 6th ser., 86 [Nov. 1975]: 147–56.)

For a long time Mallarmé's essay was largely ignored by scholars, but in the course of the past twenty-five years it has received extensive commentary. One passage in particular is of special interest in view of the argument of this book. In it Mallarmé seeks to justify the necessity of the Impressionist practice of painting in the open air. When a figure is placed in an interior, he explains, "the reflected lights are mixed and broken and often discolour the flesh tints" (p. 73). This happens in Manet's *Rêverie* (better known as *Le Repos*) of 1869–70, a portrait of Berthe Morisot half-reclining on a divan that despite being an interior scene Mallarmé finds "altogether exceptional and sympathetic" (*ibid.*). Mallarmé's reference to flesh tints, together with the mention of *Rêverie*, implies that the true subject of *plein air* painting is nothing other than *woman*. Without further transition the next paragraph reads:

Woman is by our civilisation consecrated to night, unless she escape from it sometimes to those open air afternoons by the seaside or in an harbour, affectionated by the moderns. Yet I think the artist would be wrong to represent her among the artificial glories of candle-light or gas, as at that time the only object of art would be the woman herself, set off by the immediate atmosphere, theatrical and active, even beautiful, but utterly inartistic. Those persons much accustomed, whether from the habit of their calling or purely from taste, to fix on a mental canvass the beautiful remembrance of woman, even when thus seen amid the glare of night in the world or at the theatre, must have remarked that some mysterious process despoils the noble phantom of the artificial prestige cast by candelabra or footlights, before she is admitted fresh and simple to the number of every day haunters of the imagination. (Yet I must own that but few of those whom I have consulted on this obscure and delicate point are of my opinion.) The complexion, the special beauty which springs from the very source of life, changes with artificial lights, and it is probably from the desire to preserve this grace in all its integrity, that painting—which concerns itself more about this flesh-pollen than any other human attraction—insists on the mental operation to which I have lately alluded, and demands daylight—that is space with the transparence of air alone. The natural light of day

faces on which they were painted at any rate their status as surfaces made of paint, with uncontrollable consequences for Courbet's project of quasi-corporeal merger.⁷ This implies a complexly recursive three-part hingelike structure that calls into question any absolute distinction between Courbet's Realism and Manet's modernism (from a formalist-modernist perspective, at any rate) as well as between what in the preface to this book I call the prehistory of modernist painting and modernist painting "itself." (The quotation marks are there to acknowledge that the larger story of modernist painting in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries is that of a plurality of modernisms or say of modernist adventures.) Another version of that structure, not at all formalist-modernist, emerged in chapter 5, in which some mirror-reversed self-portraits and related works in several media by Fantin-Latour, Whistler, Legros, and Manet turned out to require interpretation in terms of a three-part relation among Courbet, the generation of 1863, and the Impressionists, a relation in which, conceptually, the first and third "moments" precede

penetrating into and influencing all things, though itself invisible, reigns also on this typical picture called *Le Linge* [1876; fig. 188], which we will study next, it being a complete and final repertory of all current ideas and the means of their execution. (pp. 73–74)

Several points should be stressed. (1) Painting is held to bear a special relation to the human face. This extends the thematic of facingness, also of the portrait, which we saw at work in the art of the generation of 1863 as well as in the writings of Astruc and other critics. (2) The association between painting and the face is mediated by "woman": the faciality of painting is essentially feminine (in fact the gender connotations of the passage as a whole are not so simple, but let this stand for the moment). (3) The connections among painting, femininity, faciality, and natural light and air are established by way of the notion of woman's "complexion" on the grounds that painting as an art "concerns itself more about this flesh-pollen than any other human attraction" and so has a special affinity for women's faces seen under conditions that preserve the "integrity" of that "grace." The implicit logic would seem to be that painting, being the representation of surfaces, and itself consisting in the elaboration of a surface, is particularly bound or drawn to the most delicate or *superficial* surface of them all. Such a focus on considerations of surface is obviously indebted to Impressionism, though it is here inflected against the Impressionist preference for landscape. (4) The thematization of femininity (also of faciality) leads directly to an engagement with the issue of theatricality. It is above all the desire to avoid theatricality, which he calls "inartistic," that impels Mallarmé to deprecate artificial lighting and come out in favor of effects of daylight and air. Mallarmé thus implicitly construes Impressionism, to which he attaches Manet, as an antitheatrical school. (5) The actual wording of the passage (in the absence of the original French) complicates the question of gender by equating woman's complexion with something called "flesh-pollen," pollen being a substance produced by the male organ of the flower. This is to say that the faciality Mallarmé evokes is at once feminine and masculine. And my suggestion is that we understand the element of masculinity to be contributed by the implied male beholder's gaze, as though that gaze were itself part of the surface—the *superficies*—of both the woman's face and the painting. (An anticipation of the *Bar*.)

A final point turns on distinguishing sharply between "flesh-pollen"—a natural substance, for all its strangeness—and cosmetics—an unnatural or artificial substance applied to faces



Figure 188. Édouard Manet, *Le Linge*, 1876.

the second and thus jointly determine its meaning. Among those three “moments” the second is by far the hardest to characterize. I have described the art it comprises as negotiating a “crossing of borders” between Courbet’s corporeal realism and the ocular realism of the Impressionists, but exactly how are we to understand that feat of negotiation? Phenomenologically and (quasi-)ontologically, what came “between” the two realisms? Chapters 3 and 4 especially attempt to answer those questions, and it is perhaps fitting that they were conceived before the questions were framed.

An analogous structural uncertainty marks the beginning of the antitheatrical tradition in my account. In an obvious sense, the first body of works in which the new concern with the beholder as a disruptive force is consistently manifest are Jean-Baptiste Greuze’s genre paintings of the second half of the 1750s. But it was in terms of a comparison between Greuze and his major predecessor, Chardin, that the nature of absorption

from outside. The passage just quoted, indeed Mallarmé’s entire article, should be read in opposition to Baudelaire’s defense of cosmetics in *The Painter of Modern Life* (see esp. pt. 6, “In Praise of Makeup”). (“The Impressionists and Édouard Manet” begins by citing Baudelaire in order to establish its distance from him—to win Manet from him.) This means that Jean Clay (to cite him one last time) is exactly wrong when he sums up Mallarmé’s argument by saying: “Not to paint women, but the way these women are painted. Not faces, but that which, on these faces, is painting: makeup. To paint, not the structure of the model (bones, muscle), but the surface areas where the object offers itself as light sedimentation, and to render these sprinklings of powder by the powder of the pigment. Manet, in this respect, would have chosen to identify the object that he paints and the procedure that makes it possible. He would flatten the referent on the canvas, favoring in his choice of objects the rich surfaces that are already those of painting” (“Ointments, Makeup, Pollen,” trans. John Shepley, *October*, no. 27 [winter 1983]: 43). He also says: “The ultimate Mallarméan reversal: if the face is only worth something to the artist because it is already a painting (a painted/cosmetic surface), the painting in its turn is worth something as a face” (ibid.). Nothing could be more foreign to Mallarmé’s article of 1876 (as distinct from “Le Jury de peinture pour 1874 et M. Manet,” in which he praises Manet’s work for acknowledging “the origin of this art made from ointments and colors” [l’origine de cet art fait d’onguents et de couleurs]) than Clay’s conflation of his thought with Baudelaire’s (my use of the term “superficies” in this note is, however, indebted to Clay’s essay). (See Mallarmé, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry [Paris, 1945], p. 696.)

This is not the place for even a brief discussion of *Le Linge*, but two points are worth remarking. First, without straining interpretation *Le Linge* may be understood as a delayed response to the central group in Courbet’s *Studio*, or say to the feminization of that group in Whistler’s *Lange Leizen* and Courbet’s *Source*. And second, neither the woman wringing out a piece of wet laundry nor the small child bedazzledly, in that sense absorbedly, looking on seems aware of being beheld. But the large sunflower in the upper right-hand corner may be seen both as a figure for beholding not unlike the “eyed” peacock feathers in the *Portrait of Émile Zola* and as virtually allegorizing sunlight, the very condition of vision, hence of painting and a fortiori of Impressionism. For Jacques-Émile Blanche, who in his youth saw *Le Linge* in Manet’s studio, it is the painting in which Manet most closely approached Impressionism; he also reports that it cost Manet infinite pains (*Manet* [Paris, 1924], pp. 47–48).

as pictorial theme and effect was first articulated and the innovative force of Greuze’s art was brought to light.⁸ Moreover, a basic distinction between what I call the axis of absorption and the axis of beholding is already discernible in Chardin’s genre paintings of the 1730s, which suggests that a heightened awareness of the beholder’s point of view was already in place.⁹ Chardin may thus be thought of either as immediately preceding or as inaugurating the antitheatrical tradition,¹⁰ which is to say that he and Greuze together form a sort of hinge at once separating and connecting that tradition from and to the painting that precedes it. Indeed it may be argued that only with the towering achievement and pedagogical force of David’s history paintings of the 1780s was an antitheatrical *tradition* truly instituted. So that hinge too is really a three-part affair, anticipating the Courbet/Manet-plus-generation of 1863/Impressionism structure of roughly a century later.

One last range of implications centers on what was widely regarded at the time as the problematic status of Impressionist pictures with respect to the issue of the *tableau*. Even the movement’s early advocates—Burty, Chesneau, Armand Silvestre—believed that Impressionist pictures fell short of the “completeness,” the experiential density and artistic self-sufficiency, of the fully realized *tableau*.¹¹ By this the critics mainly meant that the works in question were too sketchlike—mere *esquisses*, *ébauches*, or *études*. (But not *morceaux*: the *tableau/morceau* distinction of the 1850s and 1860s was superseded by Impressionism.¹² Of course, as we have seen, Manet’s paintings of the 1860s had also been described as *ébauches* by contemporary critics, which suggests that Manet’s execution, his refusal of closure on the plane of technique, was a crucial link between his art and that of the Impressionists. As was his decision, breaking with both Couture and Courbet, to paint on a light, not a dark, ground.) Eventually, the Impressionists themselves would try to devise equivalents for that “completeness,” most importantly by working in *series* of pictures and, when it became feasible, exhibiting those series as ensembles. (Monet’s *Water Lilies* represent the apogee of that development.)¹³ But I want to stress something else, namely the way in which the “decorative,” modest-sized, landscape-based non-*tableau*-like Impressionist picture, in conjunction with with the new, perceptually reposeful conditions of display at Impressionist exhibitions and one-man shows of Impressionist works at private galleries (so different from the crowdedness and visual cacophony of the Salons), gave rise to a manifestly judg-

mental, self-consciously “esthetic” mode of seeing and experiencing painting that itself was largely new and would go on to have a tangible effect on avant-garde pictorial practice.¹⁴ Naturally I am not suggesting that before the advent of Impressionism critics were any less judgmental than they became afterward (see the critical literature on Manet in the 1860s). But there are signs in the criticism of the 1870s and 1880s of a subtle but momentous shift of rhetorical and experiential emphasis: from an often binary, all-or-nothing type of judgment expressive of the writer’s general critical position and engaging with a range of representational considerations (including, centrally, ones of absorption) to a less ideological-seeming, more contemplative or “disinterested,” but also more rigorously comparative type of judgment that claimed to bring into focus what soon came to be called “the intrinsic quality of painting itself.” And one of the first beneficiaries of that development was Manet, who came to seem the very prototype of the painter the distinctive merits of whose work were revealed only in this way.¹⁵

The phrase in quotation marks comes from Théodore Duret’s preface to the catalogue for the posthumous exhibition and sale of the contents of Manet’s studio of 1884, and is part of a contrast he drew between journalistic art critics, bent on judging pictures mainly according to subject matter, and a class of viewers whom he described as connoisseurs, amateurs, and collectors. “In their eyes,” Duret wrote, “the intrinsic quality of painting itself dominates everything in the work of a painter, and the subject, which almost by itself decides the preferences of others, is nothing more than an accessory.” Duret continued: “The connoisseurs are generally without *parti pris* as regards styles and schools. They are strongly eclectic. All that they ask of a painting is that it be *painted*, in the fullest sense of the word. But on that point they are pitiless. In preference to all the gods of Olympus, to all Homer’s and Virgil’s heroes, treated in the manner of half the students of the *école de Rome*, they will prefer, unhesitatingly, any cauldron from the brush of a Chardin.”¹⁶ There follows a long paragraph (the last in the preface) that I want to quote in its entirety:

The connoisseurs, men whose taste, functions, and status lead them to specially occupy themselves with paintings, will not judge a painter except after a long acquaintance with his works. For an artist to be definitively accepted as a *painter* among the connoisseurs, it’s necessary that his canvases, placed alongside ones by great painters, his predecessors, have been able to sustain the comparison. It’s necessary that, in private collections, in museums, they *hold up* alongside those by the masters. Now, Manet’s paintings *hold up* alongside

those of any painter whatsoever. No painting has a firmer facture and more exact tones than his, no painting is more luminous, more transparent, or more airy in its backgrounds, none shows more life in the eyes and on the face. Put a Manet among works by Delacroix, Corot, and Courbet, and you will leave it there, as if in its natural place, among its coequals. In every collection and museum where one wants to possess specimens of all the French masters and to represent the modern school in its entire development, Manet will inevitably have his place marked out, because he has been, as much as anyone at all, original and personal, and because he has given, with a brilliance that will never be surpassed, a special note in painting, that of bright tones, open air, and direct sunlight.¹⁷

The passage ends by implicitly assimilating Manet to Impressionism. It also provides an unexpected sequel to my earlier suggestion, gleaned from numerous remarks in the criticism of the 1860s, that Manet was admired by a cadre of amateurs and connoisseurs from the outset of his career. And its statement that Manet will henceforth inevitably—*forcément*—have his place marked out in the museums amounts to a final displacement of the notion of forcing that we first noted in Duranty’s reading of Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and in the *Ex-Voto* itself. But what I want to underscore is, first, Duret’s insistence on the intrinsically pictorial quality of Manet’s art, and second, his claim that we discover whether the work of a given artist possesses such quality by hanging a painting by him alongside paintings by earlier masters whose greatness is not in doubt and then watching what happens as the new work strives to measure up to its forebears. If the new painting “holds up” in that exacting situation, it possesses pictorial quality; if not, it doesn’t. By that simple but decisive criterion, Manet seemed to Duret to have already won his future place in the museums.¹⁸

In other words, by 1884 nearly all the elements of a “Greenbergian” formalist-modernist point of view were not only clearly articulated but also specifically brought to bear on Manet’s painting, which in turn seemed to fit them perfectly. Indeed Manet soon came to be seen as having pursued pictorial “quality,” in the sense of “esthetic” value, virtually to the exclusion of all else. “In Manet,” George Moore wrote in the 1890s, “there is nothing but good painting.” And: “Whatever he painted became beautiful—his hand was dowered with the gift of quality, and there his art began and ended.”¹⁹ And a page or so later: “Never did this mysterious power which produces what artists know as ‘quality’ exist in greater abundance in any fingers than it did in the slow, thick fingers of Édouard Manet; never since the world began; not in Velásquez, not in

Hals, not in Rubens, not in Titian. As an artist [but what does Moore mean by this?] Manet could not compare with the least among these illustrious painters; but as a manipulator of oil-colour he never was and never will be excelled. Manet was born a painter as absolutely as any man who ever lived, so absolutely that a very high and lucid intelligence never for a moment came between him and the desire to put anything into his picture except good painting.”²⁰ The simplification of Manet’s enterprise could scarcely be taken further. And with that new phase of simplification came a glorification of his execution, which had been a focus of negative comment throughout his career.²¹

These developments were, at least initially, the work of Impressionism, or rather they followed from the rapid and lasting triumph of Impressionism’s reconstitution of the easel picture and concomitant revision of the nature and content of pictorial experience. Accordingly, my effort in this book has been directed at recovering the original meaning of Manet’s art, before that double process of reconstitution and revision had got under way. And yet in a sense that effort has been possible only within the framework of the viewpoint I have been trying to overcome. I mean not only that the terms in which I posed the art-historical problem I initially set for myself, to understand the seminal role of Manet’s paintings of the first half of the 1860s, imply the persistence, the at-least-vestigial “presence,” of the “Impressionist”/formalist-modernist perspective the origins of which I have just evoked. I mean also that without endorsing Duret’s “intrinsic quality of painting itself” (though as a young critic I embraced similar ideas), and without subscribing to the excesses of Moore’s vision of Manet as involved only with quality (though standing before individual canvases I too have marveled at a touch that seemed to be concerned with nothing more), my continued stake in Manet rests importantly on the conviction that Manet’s best paintings “sustain comparison”—Duret’s phrase seems exactly right—with those of the great painters who preceded him.²² To the extent that that belief became central to a certain reflection on painting only in the wake of Impressionism, the mind of this book remains divided. But no truly serious book on Manet could be otherwise.

Appendix 1: Antonin Proust, L’Art d’Édouard Manet (1901)

J’ai publié, il y a quatre ans, dans un recueil français, *La Revue Blanche*, à l’aide de notes prises au cours d’une intimité née sur les bancs du collège et qui n’a pris fin qu’à la mort de mon ami, une série d’articles sous le titre de *Souvenirs de Manet*. Je me suis interdit dans ces articles toute appréciation personnelle, voulant conserver aux *Souvenirs de Manet* leur expression phonographique.

Un recueil anglais, le *Studio*, me demande aujourd’hui une étude sur le chef de l’École impressionniste.

Cette étude, je la donne d’autant plus volontiers que l’œuvre de Manet est peu connu en Angleterre.

Édouard Manet est né à Paris, au mois d’avril 1832. A vingt ans, en 1852, il avait déjà dans le monde des ateliers la réputation d’un maître. Ses camarades et tous ceux qui s’intéressaient au mouvement de l’art, très actif à cette époque, suivaient attentivement les études de ce jeune homme, dont l’œil, sensible au moindre frisson de l’atmosphère, rêvait de ramener à l’observation de ce qui s’agite autour de nous, la peinture française égarée dans la reconstitution des choses disparues.

Les paysagistes, influencés par l’École anglaise, vivaient depuis longtemps répandus dans la campagne, loin des laboratoires officiels et, selon l’expression de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, se laissaient séduire “par l’or des genêts et la pourpre des bruyères.”

Courbet, qui était venu d’un pas quelque peu lourd de son pays franc-comtois, avait tenté dans la figure la même transformation qui s’était opérée dans la peinture de paysages.

En peignant *l’Enterrement à Ornans*, exposé précisément en 1852, dans les galeries du Salon annuel, installé au Palais-Royal, il avait voulu réagir dans le sens du réel contre le maniérisme que nous avait valu l’enseignement donné par David; mais, demeuré très épris des méthodes italiennes, au point de vue du métier, il n’était parvenu dans ce premier tableau à donner la sensation de la lumière qu’à force d’oppositions violentes, et encore cette lumière demeurait-elle le plus souvent sourde, faute par le peintre de reconnaître, comme il l’a fait plus tard, particulièrement dans *la Remise des Chevreuils*, que les ombres sont d’autant plus limpides que les clartés sont plus ardentes.

Manet apparaît à ce moment, “apportant ainsi que l’a dit très justement Paul Mantz, à la palette contemporaine, la note claire, c’est-à-dire une sorte de fleur, non pas inconnue, mais trop oubliée. Sur les tons éteints de la peinture à la mode, la sienne avait les fraîcheurs délicates d’une rose de Bengale.”

Dès ses premiers essais à l’atelier, il avait laissé de côté les préparations noires conseillées par son maître Couture. Sur la toile blanche, il dessinait du bout de la brosse; puis, après avoir cherché à rendre d’un seul ton les parties éclairées, il conduisait la lumière jusqu’à l’ombre, dont il étudiait les moindres nuances.

Si ces essais de Manet avaient eu lieu entre les quatre murs d’un atelier, on en aurait peu parlé; mais Manet dessinait et peignait souvent hors de l’atelier, dans la rue, et sa silhouette blonde était rapidement devenue populaire dans le quartier de la place Pigalle.

En outre, Baudelaire, qui faisait de la critique d’art et qui avait été du premier coup séduit par les théories de Manet, ne s’était pas contenté de parler de lui dans le privé, il l’avait indiqué comme un rénovateur au cours de l’un de ses articles.

Ces débuts si brillants et si bruyants de Manet sont aujourd’hui oubliés. Presque tous ceux qui en ont été témoins ont disparu, et les survivants, ce qui est très humain, oubliant leurs émotions de jeunesse, ne veulent garder le souvenir que de ce qui intéresse leur personnalité, à ce moment obscure.

Quelques-uns, parmi les plus illustres, reconnaissent cependant que Manet, aussitôt qu’il fut en possession d’un crayon, dessinait ou, pour employer sa locution favorite, mettait un plan avec une fermeté et une hardiesse telles que ses dernières œuvres n’ont pas plus d’accent que ses croquis d’enfance.

Ces croquis lui avaient d’ailleurs valu, dans sa famille, un protecteur enthousiaste.

Le père et la mère de Manet appartenaient à une famille de la vieille bourgeoisie française.

Du côté paternel, on avait été de tout temps dans les fonctions de la magistrature. Le père de Manet était président de Chambre à la Cour d’appel de Paris. Sa mère était issue d’une génération d’amateurs. Son grand-père maternel, qui avait une très grosse fortune, et qui avait aidé à l’élévation de Bernadotte sur le trône de Suède, avait été fait citoyen suédois par l’ancien général français. Sa fille était la filleule de la reine de Suède. Le frère de sa mère, le colonel d’artillerie Fournier, qui occupait auprès du duc de Montpensier les fonctions d’aide de camp, aimait passionnément les arts, pour lesquels son fils, Edmond Fournier, capitaine d’artillerie, qui fut tué plus tard devant Sébastopol, n’avait aucun goût. Le colonel Fournier, qui avait trouvé dans son neveu, Édouard Manet, un enfant dont le plus grand plaisir était d’aller avec lui au Louvre ou de dessiner dans leurs excursions autour de Vincennes, où il tenait garnison, se prenait souvent de querelle avec son beau-frère à son sujet.

—Il ne faut jamais contrarier la vocation d’un enfant, disait le colonel Fournier.

Le père de Manet n’entendait pas de cette oreille.

—Si mon fils, expliquait-il, ne se sent pas attiré par les choses du Palais, qu’il fasse comme vous, qu’il embrasse la carrière militaire, mais faire de la peinture, jamais.

Pour en finir avec cette exigence paternelle, Édouard Manet consentit à se présenter à l’École du *Borda*. Il serait marin, et, comme les règlements de cette époque accordaient à ceux qui avaient fait un stage dans la marine marchande une année de plus pour concourir, Édouard Manet s’embarqua à Bordeaux à destination de Rio-de-Janeiro, en qualité de pilotin.

Il revint de ce voyage de moins en moins ouvert au charme des mathématiques. Son oncle Fournier aidant, son père céda, et il entra chez Couture.

Lorsqu’il quitta l’atelier Couture, en 1856, le front ceint de cette auréole de révolutionnaire qui lui avait valu les sympathies de la jeunesse du temps, contre toute attente il ne se hâta pas d’exposer. “Avant d’aborder les Salons, il me faut, disait-il, aller déposer ma carte chez les grands ancêtres.”

Il voyagea en Hollande, en Italie, en Espagne. Quand il rencontra, en Espagne, chez Velasquez, la préoccupation de la simplicité du dessin et de la transparence de la coloration, il se sentit heureux comme un homme qui se retrouve parmi les siens, après une exploration dans un pays où sa langue est ignorée.

L’influence que Velasquez eut sur lui, il ne la niait pas, il la confessait.

La consciencieuse sincérité des Primitifs italiens l’émut et la hardiesse des partis pris de Franz Hals lui causa, en Hollande, une telle impression que, revenu à Paris, armé de tous ces souvenirs, il se décida à aborder franchement les divers aspects de la vie parisienne.

La vie de Manet est, à cet égard, un superbe exemple de loyauté. De 1858 à 1860, il fait une série d’études, *l’Étudiant de Salamanque*, *Moïse sauvé des eaux*, *la Toilette*, *la Promenade*, en notant simplement au dos de ces études ce que les maîtres qu’il admire lui ont appris.

Le premier tableau qu’il envoie au Salon est *le Buveur d’absinthe*. Ce tableau est refusé. La critique, attachée au culte des vieilles images, pousse un cri d’horreur devant ce tableau exposé sur le boulevard des Italiens. Couture se montre impitoyable. Personne ne voit dans cette conception d’un dessin si serré, d’une couleur si harmonieuse, une œuvre qui rappelle comme le dit Manet lui-même, *les Buveurs* du Musée de Madrid.

“J’ai fait, dit-il, un type de Paris, étudié à Paris, en mettant dans l’exécution la naïveté du métier que j’ai retrouvée dans le tableau de Velasquez. On ne comprend pas. On comprendra peut-être mieux si je fais un type espagnol.”

Et, avec cette bonne humeur que rien ne déconcerte, il donne *le Joueur de guitare*, qui lui vaut une mention honorable au Salon de 1861.

Il n’existe dans aucun musée une page plus vigoureusement peinte que *le Joueur de guitare*. La manière dont sont traitées la figure et les mains, d’un modelé si complet, obtenu cependant à l’aide de procédés sommaires, les nuances si

déliçates des gris du vêtement, la justesse de coloration du banc vert, la fraîcheur des natures mortes du premier plan font du *Joueur de guitare* une manifestation dans laquelle la critique se décide à reconnaître un art qu'elle n'a pas vu ou qu'elle a perdu de vue. Revenant sur l'aveuglement dont elle a fait preuve l'année précédente devant *le Buveur d'absinthe*, elle s'excuse, en affirmant que ce premier tableau n'est qu'une erreur d'élève, une conception procédant de la méthode de Couture.

Le *Portrait de mon père et de ma mère*, exposé au même Salon de 1861, dérouté complètement cette même critique. Si elle a pu exécuter, à propos du *Joueur de guitare*, des variations sur Velasquez et sur Goya, elle est muette sur le *Portrait du père et de la mère Manet*, où paraît l'influence de Franz Hals, qu'elle ne connaît pas encore. Franz Hals ne sera, en effet, noté que plus tard, au lendemain de la vente Pourtalès.

En France, la critique d'art a toujours été, à quelques rares exceptions près, très misérable. Quand elle n'a plus sous la main les manuels en usage, elle se montre le plus souvent incapable de discerner par elle-même.

Lorsque l'on voit aujourd'hui dans la galerie de M. Faure, qui en est l'heureux possesseur, les trois premiers tableaux de Manet, *le Buveur d'absinthe*, *le Joueur de guitare*, et le *Portrait de ses parents*, on peut penser aux maîtres espagnols et au peintre de Harlem, mais il est impossible de trouver la moindre trace de l'enseignement donné à Manet par l'auteur des *Romains de la Décadence*. C'est à peine si, dans les dessous du chapeau de *Buveur*, on peut entrevoir un indice des frottis chers à Couture. Mais ce qui frappe, c'est la personnalité puissante de Manet, qui domine les influences qui ont pu s'exercer sur lui. On prévoit, à l'examen attentif de cette première étape de l'infatigable lutteur, que chaque jour qui s'écoulera à dater de ce moment produira une tentative nouvelle.

Après le succès du *Joueur de guitare*, la vie s'ouvrait aussi souriante devant lui. On le vit circuler dans Paris, y peindre partout où il trouvait un sujet qui lui plaisait et aussi aisément que s'il eût été dans son atelier.

La Chanteuse des rues, représentant une femme sortant d'un café et tenant dans une main des cerises que l'autre main porte à ses lèvres, toile devant laquelle un œil affiné admire la souplesse de l'enveloppe de la figure principale et une qualité des tons de chair qui en font une œuvre supérieure aux œuvres précédentes, fut le morceau capital qui suivit de près les trois premiers tableaux de Manet. Mais *la Chanteuse des rues* fut violemment critiquée. Cette recherche scrupuleuse de la vérité contemporaine ne trouva grâce devant personne, sauf devant Paul Mantz. Faute de pouvoir s'en prendre à l'œuvre elle-même, on se rabattit sur la vulgarité du sujet, qui est, a dit récemment un fonctionnaire des Beaux-Arts, emprunté à *l'Assommoir* de M. Zola, dont la publication eut lieu cependant plusieurs années après l'apparition du tableau.

C'est ainsi que l'on écrit l'histoire dans les régions officielles. Seul, Paul Mantz

loue *la Chanteuse des rues*. "Manet est tout ce que l'on voudra, écrit-il, mais un réaliste brutal, jamais!"

Peu de mois après, Manet exposa *le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. Ce fut encore le sujet qui parut inacceptable à la critique. Des femmes nues déjeunant avec des jeunes gens vêtus, une telle corruption n'était pas tolérable, et les écrivains du temps, oubliant le tableau du Giorgione qui est dans le salon carré du Louvre et dont Manet déclarait très haut qu'il s'était inspiré, crièrent à l'indécence.

Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe marque cependant, dans l'œuvre du peintre, cette première recherche du frémissement de la pleine clarté qu'il devait plus tard traduire avec une grande puissance dans *la Barque d'Argenteuil* et dans *le Père Lathuille*.

On sent que Manet est à la veille d'être pleinement maître de sa volonté.

Entre temps, les sujets espagnols : *le Jeune homme en costume de Majo*, fait d'après son frère Gustave, *la Lola de Valence*, peinte, comme *le Torero femme*, d'après son modèle favori, Victorine, sont autant d'études qui le préparent, comme *l'Homme mort*, fragment découpé dans *le Combat de taureaux*, à simplifier sa palette, qui nous donne deux ans plus tard *le Fifre* et *la Joueuse de guitare*, œuvres d'une maestria telle que la postérité s'inclinera devant elles avec le respect que l'on doit au génie, sans parvenir à comprendre que le peintre qui a pu faire de telles choses n'ait pas été de son vivant honoré comme il méritait de l'être.

Le Fifre, qui appartient aujourd'hui au comte Isaac de Camondo, a été très durement traité quand il parut. Autant on s'était montré séduit par *l'Enfant à l'épée*, en Amérique, à l'heure actuelle, autant *le Fifre* fut accueilli avec sévérité. Il y a cependant entre ces deux toiles une distance énorme. La première est intéressante par la crânerie du dessin, par l'accentuation de la couleur. La seconde est un morceau qui, dans sa rudesse voulue, n'a plus rien de la tonalité indécise de certains détails de la première trop sacrifiés. Le fifre est campé sur un fond clair et son gros drap de troupière s'enlève sur ce fond avec des nuances d'une sensibilité exquise. La joueuse de guitare, placée en pleine lumière, vêtue de blanc, fait sentir sous son vêtement léger la nervosité de sa forme. La pose de la main sur le manche de la guitare est d'un dessin admirable. Ce dernier tableau est dans une collection privée des États-Unis. C'est un des symptômes les plus curieux de la force des superstitions que l'erreur qui a, pendant des siècles, depuis la funeste époque de la Renaissance, entraîné l'art hors de sa voie naturelle, soit à ce point forte que toute loyale expression de la vérité ait pu apparaître comme un mensonge.

On s'était fait dans notre pays une idée si fautive des conditions du beau dessin, de la belle couleur et de la saine composition que Watteau et Chardin sont passés presque inaperçus au milieu du tapage des pinceaux bruyants, à côté du dessin métallique et de la banalité des arrangements prévus par le codex des professeurs attirés. C'est tout au plus si l'on a concédé à Watteau l'élégance des personnages

de ses fêtes galantes et à Chardin un brevet de maître de la nature morte. Des étonnantes sanguines rehaussées de crayon noir du premier et des portraits du second, on ne faisait pas plus de cas que des œuvres de Clouet, de Janet et de Cousin. Manet nous ramenait au respect de cette tradition nationale, à l'admiration des choses méconnues. Il faisait revivre tout cela par des observations personnelles, mais l'œil de ses contemporains persistait à ne pas voir. Lorsqu'il disait que, dans notre siècle, M. Ingres avait été le maître des Maîtres, on tenait pour un blasphème du peintre du *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* cette manifestation de son culte pour le peintre de *la Source*.

Dans ce même ordre d'idées, je me souviens qu'un jour, à La Rochelle, Corot ayant très vivement loué la sincérité d'observation du paysagiste Boudin, ceux qui l'écoutaient témoignaient visiblement de cette conviction que l'ermite de Ville-d'Avray se moquait d'eux.

Le célèbre tableau de l'*Olympia*, exposé au Salon de 1865 et qui est, à l'heure présente, au Musée du Luxembourg, procède, pour quiconque examine les choses de sang-froid, de la constante préoccupation qu'a eue M. Ingres et qu'a voulu avoir Manet de chercher dans les contours de ses figures une irréprochable pureté de lignes. Est-il rien de mieux mis en place, pour employer l'expression favorite de Manet, que la figure d'*Olympia*? Assurément non. Mais comment faire comprendre, à un public qui se fait d'une courtisane l'idée préconçue d'une femme opulente étalant sur des draps luxueux les chairs débordantes d'un modèle à la Jordaens, que l'image vraie de la fille est aussi bien dans cette nudité indigente qu'a représentée Manet? Dans un chapitre de son volume *Mes Haines*, Zola a fait une description magistrale de l'*Olympia* de Manet. Zola dédaigne avec raison ce reproche fait à l'*Olympia* d'être cerclée d'un trait noir conformément, avait dit la critique, à l'enseignement de Couture, qui, soit dit entre parenthèses, n'a jamais accentué les contours de ses peintures.

À ce moment, d'ailleurs, à l'exception de Théophile Gautier, de Paul Masson, de Duret, de Zola et de Barbey d'Aurevilly, qui n'avait pas coutume de parler d'art, mais qui fit une exception en faveur de Manet, toute la critique se mobilisa pour écraser sous ses foudres le peintre de l'*Olympia*.

Manet, il faut le reconnaître, fut très affecté de cette levée de boucliers. Mais ses convictions étaient tellement fortes, son courage tellement grand que son œil garda sa sûreté, et son jugement sa sérénité.

Dans ses promenades au Louvre, avec les habitués du café Guerbois, qui avaient pour principe de ne rien trouver de bien, Manet s'arrêtait et les arrêtait devant les Poussin. Tout ce qui était français le séduisait. La plupart des talents consacrés le laissait, en revanche, très froid. Il tenait Léonard de Vinci pour très supérieur au divin Raphaël, et, quand il allait au Luxembourg, c'était devant les dessins de M. Heim qu'il s'arrêtait de préférence.

"Être vrai," telle est sa formule. A Boulogne, quand il peint cet admirable tableau des *Femmes de pêcheurs au clair de lune*, il se montre scrupuleux à ce point

qu'il se refuse à donner le moindre coup de brosse quand il n'a pas retrouvé le même effet que la veille.

Toujours désireux de rendre ce qui l'a frappé, il marche la tête libre au milieu des choses de son temps. C'est l'heure de ce que l'on a appelé sa troisième manière. Il a pris son empreinte définitive. Aucun souvenir de l'atelier. Aucun rappel de tel ou tel maître.

De 1869 à 1879, il fait une série de dessins, de pastels, de tableaux ou d'études peintes où il est en pleine possession de lui-même. La critique, qui s'est adoucie devant *le Bon Bock*, qu'il a peint pour montrer à ses imitateurs qu'il saurait, s'il le voulait, plaire au public, reprend son verbe hostile quand il peint les blancheurs éclatantes du *Chemin de fer* ou qu'il expose *le Linge*.

Les portraits succèdent aux portraits; puis, voici *Polichinelle*, *Dans la serre*, la suite des eaux-fortes, les illustrations d'Edgar Poë, les études de Champfleury. Partout c'est la vie, la lumière. Il se produit sur toutes les palettes, un reflet de sa manière de peindre. Personne n'y échappe. Depuis les membres de l'Institut, à commencer par Paul Baudry, qui l'imita dans son *Saint-Hubert* du château de Chantilly, jusqu'aux derniers des intransigeants de l'École impressionniste, chacun suit attentivement tout ce qui sort de l'atelier de la rue d'Amsterdam. Mais ce n'est rien d'emprunter la manière de peindre, ce qu'il faudrait dérober à Manet, c'est sa manière de voir, et cela ne s'acquiert pas.

Manet renonce d'ailleurs à envoyer ses œuvres dans les expositions organisées par la petite église qu'il a créée, parce que là on ne se montre pas plus tendre pour lui que sous la coupole du Palais Mazarin. Pour un peu même, les impressionnistes, qui lui doivent tout, seraient tentés de le renier comme Pierre a renié Jésus.

Sans se soucier de ces misères, il prodigue sa sève généreuse et féconde sur les talents qu'il a fait naître. Quand on lui vient dire qu'il ne sait pas dessiner, il hausse les épaules et répond : "Je ne trace pas des lignes bêtes comme on apprend à les tracer à l'École, cela est vrai. Mais qu'on demande aux illustres professeurs qui y enseignent de faire une mise en place avec le sentiment de la lumière au bout des doigts. Je les en défie. Ah! l'atmosphère avec sa clarté, sa mobilité qui enveloppe tout de son éblouissante splendeur! Allez donc parler de cela à des gens qui piquent une figure sur une toile comme on pique un papillon dans une vitrine." Et, faisant allusion à un portrait d'un peintre en vogue : "Je vois bien, s'écriait-il, qu'il a peint une redingote. Elle est même d'une coupe irréprochable, cette redingote. Mais où sont les poumons du modèle? Il ne respire pas sous son vêtement. Il n'a pas de corps. C'est un portrait pour tailleur."

Un jour, étant allé rendre visite à de Goncourt, deux ans après la mort de Manet, je lui dis : "J'ai lu dans *Manette Salomon* ce que vous faites dire au peintre Coriolis et j'ai retrouvé là un récit de Manet presque textuel." "Cela est parfaitement exact, me répondit de Goncourt. J'ai écrit le chapitre, non pas sous la dictée de Manet, mais en sortant de chez lui, et vous savez combien je me fais un devoir de reproduire maintenant les propos de mes contemporains."

Ce passage de *Manette Salomon*, je le donne ici, ne serait-ce que pour montrer combien des critiques, qui ont pour excuse de ne l'avoir jamais connu, se trompent quand ils nous représentent un Manet amoureux de la réclame et du bruit et qu'ils prêtent des mots dignes d'un marchand de chocolats à cet homme qui a toujours été d'une grande modestie.

"J'étais, dit le peintre de *Manette Salomon*, dans un omnibus. J'avais fini d'épeler les annonces que l'on a sur la tête. Je regardais stupidement des maisons, des rues, des grandes machines d'ombre, des choses éclairées, des becs de gaz, des vitrines, un petit soulier rose de femme dans une montre, sur une étagère de glaces, des bêtises, rien du tout, ce qui se passait. J'en étais arrivé à suivre mécaniquement sur les volets des boutiques fermées l'ombre des gens, qui recommence éternellement une série de silhouettes. J'avais en face de moi un monsieur avec des lunettes qui s'obstinait à vouloir lire un journal. Il y avait toujours des reflets dans ses lunettes. As-tu remarqué comme les femmes paraissent mystérieusement jolies, le soir, en voiture? De l'ombre, du fantôme, du domino, je ne sais pas. Elles ont de tout cela, un air voilé, un emballage voluptueux, des choses d'elles qu'on devine et qu'on ne voit pas, un teint vague, un sourire de nuit, avec ces lumières qui leur battent sur les traits, tous ces doux reflets qui leur flottent sous le chapeau, ces grandes touches de noir qu'elles ont dans les yeux, leur jupe même, remuante d'ombre. Tiens, elle était comme ça, tournée, regardant, un peu baissée. La lueur de la lanterne lui donnait sur le front. C'était comme un brillant d'ivoire. Cela mettait une vraie poussière de lumière à la racine de ses cheveux. Trois touches de clarté sur la ligne du nez, sur un bout de la pommette, sur la pointe du menton et tout le reste dans l'ombre."

Tout Manet est dans ce récit qui traduit l'observation constante de son œil ému par tout ce qui se passe autour de lui.

Il est, au reste, aujourd'hui admis, reconnu que Manet a rendu à l'art l'éminent service de le ramener dans le champ de l'observation, de l'éloigner de l'imitation de la chose déjà faite et de le faire vivre non plus de la vie passée, mais de la vie qui nous est commune.

Manet a fait plus. Il a légué une palette plus claire, plus saine, une vision plus grande de la transparence des ombres que l'on s'obstinait à voir opaques.

Thoré, qui écrivait sous le pseudonyme de Burger, au moment où Rousseau, Corot et Millet étudiaient attentivement la campagne des environs de Paris, disait devant les premiers tableaux de Meissonier : "Quel dommage d'affubler en seigneurs Louis XIII des modèles, de vouloir remonter le cours des siècles, quand il serait si facile à M. Meissonier de peindre au cabaret, à Poissy, de braves gens dans leurs attitudes vraies!"

À cette époque, Manet n'était pas né. Ses tendances l'ont porté tout naturellement à faire ce que désirait Thoré. Il a été l'homme de son temps, et il a apporté dans la représentation des choses de son temps sa force individualiste.

On lui a reproché d'avoir vu les femmes en laid. Il n'est pas de reproche plus

injuste. Le portrait d'Eva Gonzalès n'est pas seulement le portrait fidèlement rendu d'une très jolie femme. L'attitude en est d'une grâce parfaite, le mouvement en est des plus heureux et, si l'on voulait énumérer les portraits exquis de Mlle Demarsy, de Mme Valtesse, de Méry Laurent, de Mlle Lemonnier, on ne trouverait dans l'œuvre d'aucun peintre un plus haut sentiment de la distinction.

Lorsque, au lendemain de sa mort, survenue brusquement le 30 avril 1883, on fit l'exposition de son œuvre à l'École des Beaux-Arts, ce qui choqua le public, comme à l'exposition du pont de l'Alma, qu'il avait faite en 1867, ce fut le grand nombre de toiles demeurées à l'état d'ébauche.

L'inachèvement de tant de peintures est tout à l'honneur de Manet. Il n'eût jamais consenti à poursuivre de chic une étude commencée d'après nature. Il avait un tel respect pour la chose observée qu'il ne voulait à aucun prix déflorer son observation. C'est un scrupule que l'on ne rencontre pas assez souvent chez les artistes, et l'une des faiblesses de Corot et de Millet a été de terminer dans l'atelier; pour le dernier, de composer même de toutes pièces des tableaux qui ne pèchent pas seulement par l'infériorité du métier, mais par la pauvreté de la conception. Un jour viendra où notre œil, perverti par certaines conventions, reconnaîtra la justesse de la doctrine de Manet, à ne rien faire sans le secours de la nature. "Si la définition de Bacon, disait-il, que l'art est l'homme ajouté à la nature, *homo additus naturae*, est d'une absolue vérité, encore faut-il que la nature soit là. On ne remplace pas, même par le souvenir le plus fidèle."

Les lecteurs du *Studio* seront peut-être quelque peu surpris d'entendre parler ainsi de Millet par celui qui a poussé *l'Angélus*, à la vente Secrétan, jusqu'à un prix invraisemblable.

Je dirai, à ce sujet, que tout est relatif. *L'Angélus* porte, comme tout l'œuvre de Millet, une recherche de philosophie rurale qui s'impose sous la faiblesse souvent trop manifeste des moyens d'exécution. Il fallait, à l'heure où *l'Angélus* paraissait en vente publique, honorer le penseur et l'honorer d'autant plus qu'il avait brisé avec toutes les conventions en usage.

Mais il n'y a rien de commun entre l'œuvre de Millet et l'œuvre de Corot, cherchant à séduire l'imagination par l'introduction de demi-dieux ou de naïades dans des paysages fidèlement observés, et l'œuvre de Manet.

L'auteur du *Buveur d'eau*, que reproduit le *Studio* à côté d'autres reproductions, n'a qu'un but, comme l'a spirituellement écrit Paul Mantz : "réduire au silence les derniers cuisiniers de l'École bolonaise." Ce qu'il recherche avant tout, c'est, dans un sujet simple, emprunté à la vie moderne, l'étude de l'intensité réelle des tons clairs, les différents degrés des valeurs. Manet a le sens de la couleur à un tel degré que le jeu du dessin ne se sépare pas pour lui de son mariage avec la coloration. Tout est lié dans sa pensée et il répète volontiers, dans ses entretiens intimes, "que sans ponctuation il n'y a orthographe ni grammaire, et que vouloir séparer le dessin de la couleur est une absurdité."

Son œil est tellement doué que, dans une nuance d'apparence grise et uni-

forme, il perçoit et rend des délicatesses qui nous échappent. Au fur et à mesure qu'il avance dans la vie, sa sensibilité devient à cet égard de plus en plus aiguë. Les tons violacés des ombres dans *le Portrait de Pertuiset*, la mobilité des contours qu'il maintient indécis dans *la Barque d'Argenteuil* et dans *le Père Lathuille* étonnent tout d'abord. Mais on ne tarde pas à en reconnaître la vérité et, lorsqu'on se trouve en présence de l'ensemble de son œuvre, ce qui frappe c'est la poursuite incessante d'un idéal qu'il a atteint dans ses dernières productions et que l'on pourrait définir ainsi: la réalisation des effets optiques résultant du mouvement des colorations variées que la nature nous offre.

Cette vibration des tons clairs, il l'obtient dès le début. Mais, de 1860 à 1883, c'est chaque jour un progrès nouveau, parce que chaque jour est marqué par une tentative nouvelle.

Aujourd'hui, la force des préventions est telle que le grand nombre résiste encore à accepter la plupart des œuvres de Manet. On y veut trouver des réminiscences, des faiblesses. Il viendra cependant un jour où le moindre croquis de cet artiste vraiment génial sera recherché et analysé comme renfermant un enseignement dans la plus légère de ses indications.

Pour citer l'un des exemples les plus frappants de cette intuition supérieure qui fait de Manet le plus peintre des peintres de notre siècle, quel tableau a été plus malmené que *le Combat du Kearsarge et de l'Alabama*, et dans quelle toile, cependant, ancienne ou moderne, la mer a-t-elle été rendue avec plus d'ampleur? Et quelle jouissance des yeux pour ceux qui aiment la peinture pour elle-même et qui la dégagent de tous les préjugés de la rhétorique ou de toutes les prétentieuses réflexions de la littérature?

Causant un soir avec lui, dans son atelier de la rue d'Amsterdam, Manet en vint à parler des appréciations le plus souvent injurieuses qui avaient encombré la presse pendant vingt ans, toutes les fois qu'il avait exposé soit au Salon, soit dans le bâtiment élevé à ses frais, en 1867, au bord du pont de l'Alma, soit dans sa galerie de la rue Saint-Petersbourg. C'était en 1882; il était déjà très souffrant du mal qui devait l'emporter l'année suivante. "Cette guerre au couteau, me dit-il, m'a fait le plus grand mal. J'en ai cruellement souffert, mais elle m'a donné le coup de fouet. Je ne souhaite à aucun artiste d'être loué et encensé à ses débuts. Ce serait pour lui l'anéantissement de sa personnalité." Puis, souriant, il ajouta : "Les imbéciles! ils n'ont cessé de me dire que j'étais inégal : ils ne pouvaient rien dire de plus élogieux. Cela a toujours été mon ambition de ne pas demeurer égal à moi-même, de ne pas refaire, le lendemain, ce que j'avais fait la veille, de m'inspirer constamment d'un aspect nouveau, de chercher à faire entendre une note nouvelle. Ah! les immobiles, ceux qui ont une formule, qui s'y tiennent, qui s'en font des rentes, en quoi cela peut-il intéresser l'art? Je te le demande. Déterminer, au contraire, un pas en avant, et un pas suggestif, voilà la fonction de l'homme qui a une caboche! Ils seront heureux, mon cher ami, les gens qui vivront dans un

siècle; les organes de leur vision seront plus développés que les nôtres. Ils verront mieux."

Un long silence s'étant fait à l'approche de la nuit, nous nous quittâmes sur ce mot de Manet, qu'il me répétait souvent : "Tu sais, moi il faut me voir tout entier. Et, je t'en prie, si je viens à disparaître, ne me laisse pas entrer dans les collections publiques par morceaux; on me jugerait mal."

L'année suivante, mon ami mourait. Quelques mois après sa mort, nous organisons, à l'École des Beaux-Arts, l'exposition complète de son œuvre. Huit ans après, en 1889, je pouvais renouveler cette exposition au Champ-de-Mars. En 1883 comme en 1889, ce fut une véritable apothéose. Mme Édouard Manet, qui vit dans la retraite, à Gennevilliers, entourée des portraits de son mari, le portrait de Manet jeune, par Fantin-Latour, celui que lui a fait plus tard Claude Monet et deux portraits qu'il a peints d'après lui-même, à deux époques différentes de sa vie, l'un en 1862, l'autre en 1875, ne pouvait, l'autre jour, me parler sans être profondément émue de ces deux grandes manifestations.

Quelle traînée lumineuse Manet a, en effet, laissée dans l'art français? Mais, si le public commence à se montrer moins rebelle, ce n'est que plus tard qu'il comprendra l'éclat de cette carrière si prématurément brisée.

(*Le Studio* 21 (Jan. 15, 1901): 71-77)

Four years ago, in a French journal, *La Revue Blanche*, with the help of notes taken during the course of an intimacy which was born on a school bench and which did not end until my friend's death, I published a series of articles under the title *Souvenirs de Manet*. I forbade myself any personal evaluation in those articles, wishing to preserve in the *Souvenirs de Manet* their phonographic expression.

An English journal, *The Studio*, today asks me for a study of the leader of the Impressionist school, which I provide all the more willingly since Manet's work is little known in England.

Édouard Manet was born in Paris in April 1832. At twenty, in 1852, he already had the reputation of a master in the studio world. His comrades and all who took an interest in the art movement, which was very active at the time, attentively followed the studies of this young man, whose eye, sensitive to the least atmospheric trembling, dreamed of bringing French painting back to the observation of what stirs around us, after it had strayed into reconstituting things that had disappeared.

The landscape artists, influenced by the English school, for a long time were spread out around the countryside, far from the official laboratories, and, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's expression, were letting themselves be seduced "by the gold of the broom and the purple of the heather."

Courbet, who had come with a rather heavy step from his native Franche-Comté, had attempted the same transformation in the human figure which had occurred in landscape painting.

In painting the *Burial at Ornans*, exhibited precisely in 1852, in the galleries of the annual Salon at the Palais-Royal, he wanted to react in the direction of the real, in contrast to the mannerism that David's teaching had given us; but, still very taken with Italian methods from the point of view of technique, he did not manage in that first painting to convey a feeling of light except through violent contrasts, and even this light most often remained dull, because the painter failed to recognize, as he did later, especially in the *Remise des Chevreuils*, that shadows become more limpid as light areas are more brilliant.

Manet appears at this moment, "bringing to the contemporary palette," as Paul Mantz rightly said, "the light note, that is to say, a sort of flower, not unknown, but too often forgotten. Compared with the muted tones of fashionable painting, his had the delicate freshness of a Bengal rose."

Right from his first studio attempts, he put aside the black preparations that his master Couture had advised. On the white canvas he drew with the tip of his brush; then, after trying to render the light areas with a single tone, he brought light down to shadow, whose slightest nuances he studied.

If these attempts had taken place within the four walls of a studio, we would have heard little about them; but Manet often drew and painted outside the studio, in the street, and his blond head quickly became popular in the Place Pigalle quarter.

Furthermore, Baudelaire, who wrote art criticism, and had been seduced by Manet's theories from the start, was not content to speak of him in private, but pointed him out as an innovator in one of his articles.

Manet's so brilliant and noisy debuts have been forgotten today. Nearly all who witnessed them have died, and the survivors—forgetting their youthful emotions, which is very human—want to hold on to the memory of only that which concerns their personality, which is obscure at this moment.

Several among the most illustrious people recognize however that as soon as Manet took hold of a pencil, he drew, or to use his favorite locution, he set down a design with a firmness and boldness such that his last works have no more impact than his earliest sketches.

Those sketches, moreover, earned him an enthusiastic protector in his family. Manet's father and mother belonged to the old French bourgeoisie. On his father's side, they had always worked in the magistrature. Manet's father was head of chambers at the Court of Appeals in Paris. His mother came from a generation of connoisseurs. His maternal grandfather, who had a very large fortune and had assisted in the elevation of Bernadotte to the Swedish throne, had been made a Swedish citizen by the former French general. His daughter was the queen of Sweden's goddaughter. The brother of Manet's mother, the artillery colonel

Fournier, who was aide-de-camp to the duke of Montpensier, passionately loved the arts, for which his son, Édouard Fournier, an artillery captain later killed at Sebastopol, had no taste. Colonel Fournier, finding in his nephew Édouard Manet a child whose greatest pleasure was to go with him to the Louvre or to draw during their excursions around Vincennes, where the garrison was, often quarreled with his brother-in-law on Manet's behalf. "One must never go against a child's calling," Colonel Fournier would say.

Manet's father would not listen to any of this. "If my son," he explained, "does not feel himself drawn by matters of the Palace of Justice, let him do as you've done, let him embrace a military career, but painting—never."

To put an end to this paternal demand, Édouard Manet agreed to enroll in the school of the *Borda*. He would be a sailor, and, as the rules of that time granted those who had done a stint in the Merchant Marine an extra year to pass the entrance examination, Édouard Manet embarked at Bordeaux for Rio de Janeiro with the commission of pilot's apprentice.

He returned from this voyage less and less receptive to the charm of mathematics. With his uncle Fournier's help, his father gave in, and Manet entered Couture's studio. When he left in 1856, his head encircled by the revolutionary halo that showed off the sympathies of the youth of his time, contrary to every expectation, he did not rush to exhibit. "Before tackling the Salons," he said, "I must go and leave my card with the great ancestors."

He traveled through Holland, Italy, Spain. In Spain, when he encountered in Velásquez the preoccupation with simplicity of drawing and transparency of color, he felt as happy as a man who finds himself once again among his own, after exploring a country where his language is unknown. He did not deny the influence that Velásquez had on him, in fact he confessed it.

The conscientious sincerity of the Italian primitives moved him and the boldness of Frans Hals's forceful manner made such an impression on him in Holland that, back in Paris, armed with all those memories, he decided to take on frankly the diverse aspects of Parisian life.

Manet's life is, in this respect, a superb example of loyalty. From 1858 to 1860, he produces a series of studies, the *Student of Salamanca*, *Moses Saved from the Waters*, *La Toilette*, *La Promenade [La Pêche?]*, noting simply on the back of these studies what the masters he admires taught him.

The first painting he sends to the Salon is the *Absinthe Drinker*. The painting is rejected. The critics, attached to the cult of old images, emit a cry of horror at this painting exhibited on the boulevard des Italiens. Couture proves to be merciless. No one sees in this conception of such concise drawing, of such harmonious color, a work that recalls, as Manet himself says, the *Drinkers* in the Prado.

"I have made," he says, "a Parisian type, studied in Paris, while putting into its execution the technical naïveté that I recognized in Velásquez's painting. No one understands. Perhaps they will understand better if I make a Spanish type."

And, with that good humor undisturbed by anything, he offers the *Guitarrero*, which earns him an honorable mention in the Salon of 1861. In no museum is there a work more vigorously painted than the *Guitarrero*. The way the face and hands are treated, with such complete modeling, though obtained by means of simple procedures, the delicate nuances of grays in the clothing, the accuracy of the coloring of the green bench, the freshness of the still lifes in the foreground, make the *Guitarrero* a manifestation in which criticism resolves to recognize an art which it has not seen or which it has lost sight of. Returning to the blindness they displayed the previous year with the *Absinthe Drinker*, the critics excuse themselves by affirming that this first painting is just a student's mistake, a conception derived from Couture's method.

The *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*, exhibited in the same Salon of 1861, completely baffles these same critics. If they were able to perform, apropos the *Guitarrero*, variations on Velásquez and Goya, they are mute before the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*, in which the influence of Frans Hals appears, whom they don't know yet. Frans Hals will not, in fact, be recognized until later, the day after the Pourtalès sale.

In France, art criticism has always been, with several rare exceptions, very poor. When it no longer has manuals to tell it what to think, it usually proves incapable of discerning anything on its own.

When today we see Manet's first three paintings, the *Absinthe Drinker*, the *Guitarrero*, and the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*, in the gallery of M. Faure, who is their fortunate owner, we can think of the Spanish masters and the painter of Haarlem, but it is impossible to find the slightest trace of the teaching given Manet by the creator of the *Romans of the Decadence*. It is only with difficulty that, in the underpainting of the hat in the *Absinthe Drinker*, one might catch a glimpse of the washes dear to Couture. But what is striking is Manet's powerful personality, which dominates the influences that have worked on him. One foresees, examining attentively this indefatigable fighter's first phase, that from this moment each passing day will produce a new challenge.

After the success of the *Guitarrero*, life unfolded happily before him. One saw him going around Paris, painting everywhere he found a subject that pleased him and as easily as in his studio.

The *Street Singer*, representing a woman leaving a café and holding in one hand cherries that her other hand brings to her lips, was the principal work immediately following Manet's first three paintings. A refined eye admires the suppleness of the main figure and a quality of flesh tones that make it a work superior to the preceding ones. But the *Street Singer* was violently criticized. This scrupulous examination of contemporary truth found favor with no one, except Paul Mantz. Without being able to come to terms with the painting itself, people went on about the vulgarity of the subject, borrowed, an official of the Beaux-Arts recently said, from *L'Assommoir* of Zola, whose publication in fact took place sev-

eral years after the appearance of the painting. This is the way history is written in official places. Paul Mantz alone praises the *Street Singer*. "Manet is all one could want," he writes, "but a brutal realist, never!"

Just a few months later, Manet exhibited the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. Again it was the subject that seemed unacceptable to the critics. Nude women having lunch with clothed young men, such corruption was intolerable, and the writers of the time cried out against indecency, forgetting the painting by Giorgione in the Louvre which Manet loudly declared had inspired him.

In the painter's work, however, the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* marks the first research into the shimmering of full daylight which he would later translate powerfully in *Argenteuil* and *Chez Père Lathuille*. One feels that Manet is on the verge of fully becoming master of his will.

Meanwhile, the Spanish subjects: *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, posed by his brother Gustave; *Lola de Valence*, painted, like *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, after his favorite model, Victorine, are so many studies that prepared him, like the *Dead Torero*, a fragment cut from the *Episode in a Bull Fight*, to simplify his palette, which two years later gives us *The Fifer* and the *Joueuse de Guitare*. These are works of such mastery that posterity will bow before them with the respect owed to genius, without managing to understand how the painter who could have made such things hadn't been honored in his lifetime as he deserved.

The *Fifer*, which today belongs to the Count Isaac de Camondo, was very harshly treated when it appeared. As much as people appeared to be seduced by *Boy with a Sword* in America at the present time, the *Fifer* was greeted with severity. There is, however, an enormous distance between these two paintings. The first is interesting for the directness of the drawing, for the accentuation of the color. The second is a piece which, in its willed roughness, no longer has any of the uncertain tonality of certain details that the first painting oversacrificed. The fifer is set on a light background and his rough costume of a trooper stands out from this background with nuances of exquisite sensitivity. The guitar player, placed in full light, dressed in white, makes you feel the nervousness of her form under her light garment. The pose of the hand on the neck of the guitar is admirably drawn. This last painting is in a private collection in the United States. One of the most curious symptoms of the force of superstition is that the error which, for centuries, since the fatal epoch of the Renaissance, has led art away from its natural path, should be so strong that every loyal expression of the truth could appear as a lie.

In our country we have such a false idea of the conditions of beautiful drawing, beautiful color, and sound composition that Watteau and Chardin went almost unnoticed in the midst of a clamor of noisy brushes and metallic drawing, and the banal arrangements prescribed by the formulas of titled professors. At best, Watteau was praised for the elegance of the characters of his fêtes galantes

and Chardin was granted the badge of master of still life. But no more attention was paid to Watteau's astonishing drawings in red chalk heightened with black pencil, or to Chardin's portraits, than to the works of Clouet, Janet, and Cousin. Manet led us back to a respect for this national tradition, to an admiration for these unrecognized things. He made all this live again by his personal observations, but the eyes of his contemporaries persisted in not seeing. When he said that in our century Ingres had been the master of masters, people regarded this manifestation by the painter of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* of his cult for the painter of *The Source* as a blasphemy.

In this same train of thought, I remember that one day, at La Rochelle, after Corot had greatly praised the landscapist Boudin's sincerity of observation, those who heard him testified to the conviction that the hermit of Ville-d'Avray had been mocking them.

The famous painting *Olympia*, exhibited at the Salon of 1865 and currently in the Musée du Luxembourg, proceeds, for anyone who examines matters objectively, from the constant preoccupation that Ingres had and that Manet wished to have with seeking an irreproachable purity of line in the contours of his figures. Is anything better set in place, to use Manet's favorite expression, than the figure of *Olympia*? Certainly not. But how could one make it understood, for a public that thinks of a courtesan in terms of the preconceived idea of an opulent woman displaying on luxurious sheets the overflowing flesh of a model *à la* Jordaens, that the true image of the girl is just as much in that indigent nudity that Manet represented? In a chapter of his volume *Mes Haines*, Zola gave a magisterial description of Manet's *Olympia*. Zola rightly disdained the reproach leveled against *Olympia* of being circumscribed with black outlines in conformity, the critics said, to the teachings of Couture, who, let it be said parenthetically, never accentuated the contours of his paintings.

At this moment, moreover, with the exception of Théophile Gautier, Paul Masson, Duret, Zola, and Barbey d'Aurevilly, who was not accustomed to speaking about art but who made an exception for Manet, all the critics mobilized to crush the painter of *Olympia* with their thunderbolts.

Manet, it must be recognized, was very affected by this general outcry. But his convictions were so strong, his courage so great, that his eye kept its sureness and his judgment its serenity.

During his strolls in the Louvre, with the regulars of the Café Guerbois, who made it a matter of principle to find nothing praiseworthy, Manet would stop and force them to stop in front of the Poussins. Everything that was French seduced him. Most consecrated talents left him, by contrast, very cold. He considered Leonardo da Vinci greatly superior to the divine Raphael, and, when he went to the Luxembourg, it was in front of Heim's sketches that he would stop by preference.

"Be true": this is his formula. At Boulogne, when he paints the admirable

painting of the *Boulogne Harbor by Moonlight*, he shows himself so scrupulous that he refuses to apply the slightest brushstroke if he has not again found the same effect as the day before.

Always anxious to render what has struck him, he walks with his head free in the midst of the things of his time. This is the hour of what has been called his third manner. He has made his definitive imprint. No memory of the studio. No recollection of this or that master.

From 1869 to 1879, he makes a series of drawings, pastels, paintings, or painted studies in which he is in full possession of himself. The critics, who had softened in front of *Le Bon Bock*, which he painted to show his imitators that he could, if he wanted, please the public, again sling their hostile words when he paints the dazzling whitenesses of the *Chemin de Fer* or exhibits *Le Linge*.

Portraits follow portraits; then appear *Polichinelle*, *In the Conservatory*, the series of etchings, the illustrations to works of Edgar Allan Poe, the cats for Champfleury. Everywhere there is life, light. His influence extends to all other palettes, a reflection of his manner of painting. No one escapes it. From the members of the Institute, beginning with Paul Baudry, who imitates Manet in his *Saint-Hubert* at Chantilly, down to the last intransigents of the Impressionist school, everyone follows attentively all that comes out of the studio on the rue d'Amsterdam. But it is nothing to borrow his manner of painting; what one must steal from Manet is his manner of seeing, and this cannot be acquired.

In addition, Manet gave up the idea of sending his works to the exhibitions organized by the little church he created, because they did not prove any kinder to him there than under the cupola of the Palais Mazarin. For a while even the Impressionists, who owe him everything, would be tempted to deny him as Peter denied Jesus.

Without bothering about these hardships, he lavishes his generous and fertile vigor on the talents to which he gave birth. When someone comes to him saying he doesn't know how to draw, he shrugs his shoulders and answers: "I don't trace stupid lines as one learns to do at the École, that's true. But let us ask the illustrious professors who teach there to make a setting-in-place with the feeling of light at their fingertips. I defy them to do that. Ah! the atmosphere with its lightness, its mobility that envelops all in its dazzling splendor! Go and speak of this to people who stick a figure on a canvas as one sticks a butterfly in a glass case." And, alluding to a portrait by a fashionable painter: "I see clearly," he cried, "that he has painted a frock coat. It even has an irreproachable cut, this frock coat. But where are the model's lungs? He's not breathing under his clothing. He doesn't have a body. This is a portrait for a tailor."

One day, having gone to visit Goncourt two years after Manet's death, I said to him: "I read in *Manette Salomon* what you have the painter Coriolis say and I found in it an almost word-for-word citation of Manet." "That is exactly right," Goncourt replied. "I wrote the chapter not at Manet's dictation, but just having

left him, and you know how much I make it my task now to reproduce the statements of my contemporaries.”

I offer the passage from *Manette Salomon* here, if only to show how much critics, who have the excuse of having known him, are mistaken when they represent to us a Manet in love with fame and commotion and attribute words befitting a chocolate vendor to this man who was always very modest.

“I was,” says the painter of *Manette Salomon*, “in a bus. I had finished spelling out the signs overhead. I was looking blankly at houses, roads, huge awnings, bright things, gas jets, shop windows, a woman’s little pink slipper in a watch on top of a shelf of glasses, silly things, nothing at all, whatever was passing by. I ended up mechanically following people’s shadows on the shutters of closed shops, eternally starting a series of silhouettes. Facing me was a gentleman with eyeglasses who insisted on trying to read a newspaper. Constantly there were reflections in his glasses. Have you ever noticed how women seem mysteriously pretty in a carriage at night? Because of the shadow, the illusion, the hooded cloak, I don’t know. From all that they have a veiled air, a voluptuous wrapping, things about them that you guess and don’t see, a vague tint, a nighttime smile, with lights that flicker over their features, all those soft reflections that float under their hats, those large touches of black they have in their eyes, their very skirts shifting with shadow. Yes, she was like that when she turned around, gazing, her head slightly lowered. The glimmer of the lantern shone onto her forehead. It was like a jewel of ivory. It spread a veritable dust of light on the roots of her hair. Three touches of brightness on the line of her nose, on her cheekbone, on the tip of her chin, and all the rest in shadow.”

All of Manet is in this description which translates the constant observation of his eye, moved by everything that happens around him.

Furthermore, it is today admitted and recognized that Manet performed for art the eminent service of bringing it back to the domain of observation, of removing it from the imitation of things already made, and of making it no longer live the life of the past, but the life that is common to us.

Manet did more. He left behind a lighter, clearer palette, a larger vision of the transparency of shadows, which one insisted on viewing as opaque.

Thoré, who wrote under the pseudonym Bürger, at the moment that Rousseau, Corot, and Millet were attentively studying the countryside around Paris, said as he looked at the first paintings of Meissonier: “What a shame to deck out models like lords from the time of Louis XIII, to want to go back through the course of centuries, when it would be so easy for Meissonier to paint at the cabaret, at Poissy, good, decent people in their real actions!” At that time Manet hadn’t been born yet. His tendencies led him completely naturally to do what Thoré wanted. He was a man of his time, and he brought his own individualistic force to the representation of the things of his time.

He has been reproached for depicting women as ugly. No reproach is more

unfair. The portrait of Eva Gonzales is not merely the faithfully rendered portrait of a very pretty woman. Her pose is one of perfect grace, her movement entirely happy, and, if one wished to count the exquisite portraits of Mlle Demarsy, Mme Valtesse, Méry Laurent, and Mlle Lemonnier, one would not find a loftier sentiment of distinction in the work of any painter.

When, shortly after his death, which occurred abruptly on April 30, 1883, an exhibition of his work was held at the École des Beaux-Arts, what shocked the public, as at the exhibition at the pont de l’Alma held in 1867, was the great number of canvases remaining in the state of *ébauches*.

The incompleteness of so many paintings is entirely to Manet’s credit. He would never have consented to continue without a model a study begun from nature. He had such a respect for things observed that he did not want to compromise his observation at any price. This is a scruple one does not encounter often enough among artists, and one of the weaknesses of Corot and Millet has been to finish paintings in the studio; Millet even composed from scratch paintings that erred not only in the inferiority of their technique but in the poverty of their conception. A day will come when our eye, now perverted by certain conventions, will recognize the correctness of Manet’s doctrine of doing nothing without the aid of nature. “If Bacon’s definition,” he used to say, “that art is man added to nature, *homo additus naturae*, has absolute truth, then nature needs to be present all the more. It cannot be replaced, even by the most faithful memory.”

Readers of the *Studio* will be somewhat surprised perhaps to hear Millet spoken of thus by one who pushed the *Angelus*, at the Secrétan sale, to an improbable price. On this subject, I will say that everything is relative. The *Angelus* contains, like all Millet’s work, an examination of rural philosophy which asserts itself under the often too obvious weakness in execution. It was necessary, at the time when the *Angelus* came up for public sale, to honor the thinker and to honor him all the more for having broken with all customary conventions.

But the work of Millet and Corot, who sought to seduce the imagination by the introduction of demigods or naiads into faithfully observed landscapes, has nothing in common with that of Manet.

The creator of the *Buveur d’Eau* [a fragment of the *Gypsies*], which the *Studio* is reproducing along with other reproductions, has but one goal, as Paul Mantz has wittily written: “to reduce to silence the last cooks of the Bolonaise school.” What he seeks above all is, in a simple subject borrowed from modern life, the study of the real intensity of clear tones, the different degrees of value. Manet has a sense of color to such a degree that the play of the drawing is for him not separated from its marriage with coloring. Everything is linked in his thought and he frequently repeats, in private conversation, “that without punctuation there is neither spelling nor grammar, and to want to separate drawing from color is an absurdity.”

His eye is so gifted that, in a nuance apparently gray and uniform, he perceives

and renders delicate details that escape us. As he goes along in life, his sensibility becomes sharper and sharper in this respect. The purplish blue tones of the shadows in the *Portrait of Pertuiset*, the mobility of the contours that he keeps undecided in *Argenteuil* and in *Chez Père Lathuille*, are astonishing at first. But we are not long in recognizing the truth in them and, when we find ourselves before the totality of his work, what is striking is the incessant pursuit of an ideal that he attained in his last productions and could be defined thus: the realization of optical effects resulting from the movement of the varied colorings that nature offers us.

This vibration of light tones he obtained from the beginning. But, from 1860 to 1883, every day means new progress, because every day is marked by a new attempt.

Today, the force of prejudice is such that the great majority still resist accepting most of Manet's works. They want to find reminiscences, weaknesses there. A day will come, however, when the least sketch of this true artist-genius will be researched and analyzed as containing a lesson in the most subtle of its features.

To cite one of the most striking examples of the superior intuition that makes Manet the most natural painter of our century, what painting has been more abused than the *Battle of the Kearsarge and the Alabama*, and yet in what canvas, old or modern, has the sea been rendered with greater sweep? And what visual pleasure for those who love painting for its own sake and who disengage it from the prejudices of rhetoric or from all pretentious literary reflections?

Talking with me one evening in his studio on the rue d'Amsterdam, Manet came to speak of the usually injurious assessments that had crammed the newspapers over twenty years, every time he had exhibited, whether in the Salon, in the building erected at his expense in 1867 on the pont de l'Alma, or in his studio on the rue Saint-Petersbourg. This was in 1882; he was already suffering badly from the illness that would claim him the following year. "This war at knife point," he told me, "did me the greatest harm. I've suffered cruelly because of it, but it spurred me on. I don't wish upon any artist praise and flattery at his beginnings. This would be for him the annihilation of his personality." Then, smiling, he added: "The imbeciles! They never stopped telling me I was uneven: they couldn't have spoken any greater praise. It has always been my ambition not to remain on the same level as myself, not to redo the next day what I had done the day before, constantly to be inspired by a new aspect, to seek to make a new note heard. Ah! the ones who don't move, who have a formula, who hold themselves to it, who make a living from it, how can that interest art? I ask you that. On the contrary, to decide on one step forward, and a suggestive step, that is the function of a man with a brain! They will be happy, my dear friend, the people who live a century from now; the organs of their vision will be more developed than ours. They will see better."

A long silence occurred as night approached, and we took leave of each other at this word of Manet's, which he often repeated to me: "You know, I need to be looked at as a whole. And, I beg you, if I die, don't let me enter public collections piece by piece, I would be poorly judged."

My friend died the following year. Several months after his death, we organized a complete exhibition of his work at the École des Beaux-Arts. Eight years later, in 1889, I was able to restage that exhibition at the Champ-de-Mars. In 1883 as in 1889, it was a veritable apotheosis. Mme Édouard Manet, who lives in retirement at Gennevilliers, surrounded by portraits of her husband—the portrait of the young Manet by Fantin-Latour, the one that Claude Monet made later, and two portraits he painted of himself at two different times of his life, one in 1862, the other in 1875—could not, just the other day, speak to me of those great displays without being deeply moved.

What a luminous trail has Manet, in fact, left in French art? Yet, if the public is beginning to show itself less rebellious, only later will it understand the brilliance of that career so prematurely shattered.

Translation by Bridget McDonald
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Appendix 2: Edmond Duranty, “Ceux qui seront les peintres” (1867)

En 1861, un remarquable tableau parut à l'Exposition de Peinture, intitulé *l'Ex Voto*; il représentait de vieilles femmes, agenouillées dans la campagne au pied d'une colonne portant une image votive. Il était signé LEGROS.

On y reconnaissait d'abord le tempérament d'un peintre, d'un peintre qui savait se servir de ressources simples et larges, sans tomber dans le procédé spécial d'un atelier donné. En même temps, et chose plus importante, le sentiment de la vie moderne éclatait fortement dans cette oeuvre.

C'étaient de vieilles femmes *communes*, habillées de vêtements *communs*, que l'artiste avait prises pour personnages, mais la stupidité rigide et machinale que l'existence pénible et étroite des pauvres donnait à ces faces crevassées apparaissait avec une profonde intensité. L'accent d'un monde particulier était complètement exprimé. Tout ce qui peut frapper, arrêter, retenir devant des êtres; tout ce qui est significatif, concentré, violent en eux rayonnait autour de ce groupe de vieilles femmes, autour de leurs visages, de leurs habits, dans la campagne, et le long de la colonne votive.

Et par un accord forcé, le moyen même de peinture s'identifiait si bien avec la nature des personnages ainsi rendus, que l'on était saisi par une seule impression, vive et nette; on s'écriait[,] c'est bien peint, voilà une oeuvre vraie, une oeuvre forte.

Les peintres eux-mêmes, d'ordinaire plus préoccupés de la matière du métier que de l'impression intérieure de l'artiste, consentirent à voir là une tentative, qui appliquait heureusement une forme d'art libre et neuve à l'expression du sentiment de la vie moderne.

Depuis les beaux tableaux de M. Courbet, c'était la première fois qu'une individualité semblait entrer dans cette voie.

L'oeuvre inspirait à quelques-uns d'autant plus d'intérêt que l'auteur étant jeune, on devait y voir la première impulsion d'un mouvement qui sans doute ne s'arrêterait pas.

En 1862, dans les salles du boulevard des Italiens, plusieurs tableaux signés MANET firent du bruit et causèrent presque du scandale. Les gens qui se scandalisaient, prétendaient fort à tort qu'on avait voulu les scandaliser. Le même effet

se produisit à l'Exposition officielle suivante, où ces tableaux furent relégués parmi les refusés.

M. Manet peignait autrement que M. Legros, mais il relevait bien du même principe d'art: rendre le sentiment des choses modernes avec les moyens d'une peinture personnelle.

C'étaient bien des peintres décidés à la liberté et voulant exprimer le plus fidèlement possible la nature, sans se servir des recettes d'atelier.

La peinture de M. Manet, à la fois fraîche et solide, montrait des rapports de tons inattendus.

En 1863, les tableaux de M. Manet furent, avons-nous dit, rejetés dans les salles de *honte*, où l'on mettait, pour les punir, à côté des maladroits, les peintres coupables de hardiesse et de nouveauté. À cette même Exposition, on accrochait dans des corridors écartés les peintures de M. Legros, autre genre de pestilence.

Dans les salles des refusés, purgatoire des peintres méchants, se trouvait, avec de fort méritantes oeuvres de MM. Viel-Cazal, Collin, Gautier, Chintreuil, etc. *Une jeune fille blanche* signée WHISTLER, peinture où éclatait encore cette franche compréhension de la nature, qui distingue les hommes de la nouvelle recherche. M. Whistler savait, de son côté, tirer de la nature ce qu'elle contient d'élégance, de délicatesse et d'étrangeté. Comme les précédents, M. Whistler est un homme jeune, et, point important peut-être pour l'avenir, un peintre de Londres, exposant là-bas et ici. Nous n'avons plus dès lors qu'à dresser le terrible mot *international*, sans quoi qu'il soit besoin d'autre explication.

Au Salon de 1864, on a vu un grand tableau intitulé *Hommage à Delacroix* et signé FANTIN, dont l'aspect s'imposait aux yeux. MM. Legros, Manet et Whistler y figuraient à côté de l'auteur. Ils se reconnaissent donc bien comme frères d'art. Les autres personnes, peu ou très-connues, représentées en outre dans ce tableau, suivent aussi le même principe d'art, quelles que soient les apparentes divergences.

Quant au sujet même de l'oeuvre, il se bornait à ceci; des artistes contestés rendant hommage à la mémoire de l'un des grands contestés de ce temps.

Enfin, cette année, M. Manet a causé un véritable, un sérieux scandale, et il a recueilli la gloire à l'envers. Épiciers, gens du monde, étudiants, femmes philosophes, artistes secondaires, tout le monde a beaucoup ri. Le malheureux M. Manet ne savait ni peindre, ni dessiner, puisque ses tableaux ne *rassemblaient pas à ceux des autres*, ou bien c'était un charlatan. Quelques peintres, qui connaissent les desiderata de leur art, quelques littérateurs habitués à n'estimer que l'accent, que les hommes qui savent trouver une façon à eux, ont seuls reconnu tout l'intérêt de cette oeuvre très-originale, très-vigoureuse, et où les défauts sont ceux de quiconque cherche et s'écarte du chemin battu. Oeuvre sincère, soigneusement faite en vue de la nature et dont la bizarrerie tient uniquement à ce soin. Ah! comme la platitude bien broyée a ri, et que ce M. Manet est grotesque!

Cependant, les peintres dont nous venons d'indiquer la petite succession his-



torique, ne sont pas arrivés à la plénitude de leur talent, et il faut que de nombreux travaux leur apportent de plus décisifs résultats.

Nous n'insisterons pas non plus, à leur propos, sur M. Courbet, le robuste initiateur de ces tentatives. M. Courbet paraît avoir imprimé personnellement tout le mouvement qu'il pouvait donner, et tout fait penser que la marche, l'intérêt du mouvement, en bien ou en mal, est à présent dans les peintres dont nous avons parlé et dans ceux qui commencent à se rallier autour d'eux.

Sont-ils arrivés d'eux-mêmes à ce rendez-vous d'une même route et s'y maintiendront-ils par l'instinct ou par la volonté? N'y ont-ils pas été poussés de force, par l'opinion du public qui pourchasse les essais d'originalité?

Il n'est pas sûr qu'ils soient encore très-affermis et sachent bien où ils doivent aller. Aussi faut-il leur souhaiter, comme mobile certain du développement futur, de longs insuccès, un gain médiocre, beaucoup de railleries de la part de leurs adversaires et l'antipathie du public.

Alors si ce ne sont pas des natures médiocres, s'ils ont quelque vaillance et que leur très-légitime dégoût des routines ne se change pas en un paresseux contentement de soi-même, si un succès momentané ne leur fait pas croire que leur caprice fera leur rôle, tandis que toute l'importance de ce rôle est dans la ferme volonté de suivre une même ligne, toujours la même . . .

Ils seront les peintres!

Ils pourront voir peut-être tous les vaudevilles et les anecdotes colorées de ce temps-ci, bretons, orientales, historiques; toute la friperie de mardi-gras des peinturlureurs, empilés dans les greniers, pour amuser les rats et faire pleurer les héritiers des amateurs actuels.

Ils seront les peintres.

À Londres leurs tableaux préoccupent académiciens et préraphaélites. Les Belges et les Allemands s'y intéressent aussi. Les Expositions annuelles vont exténuier les paresseux et les cervelles banales. En rassemblant constamment ce remassis de toiles, qui ont l'air de sortir de la même fabrique de paravents de cheminée, on finira par faire soupirer tout le monde après quelque changement dans cette inexorable monotonie. Les forces de tempéraments sanguins et entreprenants, comme ceux de MM. Manet et Legros, nerveux, fins et passionnés comme ceux de MM. Fantin et Whistler peuvent, bien conduites et unies, se renouveler, s'accroître et produire à outrance!

Tous ceux qui iront dans la même voie s'en trouveront bien. Ils engendreront une race vigoureuse et hardie qui détruira les espèces rivales.

Et maintenant, quelle est donc cette voie?

Eh bien, il est bon de leur dire à eux-mêmes; tant qu'ils auront peur du gros mot, tant qu'ils mettront pudiquement la main devant les yeux pour ne pas apercevoir ce terrible mot, sans se douter que tout le monde leur en voit l'écriture attachée au dos et le montre au doigt derrière eux, ils n'arriveront à rien.

Ils sont condamnés à être réalistes, et s'ils n'acceptent pas leur condamnation, c'est qu'ils ne réfléchissent pas.

Peut-être, accueilleront-ils fort mal le boute-selle qu'on leur sonne ici, préférant la trompette des compliments à toute autre, mais il est sûr que s'ils n'acceptent pas franchement la situation, ils n'en auront jamais aucune. Eh! la nouvelle philosophie, la philosophie positiviste et matérialiste a bien su le comprendre et se rallier armes et bagages au réalisme artistique. Allez donc, et qu'on ne compte pas seulement sur vos adversaires pour vous maintenir dans la voie du salut: le Réalisme!

DURANTY

(In Fernand Desnoyers, ed., *Almanach parisien, 6e année, 1867* (Paris, 1867), pp. 13-18)

In 1861, a remarkable painting appeared at the Salon, entitled the *Ex-Voto*; it represented some old women, kneeling in the countryside at the foot of a column bearing a votive image. It was signed LEGROS.

One recognized in it first the temperament of a painter, a painter who knew how to exploit simple and broad resources without falling into the particular techniques of some specific atelier. At the same time, and more important, the feeling of modern life shone forth strongly in this work.

These were *common* old women, dressed in *common* clothing, whom the artist took for his personages, but the rigid and machinelike stupidity that the painful and difficult existence of the poor gave to their crevassed faces appeared with a profound intensity. The accent of a particular world was completely expressed. Everything that can strike, arrest, and hold one before human beings; everything that is meaningful, concentrated, violent in them radiated from this group of old women, from their faces, their clothing, the countryside, and the votive column.

And by a forced accord, the very means of painting was identified so well with the nature of the personages thus rendered, that one was gripped by one single impression, vivid and clear; one cried out, it's well painted, here is a true work, a strong work.

The painters themselves, ordinarily more concerned with technical matters than with the interior impression of the artist, agreed in seeing there a successful attempt to apply a free and new form of art to the expression of the feeling of modern life.

Since the beautiful paintings of Courbet, it was the first time that an individual seemed to enter into this path.

The work inspired all the more interest in some viewers because the author

being young, one had to see in it the first impulse of a movement that surely would not stop.

In 1862, in the galleries of the boulevard des Italiens [i.e. at Martinet's], several paintings signed MANET attracted notice and caused almost a scandal. Those who were scandalized insisted wrongly that the artist had *wanted* to scandalize them. The same effect was produced at the next Salon, where these paintings were officially relegated among the rejected works.

Manet painted differently from Legros, but he adhered to the same principle of art: to render the feeling of modern things with a personal way of painting.

These were obviously painters committed to freedom and wanting to express nature as faithfully as possible, without using outworn recipes.

Manet's painting, at once fresh and solid, showed unexpected relationships of tones.

In 1863, Manet's paintings were, we have said, condemned to the galleries of *shame*, where were put, to punish them, alongside the incompetents, those artists who were guilty of daring and novelty. At that same exhibition, Legros's paintings, another kind of plague, were hung in the farthest corridors.

In the galleries of the rejected artists, purgatory for unruly painters, was found, along with meritorious works by Viel-Cazal, Collin, Gautier, Chintreuil, etc., *A Young Woman in White* signed WHISTLER, a painting in which shone forth that frank comprehension of nature which distinguishes the men of the new research. Whistler knew, for his part, to extract from nature what it contained of elegance, delicacy, and strangeness. Like the artists already mentioned, Whistler is a young man, and, an important point for the future perhaps, a London painter, exhibiting both there and here. From then on we have only to raise up the terrible word *international*, without needing any further explanation.

In the Salon of 1864, one saw a large painting entitled *Homage to Delacroix* and signed FANTIN; it had an imposing look. Legros, Manet, and Whistler figured in it alongside its author. They thus recognize themselves as brothers in art. The other personages represented in that painting, little or well known, also follow the same artistic principle, whatever their apparent divergences.

As for the subject of the work, it was simply this: some controversial artists rendering homage to the memory of one of the great controversial artists of our time.

Finally, this year, Manet caused a true, a serious scandal, and gathered glory of a negative sort. Storekeepers, worldly people, students, women philosophers, minor artists, everyone had a good laugh. The unfortunate Manet didn't know how to paint or draw, because his paintings *didn't resemble those of the others*, or perhaps he was a charlatan. A few painters, who know the requirements of their art, a few writers used to valuing only the accent that marks the work of men who have found a personal manner, alone recognized all the interest of this very original and vigorous body of work, the faults of which are those of some-

one who is searching and therefore avoids the beaten path. A sincere body of work, done with care in the sight of nature and the bizarreness of which stems uniquely from that care. Ah! how the well-brushed platitudes laughed, and how grotesque this Manet is!

However, the painters whose little historical succession we have indicated have not yet arrived at the fullness of their talent, and it's necessary that numerous works bring them more decisive results.

Nor will we insist, apropos their art, on Courbet, the robust initiator of these attempts. Courbet seems to have personally imprinted as much of the movement as he can, and everything suggests that the course, the interest of the movement, for good and ill, at present resides in the painters of whom we have spoken and in those who begin to rally around them.

Have they arrived by themselves at this rendezvous by the same route, and do they maintain themselves there by instinct or by will? Were they not pushed there by force, by the public opinion that hounds all original efforts?

It isn't yet certain that they are wholly resolved and understand perfectly where they must go. Therefore it's necessary to wish on them, as a sure motive for their future development, protracted lack of success, mediocre earnings, lots of mockery on the part of their adversaries, and the antipathy of the public.

Then if they aren't mediocre natures, if they have some courage and if their legitimate disgust with routine procedures doesn't change into a lazy contentment with oneself, if some momentary success doesn't lead them to believe that their role is to be capricious, whereas all the importance of this role is in the strong will to follow a single line, always the same . . .

They will be the painters!

They will perhaps be able to see all the vaudevilles and colored anecdotes of our time, Breton, Oriental, historical; all the mardi-gras frippery of the daubers, piled high in attics, to amuse the rats and make the inheritors of today's collectors weep.

They will be the painters.

In London their paintings interest academicians and pre-Raphaelites. Belgians and Germans are interested in them as well. The annual expositions will exhaust the lazy ones and the banal intelligences. In constantly assembling that mass of canvases, which have the air of issuing from same factory for fireplace screens, the result will be to make everyone long for some change in that inexorable monotony. The forces of sanguine and enterprising temperaments such as Manet's and Legros's, and of nervous, fine, and passionate temperaments such as Fantin's and Whistler's, can, properly guided and united, renew themselves, grow, and produce without limit!

All those who go in the same path will find themselves doing well. They will engender a vigorous and hardy race that will destroy all rival species.

And now, what then is that path?

Well, it's good to tell it to them personally; as long as they have fear of that gross word, as long as they shyly put their hand over their eyes in order not to perceive that terrible word, without realizing that everyone else sees the writing attached to their backs and points to it behind them, they will come to nothing.

They are condemned to be realists, and if they don't accept their condemnation, it's because they aren't thinking.

Perhaps they will resent the wake-up call being sounded here, preferring the blast of compliments to all others, but it is certain that if they don't frankly accept the situation, they won't ever have any. Eh! the new philosophy, the positivist and materialist philosophy has perfectly been able to understand artistic realism and to rally heart and soul around it. Go on now, and don't count only on your adversaries to keep you on the path of salvation: Realism!

Appendix 3: Le Capitaine Pompilius [Carle Desnoyers] on Manet (1863)

. . . J'aborde ce sujet [the authorization of the Salon des Refusés] pour arriver à vous parler d'un peintre autour duquel le monde des arts fait grand bruit depuis quelque temps. Remarquez, monsieur, que je dis le monde des arts et non le public, car le public n'est pas assez versé dans la connaissance des procédés du métier pour comprendre et apprécier la valeur des ouvrages de M. Manet; c'est le nom du peintre dont il s'agit. Je l'appellerais novateur si l'Espagnol Goya, d'une part, et le Franc Comtois Courbet, de l'autre, n'étaient venus avant lui. Je ne puis donc vous le présenter que sous la qualification d'une des plus puissantes individualités artistiques de notre temps.

L'expulsion de ses tableaux et celle d'un autre, dont je vous parlerai tout à l'heure, sont les seuls événements marquants de l'exposition des refusés, les seuls du moins qui aient pu donner lieu à prêter des intentions hostiles au jury de 1863. Eh! bien, monsieur, pour ma part, je suis d'avis que les amis et les défenseurs de M. Manet, ne prennent pas le bon chemin pour faire arriver leur client à la gloire en se servant de ses oeuvres pour convaincre le public de l'indignité du jury.

Si les tableaux de M. Manet étaient enveloppés de leur forme définitive; si, jusque dans cette touche suprême qui clôt une oeuvre en la signant énergiquement d'une griffe magistrale, ils affirmaient le principe nouveau du jeune maître, on pourrait croire que l'aspect de cet art sain et vigoureux a dû confondre ou horripiler ces représentants des écoles vermoulues. Malheureusement, il n'en est pas ainsi: les connaisseurs saisissent au premier coup d'oeil les qualités exceptionnelles de cet admirable ébaucheur; mais pour le public, à qui il faut mettre les points sur les I: pour l'Institut, qui ne sait estimer encore que la peinture qui sent l'étude et la recherche, les compositions de M. Manet ne peuvent guère passer, comme rendu, que pour des à peu près.

Partant de là, faut-il admettre en son honneur, l'antagonisme systématique du jury? Je ne le pense pas. Quand M. Eugène Delacroix affirmait, il y a vingt-cinq ans, l'art romantique, il le faisait en s'appuyant sur des oeuvres qui s'intitulaient: *Les Massacres de Scio, les Croisés à Constantinople, la Mort de Sardanapale, le Trajan, la Médée*, etc., c'étaient là des oeuvres auxquelles un trait de plus n'au-

rait rien ajouté. M. Manet, j'en ai l'espoir, deviendra quelque jour un maître: il possède la franchise, la conviction, la puissance, l'universalité, c'est-à-dire l'étoffe du grand art.

Il voit clair dans la nature et il la traduit simplement, lumineusement. Son grand tableau des *Baigneuses*, placé sur le mur de fond d'une salle, fait, aux yeux du spectateur, l'effet d'une trouée sur la campagne. Tout autour de lui, les paysages les plus corsés paraissent des visages que cette mâle et vigoureuse coloration fait pâlir; mais encore une fois, monsieur, vous n'y verriez, comme moi, qu'une surprenante, qu'une admirable ébauche; mais personne ne saurait y reconnaître l'affirmation triomphante d'un art nouveau, parce que si tout ce que l'art réclame du maître est indiqué, rien n'y marque le sceau du travail arrivé à terme.

En un mot, une telle oeuvre achevée serait solennelle. Dans l'état où M. Manet nous la livre, elle n'est qu'intéressante: elle est conditionnelle, elle n'est pas effective.

(“Lettres particulières sur le Salon,” *Le Petit Journal*, no. 131 [June 11, 1863])

. . . I raise this subject to get to speak to you of a painter about whom the art world has been making a lot of noise for some time. Note, monsieur, that I say the art world and not the public, because the public isn't well enough versed in the knowledge of matters of technique to understand and appreciate the value of Manet's works; that's the name of the painter I'm referring to. I would call him an innovator if the Spaniard Goya, on one side, and the Franc-Comtois Courbet, on the other, hadn't come before him. I can therefore present him to you only as one of the most powerful artistic individuals of our time.

The rejection of his paintings and of another artist [Whistler], of whom I will speak presently, are the only significant events of the Salon des Refusés, or at least the only ones that could have given rise to the notion of the hostile intentions of the Salon jury. But, monsieur, for my part, I hold the view that Manet's friends and defenders are not taking the right path to secure their client's glory in using his works to convince the public of the unworthiness of the jury.

If Manet's *tableaux* were enveloped in their definitive form; if, down to that supreme touch that closes a work by energetically signing it with a magisterial stroke, they affirmed the young master's new principle, one might believe that the look of this healthy and vigorous art must have confounded or horrified the representatives of the moth-eaten schools. Unfortunately, that's not the case: the connoisseurs comprehend the exceptional qualities of this admirable *ébaucheur* with their first *coup d'oeil*; but for the public, for whom it's necessary to dot the i's; for the Institute, which esteems only painting that smacks of study and research, Manet's compositions are barely able to pass, with respect to how they are rendered, for approximations.

Based on that, is it necessary to posit in his honor the systematic antagonism of the jury? I don't think so. When twenty-five years ago Eugène Delacroix affirmed romantic art, he did it on the strength of works entitled *Scenes from the Massacre at Scio*, *Crusaders Entering Constantinople*, *Death of Sardanapalus*, *Death of Trajan*, *Medea*, etc., all works to which an additional mark would have added nothing. Manet, I hope, will someday be a master: he possesses the frankness, the conviction, the power, the universality, that is to say, the stuff of great art.

He sees nature clearly and translates it simply, luminously. His large *tableau* of *Bathers* placed on the wall at the rear of a room, creates, in the eyes of the beholder, the effect of an opening onto the countryside. All around it, the coarsest landscapes seem like faces that its male and vigorous colors have made go pale; but again, monsieur, you would see in it, like me, only a surprising, an admirable, *ébauche*; but no one could recognize in it the triumphant affirmation of a new art, because if everything that art requires of a master is indicated, nothing in it has the seal of work that has arrived at its completion.

In a word, such a work truly finished would be a solemn event. In the state that Manet has left it to us, it is only interesting; it is conditional, it is not effective.

Appendix 4: Zacharie Astruc on Manet (1863)

Un des plus grands caractères artistiques du temps. Je ne dirait point qu'il ait les triomphes de ce salon, où tant de vaillants se rencontrent, me servant d'une expression que sa modestie désavouerait—mais il en est l'éclat, l'inspiration, la saveur puissante, l'étonnement. L'injustice commise à son égard est si flagrante qu'elle confond—et pour qui veut s'arrêter devant ses toiles, les examinant avec l'attention que méritent des oeuvres toutes spontanées, si harmonieuses, exécutées avec tant de verve et de force qu'elles semblent jaillies de la nature par un seul élan, il est impossible de méconnaître leurs mérites et de ne pas les louer avec la justice que réclament les beaux ouvrages.

Une chose digne de remarque, c'est qu'à l'inverse des grands talents naturels qui nous portent d'abord à étudier leur art dans sa pratique matérielle, lui n'impose et ne montre pour ainsi dire que son accent vital. C'est l'âme qui frappe, c'est le mouvement, le jeu des physionomies qui respirent la vie, l'action; le sentiment qu'exprime leur regard, la singularité expressive de leur rôle. Il plaît ou déplaît aussitôt; il charme, attire, ou repousse vite. L'individualité est si forte qu'elle échappe au mécanisme de construction. Le rôle de la peinture s'efface pour laisser à la création toute sa valeur métaphysique et corporelle. Longtemps après, seulement, le regard découvre les formes de l'exécution, les éléments qui constituent le sens de la couleur, la valeur du relief, la vérité du modelé.

Qui ne se souvient du petit *Enfant à l'épée*—cette page si heureuse? de *l'Homme au livre*, du *Guitarero* [sic], de sa délicate fantaisie: *Gil-Blas*, de sa danseuse *Lola*—ce ramage de tons, de la *Danseuse couchée*, d'une si douce coloration. Eh bien! les trois tableaux:—*Portrait* de son frère, en Espagnol—*Repos sur l'herbe*—*la Espada*, bizarre tableau qui nous montre une femme victorieuse, dans une cirque, sont des peintures encore supérieures. Rien de plus séduisant de ton que la jeune femme tenant son épée nue à la main; de plus franc, de plus robuste que le portrait; de plus savoureux que le grand paysage d'un caractère si jeune, si vivant, et que Giorgione semble avoir inspiré. J'ai parlé de franchise: c'est la note dominante de cet air plein et viril qui résonne comme un cuivre et qui a des hardiesses toutes géniales—même en tenant compte de certaines habitudes relâchées—autant vaudrait dire de simplifications. J'aimerais pourtant

moins de ces qualités qui tiennent à l'esprit de l'art et parfois plus de consistance; pourtant, il faut l'avouer, ce sont des facultés qui s'établissent peu à peu, à mesure que l'accent s'épure et se corrige.

Le talent de Manet a un côté de décision qui frappe—ce quelque chose de tranchant, de sobre et d'énergique constituant une nature aussi contenue qu'emportée, et surtout sensible aux impressions accentuées. Il ménage l'effet; sa nature se voue à la vérité sans trop de recherches subtiles, peu soucieuse du brillant, mais stimulée par tout ce qui lui montre dans la nature un côté de passion. L'école espagnole l'attire invinciblement par ses colorations grises où les blancs passent aigus et comme frissonnants; il éteint les tons éclatants et leur donne une certaine fièvre qui les transpose. Il est surtout un fils chéri de la nature qu'il idolâtre. La nature est encore plus savante que toutes les écoles—Manet le sait bien. Sa grande intelligence, beau fruit encore un peu vert et âpre—fort mauvais, je l'avoue, pour des lèvres trop minaudières—demande à fonctionner librement dans une sphère nouvelle qu'il vivifiera.

(*Le Salon de 1863, feuilleton quotidien paraissant tous les soirs, pendant les deux mois de l'Exposition: Causerie, critique générale, bruits et nouvelles du jour*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863])

One of the greatest artistic personalities of our time. I wouldn't say that he has the triumphs of this Salon, where so many worthies encounter one another, to use an expression that his modesty would disavow—but he is its brilliance, its inspiration, its strong savor, its astonishment. The injustice committed in his regard is so flagrant that it confounds—and for those who are willing to stop before his canvases, examining them with the attention that these entirely spontaneous works deserve, works so harmonious, executed with such verve and force that they seem to burst from nature in a single bound, it is impossible not to recognize their merits and not to praise them with the justice to which beautiful works lay claim.

Something worth noting is that, contrary to those great natural talents who prompt us at first to study their art in its material practice, he imposes and shows only its vital accent so to speak. It is the soul that strikes, it is the movement, the play of faces breathing life and action, the feeling that their looks convey, the expressive singularity of their roles. He pleases or displeases immediately; he charms, attracts, or repels quickly. The individuality is so strong that it escapes the mechanism of construction. The role of painting effaces itself to grant the creation all its metaphysical and corporeal value. Only much later does the gaze discover the forms of the execution, the elements that give meaning to the color, value to the relief, truth to the modeling.

Who doesn't recall the small *Boy with a Sword*—that happy page? the *Man with the Book*, the *Guitarrero*, the delicate fantasy *Gil Blas*, his dancer *Lola*—

that floral pattern of tones—the *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*, its coloration so gentle. And then! the three paintings:—the *Portrait* of his brother, in Spanish dress—*Déjeuner sur l'herbe*—the *Espada*, bizarre painting that shows us a victorious woman in an arena, are even superior paintings. Nothing more seductive in its tone than the young woman holding her naked sword in her hand; nothing more frank, more robust, than the portrait; nothing more to be relished than the large landscape of such a young, alive character, and which Giorgione seems to have inspired. I've spoken of frankness: that's the dominant note of this full and virile atmosphere that resounds like the brasses and has an inspired boldness—even taking account of certain too-relaxed habits—one might just as well say simplifications. I would, however, like fewer of those qualities that belong to the spirit of art and at times greater consistency; but it must be acknowledged that these are faculties that establish themselves little by little, as the accent is refined and corrected.

Manet's talent has a decisive aspect that strikes—something cutting, sober and energetic constituting a nature as contained as it is carried away, and above all sensible to accented impressions. He is sparing of effects; his nature is devoted to the truth without too many subtle researches, without caring much about brilliance, but stimulated by everything in nature that shows him an aspect of passion. The Spanish school attracts him invincibly by its gray colorations in which the whites go by piercing and as if shivering; he softens dazzling tones and gives them a certain fever that transposes them. He is above all a cherished son of the nature that he idolizes. Nature is still more knowledgeable than all the schools—Manet knows this very well. His great intelligence, beautiful fruit still a little underripe and bitter—unhealthy, I admit it, for simpering lips—demands to function freely in a new sphere that he will bring to life.

Notes

Abbreviations

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1. Charles Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, ed. Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler, 2 vols. (Paris, 1973), 2:496–97.
2. Stéphane Mallarmé, "Quelques Médailles et portraits en pied," *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry (Paris, 1945): 532–33.
3. Jacques-Émile Blanche reports that Edgar Degas made this statement on the occasion of Manet's funeral, or at least that he then began to say these words "which finally became irritating because of being repeated when his friend was no longer there to hear them" (*Manet* [Paris, 1924], p. 57). (Mais il commença de dire son mot qui a fini par devenir irritant à force d'être répété quand son ami n'était plus là pour l'entendre: "Il était plus grand que nous ne pensions.")

Introduction

1. The most recent biography, Darragon 1989, is the best, but A. Tabarant, *Manet et ses oeuvres* (Paris, 1947), remains an invaluable source of information.
2. See Proust 1897, pp. 10–11, 13, 17–18.
3. Relevant letters and other documentation pertaining to Manet's Spanish trip were recently collected by Juliet Wilson-Bareau in *Édouard Manet: Voyage en Espagne* (Caen, 1988).
4. See the texts collected in Zola, *Écrits sur l'art*.
5. The classic study of Impressionism is John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* (1946; 6th ed., New York, 1973). On the Impressionist exhibitions see the catalog by Charles S. Moffett et al., *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Jan. 17–Apr. 6, 1986; San Francisco: M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, Apr. 19–July 6, 1986).
6. Fried 1969.
7. Reff 1969. Although in chapter 2 of this book I respond vigorously to Reff's critique, I appreciate his taking "Manet's Sources" seriously enough to want to counter it.
8. Throughout this book, Courbet's Realism will be designated with a capital R; in all other instances the word will be a common noun.
9. That is, I compare Courbet's painting with Baudelaire's art criticism, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and letters to Louise Colet, some key passages in Marx's *Grundrisse*, and the philosopher Félix Ravaisson's treatise *De l'habitude* (1838).
10. I refer here not to all the painters who took part in the Impressionist exhibitions, a heterogeneous and continually shifting group, but chiefly to the landscape Impressionists Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Alfred Sisley. For most critics of the 1870s and 1880s, those were the painters who represented a new pictorial esthetic based on the exclusively visual and essentially fleeting or instantaneous "impression" and on a new mode of "decorative" unity. See in this connection the early reviews of Impressionist exhibitions by three critics favorably inclined toward the new school, Philippe Burty, Ernest Chesneau, and Armand Silvestre (references in Moffett, *The New Painting*) as well as two articles by Steven Z. Levine, "Décor/Decorative/Decoration in Claude Monet's Art," *Arts Magazine* 51 (Feb. 1977): 136–39; and "The 'Instant' of Criticism and Monet's Critical Instant," *Arts Magazine* 55 (Mar. 1981): 114–21. See also Levine, *Monet and His Critics*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1976), and the individual essays gathered in *The New Painting*. I briefly discuss Burty's, Chesneau's, and Silvestre's writings on Impressionism in the coda.

11. See Ernest Chesneau, “À côté du Salon: II Le Plein Air. Exposition du boulevard des Capucines,” *Paris-Journal*, May 7, 1874.

12. “Édouard Manet vu par Henri Matisse,” interview with E. T[ériade], *L’Intransigeant*, Jan. 25, 1932. (Manet est le premier peintre qui ait fait la traduction immédiate de ses sensations en libérant ainsi l’instinct. Il a été le premier à agir par réflexes et à simplifier ainsi le métier du peintre.) The interview ends with the following short statement: “A great painter is one who finds personal and durable signs to express in plastic terms the object of his vision. Manet found his.” (Un grand peintre est celui qui trouve des signes personnels et durables pour exprimer plastiquement l’objet de sa vision. Manet a trouvé les siens.)

13. See e.g. Philippe Burty (a longtime supporter and one of Manet’s pallbearers), who criticized both the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and *Olympia* and added that “Manet always composed badly when he juxtaposed personages”—his basic approach throughout his career but most obviously in his paintings of the 1860s (“L’Oeuvre d’Édouard Manet à l’École des Beaux-Arts,” *République française*, Jan. 16, 1884). (Manet composa toujours péniblement dès qu’il juxtaposait des personnages.) See also Joséphin Péladan, whose admiration for Manet was measured to say the least but who greatly preferred the paintings of his second manner to those of his first (“Le Procédé de Manet,” *L’Artiste*, Feb. 1884, republished in *Manet raconté par lui-même et par ses amis*, ed. Pierre Cailler and Pierre Courthion, 2 vols. [Geneva, 1953], 2:155–83). For Péladan, *Olympia* in particular was “a model of bad painting,” incapable of sustaining “the most cursory examination” (p. 169). (Modèle de mauvaise peinture, l’*Olympia* ne soutient pas le plus cursif examen.) A major exception to the general preference for Manet’s “impressionist” manner is Émile Zola, author of the preface to the catalog of the retrospective exhibition of January 1884. See Zola, “Préface,” *Écrits sur l’art*, pp. 451–58; and the interesting analysis of Zola’s views in the context of other articles of that moment in Jean-Paul Bouillon, “Manet 1884: Un bilan critique,” in Jean-Paul Bouillon, ed., *La Critique d’art en France, 1850–1900*, Actes du Colloque de Clermont-Ferrand, May 25–27, 1987 (Saint-Étienne, 1989), pp. 159–75. See also n. 60 below.

14. “The *Olympia*,” Matisse was reported as saying, “belongs to Manet’s transitional period. If in certain respects that celebrated painting contains indications of the future, it remains very close to the traditional painting of the Old Masters. Besides, it isn’t, perhaps for that reason, one of his best canvases” (“Édouard Manet vu par Henri Matisse”). (L’*Olympia* appartient à l’époque de transition de Manet. Si par certains côtés ce tableau célèbre contient des indications pour l’avenir, il demeure très rapproché de la peinture traditionnelle des Anciens. Ce n’est d’ailleurs pas, peut-être pour cette raison, l’une de ses meilleures toiles.) For Jacques-Émile Blanche in 1924, however, *Olympia* was one of the “pearls” of the Louvre, “more serene, more majestic in its living reality than Ingres’s *Odalisque* and *Bather of Valpinçon*; metamorphosed into a ‘masterpiece-type’ like Titian’s *Mistresses*, *Olympia* begins to lose its ‘disquieting’ signs that earned it, sixty years ago, the insults of all good people and the cult of some ‘unhealthy minds’” (*Manet* [Paris, 1924], p. 34). (Aujourd’hui l’une des perles du Louvre, plus sereine, plus majestueuse dans sa vivante réalité que l’*Odalisque* et la *Baigneuse* au foulard d’Ingres; métamorphosée en “chef-d’œuvre-type” comme les *Maîtresses* de Titien, l’*Olympia* commence à perdre les signes “inquiétants” qui lui valurent, il y a soixante ans, les insultes des honnêtes gens, le culte de quelques “esprits malsains.”) Elsewhere in the same text Blanche remarks: “Aren’t [Manet’s] strongest and most prized works today the ones that he conceived in the contrastive light of an atelier or an apartment, in the manner of Velásquez, of most of the Dutch or Chardin?” (p. 17). (Ses ouvrages les plus forts et les plus

prisés aujourd’hui ne sont-ils pas ceux qu’il conçut dans la lumière polarisée d’un atelier ou d’un appartement, à la façon de Vélasquez, de la plupart des Hollandais ou de Chardin?) See also the lukewarm remarks on *Olympia* by an earlier admirer of Manet’s art, George Moore, in his *Modern Painting* (London and New York, 1898), pp. 42–43.

15. Albert Pinard, “L’Exposition Manet,” *Le Radical*, Jan. 10, 1884. (Si Manet a souffert pour l’impressionisme c’est par l’impressionisme qu’il doit triompher.) Even Théodore Duret, who in his preface to the catalog for the sale of Feb. 4–5, 1884, would have wanted to avoid seeming to privilege any part of Manet’s oeuvre, wrote: “It is he in effect who banished opaque shadows from contemporary painting, and it is in following him that others learned to juxtapose clear and vivid tones on the canvas, to paint in full sunlight” (“Édouard Manet,” *Critique d’avant-garde* [Paris, 1885], p. 123). (C’est lui en effet qui a banni de la peinture contemporaine les ombres opaques, et c’est en le suivant qu’on a appris à juxtaposer sur la toile les tons clairs et tranchés, pour peindre en pleine lumière.)

In a recent article on the critical response to the retrospective exhibition, Michael R. Orwicz interprets the tendency of “liberal” Republican writers such as Burty to downplay the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* as a strategy designed to purge Manet’s oeuvre of its most unsettling elements and thereby secure his biographical and artistic respectability (“Reinventing Édouard Manet: Rewriting the Face of National Art in the Early Third Republic,” in Michael R. Orwicz, ed., *Art Criticism and Its Institutions in Nineteenth-Century France* [Manchester, 1994], pp. 131–32). What this view fails to recognize, however, is the extent to which the “impressionist” reading of Manet’s art in 1884 expressed a deeply grounded shift of sensibility, not simply the political-rhetorical needs of the moment. Orwicz is nearly forced to acknowledge as much when toward the end of his article he explains that the “liberal” republican critics credited Manet with “nothing less than the wholesale transformation of modern French painting towards impressionism” (p. 137). “Nevertheless,” he adds, “they were careful to avoid explicitly naming him as an Impressionist or calling him the *chef d’école des Batignolles*. Evading those epithets served their strategy well, since the term ‘Impressionist’ continued to provoke varying degrees of hostility not only among Manet’s academic and conservative critics, but with his more moderate supporters as well” (pp. 137–38). But of course the mere avoidance of the term “Impressionist” would hardly have sufficed to deflect the hostility to which Orwicz refers. And besides, as Pinard’s remarks show, not all “liberal” critics avoided mentioning Impressionism. In short, Orwicz’s article, while interesting and informative, is reductive in granting absolute priority to social-political considerations.

16. See Darragon 1989, pp. 416–19, and Gustave Geffroy, *Monet, sa vie, son oeuvre*, ed. C. Judrin (Paris, 1980), pp. 221–58.

17. See Geffroy, *Monet*, p. 251; cited by Darragon 1989, p. 418. (Chose singulière! ce sera vous qui ferez le trou par où passera Manet, quoi qu’il ait été le précurseur. Votre oeuvre venant plus tard, trouve le terrain mieux préparé, puis Manet était un peintre de figures et là la terrible convention académique et le poncif règnent et règneront toujours en maîtres.)

18. The first art historian to insist on the distinctive character of the 1860s as a period was Nils Gösta Sandblad, to whose pathbreaking book I am deeply indebted; see Sandblad 1954, pp. 14–15. However, his exclusive focus on Manet (appropriate at that stage of Manet studies) meant that he had little to say about the other artists of the same generation who figure importantly in the present book. The other major art historian who published an important study of the painter in 1954, George Heard Hamilton, believed that it was between 1871 and 1882 that Manet “made his enduring contribution to modern art,

modern both in relation to the progressive painting of his own day and in the sense of providing a body of work to which future painters would look for solutions to their own problems in discovering a truly modern expression" (*Manet and His Critics* [New Haven, 1954], p. 18).

Also, at the very moment the completed manuscript of this book was sent to the publisher, a large exhibition devoted to the "New Painting" of the 1860s opened at the Grand Palais in Paris and then traveled to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The exhibition, organized by Gary Tinterow and Henri Loyrette, was called "Origins of Impressionism" and was accompanied by an ambitious catalog of the same title. This is not the place for a detailed critique of the intellectual premises of the exhibition and catalog, but it should at least be said that by conceiving of the 1860s teleologically—as leading to Impressionism—the organizers did nothing to challenge prevailing views of the period. The catalog essays by Tinterow and Loyrette may therefore usefully be read in counterpoint to my argument in the chapters that follow: where we disagree is not only with respect to the pictorial issues in question but also as regards our respective approaches to historical understanding. For example, although they quote extensively from contemporary art criticism, they invariably do so to illustrate a general point they have already made; they never begin by analyzing a passage in order to discover something they did not know beforehand. Although they aren't unaware that Manet himself belonged to a generation distinct from that of the Impressionists, the entire thrust of their account prevents them from focusing on that prior generation so as to illuminate its particular situation and aspirations. And their decision to organize both the catalog and the exhibition according to types of paintings (History Painting, The Realist Landscape, The Nude, Figures in a Landscape, Still Life, Portraits and Figures, The Impressionist Landscape, and Modern Life) imposes a largely arbitrary grid on the pictorial production they survey.

On another front, I might add that my insistence on seeing Manet's paintings in the context of the work of artists with whom he had most in common is at the farthest pole from John House's ostensibly contextualist but in fact a priori and ahistorical view that Manet in his art deliberately sought to subvert "academic conventions" or the norms of "Salon painting" ("Manet's Naïveté," in Wilson-Bareau 1986, pp. 1–19; and "Manet's Maximilian: History Painting, Censorship and Ambiguity," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, pp. 88–111). Certainly Manet's art differed radically from what House means by academic or Salon painting; no doubt Manet held the bulk of such painting in low esteem; but precisely because he did, he would not have felt it a worthy ambition (it would not have been adequate to his aspirations) to seek to overthrow its norms, which in any case House understands in the most general terms. A version of the same cliché is operative in Seymour Howard, "Early Manet and Artful Error: Foundations of Anti-Illusion in Modern Painting," *Art Journal* 37 (fall 1977): 14–21, where various "errors" and inconsistencies in his paintings are seen in the context "of Academic, even Realist, painting" as "[drawing] attention to themselves by their blatant repudiation of convention. They became self-justifying aberrations that irritated and arrested the observer while reinforcing the broader effects of Manet's new style. Combined with Manet's new approaches to subject and form, these errors aided not only in undermining simple imitation but in disintegrating the traditional coherence and power of narrative" (p. 19). But "simple imitation" and "the traditional coherence and power of narrative" are generalizations with only the dimmest relevance to the situation of ambitious painting in the 1860s.

An indispensable guide to the art criticism of the 1850s and 1860s is Christopher Parsons and Martha Ward, *A Bibliography of Salon Criticism in Second Empire Paris* (Cambridge, 1986). See also *La Promenade du critique influent: Anthologie de la critique d'art*

en France 1850–1900, ed. Jean-Paul Bouillon, Nicole Dubreuil-Blondin, Antoinette Ehrard, and Constance Naubert-Riser (Paris, 1990).

19. For a recent discussion of the *Homage* and some of its preparatory drawings see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 167–80. See also Michael Fried, "Manet in His Generation: The Face of Painting in the 1860s," *Critical Inquiry* 19 (autumn 1992): 22–69, for a preliminary version of the analysis of the *Homage* here and in chapter 3.

20. In the early 1850s Fantin and Legros had been students together under the unconventional teacher Lecoq de Boisbaudran; others in their circle included Charles Cuisin, Léon Ottin, Guillaume Régamey (the future painter of military subjects), and Louis-Marc Solon. In October 1858 Fantin met Whistler at the Louvre, and shortly afterward they and Legros formed the Société des Trois, the nucleus of the larger gathering in the *Homage*. Fantin and Manet are said to have first met at the Louvre in 1857, but their friendship seems to date from the visit to Manet's studio in 1861. According to Fernand Desnoyers, the visitors included Fantin, Legros, Carolus Duran, and Bracquemond. See chap. 1, n. 65.

21. Whistler, letter to Fantin, May 1867, Pennell Collection, Library of Congress. See the discussion of this letter in the context of Whistler's growing involvement with British aestheticism in Katherine A. Lochnan, *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven and London, 1984), p. 155.

22. Champfleury's role in the revival of the Le Nain brothers is discussed in chapter 1. For a selection of his writings see Champfleury, *Le Réalisme*, ed. Geneviève and Jean Lacambre (Paris, 1973).

23. See Legros 1987–88, pp. 38–39, cat. no. 6.

24. Antonin Proust quotes the young Manet as saying: "Yes, it's very good, the *Burial*. It can't be said too much that it's very good because it's better than everything. But, between you and me, it's still not 'it'. It's too black" (Proust 1897, p. 21). (Oui, c'est très bien, l'*Enterrement*. On ne saurait dire assez que c'est très bien parce que c'est mieux que tout. Mais, entre nous, ce n'est pas encore ça. C'est trop noir.) A similar ambivalence marks Fantin's correspondence of 1858–59 with the German painter Otto Scholderer, whose studio in Frankfurt was across from Courbet's and whose admiration for the master of Ornans was unqualified (Brame and Lorenceau archives, Paris).

25. Baudelaire's critique of Courbet is found in his "Exposition Universelle de 1855" (*Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 225–26), and "Puisque réalisme il y a," notes for an article never completed (pp. 823–25). Legros's *Angelus*, *Ex-Voto*, and *Vocation of St. Francis* are praised in his "Salon de 1859" (the *Angelus*, pp. 331–34) and "L'Exposition de la Galerie Martinet en 1861" (the other two, p. 402), and Legros, Manet, and Whistler are praised for both etchings and paintings in "L'Eau-forte est à la mode" (pp. 405–6) and "Peintres et aquafortistes" (pp. 410–13). See also various letters and references to all three artists in Charles Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, ed. Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler, 2 vols. (Paris, 1973).

26. See Claude Pichois, *Baudelaire*, trans. Graham Robb (London, 1989), pp. 315–62.

27. Jean Rousseau, "Salon de 1864," *L'Univers illustré*, June 1, 1864. (Je ne crois pas que la poétique de Delacroix ait jamais été celle de M. Courbet. Comment donc une alliance s'est-elle subitement établie entre ces écoles qui semblaient s'exclure, et qui se sont si longtemps fait la guerre? Il faut que le réalisme ait singulièrement modifié son programme, et nous serions curieux d'en connaître la nouvelle formule.) Earlier in that "Salon" Rousseau wrote: "[Fantin's] painting of this year is somewhat to glorify realism, whose principal apostles are shown grouped, in a touching reunion, around their lord and

master Champfleury. But, for the love of heaven and the truth, what is the portrait of Delacroix, placed behind them, doing there? Does the realist school claim to be affiliated with the greatest fantasist of modern times? It would be very curious to see their genealogical tree" (May 14, 1864). ([S]on tableau de cette année est un peu à la gloire du réalisme dont il nous montre les principaux apôtres groupés, dans une touchante union, autour de leur maître et seigneur M. Champfleury. Mais, pour l'amour du ciel et de la vérité, qui fait là ce portrait de Delacroix, placé derrière eux? L'école réaliste prétendait-elle se rattacher au plus grand fantaisiste des temps modernes? Je serais bien curieux de voir son arbre généalogique.) And in a second "Salon" of that year he identified Fantin as representing contemporary painting, Baudelaire the romanticism of 1830, and Champfleury the realism of recent years ("Salon de 1864," *Le Figaro*, May 26, 1864). (Voilà M. Fantin qui représente la peinture actuelle, M. Baudelaire qui représente le romantisme de 1830, M. Champfleury qui représente le réalisme de ces dernières années.)

28. The connection was first noted by Douglas Druick in *Fantin-Latour 1982–83*, p. 174.

29. For more on that exhibition see chap. 1.

30. Actually, the situation is more complex than I have indicated. For a second source has been associated with the *Homage*—an unspecified group portrait by Frans Hals, possibly the *Banquet of the Officers of the St. Hadrian's Civic Guard Company* (1627), a copy of which is supposed to have been instrumental in leading Fantin to imagine his composition in ostensibly realist, not openly allegorical, terms (see *Fantin-Latour 1982–83*, p. 174, where the Hals is reproduced). There is no reason to doubt the validity of such a connection, but it should be noted that it is much less evident in the final painting than the reference to the Champagne.

31. Fantin, Ribot, and Moreau will be discussed in this connection in chapter 3 and Manet in chapters 1, 2, and 4. The affinity between Legros's paintings and those of early Renaissance masters was remarked by various critics including Hector de Callias, "Salon de 1863," *L'Artiste*, June 1, 1863; and Ernest Chesneau, *Les Nations rivales dans l'art* (Paris, 1868), p. 333. On the young Tissot's predilection for pastiching Leys and earlier artists see e.g. Callias, "Salon de 1863"; Maxime Du Camp, *Le Salon de 1861* (Paris, 1861), p. 5; and Paul Mantz, "Salon de 1863," *GBA*, 1st ser., 14 (June 1, 1863): 506. On Puvis's evocations of the look of Renaissance frescoes see e.g. Dubosc de Pesquidoux, "Salon de 1861," *L'Union*, June 8, 1861; and Paul de Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1861," *La Presse*, May 12, 1861. Whistler is said to have pastiched Chinese painting in his *Princesse du pays de la porcelaine* by both Louis Auvray, *Salon de 1865* (Paris, 1865), p. 58; and Jules Claretie [Arsène Arnaud], "Deux Heures du Salon de 1865," in *Peintres et sculpteurs contemporains* (Paris, 1874), p. 109. Recently, too, it has been suggested that Whistler intended a resemblance between his *Woman in White* in the Salon des Refusés and Watteau's *Gilles*, another La Caze picture exhibited at Martinet's three years before (see David Park Curry, "Artist and Model," in *James McNeill Whistler at the Freer Gallery of Art* [New York and London, 1984], pp. 35–51). Alone among the painters I have just cited, Degas figures scarcely at all in the art criticism of the 1860s; among the books, articles, and catalogs documenting Degas's involvement with older art are Theodore Reff, *Degas: The Artist's Mind* (New York, 1976), chap. 3, "Pictures within Pictures"; *idem*, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," *Burlington Magazine* 105 (June 1963): 241–51; Eleanor Mitchell, "La fille de Jephté par Degas: Genèse et évolution," *GBA*, 6th ser., 18 (Oct. 1937): 175–89; Geneviève Monnier, "La Genèse d'une oeuvre de Degas: *Sémiramis construisant une ville*," *La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 28, nos. 5–6 (1978): 407–26; and Jean Sutherland Boggs et al., *Degas*, exhib. cat. (Paris: Grand Palais, Feb. 9–

May 16, 1976; Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, June 16–Aug. 28, 1988; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Sept. 27, 1988–Jan. 8, 1989).

32. More precisely, they were responding to a new stage in a development the origins of which went back at least to the early 19th century. Baudelaire's attack on "eclecticism" in his "Salon de 1846" may be taken as emblematic of a decisive moment in that development: for Baudelaire the rise of eclecticism was correlated with the erosion of tradition in the face of the modern malady of doubt (*Curiosités esthétiques*, esp. pp. 168–70, 175–77, 191–94). For a reading of that "Salon" which focuses on the question of the relation of new art to that of the Old Masters see Fried 1984 and chapter 2 in the present book.

On the general topic of present-past relations in French painting of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix* (Cambridge, 1984), which applies to the painting of David and Ingres certain ideas concerning the conflicted nature of artistic inheritance developed by the literary critic and theorist Harold Bloom. Bryson's chapters on David strike me as arbitrary and unargued, but those on Ingres make a valuable contribution.

33. Zacharie Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 9 (May 10–11, 1863). (Pour se formuler grand homme, il n'est point absolument nécessaire de s'inspirer de Raphael, de Titien, de Rembrandt, de Rubens ou de Velasquez.) Or to quote a critic less sympathetic to the young realists, Jean Rousseau: after discussing the way in which Manet, Ribot, and Legros all invoked earlier masters, Rousseau asked rhetorically, "[H]ow is it that several of [the realists]—who make a profession of sincerity—counterfeit someone else instead of being themselves?" ("Salon de 1868," *L'Univers illustré*, June 6, 1868). ([C]omment se fait-il que plusieurs de ces artistes—qui font de la sincérité une profession—contrefassent quelqu'un au lieu d'être eux-mêmes?)

34. See Anne Coffin Hanson, *Manet and the Modern Tradition* (New Haven and London, 1977); Reff 1982–83; Clark 1985; and Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven and London, 1988). Among these books, Clark's is by far the most distinguished: its interpretive energy, imaginative scholarship, and nuanced treatment of the question of modernism make it one of the most compelling works in the entire body of Manet scholarship. Its influence on recent Manet studies has been great, and it is a basic reference throughout the present work. Herbert's book also makes a significant contribution, though to my mind its weakest pages are those on Manet; in particular Herbert's decision to treat Manet as an Impressionist is a mistake. I discuss Reff's *Manet and Modern Paris* toward the end of chapter 2. Hanson's book, though not devoid of useful observations, is best left to itself.

35. Here, for example, is how Cachin characterizes the unprecedentedness of Manet's procedures: "To paint openly from paintings, almost to the point of parody, taking painting itself as the object of its own attention; *Olympia*, daughter of Titian, Ingres, and Goya, throws down a challenge to the masters but in contemporary terms" (Manet 1983, p. 18). She also says that Picasso's variations on the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* "do unto Manet as he had done unto the Italian Renaissance painters" (p. 172), a perfect example of the sort of historical leveling I seek to counteract. The limits of Beatrice Farwell's engagement with the question may be gauged from the following summary remarks on the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*: "Why did [Manet] need Raphael? Like those complexities in Bach's cantatas that were inaudible in the acoustics of the Thomas-Kirche though the composer knew they were there, the presence of Raphael in the poses of Manet's figures was there, whether recognized or not, to represent 'the ideal.' It is this and not 'weakness of imagination' that lay behind Manet's quotations from the old masters. By the time of *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* it was done with the wry humor of persiflage, while it contributed as well an ingredient of

monumentality. Thus it made of the composition a marvellously artificial set piece, like that moment in the film *M.A.S.H.* in which a team of American military medics in Korea seems to fall inadvertently into the composition of Leonardo's *Last Supper*. The intentions are roughly equivalent, except that Manet's prototype was less obvious" (Farwell 1981, p. 255).

George Mauner's *Manet Peintre-Philosophe: A Study of the Painter's Themes* (University Park, Pa., and London, 1975) discusses the relation of a number of paintings by Manet to their respective sources, but interprets all of Manet's art in terms of a conscious iconological program thematizing the duality of spirit and matter (unpersuasively, in my view). Finally, James H. Rubin explains Manet's allusions to earlier art in his paintings of the 1860s in terms of "Manet's theme of the classics renewed through contact with reality" (*Manet's Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets* [London, 1994], p. 59).

36. See Wilson-Bareau 1986 and 1992. The omission of any reference to "Manet's Sources" is especially pointed in the case of her eponymous essay in *The Hidden Face of Manet*, which deals at length with Manet's allusions to earlier pictures.

37. Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," in *The New Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (1966; rev. ed., New York, 1973), p. 68. Greenberg's essay was first published in 1960 as a pamphlet by the Voice of America; it then appeared in *Arts Yearbook*, no. 4 (1961), and with slight revisions in *Art and Literature*, no. 4 (spring 1965) before its publication in *The New Art*. Recently the original essay has been republished in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4, *Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957–1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago and London, 1993).

38. Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," pp. 68–69.

39. See Fried 1990, pp. 284–87. See also *idem*, "Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings" (originally published in *Artforum* in 1966), in Henry Geldzahler, ed., *New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940–1970* (New York, 1969), pp. 403–25, esp. pp. 413–14; *idem*, "Art and Objecthood" (originally published in *Artforum* in 1967), in Gregory Battcock, ed., *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York, 1968), pp. 116–47, esp. pp. 123–24, n. 4; and *idem*, "How Modernism Works: A Response to T. J. Clark," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (Sept. 1982): 217–34. Clark's original essay, "Clement Greenberg's Theory of Art," appeared in the same issue of *Critical Inquiry*, 139–56; his reply to my critique was published (along with his essay and my critique) in W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *The Politics of Interpretation* (Chicago and London, 1983). See also Leo Steinberg, "Other Criteria," in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York, 1972), pp. 55–91; Stephen Melville, "Notes on the Reemergence of Allegory, the Forgetting of Modernism, the Necessity of Rhetoric, and the Conditions of Publicity in Art and Criticism," *October*, no. 19 (winter 1981): 55–92; *idem*, *Philosophy beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism*, Theory and History of Literature, vol. 29 (Minneapolis, 1986), chap. 1, "On Modernism"; and Thierry de Duve, "The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas," in Serge Guilbaut, ed., *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1990), pp. 244–310.

40. Greenberg, "Necessity of Formalism," *New Literary History* 3 (autumn 1971): 171 (quoted by Thierry de Duve, "The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas," p. 251). See also Greenberg, "Beginnings of Modernism," *Arts Magazine* 57 (Apr. 1983): 77–79, where he again identifies Manet as the first Modernist painter by virtue of the "sheer handling of his medium"; observes that "[i]t's the renovation of the medium, of the immediate phenomenal substance, that has largely made Modernism the renovation of aesthetic quality by which it justifies itself. Away from such renovation Modernism evaporates: what happens becomes something else—not necessary something less, by no

means, but still no longer or not yet Modernism" (p. 78); and explains that the Modernist renovation of the medium of painting in the interests of sustaining esthetic quality took the form of a "creative devolution" toward flatness, which he compares and contrasts with the transformation of Greco-Roman pictorial art into Byzantine art that took place between the fourth and sixth centuries of the modern era (p. 79). And cf. Walter Darby Bannard: "Modernism is a frame of mind or working attitude toward both the making and taking in of art which embodies two primary principles. One, art in the making is self-critical, turning naturally to the best art of the past to emulate the highest standards for the present, bringing to itself whatever changes seem necessary to maintain those standards. Two, art objects are relatively good or not so good, and that [sic] this goodness or 'quality' must be taken in through feeling and intuition above and beyond the sum of describable parts. The driving force of Modernism is self-improvement, esthetic betterment" ("Jules Olitski at the New Gallery," exhib. cat. [Miami, Fla.: The New Gallery, University of Miami, Feb. 25–Mar. 25, 1994], n.p.). I shall have more to say about the issue of "esthetic quality" in the coda.

41. Clark 1985, p. 10.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

44. The idea that the Impressionist painters were in pursuit of a new, "decorative" mode of unity that stressed the relations of tones and colors on a flat surface was first put forward by the critics Armand Silvestre (in 1874 and 1876) and Philippe Burty (in 1874, 1876, and 1877). See Armand Silvestre, "L'Exposition des révoltés" and "Exposition de la rue Le Peletier," *L'Opinion nationale*, Apr. 22, 1874, and Apr. 2, 1876; Philippe Burty, "The Paris Exhibitions," *The Academy*, May 30, 1874; *idem*, "The Exhibition of the 'Intransigeants,'" *The Academy*, Apr. 15, 1876; and *idem*, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *La République française*, Apr. 25, 1877. In the decades that followed the concept of the decorative underwent considerable development, largely though by no means exclusively in connection with the art of Claude Monet. The best discussions of this topic remain Levine's in "Décor/Decorative/Decoration," and *Monet and His Critics*. See also the coda.

45. The exchange is cited by Albert Wolff, "Édouard Manet," *Le Figaro*, May 1, 1883.

Courbet lui-même en voyant paraître, en 1865, au Salon, l'*Olympia* de Manet, ne put s'accommoder de cet art moderne et s'écria: —C'est plat, ce n'est pas modelé; on dirait une dame de pique d'un jeu de cartes sortant du bain.

Ce à quoi Manet, toujours prêt à la riposte, répondit: —Courbet nous embête à la fin avec ses modelés; son idéal à lui c'est une bille de billard!

46. See the discussion of these criticisms in chapter 4.

47. Zola, "Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 152. Zola goes on to compare *Olympia* to a *gravure d'Épinal* (p. 160) and the *Fifer* to "une enseigne de costumier" (p. 161). The nearest approach to a reading of some of Manet's paintings as flat is found in E. Spuller's highly interesting account of Manet's one-man exhibition of 1867 ("M. Édouard Manet & sa peinture," *Le Nain jaune*, June 9, 1867). Spuller criticizes Manet for his belief that painting was meant to be seen not up close but only at a distance. When Manet's paintings are viewed from far back, Spuller wrote, "the patches [of color] disappear into the ensemble, the desired effect is obtained, one has before us a *relief*: the object is surrounded by air, by reality, the aim of painting is achieved." But Spuller added that in the exhibition none of Manet's *nude* figures actually achieved

that effect, because they couldn't be seen from far enough away. "There is no modeling," he complained, "no chiaroscuro, all the artifices of ordinary painting are suppressed; one is forced, despite the opposite desire that one would have, to find these nude figures of a desperate flatness, not to mention their other faults."

Pour bien voir les tableaux de M. Manet, il faut les voir à une grande distance, se reculer le plus loin possible. Les taches disparaissent alors dans l'ensemble; on obtient l'effet voulu, on a devant soi un relief: l'objet est dans l'air, dans la réalité, le but de la peinture est atteint.

Soit! c'est un système comme un autre, moins commode cependant que celui qui n'exige pas des appartements immenses pour recevoir des tableaux comme des mouchoirs de poche. Mais admettons l'idée de M. Manet. Eh bien! je regrette d'avoir à lui dire qu'au moins dans son salon de l'avenue de l'Alma, aucune des figures nues qu'il a exposées se prend de relief, car on ne peut pas les voir d'assez loin. Il n'y a point de modelé, point de clair-obscur, tous les artifices de la peinture ordinaire sont supprimés; on est bien forcé, malgré le désir contraire qu'on pourrait avoir, de trouver ces figures nues d'une désespérante platitude, sans parler de leurs autres défauts.

But Spuller complains of the flatness *only* of the nude figures, not of the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* in their entirety. Indeed earlier in his article Spuller comments that Manet's method isn't really new, that many artists were familiar with it before Manet but refrained from practicing it "because it is defective and in the end inevitably leads the painter who resorts to it to produce only works of *trompe-l'oeil*, which is the coldest and most irritating thing in the world that one can imagine." (In other words, in Spuller's view the inherent tendency of Manet's method was toward *untrammelled* illusionism.) (J'ajoute que cette méthode n'a rien de bien neuf, que bien des gens la connaissent avant M. Manet, mais ne la pratiquaient point parce qu'elle est défectueuse et qu'enfin elle doit forcément amener le peintre qui s'en sert à ne plus produire que des tableaux en trompe-l'oeil, c'est-à-dire la chose la plus froide et la plus agaçante qui se puisse concevoir au monde.) In any case, Spuller's criticism of the apparent flatness of Manet's nudes at the avenue de l'Alma is *not* the note of most Manet commentary from the 1860s.

48. See chap. 1, n. 96 and Fried 1990, pp. 286–87. In his discussion of *Olympia* in *The Painting of Modern Life* Clark considers various internally problematic or disparate features of that painting and goes on to say: "To call these disparities 'flatness' or 'flattening' does not seem to me quite right. The passages I have pointed to insist on something more complex than a physical state, or at any rate the state of a medium. They put in question how the world might appear in a picture if its constituents were conceived—it seems they may be—as nothing but material; and how paint might appear as part of that world, the ultimate dry sign of it" (p. 138). Clark goes on to detect a thematization of flatness in *Argenteuil* (1874) and *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881–82), but of course both paintings reflect Manet's engagement with Impressionism, which is to say with a conception of painting and of pictorial unity that differed in crucial respects from those implicit in his canvases of the 1860s.

49. Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," pp. 71–72.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

51. In an important article Yve-Alain Bois calls attention to a sweeping change in Greenberg's point of view that took place in the mid-1950s ("Greenberg's Amendments," *Kunst & Museumjournaal* 5, no. 1 [1993]: 1–9). Briefly, by comparing a number of essays by Greenberg as originally published and as revised and republished in *Art and Culture* (1961), Bois shows how a prior emphasis on materiality came increasingly to be displaced by one on opticality, as exemplified, finally, in the art of Morris Louis and the color-field painters. Bois cites approvingly John O'Brian's account of a slightly earlier shift in Greenberg's political views, from what T. J. Clark has called his "Eliotic Trotskyism" to "Kantian Anti-Communism" (see O'Brian, Introduction, Clement Greenberg, *The Col-*

lected Essays and Criticism, 3: *Affirmations and Refusals*, 1950–1956 [Chicago and London, 1993], pp. xv–xxxiii), and suggests that the new emphasis on opticality is consistent with that development. "Such an ideological conversion," Bois writes, "finds its counterpart in the realm of esthetics (with a small time-lag, a deferral of a few years, and in a gradual fashion): from the materialism of 'positive facts' to the transcendence of the mirage, from tactility to opticality, and so forth" (p. 6). (Bois also suggests a biographical explanation, tied to Greenberg's love affair starting in 1950 with Helen Frankenthaler, "whose 'Mountains and Sea,' dating from 1952, will become a key-element of Greenberg's new reading of Pollock and of Abstract Expressionism as a whole" [ibid.].) Whatever the reasons for Greenberg's change of mind, his later position, which Bois characterizes as "idealist" (p. 8), has the crucial consequence of enlisting Manet and the Impressionists under the dual sign of flatness and opticality. See also Bois's discussion of that change of mind in "The Limit of Almost," in *Ad Reinhardt*, exhib. cat. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, May 30–Sept. 2, 1991; Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, Oct. 13, 1991–Jan. 6, 1992), pp. 14–17.

52. Armand Silvestre, "Chronique des Beaux-Arts," *L'Opinion nationale*, Apr. 22, 1874. (Il faut, en effet, des yeux spéciaux pour être sensibles à cette justesse dans les relations des tons qui fait leur honneur et leur mérite.)

53. Marc de Montifaud [Marie-Amélie Chatroule de Montifaud], "Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *L'Artiste*, May 1, 1874, pp. 307–13. (Si ce petit groupe pouvait constituer une école, on devrait l'appeler "l'école des yeux.")

54. See e.g. Ernest Chesneau, "Salon de 1875," *Paris-Journal*, May 14, 1875; Philippe Burty, "Salon de 1875," *La République française*, May 23, 1875; and Stéphane Mallarmé, "The Impressionists and Édouard Manet," *Art Monthly Review*, Sept. 30, 1876. I briefly discuss the last of these in my footnote in the coda.

55. Pinard, "L'Exposition Manet," *Le Radical* (Jan. 9, 1884). ([À] peine croirait-on que la main humaine a dû être employée pour transporter sur la toile l'image recueillie par l'oeil de l'artiste, on pourrait supposer que son regard a été le seul agent de réception et de reproduction de l'image.) Pinard also said that he regarded those two works as the most useful for understanding Manet's art: "Si je m'attache particulièrement à ces deux oeuvres, c'est qu'elles me paraissent les plus propres à faire comprendre le peintre."

56. Jacques de Biez, "Édouard Manet," *Le Voltaire*, May 2, 1883. (Manet doit-il blâmé du soin qu'il parut prendre à répudier de son oeuvre toute intention psychologique ou tout sujet philosophique? Manet fut un peintre avant tout, et son ambition la plus haute était de rester peintre dans la pleine acception plastique du terme. Manet fut un oeil plutôt qu'un raisonnement.)

57. Edmond Bazire, *Manet* (Paris, 1884), p. 135. (Sa carrière se résume en une ascension continue vers la lumière et la vérité, et présente cette extraordinaire particularité que chaque manifestation du peintre est un acheminement, une transition, pour ainsi dire, vers une expression nouvelle de sa conception intérieure. . . . Peindre d'après les yeux, non d'après l'imagination, fut son programme.) Significantly, Bazire also remarks: "To adjust patches to patches is not to model: it's at most to pursue the opportunity to obtain decorative ensembles, but not lines" (p. 136). (Ajouter des plaques à des plaques, ce n'est pas modeler: c'est tout au plus courir la chance d'obtenir des ensembles décoratifs, mais pas de lignes.)

58. Théodore Duret, *Histoire de Édouard Manet et de son oeuvre* (1902; Paris, 1926), pp. 63–65. In his words:

Never in effect has anyone painted with more sincerity and, in part, with more naïveté than Manet; never has anyone, brush in hand, absorbed by the subject, sought to render it more

faithfully. The disaccord between the public and him stems therefore from a difference of vision. Manet and others didn't see in the same way. . . .

His faculty of seeing in a particular manner was not the result of a reasoned act, or an effort of the will, or of work. It came from nature. It was the gift. . . . He saw things in a dazzle of light that the others didn't discover, he fixed on the canvas the sensations that struck his eye. In so doing, he acted unconsciously, in that what he saw derived from his [nervous and sensory] organization. Nothing was more false than to accuse him of pursuing so-called *peinture bariolée*, deliberately and out of a pure desire to attract attention.

Jamais en effet personne n'a peint avec plus de sincérité et, pour une part, avec plus de naïveté que Manet; jamais personne n'a, le pinceau à la main, absorbé par le sujet, cherché le rendre plus fidèlement. Le dissentiment survenu entre le public et lui provenait donc d'une différence de vision. Manet et les autres ne voyaient pas de la même manière. . . .

Sa faculté de voir d'une façon particulière ne venait ni d'un acte raisonné, ni d'un effort de volonté, ni du travail. Elle venait de la nature. Elle était le don. . . . Il voyait les choses dans un éclat de lumière que les autres n'y découvriraient pas, il fixait sur la toile les sensations qui avaient frappé son oeil. En le faisant, il agissait inconsciemment, puisque ce qu'il voyait lui venait de son organisation. Rien n'était plus faux que de l'accuser de s'adonner à la soi-disant *peinture bariolée*, de propos délibéré, et par pur désir d'attirer l'attention.

59. Antonin Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," *Le Studio* 21 (Jan. 15, 1901): 76; see chap. 1, no. 29, for more on that article, which is reproduced in its entirety along with an English translation in appendix 1. Near the beginning of that article Proust refers to Manet as the "leader of the Impressionist school."

60. This despite Zola's proto-Impressionist insistence that the distinction of Manet's art lay in the simplicity and directness (also the subtlety, the finesse) with which the painter transcribed the scene before him into a tonally coherent whole. "What first strikes me in his painting is the extremely delicate accuracy of the relations among tones," he wrote in 1867 ("Édouard Manet," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 150). And: "The artist's whole personality consists in the manner in which eye is organized: he sees blond, and he sees by masses" (ibid., p. 151). And finally: "Don't ask him for anything other than a literally accurate translation [of nature]. He doesn't know to sing or philosophize. He knows how to paint and that's all: he has the gift, and therein lies his distinctive temperament, to seize the dominant tones in all their delicacy and to thus be able to model in broad planes both things and beings" (ibid., p. 153). (Ce qui me frappe d'abord dans ces tableaux, c'est une justesse très délicate dans les rapports des tons entre eux. . . . Toute la personnalité de l'artiste consiste dans la manière dont son oeil est organisé: il voit blond, et il voit par masses. . . . Ne lui demandez rien autre chose qu'une traduction d'une justesse littéraire. Il ne saurait ni chanter ni philosopher. Il sait peindre, et voilà tout: il a le don, et c'est là son tempérament propre, de saisir dans leur délicatesse les tons dominants et de pouvoir ainsi modeler à grands plans les choses et les êtres.)

I discuss Zola's idiosyncratic critical perspective in chapters 3 and 4 of this book; here I will simply remark that his writings on Manet of 1866–68 anticipate Impressionism's simplifactory view of Manet's achievement. As he says: "I can't repeat too often that it's necessary to forget a thousand things to understand and appreciate this talent" (ibid.). (Il nous faut, je ne saurais trop le répéter, oublier mille choses pour comprendre et goûter ce talent.) What's curious, of course, is that Zola finally was ambivalent about Impressionism itself, in part because of his continued allegiance to the human figure, in part because he never became fully reconciled to Impressionist technique. In 1879, for example, he wrote of Manet, whom he called the leader of the Impressionists: "His long struggle against the incomprehension of the public is explained by the difficulty he finds in executing, which is to say that his hand isn't the equal of his eye. . . . If his technique equaled the

accuracy of his perceptions, he would be the great painter of the second half of the nineteenth century" ("Lettres de Paris: Nouvelles artistiques et littéraires [Le Salon de 1879]," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 400). (Sa longue lutte contre l'incompréhension du public s'explique par la difficulté qu'il rencontre dans l'exécution, je veux dire que sa main n'égale pas son oeil. . . . Si le côté technique chez lui égalait la justesse des perceptions, il serait le grand peintre de la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle.) But his deepest assumptions about painting were far closer to those of early Impressionism, or rather to the views of the painters who became the Impressionists, than to the collective aspirations of the generation of 1863.

61. In *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1993), Rosalind E. Krauss simultaneously endorses Greenberg's hypostatization of opticality and attacks opticality as such, and by implication modernist painting, in the name of what she calls, adapting a phrase of Walter Benjamin's (but on quasi-Lacanian grounds), "the optical unconscious." Put slightly differently, Krauss has something against opticality; but she also thinks that Greenberg has it right when he claims that modernist painting "confine[s] itself exclusively to what is given in visual experience," and understands her own project as an attempt to tell (in the words of the book jacket) "the story of a small, disparate group of artists who defied modernism's most cherished self-descriptions, giving rise to an unruly, disruptive force that persistently haunted the field of modernism from the 1920s to the 1950s and continues to disrupt it today." The result is a curious argument in which modernist painting stands indicted as the merely "retinal" enterprise Marcel Duchamp considered it to be (see, however, Thierry de Duve's complicating account of Duchamp's thought in *Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade*, trans. Dana Polan, Theory and History of Literature, vol. 51 [Minneapolis and Oxford, 1991]), and in which even the verticality of painting emerges as a reprehensibly conservative force (see Krauss's discussion of Pollock's drip paintings).

62. This is perhaps as good a place as any to cite my own first summary remarks about Manet, in a long footnote to the introductory essay to *Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella*, exhib. cat. (Cambridge: Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Apr.–May 1965). The footnote is appended to the clause set off by hyphens in the sentence: "Roughly speaking, the history of painting from Manet through Synthetic Cubism and Matisse may be characterized in terms of the gradual withdrawal of painting from the task of representing reality—or of reality from the power of painting to represent it—in favor of an increasing preoccupation with problems intrinsic to painting itself" (p. 5). The footnote reads:

This is more than just a figure of speech: it is a capsule definition of what may be seen to take place in Manet's paintings. Manet's ambitions are fundamentally realistic. He starts out aspiring to the objective transcription of reality, of a world to which one wholly belongs, such as he finds in the work of Velásquez and Hals. But where Velásquez and Hals took for granted their relation to the worlds they belonged to and observed and painted, Manet is sharply conscious that his own relation to reality is far more problematic. And to paint his world with the same fullness of response, the same passion for truth, that he finds in the work of Velásquez and Hals, means that he is forced to paint not merely his world but his problematic relation to it: his own awareness of himself as *in* and yet *not of* the world. In this sense Manet is the first post-Kantian painter: the first painter whose awareness of himself raises problems of extreme difficulty that cannot be ignored: the first painter for whom consciousness itself is the great subject of this art.

Almost from the first—surely as early as the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*—Manet seems to have striven hard to make this awareness function as an essential part of his paintings, an essential aspect of their content. This accounts for the *situational* character of Manet's paintings of the 1860s: the painting itself is conceived as a kind of *tableau vivant* (in this sense Manet relates back to David), but a *tableau vivant* constructed so as to dramatize not a particular event so much as the beholder's

alienation from that event. Moreover, in paintings like the *Déjeuner* and the *Olympia*, for example, the inhibiting, estranging quality of self-awareness is literally depicted within the painting: in the *Déjeuner* by the unintelligible gesture of the man on the right and the bird frozen in flight at the top of the painting; in the *Olympia* above all by the hostile, almost schematic cat; and in both by the distancing calm stare of Victorine Meurent.

But Manet's desire to make the estranging quality of self-awareness an essential part of the content of his work—a desire which, as we have seen, is at bottom realistic—has an important consequence: namely, that self-awareness in *this* particular situation necessarily entails the awareness that one is looking at is, after all, merely a painting. And this awareness *too* must be made an essential part of the work itself. That is, there must be no question but that the painter *intended* it to be felt; and if necessary the spectator must be *compelled* to feel it. Otherwise the self-awareness (and the alienation) Manet is after would remain incomplete and equivocal.

For this reason Manet emphasizes certain characteristics which have nothing to do with verisimilitude but which assert that the painting in question is exactly that: a painting. For example, Manet emphasizes the flatness of the picture-surface by eschewing modeling and (as in the *Déjeuner*) refusing to depict depth convincingly, calls attention to the limits of the canvas by truncating extended forms with the framing edge, and underscores the rectangular shape of the picture support by aligning with it, more or less conspicuously, various elements within the painting. (The notions of emphasis and assertion are important here. David and Ingres rely on rectangular composition far more than Manet; and some of Ingres's forms have as little modeling as Manet's. But David and Ingres are not concerned to emphasize the rectangularity or the flatness of the canvas, but rather they make use of these to ensure the stability of their compositions and the rightness of their drawing.)

No wonder Manet's art has always been open to contradictory interpretations: the contradictions reside in the conflict between his ambitions and his actual situation. (What one takes to be the salient features of his situation is open to argument; an uncharacteristically subtle Marxist could, I think, make a good case for focusing on the economic and political situation in France after 1848. In this note, however, I have stressed Manet's recognition of consciousness as a problem for art, as well as the estranging quality of his own consciousness of himself.) Manet's art represents the last attempt in Western painting to achieve a full equivalent to the great realistic painting of the past: an attempt which led, in quick inexorable steps, to the founding of modernism through the emphasis on pictorial qualities and problems in their own right. This is why Manet was so easily thrown off stride by the advent of Impressionism around 1870: because his pictorial and formal innovations of the preceding decade had not been made for their own sakes, but in the service of a phenomenology that had already been worked out in philosophy, and had been objectified in some poetry (e.g. Blake), but which had not yet made itself felt in the visual arts. It was only at the end of his life that Manet at last succeeded in using what he had learned from Impressionism to objectify his own much more profound phenomenology, in the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. (pp. 49–50)

There is much that might be said about this (and much that's wrong with it), but let me make just three points: (1) Already in 1965 I insisted that Manet should be seen as a realist and that his endeavor in his paintings of the 1860s differed fundamentally from that of the Impressionists. (2) My emphasis on Manet's thematization of consciousness and alienation, though crude and untenable as it stands, is not without a certain relation to the social-historical notion of the "self-distanced" or "alienated" subject of modernism mentioned above. (3) My claim that the thematization of consciousness and alienation in this particular situation entailed calling attention to the painting in question being merely that, a painting, also might be linked with the passage from Clark cited above. But there is a sharp difference between Clark's emphasis on the first modernist painters' skepticism and unsureness about the nature of pictorial representation and what I imply was Manet's deliberate strategy of underscoring the "paintingness" of his pictures of the 1860s, and of course nothing could be more "impressionist" (in the sense that I have been using the

term) than my Greenbergian stress on the flatness and rectangularity of the picture plane. Similarly, the phrases "problems intrinsic to painting itself" and "pictorial qualities and problems in their own right" express an ahistorically essentialist notion that *all* my art historical writings, and indeed my art critical writings subsequent to *Three American Painters*, implicitly or explicitly repudiate. See the brief commentary on my footnote in Charles Harrison's chapter, "Impressionism, Modernism and Originality," in Francis Frascina, Nigel Blake, Briony Fer, Tamar Garb, and Charles Harrison, *Modernity and Modernism: French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven and London, 1993), p. 201. Finally, the question of Manet's status as "the first modernist and/or the last old master" is central to David Carrier's essay, "Manet and His Interpreters" (*Art History* 8 [Sept. 1985]: 320–35), a survey of competing views of Manet that declines to take sides among them, concluding that art history's "present practice involves, unavoidably, concerns about relativity of interpretation" (p. 333).

1. Manet's Sources, 1859–1869

1. Ernest Chesneau and Théophile Thoré. Their observations are discussed in the last section of this chapter.

2. For example, Edmond Bazire, *Édouard Manet* (Paris, 1884); Jacques de Biez, *Édouard Manet* (Paris, 1884); Louis Gonse, "Manet," *GBA*, 2d ser., 29 (Feb. 1, 1884): 133–52. Gonse is not exactly an admirer of Manet's work but argues that its importance is incontestable.

3. Jacques-Émile Blanche, *Essais et portraits* (Paris, 1912), p. 162.

4. I discuss the articles and books that most importantly contributed to this realization below. I might remark, however, that Manet's use of the art of the past began to be a historical problem shortly before the exhibition of 1932. See Paul Jamot, "Études sur Manet I," *GBA*, 5th ser., 15 (Jan. 1927): 27–50.

5. Quoted in Pierre Cailler and Pierre Courthion, eds., *Manet reconté par lui-même et par ses amis*, 2 vols. (Geneva, 1953), 1:135.

L'artiste ne dit pas aujourd'hui: venez voir des oeuvres sans défauts, mais: venez voir des oeuvres sincères.

C'est l'effet de la sincérité de donner aux oeuvres un caractère qui les fait ressembler à une protestation, alors que le peintre n'a songé qu'à rendre son impression.

6. See e.g. Germain Bazin, "Manet et la tradition," *L'Amour de l'art* 13 (May 1932): 152–63; René Huyghe, "Manet, peintre," *L'Amour de l'art* 13 (May 1932): 165–84; Paul Colin, *Manet* (Paris, 1937).

7. Michel Florisoone, *Manet* (Monaco, 1947), p. xvii.

8. Meyer Schapiro, review of *French Painting between the Past and the Present*, by Joseph C. Sloane, *Art Bulletin* 36 (June 1954): 163–65.

9. Bazin, Huyghe, and Florisoone are among those who have expressed this view. See also John Richardson, *Manet* (1958; London and New York, 1967). Alan Bowness in "A Note on Manet's 'Compositional Difficulties,'" *Burlington Magazine* 103 (June 1961): 276–77, takes issue with Richardson.

10. Alain De Leiris, "Manet, Guérault and Chrysispos," *Art Bulletin* 46 (Sept. 1964): 402. But De Leiris says nothing about why it is wrong to postulate such an element.

11. I hope that something of what it means to say this will become clear by the end of the present study [i.e. chapter 1]. I am not suggesting that the history of the concept of composition in the nineteenth century should be investigated apart from the history of

nineteenth-century painting. On the contrary, it is only in the context of the painting of a given moment that the meaning of the notion of composition for that painting can be understood. In discussing the painting of the past two hundred years—since Lessing, Diderot, Greuze, Chardin, David—the concept of composition must be used with extreme care: it had meanings for these men which have been lost, and which as historians we must try to recover, if we are to understand their thought. One of the points that will emerge is that the concept of composition cannot be understood apart from other concepts, which at different moments were equally if not more crucial to the structure of the paintings in question, and which do not at first seem to bear any direct relation to what we (unhistorically) tend to think of as compositional concerns. The art of David, for example, must eventually be seen in relation to the work of Lessing and Diderot—not just their writings on painting and sculpture but their discussions of drama as well—and in terms of such concepts as action (in particular *an* action and a *moment* in an action), grimace and theatricality (both used as pejoratives), and *tableau* (in as much of its complexity as we can encompass). This at least must be done if we are even to approach an adequate sense of David's actual enterprise.

12. In his article (above n. 10) De Leiris remarks of the *Old Musician*: “Manet did not ‘borrow’ the composition of Velásquez’s *Drinkers* but transposed fragments of it” (p. 403). This is an important distinction. Manet did both throughout the first half of the 1860s, often in the same painting.

13. It was thought that Velásquez had depicted himself and Murillo in the *Petits Cavaliers*. See Sandblad 1954, pp. 37–39, 42–45. Most of my references to Sandblad's book will be related to disagreements over various points. So I want to express at the outset my deep sense of indebtedness to his work. More than any other modern historian, Sandblad demonstrates that it is possible to investigate Manet's specific intentions and the development of his thought through careful analysis of individual works and of the context in which each was painted.

14. Theodore Reff, “The Meaning of Manet's Olympia,” *GBA*, 6th ser., 63 (Feb. 1964): 116.

15. Sandblad 1954, p. 45.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 91; emphasis in original.

17. De Leiris, “Manet, Guérault and Chryssippos,” p. 404.

18. For example, the *Gypsies*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia*, *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*, and *Christ Mocked*. Of course Manet also painted numerous pictures of single figures. But in four of the most important of these—the *Street Singer*, *Lola de Valence*, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, and *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc*—he seems to have made a deliberate effort to activate and even to people the backgrounds in various ways (see n. 26 for more on this). After his visit in the summer of 1865 to Madrid, where he was enormously impressed by Velásquez's *Pablo de Valladolid*, the weight of his art fell predominantly on the single full-length figure, as in the *Tragic Actor*, *Monk in Prayer*, the three Beggar-Philosophers of 1865, the *Torero Saluting*, and the *Fifer*. But by the late 1860s, in paintings such as the *Luncheon in the Studio* and *Balcony*, the multifigure painting again became a major vehicle for him.

19. Sandblad 1954, p. 33.

20. De Leiris, “Manet, Guérault and Chryssippos,” p. 403. [For the suggestion that Manet based his allusion to Velásquez's *Drinkers* on Nanteuil's lithograph, see Reff 1982–83, p. 174. As Reff remarks, that lithograph appears in the background of Manet's *Portrait of Émile Zola* in 1868 (see also Reff, “Manet's Portrait of Zola,” *Burlington Magazine* 117 [Jan. 1975]: 39).]

21. Richardson connects the boy nearest the seated musician with the boy in Velásquez's *Water Carrier* in Apsley House, London, which Manet could have known from an engraving by Amertler (*Manet*, p. 13).

22. Florisoone, *Manet*, p. xxxii.

23. The first writer to spot the relationship seems to have been Paul Fierens, *Les Le Nain* (Paris, 1933), p. 29. There are several versions of Le Nain's painting, the best known of which is in the Ionides Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is not clear how Manet came to see any of the known versions, but the visual evidence alone suggests overwhelmingly that he did. For a discussion of the different versions see Basil S. Long, *Catalogue of the Constantine Alexander Ionides Collection*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1 (London, 1925): 36–37.

24. Florisoone seems to have been the first to connect the *Old Musician* with the *Gilles* (*Manet*, pp. xvi–xvii).

25. *La Charrette*, then in the collection of Philippe de Saint-Albin who subsequently willed it to the Louvre, was discussed by Champfleury in “Nouvelles Recherches sur la vie et l'oeuvre des frères Le Nain,” *GBA*, 1st ser., 8 (Dec. 1, 1860): 275. An engraving of the painting by Sotain, after a drawing by Parent, appears on p. 273.

26. One important difference between the *Halte du cavalier* and the *Old Musician* (it is also a difference between the *Drinkers* and the *Old Musician*) might be mentioned here. In Le Nain's and Velásquez's paintings several of the figures stare directly at the beholder—or if we think them as posing to be painted, at the painter himself—whereas in Manet's canvas only a *single* figure, the *Old Musician*, actually meets one's gaze with his own. In fact, there is not a single large multifigure painting in Manet's oeuvre in which more than one of those figures looks out at us. (The closest thing to an exception occurs in *Olympia*, in which both Victorine Meurent and the black cat at the foot of her bed confront us directly.) This may not strike the reader as important—it has gone unremarked until now—but I believe that Manet seems consciously or unconsciously to have felt that to have *more* than a single figure look directly at the beholder would in effect be to establish several individual, and so to speak merely psychological, relationships between the beholder on the one hand and the figures in question on the other. Whereas Manet seems to have wanted to establish a particular kind of relationship between the beholder and the painting *as a whole*, in its essential unity as a *painting*. In this sense it is as though the *painting itself* looks or gazes or stares at one—it is as though it confronts, fixes, even freezes one—through the eyes of the *Old Musician*, or through those of Victorine Meurent in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, or through those of the soldier holding a cloak in the *Christ Mocked*. . . and as though this was an essential source of Manet's conviction, insofar as he achieved that conviction, that the paintings in question really *were paintings*. (The claim that Manet was explicitly concerned with the concept of a painting—*le tableau*—is not based only on the character of his pictures themselves. It is also grounded in the criticism of the time, in particular that of Zacharie Astruc, who more than any other writer spoke for Manet's generation. See n. 97 for more on Manet's search for the *tableau*.)

If there is truth in this, Manet's preference for arrangements of more than one figure becomes at least partly intelligible: in his paintings of a single figure, the latter inevitably tended to detach or anyway to distinguish itself—if only “psychologically”—from the rest of the painting. Hence his decision to activate the backgrounds of such pictures as the *Street Singer*, *Lola de Valence*, *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*. Hence also his indecision whether or not to include a maid and/or a peeping figure in the shrubbery in the *Surprised Nymph* of 1861. [We now know from old photographs that the face of a

satyr was visible among the boughs at the upper right, and that most likely it was painted out only after the painter's death (see Manet 1983, pp. 83–84, cat. no. 19).]

27. Bazin, "Manet et la tradition," p. 155. George Heard Hamilton remarks that "in costume, if not in mood, the *Absinthe Drinker* appears not unrelated to Daumier's sculpture . . . *Ratapail* (1850)" (*Manet and His Critics*, p. 23, n. 7).

28. Paul Jamot and Georges Wildenstein, *Manet*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1932), 1:89. See also Anne Coffin Hanson, *Édouard Manet 1832–1883*, exhib. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Nov. 3–Dec. 11, 1966; Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, Jan. 13–Feb. 19, 1967), p. 45.

29. Antonin Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," *Le Studio* 21 (Jan. 15, 1901): 71–77, at p. 72. (*Le Studio* was the French edition of the English magazine *The Studio*, in which Proust's essay appeared in an inadequate translation.) Proust was Manet's friend from childhood, and his witness is invaluable. "L'Art d'Édouard Manet" contains information not in Proust's *Souvenirs*. The article is not exactly unknown since it is cited in several Manet bibliographies and one brief excerpt from it is anthologized in Caillier's and Courthion's *Manet raconté par lui-même*. But it has been neglected by historians of Manet. [It has since been republished in Proust 1897, pp. 85–102. The French text of the original essay plus a new English translation are given in appendix 1.]

30. [See n. 21 above.]

31. Some exception must be made for Florisoone, who in his book of 1947 insists on the importance of seeing Manet (in particular his "eye") in relation to French artists of the eighteenth century such as Watteau, Desportes, Oudry, Louis Moreau l'aîné. He does not emphasize the importance of Watteau, however, and seems to have had in mind the aspect of French eighteenth-century art that Sandblad characterized by the words "flâneur realism" and associated with the *Music in the Tuileries* (Sandblad 1954, pp. 47–57, 159–61).

32. The *Joueuse de guitare* (Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, Conn.) is placed in 1867 by Jamot and Wildenstein. But A. Tabarant is certain that it was painted in 1866 (*Manet et ses oeuvres* [Paris, 1947], pp. 119, 124, 134). [It is placed in 1867 in Denis Rouart and Daniel Wildenstein, *Edouard Manet: Catalogue raisonné*, 2 vols. (Lausanne and Paris, 1975), 1:116–17, cat. no. 122.]

33. Bazin, "Manet et la tradition," pp. 154–55. Previously, Jamot had connected *La Pêche* with the painting of the same title by Annibale Carracci in the Louvre ("Études sur Manet I," 38–39). Bazin argues that Manet's work is based on two paintings by Rubens, the *Landscape with Rainbow* in the Louvre and the *Castle Garden* in Vienna. Sandblad believes that Manet had both Carracci and Rubens in mind (Sandblad 1954, pp. 42–44). He also observes that Manet probably relied on Bolswert's engravings after both Rubens paintings: thus the reversal, in relation to the paintings, of the borrowed motifs. In any case, Manet's references to Rubens are far more precise than his rather general allusion, if it is as much as that, to the Carracci.

34. For these works see respectively Hélène Adhémar, *Watteau, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Paris, 1950), p. 226, cat. no. 186, engraved by Favannes; p. 226, cat. no. 188, engraved by Le Bas; p. 228, cat. no. 198, engraved by Aubert; p. 221, cat. no. 159, engraved by Caylus (the original has been lost). There is a striking resemblance between the weedlike plant that dominates the leftmost portion of Manet's canvas and the device or piece of equipment, itself suggestively like a child's fishing rod, to the right of center in the Caylus engraving. The resemblance between the half-submerged bit of fence in the middle distance in *La Pêche* and the similar construction in *La Chasse aux oiseaux* might also be remarked. (The same kind of fence appears in Rubens's *Landscape with Rainbow* sited firmly on dry land.)

L'Amour paisible and *Le Rendez-vous de chasse*, then in the Morny Collection, were exhibited on the boulevard des Italiens in 1860. *L'Assemblée dans un parc* belonged to La Caze with whose collection Manet was familiar.

The possibility that *La Pêche* might be closely related to Watteau as well as to Rubens was independently remarked, at the 1966 Manet exhibition in Philadelphia, by Kermit Champa.

35. Jean Collins Harris, "The Graphic Work of Édouard Manet" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1961), p. 242. Harris relates *Les Voyageurs* to Ruisdael.

36. See Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 205, cat. no. 34, for a discussion of the different versions of *Recrue allant joindre le régiment*.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 220–21, cat. no. 155, engraved by Watteau and Simmoneau l'aîné. A version of this painting was exhibited on the boulevard des Italiens in 1860.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 212, cat. no. 92, engraved by Thomassin fils.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 229, cat. no. 204, engraved by C.-N. Cochin.

40. Other possible sources include *Les Jaloux*, *ibid.*, p. 208, cat. no. 64, engraved by G. Scotin; *Le Rendez-vous*, p. 211, cat. no. 85, engraved by Audran; *La Game d'amour*, p. 223, cat. no. 169, engraved by J.-P. Le Bas; *Le Lorgneur*, pp. 223–24, cat. no. 171, engraved by G. Scotin; and *Fêtes Vénitienes* (see n. 42 below).

41. *Ibid.*, p. 231, cat. no. 211, engraved by Baron in the eighteenth century and by W. Marks in *L'Artiste*, Feb. 3, 1856, opp. p. 322.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 228, cat. no. 197, engraved by Laurent Cars. Also, the pose of the male dancer in *Fêtes Vénitienes* is close to that of Manet's *Absinthe Drinker*.

43. Cf. in particular Watteau's *Les Champs-Élysées* (Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 225, cat. no. 184, engraved by N. Tardieu, fig. 78). This connection was first suggested by Ellen Phoebe Wiese, "Source Problems in Manet's Early Painting" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1959), p. 154.

44. Schapiro, in his review of Sloane (above, n. 8), calls attention to Manet's "positive interest in the refractory, the independent, the marginal, and the artistic in life itself (the world of performers and spectacle)" (p. 164). This interest was consistent with an important facet of the generation of young painters to which Manet belonged: their belief in the value of art as an independent activity which did not require social justification. Delacroix and Baudelaire epitomized this point of view for them, and Fantin-Latour's *Homage to Delacroix* is perhaps its most explicit monument. Not that Manet's involvement with theatricality was simply an aspect of his interest in the artistic. The kind of relationship (roughly, of a particular mode of confrontation) between the beholder and the work itself which I suggest Manet wanted to establish (see n. 26)—and on the establishing of which his conviction in his work as *paintings* partly depended—may be thought of as essentially theatrical. And later (n. 111) I suggest that Manet's involvement with theatricality was a function of his realism as well.

In any case, its ubiquitousness in his art is beyond question. Even Manet's subjects from contemporary "history"—the *Battle of the Kearsarge* and the *Alabama* and the *Execution of Maximilian*—are essentially theatrical. In both cases the events were witnessed by an audience, some of whom are depicted in the actual paintings. Maximilian himself is shown as a kind of Gilles-figure, a large sombrero on his head, companions at his side, like the boy in white in the *Old Musician*. Often, however, what one experiences as the theatricality of Manet's subject matter seems to be a function of nothing more than the fact that he depicted it: as though in Manet's art the very act of posing, or fact of being represented, was for the first time revealed as ineluctably theatrical—as inescapably, even when inadvertently, a performance.

45. [I have moved the sentences between parentheses from the notes to the body of the text.]

46. Philippe Burty quoted these lines in his *Tableaux de l'école française principalement du XVIII^e siècle tirés de collections d'amateurs*. . . (Paris, 1860), p. 56, cat. no. 273. This was the catalog for the exhibition on the boulevard des Italiens in which a version of *Une Mascarade* was shown.

Manet's painting of 1859–60, the *Students of Salamanca*, may also be relevant here: Le Sage's *Gil Blas*, on which it is based, is a French classic in Spanish dress. Moreover, the incident depicted, which occurs in the prologue, has for its theme the need to pursue the meaning of what in the work itself may appear at first arbitrary or meaningless.

47. Marcel Guérin, *L'Oeuvre gravé de Manet* (Paris, 1944), pl. 29 [reference missing from "Manet's Sources"].

48. Theodore Reff, "The Symbolism of Manet's Frontispiece Etchings," *Burlington Magazine* 104 (May 1962): 184.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

51. See n. 13 above.

52. Reff, "Manet's Frontispiece Etchings," p. 185.

53. Guérin, *L'Oeuvre gravé de Manet*, pl. 28 [reference missing from "Manet's Sources"].

54. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

55. Fernand Desnoyers, *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle, prologue en vers par F. Desnoyers pour l'ouverture du théâtre de marionnettes dans le jardin des Tuileries* (Paris, 1861). Reff mentions Duranty's theater and Desnoyers's prologue in a footnote ("Manet's Frontispiece Etchings," p. 185, n. 39), to show the topicality of Manet's reference to Pulcinella in the *Deuxième Essai*. He does not connect the *Premier Essai* with the *théâtre de Polichinelle*.

56. Edmond Duranty, *Théâtre des marionnettes du jardin des Tuileries* (Paris, 1862).

57. See Reff, "Manet's Frontispiece Etchings," p. 185. According to Marcel Crouzet, Duranty's book was published during the last weeks of 1862 (*Un Méconnu du réalisme: Duranty* [Paris, 1964], p. 179). This means that Manet could not have based the cat in the *Premier Essai* on the published book itself. Crouzet also notes that Nadar's vignette had already been used by Jules Viard's journal, *Polichinelle à Paris* (*ibid.*); so there is no question but that Manet, who was Nadar's friend, could have known it.

Moreover, the Polichinelle-cat connection suggests that the *Deuxième Essai* was in fact executed first and that the *Premier Essai* came second, the cat alone now standing for Polichinelle, and the commedia dell'arte generally, in a simplified and highly symbolic image. [In this connection, Étienne Moreau-Nélaton lists the Pulcinella frontispiece before the one with the cat in his pioneering work, *Manet graveur et lithographe* (Paris, 1906), nos. 48 and 49, and Léon Rosenthal, in *Manet aquafortiste et lithographe* (Paris, 1925), states that the Pulcinella frontispiece preceded the other, "d'une sobriété classique" (pp. 28–29). Jean C. Harris follows Guérin in maintaining the reverse order (*Édouard Manet: The Graphic Work: A Catalogue Raisonné*, rev. ed., ed. Joel M. Smith [San Francisco, 1990], pp. 130–33, cat. nos. 37 and 38).]

58. Victor Luciennes, "Théâtre de Polichinelle aux Tuileries," *L'Artiste* (Oct. 15, 1861): 185–86. (Mais il y manque quelque chose: un chat, je n'ai pas vu de chat. Vous en souvenez-vous, quand nous étions enfants et que nos mères nous conduisaient par la main, vous en souvenez-vous de ce beau chat, le compagnon inséparable de Polichinelle? Il rappelait le choeur dans Sophocle et dans Euripide. Le chat, mon Dieu! c'est la tradition, c'est la poésie de notre enfance!)

59. Henri Béraudi, *Les Graveurs du XIX^e siècle*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1885–92), 9:102, cat. no. 159. See also *A Catalogue of the Etchings, Drypoints, and Lithographs by Professor Alphonse Legros in the Collection of Frank E. Bliss* (London, 1923), pl. XLVI. Harris ("Graphic Work of Édouard Manet," p. 144) sees a stylistic relation between Legros's lithograph and Manet's *Balloon*.

60. See Seymour O. Simches, *Le Romantisme et le goût esthétique du XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1964); and Crouzet, *Un Méconnu du Réalisme*, who discusses the relation of the puppet theater to the Realist esthetic of its creator (pp. 149–66).

61. See Fernand Desnoyers, "Du réalisme," *L'Artiste*, Dec. 9, 1855, 197–200.

62. See Crouzet, *Un Méconnu du Réalisme*, esp. pp. 133–66.

63. That announcement is reproduced in Gerstle Mack, *Courbet* (New York, 1951), pl. 35.

64. Crouzet does not give a date for their first meeting. By 1862, though, Champfleury was well enough known to Manet for the painter to depict him in *Music in the Tuileries*, and Duranty was Champfleury's protégé. (Duranty himself may be represented in Manet's painting, just to the right of Baron Taylor and further back, in a light or perhaps a straw hat. Cf. the portrait drawing of Duranty by Évariste de Valernes, pl. V in Crouzet's study.) Both Duranty and Manet appear in Fantin-Latour's *Homage to Delacroix*, which was begun in 1863.

65. Fernand Desnoyers in his *Salon des Refusés: La Peinture en 1863* (Paris, 1863), pp. 40–42, claims that Legros, Fantin-Latour, Gautier, Carolus Duran, and Bracquemond, stunned by Manet's *Guitarrero* in the Salon of 1861, visited him to pay their respects, and later brought to his studio several critics and at least one poet. This may be when and how Duranty and Zacharie Astruc first met Manet. Both Crouzet (*Un Méconnu du Réalisme*, p. 198) and John Rewald (*The History of Impressionism* [1946; rpt. New York, 1961], pp. 51–52) think that it was.

66. It is, I think, not inconceivable that Manet's experience of the puppet theater encouraged him in the direction of the willed, intense naïveté—the deliberate, almost painful crudeness—with which *Music in the Tuileries* was painted and which sets it somewhat apart from the rest of his ambitious pictures of the first half of the 1860s. "I thus have composed a *written theater* for marionnettes," Duranty wrote in the introduction to his collection of plays, "an attempt without precedent in Europe, and I give this attempt over to the meditation and the criticism of naïve and sophisticated minds." (J'ai donc composé un *théâtre écrit* de Marionnettes, tentative sans précédents en Europe, et je livre cette tentative à la méditation et à la critique des esprits naïfs et savants.) And in the *Petit Discours* that ends the book he wrote (in the person of Polichinelle), pp. 385–86:

This book is not at all written for children, that's to say it isn't specially written for them. It is meant, as was said in the *Introduction*, for very naïve and very sophisticated minds. Children belong to the first category, that's why the book suits them perfectly, even those parts of it that they won't understand. . . .

Certain things will escape the children, just as certain other things will escape the sophisticated. That doesn't prevent this collection of Comedies from being the most complete comic monument that has been erected in the nineteenth century, embracing at the same time mystery and reality.

Le livre n'est nullement fait pour les enfants, je veux dire fait d'une manière spéciale. Il est destiné, comme il a été dit dans l'*Introduction*, aux esprits très naïfs et aux esprits très savants. Les enfants appartiennent à la première catégorie, voilà pourquoi le livre les conviendra parfaitement, même dans les parties qu'ils ne comprendront pas. . . .

Certaines choses échapperont aux enfants, de même que certaines autres échapperont aux esprits très savants. Cela n'empêche cette collection de *Comédies* d'être le monument comique le plus complet qui ait été élevé aux dix-neuvième siècle, embrassant à la fois le mystère et la réalité.

The same deliberate, extreme naïveté characterizes two other works of roughly this moment, both of which can be connected with *Music in the Tuileries* and *The Balloon*: the etching known as the *Street Singer* (which Jean Collins Harris was the first to place in 1862), and the small oil painting, *Children in the Tuileries*, in the museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. Each contains figures seen from the rear, a motif that occurs only very rarely in Manet's oeuvre. But that motif is common to representations of the marionette theater in operation, those by Legros already cited, for example, and it seems likely that Manet had such representations in mind.

Two further analogies between the marionettes and Manet's paintings of the early 1860s might be mentioned. In "The Symbolism of Manet's Frontispiece Etchings" Reff remarks that the *Deuxième Essai de frontispice* contains discrepancies of scale, e.g. between the actor and the sword, and that similar discrepancies also occur in Manet's paintings of the time. While in the introduction quoted above Duranty includes among the sources of the special charm of the marionettes: "disproportion between the animate being and the objects that surround him; large things reduced, small objects magnified, uninhabitable houses, dwarf trees, procrustean beds, microscopic mountains, but giant bottles, colossal pots, monumental casseroles, rifles, sabers, umbrellas . . ." (p. ii). I do not say that Duranty's marionettes influenced Manet's paintings in this respect. The significance of the analogy is rather that it helps specify a further tract of common sensibility. At the very least, it suggests that if Manet recognized discrepancies of scale in some of his pictures, as he almost certainly did—which is not to say that he explicitly intended those discrepancies in the first place—there was a point of view, associated with the concept of naïveté, from which they could be not just tolerated but welcomed. (The spatial inconsistencies in paintings by the Le Nains, which Champfleury regards as characteristic and which seem to anticipate the problematic spatial relations of such pictures as the *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and *Episode in a Bullfight*, may have a similar significance for Manet.)

Finally, there is a sense in which Manet may perhaps be said to have identified with Polichinelle: not with his character but with his relation to the marionette theater as a whole. Roughly, the theater belonged to Polichinelle; he was not only its chief protagonist but, according to the plays themselves, its director, author, and creator. In effect, he put himself in his productions—much as Courbet had put himself at the center of his *Painter's Studio*, or in numerous other paintings, or as Manet had put himself in *La Pêche* and *Music in the Tuileries*. Unlike Courbet, Manet quickly came to remove all overt evidence of himself from within his paintings; though the relation of his pictures to the beholder, who of course was in the first place the painter himself, implies that there may be a sense in which it simply was not possible for Manet to take himself out of his pictures entirely. (Here I might mention that Legros too depicts himself in his lithograph *Le Théâtre de Polichinelle des Tuileries*, which further suggests that self-awareness of some more or less explicit sort was associated with Duranty's marionettes.)

67. This was first observed by Ernest Chesneau, "Le Salon des Refusés," in *L'Art et les artistes modernes en France et Angleterre* (Paris, 1864), p. 190n. More than forty years later it was rediscovered by Gustav Pauli, "Raffael und Manet," *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1908): 53–55.

68. Zacharie Astruc was the first to connect the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, then called *Le Bain*, with Giorgione (*Le Salon*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863]: 5). Astruc was close to Manet and must have spoken from definite knowledge. See Proust 1913, p. 43.

69. Florisoone, *Manet*, p. xvii.

70. Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 203, cat. no. 15, engraved by Aveline. Adhémar wonders

whether a painting designated only as *Jeune Fille passant un gué*, which was part of an anonymous sale in Paris on Feb. 6, 1862, was a replica of *La Villageoise*.

71. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 30510.

72. Reff, "The Meaning of Manet's Olympia," pp. 111–22. [See also Theodore Reff, *Manet: Olympia*, Art in Context (London, 1976).]

73. Sandblad 1954, esp. pp. 69–107.

74. The maid bearing flowers, however, is not unlike figures in paintings by Watteau who carry flowers in their raised aprons in much the same way. I am thinking of figures such as that of the woman in *L'Amante inquiète* (Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 216, cat. no. 127, engraved by Aveline); of the child in *L'Automne* (ibid., p. 225, cat. no. 179, not engraved but in 1863 in the La Caze Collection, Paris); of the woman at the right of the Berlin *Embarkation for Cythera* (ibid., p. 227, cat. no. 195, engraved by N.-H. Tardieu; fig. 189).

75. Guérin, *L'Oeuvre gravé de Manet*, pl. 87.

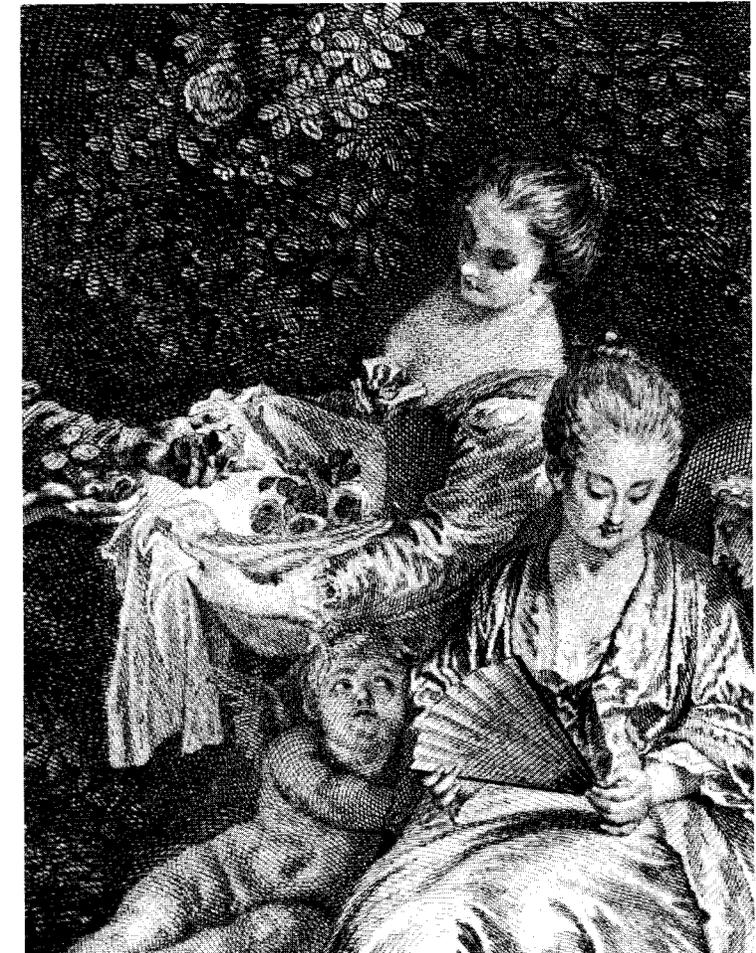


Figure 189. N.-H. Tardieu, engraving after Antoine Watteau, *Embarkation for Cythera*, detail of woman holding flowers in her apron.

76. Julius Meier-Graefe, *Édouard Manet* (Munich, 1912), p. 141, pl. 67.

77. Maximilien Gauthier, *Achille et Eugène Devéria* (Paris, 1925), opp. p. 80.

78. Gauthier, *Achille et Eugène Devéria*. See also Stanley Meltzoff, "Nineteenth-Century Revivals" (M.A. diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1941). The first section of Meltzoff's thesis, "Revival of the Rococo," discusses the Devérias. For Schall see A. Girodie, *Un Peintre des fêtes galantes: J. F. Schall* (Strasbourg, 1927).

79. Proust 1913, p. 23.

Il nous conduisit droit au *Pèlerins d'Emmaüs* de Rembrandt et aux *Cavaliers* de Velasquez, puis nous fit faire une longue station devant les dessins des maîtres, surtout devant ceux de Watteau et de Chardin.

Là nous trouvâmes [Eugène] Devéria, l'auteur de la *Naissance de Henri IV*, à qui il avait donné rendez-vous. Devéria nous ramena devant les Veronese et nous fit un éloge enthousiaste des Italiens.

"Les jeunes gens," dit en riant Raffet, "ont assez gentiment écouté l'avocat. Le peintre pourrait les conduire devant son tableau au Luxembourg."

Notre visite y fut rapide. Raffet adressa à Devéria des éloges auxquels nous nous associâmes, ce qui nous fit de Devéria un protecteur et un ami. Celui-ci donna même à Manet ultérieurement une petite *Fête* de Fragonard peinte sur ardoise, dont mon camarade me fit plus tard présent.

This is just one instance of the richness of relevant detail in Proust's reminiscences of Manet.

80. Charles Baudelaire, "Salon de 1845," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 25; English translation from Baudelaire, "Salon of 1845," *Art in Paris, 1845–62*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London, 1965), pp. 11–12. (Pendant des longues années, M. Achille Devéria a puisé, pour notre plaisir, dans son inépuisable fécondité, de ravissantes vignettes, de charmants petits tableaux d'intérieur, de gracieuses scènes de la vie élégante, comme nul keepsake, malgré les prétentions des réputations nouvelles, n'en a depuis édité. Il savait colorer la pierre lithographique; tous ses dessins étaient pleins de charmes, distingués, et respiraient je ne sais quelle rêverie amène. Toutes ses femmes coquettes et doucement sensuelles étaient les idéalizations de celles que l'on avait vues et désirées le soir dans les concerts, aux Bouffes, à l'Opéra ou dans les grands salons. Ces lithographies, que les marchands achètent trois sols et qu'ils vendent un franc, sont les représentants fidèles de cette vie élégante et parfumée de la Restauration, sur laquelle plane comme un ange protecteur le romantique et blond fantôme de la duchesse de Berry.)

81. Baudelaire, "Le Peintre de la vie moderne," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 458 (historiens des grâces interlopes de la Restauration); English translation from "The Painter of Modern Life," in Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London, 1964), p. 5.

82. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1859," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 352; English translation from "Salon of 1859," in Baudelaire, *Art in Paris*, p. 180. (Cette époque était si belle et si féconde, que les artistes en ce temps-là n'oubliaient aucun besoin de l'esprit. Pendant qu'Eugène Delacroix et [Eugène] Devéria créaient le grand et le pittoresque, d'autres, spirituels et nobles dans la petitesse, peintres du boudoir et de la beauté légère, augmentaient incessamment l'album actuel de l'élégance idéale.)

83. Proust writes that while he and Manet were students in Couture's atelier, before 1856, that is, they often ate lunch at a shop on the rue Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, in the company of Murger, Barbey d'Aureville (who later praised the *Kearsarge and the Alabama*), Baudelaire, and others (Proust 1913, p. 22). He also gives a long account of a conversation among Manet, Baudelaire, and himself just after Manet learned that the *Absinthe Drinker* had been rejected by the jury for the Salon of 1859 (pp. 33–35).

84. Sandblad sees this grouping in different terms. He feels that the conjunction of

Gautier, Taylor, and Baudelaire "was not a matter of accidental choice. For if Gautier was the representative of conservative criticism and Lord Taylor the habitué of the museums and a connoisseur of Spanish art, Baudelaire's position in the circle was that of spokesman for the realism of the flâneur" (Sandblad 1954, p. 57). But Gautier was not a representative of conservative criticism, and Taylor was far more than just a connoisseur. Both were heroes of romanticism, and Gautier was a consummate artist, to whom Baudelaire had dedicated both the 1857 and 1861 editions of *Les Fleurs du mal*. (For those dedications see Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Y.-G. Dantec and Claude Pichois [Paris, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1961], pp. 1506 and 2 respectively. See also his essay, "Théophile Gautier," *ibid.*, pp. 675–700.) For Baron Taylor see Philippe de Chennevières, "Le Baron Taylor," *Souvenirs d'un directeur des Beaux-Arts*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1883–89), 3:30–51, from which I quote the following (p. 37):

No one, I repeat, has been more of his time, but as one should be, that's to say as a shrewd observer of its needs, guessing its barely stated aspirations, he served his age without hesitation and with a brave and noble heart that sought everything that could be honestly profitable to him. He was among the first to understand that in the midst of contemporary discords, art was perhaps the most serious of all France's interests. He hardly knew any other party than that of art; by that, he showed himself indifferent to and above political parties; by that, he merited the respect and the favor of every government.

Nul, je le répète, n'a plus été de son temps, mais comme on doit en être, c'est-à-dire qu'observateur délié de ses besoins, devinant à demi-mot ses aspirations, il servit son temps sans hésitation et d'un cœur brave et élevé dans tout ce qui pouvait lui être honnêtement profitable. Il fut des premiers qui comprit qu'au milieu des tiraillements contemporains, l'art était peut-être le plus grave des intérêts de la France. Il ne connut guère l'autre parti que celui de l'art; par là, il se montra indifférent et supérieur aux partis politiques; par là il mérita le respect et la faveur de tous les gouvernements.

Chennevières adds that Taylor was "the best armed, the earliest, and the least hesitant of our most violent romantics" (p. 32) (le mieux armé, le premier en date et le moins hésitant de nos plus violents romantiques). By placing Baudelaire in conversation with Gautier and Taylor, Manet was asserting his friend's relation to early romanticism.

85. Harris ("Graphic Work of Édouard Manet," p. 86, n. 54) connects the cat in the *Olympia* with the one in Legros's etching *Le Chat noir* (Béraldi, cat. no. 148; reproduced in *Etchings, Drypoints and Lithographs*, pl. XLIII). Possibly both connections were at work.

Olympia's cat is, I think, also related to the cat in Chardin's great still life of 1728, *La Raie dépouillée* (fig. 190). The connection is perhaps even more explicit between Chardin's cat and the one in Manet's *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*.

86. [According to Jacques Thuillier, organizer (with Michel Laclotte) of a major retrospective exhibition of the brothers Le Nain in 1979, all efforts to attribute particular works to Louis, Antoine, or Mathieu Le Nain must remain speculative (Préface, *Les Frères Le Nain*, exhib. cat. [Paris: Grand Palais, Oct. 3, 1978–Jan. 8, 1979], pp. 16–20).]

87. The exhibition took place at Martinet's (where Manet was to exhibit paintings throughout the first half of the 1860s), 26 boulevard des Italiens. The catalog was by Philippe Burty (above, n. 46). The importance of this exhibition for Manet's development can scarcely be exaggerated. See also the discussion of that exhibition by Thoré further on in this chapter.

88. Perhaps it is relevant that Champfleury thought that *The Forge* might be a portrait of Le Nain and his parents (*Les Frères Le Nain* [Paris, 1862], p. 45).



Figure 190. Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, *La Raie dépouillée*, 1727.

89. The mood of Manet's painting is largely a function of the way in which his parents, like most of the figures in Le Nain's *Repas de paysans* for example, do not look at the beholder. This seems to conflict with the claims (see n. 26 above) concerning the role played in Manet's art by figures who gaze directly at the beholder. But Manet had certain problems with the portrait as a genre, precisely because direct confrontation with the beholder was built into it as one of its conventions; as a result, the *special* mode of confrontation which Manet wanted his paintings to compel tended to be undercut, neutralized. Moreover, a portrait traditionally depicted the character or personality of its subject; and this too led to the wrong kind of confrontation as far as Manet was concerned—with the painting's subject instead of with the painting as a whole (the painting *as a painting*, not as a portrait). This is not to say that Manet was not interested in the personalities of his sitters, or that he saw in them simply pretexts for paintings. His problem was how to make a portrait a painting: and his resourcefulness in that regard was no less remarkable than in any other. In the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents* Manet seems to have tried to counter the portrait's traditional or conventional aspect as confrontation by having his parents direct their gazes away from the beholder; and Le Nain was, I suggest, instrumental in enabling him to do this. (The picture of the early 1860s which perhaps more lucidly than any other exemplifies Manet's effort to make the portrait bear full conviction as a painting is the intensely interesting *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* of 1863 in Bremen [a work now believed to have been painted in 1866].)

Here as elsewhere Manet emerges as Courbet's antithesis. Far from being problematic for Courbet, the portrait in fact helped him confront reality as something outside himself

(instead of experiencing it as essentially continuous with himself, as an extension of his own body or person).

90. Léon Lagrange, "Salon de 1861," *GBA*, 1st ser., 11 (July 1, 1861): 52.

91. Harris argues convincingly that the etching does not exactly reproduce the painting ("Graphic Work of Édouard Manet," pp. 256–57). Almost certainly, however, it does not depart from the painting in ways that call into question the conclusions I draw from it.

92. See n. 25.

93. See Stanley Meltzoff, "The Revival of the Le Nains," *Art Bulletin* 24 (Sept. 1942): 259–86. This is based on one section of Meltzoff's thesis (see above, n. 78). I want to express my admiration for Meltzoff's work, which I found consistently illuminating. His articles on the Le Nains contains one mistake which I call attention to because it bears on the argument of the present study. Meltzoff writes: "In 1857 Thoré praised the Le Nains in a discussion of the *Bénédictité* [the *Repas de paysans*], and called for a new French school to be based on the Clouets, Poussin, Champaigne, and the Le Nains in opposition to the petty futility of the Rococo" (p. 266). The call for a new French school based on those masters was by Champfleury (*Les Frères Le Nain*, p. 57). The confusion evidently arose because Champfleury had just quoted Thoré's account—of 1860, not 1857—of the *Repas de paysans*, which indeed Thoré admired intensely. But for Thoré the Le Nains and Watteau were similar rather than opposite, as we shall see.

94. Champfleury, "Nouvelles Recherches sur la vie et l'oeuvre des frères Le Nain," *GBA*, 1st ser., 8 (Dec. 15, 1860): 332; reprinted in Champfleury, *Les Frères Le Nain*, pp. 138–39. ([c]'est qu'ils étaient pleins de compassion pour les pauvres, qu'ils aimaient mieux les peindre que les puissants, qu'ils avaient pour les champs et les campagnards les aspirations de La Bruyère, qu'ils croyaient en leur art, qu'ils l'ont pratiqué avec conviction, qu'ils n'ont pas craint la bassesse du sujet, qu'ils ont trouvé l'homme en guenilles plus intéressant que les gens de cour avec leurs broderies, qu'ils ont obéi au sentiment intérieur qui les poussait, qu'ils ont fui l'enseignement académique pour mieux faire passer sur la toile leurs sensations; enfin parce qu'ils ont été simples et naturels, après deux siècles ils sont restés et seront toujours trois grands peintres, les frères Le Nain.)

95. For example, Sainte-Beuve discussed Champfleury's study of the Le Nains, and his realism generally, in the *Lundi* of Jan. 5, 1863; reprinted in *Nouveaux Lundis*, 13 vols. (Paris, 1865), 4:116–39.

96. I am convinced that Manet took the figure of the girl who stands facing us in the *Halte du cavalier*; turned her sideways on the basis of the two girls in profile in *Les Moissonneurs*; turned her face somewhat further away from us, until it was a Watteau-like *profil perdu*; and based some of the details of that *profil perdu* on the kneeling figure in Velásquez's *Drinkers*.

Manet's decision to depict the girl in the *Old Musician* in profile must be seen in connection with the problems of confrontation discussed in nn. 26, 44, and 89. One might say that Manet wanted to make the *painting itself* turn toward and face the beholder, and that he sought this partly through the use of figures in profile, whose character and the nature of whose conjunction with the other more or less frontal figures underscored the fact that one was not being offered psychological intimacy with distinct individuals. At the same time, the use of figures in profile did not fundamentally defy the frontality or facingness of the painting as a whole (as the use of figures seen from the rear almost certainly would have done). It is as though the frontality, the problematic spatial relationships, and finally what has been seen as the flatness of Manet's paintings are at bottom just this facingness, this turning-toward.

The *Surprised Nymph* (1861; fig. 73) seems to represent an earlier and still incomplete

stage in this development (I have not seen the painting itself so these remarks are especially tentative). [I subsequently saw it when it was shown in the retrospective exhibition of 1983.] Despite her gaze, which is trained directly at the beholder, the fact that she is in profile, together with other facts—that there is no other figure in the final version of the painting to make the *meaning* of that profile equivalent to that of the girl in the *Old Musician* or Victorine Meurent in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, that the *background too* is shown in profile as it were, that the Nymph herself seems to turn away from the beholder in an attempt to conceal her nakedness (even her crossed leg matters here)—keep the painting as a whole from turning toward or facing us, as the *Old Musician* or *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* may, I suggest, be said to do. It is almost as though the *Surprised Nymph* turns its *side* to us. (For another view of that painting see Rosalind E. Krauss, “Manet’s Nymph Surprised,” *Burlington Magazine* 109 [Nov. 1967]: 622–27.)

97. Among other things this will entail trying to place Manet alongside a number of the most gifted and interesting of his contemporaries, including Whistler, Fantin-Latour, and Alphonse Legros, all of whom, like Manet himself, came to maturity in the mid- and late 1850s, and who together with Manet may be said to have constituted a definite artistic generation—one with its own critics, notably Zacharie Astruc, its own common imperatives, such as the demand that the artist be of his time, and finally its own climactic moment, the Salon des Refusés of 1863, after which its coherence, never very great, progressively diminished. (Between 1859 and 1863 the young Astruc may have been the best critic of new art in France, largely because he seems to have spoken for that generation.) It was above all the shared need to come to grips with, and if possible to go on from, what Courbet had done that appears in retrospect to have given that generation the brief coherence it possessed. In 1859 Astruc visited Courbet and reported: “He complains mildly about the malevolence of which he has been the object, and counts on the young and liberated generation that is entirely devoted to him and acclaims him with a sort of veneration, which he himself accepts only in the spirit of a coreligionist” (*Les 14 Stations du Salon, 1859, suivi d'un récit douloureux* [Paris, 1859], p. 387). (Il se plaint fort doucement des malveillances dont il est l'objet, et compte sur la jeune et libre génération qui lui est toute dévouée et l'acclame avec une sorte de vénération, que lui-même n'accepte qu'en manière de sympathique coreligion.) When Astruc wrote these words he had not yet made the acquaintance of Manet, whose friend and champion he soon became. If he had, his description of the young generation's attitude toward Courbet might have been slightly but significantly qualified: Proust tells us that while the young Manet admired Courbet enormously, he found his paintings too *black* (Proust 1913, p. 30); and in general Manet from the start seems to have resisted being drawn into Courbet's orbit.

To my mind, probably the most important single difference between Manet and Courbet involves the concepts of *tableau* and *morceau* as they were used in much of the most important art writing of the 1850s and 1860s. Roughly, Courbet's paintings tended to be seen by his admirers and his detractors alike either as agglomerations of superbly painted pieces of reality—a head, a hand, a dog, a woman's body, a stone outcropping, a breaking wave, for example—or as entire large *morceaux* in their own right. This aspect of Courbet's art was often criticized as a failure of composition: for example, by Planche, who disapproved of Courbet, and for whom the concept of composition was intimately related to the concept of a *tableau*, as contrasted explicitly with that of a *morceau*. (This is one instance of what it means to say that the concept of composition has its own history in nineteenth-century painting and criticism.) Champfleury countered by making a supreme virtue of the *avoidance* of composition, as in the work of the Le Nains. But this did not, it seems, wholly satisfy the younger generation, though it does seem to have forced them to

avoid the notion of composition wherever possible. Here for example is Astruc, who admired Courbet greatly: “Courbet does not bring to the arrangement [or composition] of his works as much care as one would like. He doesn't burn with that flame of art that bears down desperately and ceaselessly on each detail. There is a negligence and carelessness, a letting-go, in his conception of the ensemble. . . . In contrast to Delacroix, who only sees an ensemble resonating with the idea, he prefers the particular *morceau* that keeps it at a distance. From the *morceau* we move toward the ensemble, the *tableau*: hence the errors and inconsistencies. He doesn't concern himself enough in advance with the disposition of the *tableau*” (Astruc, *Le Salon intime: Exposition au boulevard des Italiens* [Paris, 1860], p. 65; for French text, see chap. 4, n. 8).

Astruc's remarks suggest that Delacroix may have been important to the younger painters for his conception of the picture in terms of its overall coherence as well as for his exemplary dedication to art. In any case, Astruc's admiration for Courbet's art did not prevent him from having strong reservations about it, reservations which I believe were held by Manet as well.

It is in the context of this view of Courbet, and of the aspirations for a new kind of painting that such a view implies, that Thoré's characterization of the (best) pictures in the Salon des Refusés is to be understood: “French art as one sees it in the banned works seems to be beginning, or beginning anew. It is baroque and wild, sometimes very accurate and even profound. The subjects are no longer the same as in the official galleries: little mythology or history; contemporary life, especially that of popular types; little refinement and no taste: things as they ordinarily appear, beautiful or ugly, distinguished or vulgar. And a practice altogether different from the practices hallowed by the long domination of Italian art. Instead of laboring over contours, which is what the Academy means by *drawing*, instead of slaving over each detail, which is what the amateurs of classicism call *finish*, the new artists try to render the effect in its striking unity without worrying about the correctness of the lines or the minutia of the accessories” (Bürger [Thoré], “Salon de 1863,” *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:414, emphasis in original; for French text see chap. 4, n. 12).

The scandal of the Salon des Refusés was, of course, Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (then called *Le Bain*); and Astruc's description, in his *feuilleton* on the Salon des Refusés, of what seemed to him a crucial aspect of Manet's art complements Thoré's account in an informative way: “Something worth noting is that, contrary to those great natural talents who prompt us at first to study their art in its material practice, he imposes and shows only its vital accent so to speak. It is the soul that strikes, it is the movement, the play of faces breathing life and action, the feeling that their looks convey, the expressive singularity of their roles. He pleases or displeases immediately; he charms, attracts, or repels quickly. The individuality is so strong that it escapes the mechanism of construction. The role of painting effaces itself to grant the creation all its metaphysical and corporeal value. Only much later does the gaze discover the forms of the execution, the elements that give meaning to the color, value to the relief, truth to the modeling” (Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863]; for French text see appendix 4).

The ability to paint wonderfully—to paint wonderful *morceaux*—was something even Courbet's detractors granted him without stint. But they refused to grant that the final result amounted to a painting, *un tableau*; and it seems that Astruc, and presumably Manet, would have concurred (though of course what Courbet's detractors meant by a *tableau* was not likely to have appealed to them). In this sense, Astruc saw Manet's paintings as exactly opposite to Courbet's: that is, he claimed that *how* Manet's pictures were painted was far less important *in one's experience of them* than their sheer individuality,

their vitality, their immediate, instantaneous power to attract or repel. Later it might turn out that the forms were put together in special ways, that the drawing had a particular character, that half-tones were suppressed and value contrasts intensified, that the pigment itself was manifest in a new way—but in the moment, in the grip of the work, none of these, Astruc claimed, were felt to matter or even were experienced as such. All that was experienced, for good or ill, was the total result, the painting as a whole, in its essential unity. Even the reservations of the young painter Gonzague Privat support this reading of Manet's art: "Manet has sought the *tableau* without concerning himself sufficiently with form or details" (*Place aux jeunes! Causeries critiques sur le Salon de 1865* [Paris, 1865], p. 136, emphasis in original; for French text see chap. 4, n. 13). (Privat's italicizing of *tableau* suggests that he meant it in a technical or at least a special sense, as a painter's term and not just as a common noun.) The above helps relate Manet to his generation on the one hand and to distinguish his superiority within that generation on the other. One way of describing both that superiority and Manet's liberating importance for the succeeding generation, that of the Impressionists, might be to say that in his great pictures of the first half of the 1860s—the *Déjeuner*, for example, or *Olympia*—he not only sought the *tableau* but in effect found it. At any rate, those pictures seem to have put an end to the search—for everyone but Manet, perhaps.

One might sum this up by saying that during the first half of the 1860s Manet was in search of a new *paradigm* of what a painting was. (For a related though not identical use of the concept of a paradigm, to which I am indebted, see Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [Chicago, 1962].) In part that search was the result of certain dissatisfactions with the art of Courbet. For Manet and Astruc, and presumably for other members of their generation as well, Courbet was a magnificent painter who had produced pictures of permanent value which nevertheless were not *paintings*, not *tableaux*, in the full sense of the word. At the same time, Courbet had done more than any other artist to determine the conditions within which the *tableau* would be found—if indeed it could be found. (For example, it would have to be essentially realistic.) All this is to say nothing about why Courbet's paintings are the way they are, which will eventually have to be done if Manet's relation to Courbet is to be understood in depth.

Those aspects of Manet's art which I have characterized as theatrical were instrumental in his search for the *tableau*. I mean to discuss them at length in the future study of Manet's realism mentioned above. By the close of this chapter, I hope it will be clear that Manet's involvement with the art of the past must be understood in the context of that search as well. The question of *finish*, to which Thoré adverts in the passage quoted above, must also be seen in these terms. Manet's problem, one might say, was not so much to know when a given picture was finished as to discover in himself the conviction that it was now a painting.

Nothing more sharply underscores the young Zola's distance from Manet's art than the claim, "What I seek above all else in a painting is a man and not a painting" (Émile Zola, "Mon Salon," *Salons*, ed. F. W. J. Hemmings and Robert J. Niess [Paris and Geneva, 1959], p. 61). (Ce que je cherche avant tout dans un tableau, c'est un homme et non pas un tableau.)

98. Champfleury, "Nouvelles Recherches sur la vie et l'oeuvre des frères Le Nain," *GBA*, 1st ser., 8 (Nov. 1, 1860): 184; *idem*, *Les Frères Le Nain*, p. 22. (Le doyen des critiques d'art, M. Delécluze, regarde "la voie simple qu'avait ouverte Le Nain comme bien au-dessus du genre imaginaire et fantastique, tel que Watteau l'a traité." Je ne discuterai pas cette opinion; les oppositions de maîtres, la comparaison des anciens et des modernes peuvent fournir de longues thèses, mais sans grande utilité. Watteau est Watteau, Le Nain

est Le Nain. Si ma nature me pousse vers Le Nain, je ne saurais empêcher les esprits de fantaisie de s'enthousiasmer devant les masques italiens, les comédiennes et les embarquements amoureux; mais on a calomnié le XVIII^e siècle en l'affublant exclusivement de galanterie.)

99. Thoré adopted the pseudonym William Bürger while exiled from France during the 1830s and retained it in his writings after his return to France in 1859. As a result, many writers refer to him as Thoré-Bürger. I prefer to call him Thoré throughout and to cite his pseudonym in the references to his writings that appeared under the name Bürger.

100. Champfleury, *Les Frères Le Nain*, pp. 54–55. (Un des tableaux les plus singuliers de Le Nain fut exposé en 1860, au boulevard des Italiens, au milieu des maîtres galants du XVIII^e siècle, Watteau, Pater, Lancret, Boucher, Gillot, Lemoine, etc. Cette peinture faisait une triste figure, je l'avoue, au milieu de toutes ces sensualités élégantes. Qu'on s' imagine, au milieu de courtisans habillés de soie, une bande de charbonniers qui sont tombés dans la farine, et on aura à peine l'idée du Le Nain sobre et sévère dont je laisse la description à M. W. Bürger.)

101. *Ibid.*, p. 56 (une singulière anomalie au milieu de l'art pompeux et théâtral du XVII^e siècle).

102. *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

Et M. W. Bürger ajoutait avec raison que, "parmi les peintres parisiens," Le Nain et Philippe de Champaigne, par leurs convictions, semblaient deux "excentriques." Le mot est juste. Dans une galerie de peintures du XVIII^e siècle, Le Nain est un *excentrique*. Il est calme et tranquille d'habitude, il paraît sévère en telle compagnie. Placez un portrait d'Holbein à côté d'une tête de femme de Fragonard, et rendez-vous compte de l'abîme qui sépare ces deux façons d'envisager la nature, qui font penser à une lecture d'un roman de Crébillon fils après avoir médité une pensée de Pascal. L'art est régi par des courants mystérieux qui conduisent le pinceau d'un Watteau et d'un Boucher; mais qu'on fasse actuellement une religion de ces maîtres agréables, qu'on en arrive à admirer leurs imitateurs, leurs copistes et tous leurs contemporains, voilà une mode et une adoration contre lesquels on ne saurait trop protester. Ces époques de dissolution ont abouti à la Révolution, et en présence de ce *joli* dans l'art, on est arrivé à regretter que la révolution imprimée par David n'ait pas été plus nette et plus absolue, puisqu'un siècle après nous revenons à cet art de troisième ordre qui avait sa raison historique et sociale, mais qu'il ne faut regarder que comme une amulette.

Ne serait-il pas bon aujourd'hui de laisser de côté Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, pour nous préoccuper d'une école française plus glorieuse: Les Clouet, les Poussin, les Champaigne, les Le Nain?

103. See n. 11. This use of "theatrical," as a pejorative term roughly synonymous with rhetorical and grimacing, has its roots in the art and thought of Jacques-Louis David. [Actually, it has its roots in the writings of Diderot and other French critics of the 1750s and after. See Fried 1980.] The important critic M.-E.-J. Delécluze, who had been David's student, relates several instances of David's use of these terms in *Louis David, son école et son temps* (Paris, 1855). For example, Delécluze writes: "However, toward the years 1796–1800, at a time when he was deeply preoccupied with rediscovering the artistic doctrine of the Greeks, David judged his *Oath of the Horatii* with quite remarkably severe justice. He characterized the difficulty relative to the composition by saying that it is theatrical" (p. 120). (Cependant vers les années 1796–1800, lorsqu'il était tout préoccupé de retrouver les doctrines grecques, David jugeait ses *Horaces* avec une équité sévère bien remarquable. Il tranchait la difficulté relativement à la composition, en disant qu'elle est théâtrale.) David's development from the *Horatii* to the *Sabines* has generally been discussed in narrowly stylistic terms. But Delécluze's remarks make clear that for David, as for Delécluze, style and dramaturgy were a complex unity; and that major shifts in

David's art have at least as much to do with changes in his conception of the modes of action proper for painting to depict, as with changes in his conception of the kind of drawing, modeling, and coloring with which they are to be depicted.

104. Meltzoff, "Revival of the Rococo," p. 46, n. 133. Watteau's fidelity to nature had previously been a major theme of eighteenth-century accounts of his life and art.

105. Thoré (1807–69) was a staunch and lifelong republican. He began writing art criticism in the 1830s and continued until the Revolution of 1848, which naturally he welcomed. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s he contributed political journalism to left-wing publications; in 1840 his brochure *La Vérité sur le parti démocratique* led to a lawsuit and finally imprisonment for about a year in Sainte-Pélagie. Thoré's political activities both before and after the Revolution of 1848 are described briefly by Marguéry in the articles cited below. After the failed insurrection of June 1849, in which he was implicated, he was compelled to flee the country, not to return again until the amnesty of 1859. Thoré spent the 1850s in Switzerland, England, and Holland. By 1857, when the Manchester exhibition was held, he was one of the leading connoisseurs in Europe. During the late 1850s and early 1860s, under the pseudonym William Bürger, he wrote a series of catalogs of major collections in Holland and Belgium. He returned to France in 1859 and from then until his death in 1869 wrote both criticism and history (or studies in connoisseurship) under the name of Bürger. See also P. Pétrou, *Un Critique d'art au XIX^e siècle: Théophile Thoré* (Paris, 1884); H. Marguéry, "Un pionnier de l'histoire de l'art: Thoré-Bürger," *GBA*, 5th ser., 11 (Apr. 1925): 229–45, (May 1925): 295–311, and (June 1925): 367–80; Stanley Meltzoff, "The Rediscovery of Vermeer," *Marsyas* (1942): 145–66 (from which the above is largely adapted); André Blum, *Vermeer and Thoré-Bürger* (Geneva, 1946); Philippe Rebeyrol, "Art Historians and Art Critics: I. Théophile Thoré," *Burlington Magazine* 94 (July 1952): 196–200; and Pontus Grate, *Deux Critiques d'art de l'époque romantique: Gustave Planche et Théophile Thoré* (Stockholm, 1959). [For studies of Thoré after 1969 see n. 12 in chap. 2.]

106. Bürger [Thoré] 1860 (I): 268.

Pour les observateurs superficiels, Watteau n'a pas beaucoup l'air d'adhérer à la nature. C'est pourtant là son suprême mérite, avec le sentiment de l'élégance, un esprit subtil et délicat.

N'allait-il pas, le jeune mélancolique, regarder et dessiner dans les environs de Paris, toutes les fois qu'il en avait le loisir? Quand la maladie eut attaqué ses forces vitales, où donc eut-il l'idée d'aller se raviver? À la campagne, au bord de l'eau, en pleine nature. Et quelle innombrable quantité d'études n'a-t-il pas laissées, toutes, même les moindres traits, accentuées avec une passion pénétrante! On le voit bien, qu'il aimait la nature, dans ses paysages mystérieux et poétiques, dans ses ciels éblouissants de lumière, dans la désinvolture incomparable de ses figurines aux extrémités si fines et si agiles, dans la couleur exquise des carnations de ses femmes, dans la combinaison prestigieuse des nuances de ses étoffes, dans l'harmonie de ses effets d'ensemble.

107. *Ibid.* (Et, chose inexplicable! quoiqu'il parte ainsi directement de l'observation et de l'amour de la nature, il arrive pourtant à un dessin extrêmement maniéré, à des formes presque impossibles, à des mirages de coloris comme on n'en voit guère. Mais cela est arrivé aussi à quelques autres artistes de génie, à Rembrandt, par exemple, et à Velazquez, qui sont à la fois très-fantastiques et très-réels. C'est un des mystères de la peinture chez certains coloristes privilégiés.)

108. *Ibid.*, p. 266. (Watteau! Avant lui, on faisait des princesses, et il a fait des bergères; on faisait des déesses, et il a fait des femmes; on faisait des héros, et il a fait des saltimbanques—et même des singes!)

109. Champfleury, *Les Frères Le Nain*, p. 14 (acteurs qui viennent sur le devant de la toile chanter le couplet final au public). In his "Nouvelles recherches sur la vie et l'oeuvre

des frères Le Nain" of 1860 Champfleury wrote: "They are actors who come in front of the curtain to sing a final couplet to the public, and who belong as much to nature as the actor before the prompter's box" (p. 179). (Ce sont des acteurs qui viennent sur le devant de la toile chanter un couplet final au public, et qui appartiennent autant à la nature que le comédien devant le trou du souffleur.)

110. Ernest Chesneau, "Le Réalisme et l'esprit français dans l'art," in *L'Art et les artistes modernes en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, 1864), pp. 14–15; originally published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1863. (C'est donc dans les manuscrits français, à partir du moment où l'art se sécularise et sort des couvents, à partir du XIII^e siècle, qu'il faut voir le berceau du réalisme tel que le comportait, que le comporte maintenant encore notre goût en fait d'art. . . . Comment nier la parenté de certains groupes de saints dans les miniatures, avec les groupes qui figurent dans l'oeuvre des frères Le Nain, de Philippe de Champaigne, de Watteau lui-même et de Chardin, bien moins encore, de Pater et de Lancret? Sous la variété des talents humbles et modestes, ou brillants, éclatants, superficiels et légers, que de fois ne rencontrons-nous pas, même chez les plus corrompus, ce retour de naïveté qui pose bonnement les personnages d'une scène en face du spectateur, inattentifs aux bruits du dehors, l'oeil vaguement dirigé droit devant soi, regardant sans voir:—singulier accent qui se retrouve aux dates les plus éloignées!)

Chesneau's essay was written in response to Champfleury's work on the Le Nains. While Chesneau admired the Le Nains, he believed that Champfleury overvalued them; and while he argued that French painting was naturally realistic, what he meant by realism excluded Courbet and the young artists influenced by him. For a brief discussion of Chesneau's article in the context of the traditional policy of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* see Thaddeus Ernest Du Val Jr., *The Subject of Realism in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' 1831–1865* (Philadelphia, 1936), pp. 142–44. Du Val quotes Jules Troubat (*Sainte-Beuve et Champfleury* [Paris, 1908], p. 216) to the effect that Chesneau was a follower of the conservative critic Gustave Planche. This is partly true; it is also true that Chesneau was strongly influenced by a view of the history of French painting that ran counter to Planche's, and which he tried to reconcile with his native conservatism.

111. By the early 1860s aspects of Le Nain's and Watteau's art that I have described as essentially theatrical—that the figures are grouped, that they either confront the beholder or in effect pose for him, that they participate only in the most formal or conventionalized of actions—were experienced not just as compatible with realism but as intensely, even uniquely realistic in their own right. The crucial notion, here as elsewhere, was that of naïveté: what I have been calling theatrical seems, for the historical moment in question, to have been seen and felt as the natural concomitant of a kind of radical fidelity to one's sensations. The Le Nains, Champfleury wrote in the first passage quoted above, "spurned academic instruction the better to render their sensations on canvas." That is, the very conventions of their art were seen, at least by some critics and historians, as indexes of verism and naturalness.

Manet was, of course, also interested in the overtly theatrical, the theatrical for its own sake. But it must be emphasized that that interest itself was more than just compatible with his commitment to realism. The two reinforced each other completely: because Watteau had come to be seen as realistic, and because various conventions in the art of Watteau and other painters such as the Le Nains which can be described as theatrical, and which in Watteau's paintings are so to speak disclosed as overtly theatrical, were themselves experienced as paradigmatically realistic, natural. I have already suggested that Manet's adaptation of those conventions was crucial to the securing of his work's identity as painting. The implication is that Manet's predilection for theatrical subject matter, his

fundamentally realist aspirations, and his search for the *tableau*, far from being disparate or conflicting aspects of his enterprise, formed a single intuitive unity of vision and aspiration.

112. Bürger [Thoré], *Les Trésors d'art en Angleterre* (1857; 3d ed., Paris, 1865), p. 327 (la première de l'Europe et presque la seule).

113. Chesneau, "Réalisme et l'esprit français dans l'art," pp. 5–6. (Les tendances réalistes de l'école moderne ne sont, en effet, que les indices préliminaires d'un retour légitime aux anciennes tendances de l'art français. Ces aspirations primitives, refoulées, étouffées dès l'origine sans avoir pu se développer et se manifester avec suite, sont en rapport étroit avec le génie même de la France intellectuelle. . . . Une étude successive des peintres français qui sont restés vraiment Français, qui ont secoué ou n'ont pas accepté le joug de la tradition italienne, établirait abondamment la justesse de ces assertions.)

114. Another influence seems to have been Louis Vitet's study of Eustache Le Sueur (see *ibid.*, p. 11).

115. Bürger [Thoré], *Les Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, pp. 326–27.

Ah! pourtant, voici que commence au XVIII^e siècle une école française: Watteau, c'est un Français par la tournure et l'esprit, par le style; encore est-il de la frontière flamande, et, comme praticien et coloriste, sectateur de Rubens.—Il n'y a pas loin de Valenciennes à Anvers.

Chardin, il est Français aussi, mais aussi un peu Flamand par la touche et la couleur.

A ce moment-là, et jusqu'à la fin du siècle . . . oui, il y a une école française, dont on peut avoir une opinion quelconque, mais qui eut même le privilège, en l'absence de toute peinture dans les autres pays, de rayonner sur l'Europe et d'y insinuer son style. Nattier, François Boucher, Fragonard et d'autres sont du moins des Français-Pompadour. Greuze, voilà un Français-Louis XVI.

116. Bürger [Thoré] 1860 (I): 257–58.

Oui, c'est vraiment là l'école française! Certains critiques ont l'air de prétendre qu'il n'y a guère d'école française. Ils n'ont qu'à entrer dans cette exposition. Ah! que c'est français! De l'élégance, du caprice, de l'adresse, du goût; beaucoup de charme et beaucoup d'esprit: on sent tout de suite qu'on est en France.

Il faut bien reconnaître que ces artistes sont de chez eux, que leur inspiration et leur manière, leur sentiment et leur style sont propres à leurs pays et à leur temps, et qu'ils composent une école originale, distincte de toutes les écoles étrangères.

A la vérité, la pléiade qui brille à l'exposition du boulevard appartient presque exclusivement au XVIII^e siècle. L'école française ne daterait-elle que de la fin du règne de Louis XIV?—Peut-être.

Au XVI^e siècle en France on n'aperçoit, en effet, que le style italien importé par Andrea del Sarto, Vinci, Salaï, Rosso, Primaticcio, Niccolo dell'Abbate et autres; du florentin ou du bolonais, depuis Jean Cousin jusqu'à Martin Freminet.—Ceux qui ne sont pas italianisés sont des Flamands: les Clouet.

Au XVII^e siècle, la fureur de l'imitation italienne est telle, que Molière, le plus français des écrivains français, glorifie Mignard, "ce grand homme devenu tout Romain." L'école romaine et bolonaise de Vouet, de Mignard et de Lebrun domine si exclusivement, que les meilleurs artistes indigènes s'étaient même expatriés et dénationalisés: Poussin le Normand, Claude le Lorrain, Courtois le Bourignon, Valentin et d'autres vivent et meurent à Rome,—à l'inverse des Florentins et des Bolonais qui, au siècle précédent, étaient venus vivre et mourir en France. . . . Les seuls qui ne soient pas italianisés sont toujours des Flamands: le peintre du grand cardinal et le peintre du grand roi, Philippe de Champaigne et Van der Meulen, qui meurent à Paris académiciens français.

Vers la fin du siècle, cette influence néerlandaise commence à contrebalancer un peu le goût italien, par Jacob Van Loo, qui plante en France sa dynastie,—par Largillière, éduqué dans la ville de Rubens chez le Flamand Goubau, puis à Londres chez Lely, qui continuait la tradition de Van Dyck,—par Rigaud, qui se perfectionnait aussi en copiant Van Dyck, avec les conseils de son

ami Largillière,—par d'autres encore, qui servent de transition entre "le grand siècle" tout romain et une époque très-divergente, où la liberté des moeurs allait autoriser la liberté de l'art et l'épanouissement de la fantaisie française en peinture.

Est-il sûr que cette école du XVIII^e siècle soit plus originale que celle du XVII^e? Est-il sûr que Watteau soit plus français que Lebrun? Mais cela saute aux yeux! A peu près comme Rubens et Jordaens sont plus de leur pays que leurs prédécesseurs, les Van Coxcy et les Van Orley; comme Velazquez et Murillo représentent mieux l'Espagne que leurs prédécesseurs, ambitionnant d'imiter Raphaël ou le Titien.

117. *Ibid.*, p. 268 (même les plus idéales ou les plus religieuses).

118. Castagnary, "Salon de 1866," *Salons*, 1:231–32.

L'art est indigène,—ou il n'est pas. Il est l'expression d'une société donnée, de son esprit, de ses moeurs, de son histoire,—ou il n'est rien. Il tient du sol, du climat, de la race,—ou il est sans caractère.

Ne craignons pas de l'avouer, nous n'avons jamais eu en France de peinture française.

Les germes d'un art national,—basé sur la nature et l'expression de la vie comme tous les arts nationaux qui se sont développés en Europe,—commençaient à grandir dans les divers centres intellectuels de nos vieilles provinces (on peut voir par les Clouet du Louvre où il eût atteint), quand, à la suite des guerres de la Péninsule, l'influence italienne entra subitement chez nous, apportée par les gentilshommes de François I^{er}, aux fers de leur chevaux. Le coup fut terrible. L'arrivée de Léonard da Vinci et d'André del Sarte, la formation de l'école de Fontainebleau, la prépondérance croissante de Paris, il n'en fallut pas davantage. Jamais invasion ne fut plus rapide ni plus décisive: la peinture française fut tuée net. . . . Dès lors plus d'art, hormis un art de seconde main, un art inspiré de l'art des autres peuples et non sorti des entrailles de la vie ambiante. Aussi qu'arrive-t-il? c'est que nos plus belles gloires, celles dont nous sommes le plus disposés à nous enorgueillir, ne nous appartiennent qu'à demi. Est-ce que Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorraine sont français? Il ne le sont ni par la tournure de leur esprit, ni par le choix de leur patrie adoptive. Lesueur lui-même, qui pourtant n'a jamais quitté Paris, est italien. Dans ce grand courant d'imitation qui part de Primitice pour aboutir on ne sait à qui vers la fin du dernier siècle, quelques individualités surgent: Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin; mais combien peu nombreuses et de combien peu d'influence?

119. It seems clear, however, that the development of art history in France deserves further study, both in its own right and in relation to the painting and criticism of the time. The work of Louis Dimier, who directly opposed the view of French painting that I have associated here chiefly with Thoré, would make an appropriate terminus for such a study.

120. Chennevières, "Le Vicomte Both de Tauzia," *Souvenirs*, 5 (1889):67. (Et pour quoi n'aurions nous pas le courage de crier de suite tout haut et tout franc: "Assez, assez de ce XVIII^e siècle; assez de cette faisanderie. Le XVIII^e siècle nous a amollis, il nous a gâtés, il nous a pourris, et finalement il nous a tués. J'entends qu'il a amolli et pourri ceux de son temps, et qu'il a suffi à quelques amateurs d'en regliser le ferment de notre goût, dans notre art national, pour nous gâter et nous décomposer à notre tour. Ah! qu'ils avaient raison, David et la forte légion de ses élèves de honnir, de le maudire et de le proscrire avec haine et sans pitié et du plus haut de leur dédain; et qu'il est vraiment temps de nous débarbouiller à notre tour de cette farine, de cette poudre de riz empoisonnée! . . . Comment, c'est-là ce XVIII^e siècle, que les Goncourt et les Marcille et les Walferdin, et tous nos amateurs depuis trente ans, ceux dans lesquels nous avons le plus de confiance, nous ont représenté comme la seule école française, comme la date d'apogée du vrai génie français!")

121. *Oysters*, National Gallery, Washington, D.C. See Jamot and Wildenstein, *Manet*, 1:122, cat. no. 57; 2:202, fig. 412.

122. For another view see John W. McCoubrey, "The Revival of Chardin in French Still-Life Painting, 1850–1870," *Art Bulletin* 46 (Mar. 1964): 39–53. McCoubrey seems to doubt that Chardin's still lifes were important for Manet. He writes: "Chardin's influence on Manet's still life cannot be traced with any certainty. Only two of them seem to have been inspired directly by available Chardin still lifes: a dead rabbit (Paris, Doucet Collection) that seems related to Chardin's *Lièvre morte* in the Louvre, and *Brioche fleurie* (Berlin, Private Collection), which may relate to a Chardin of the same subject that came to the Louvre in the La Caze Collection. Neither the small flower studies which Zola particularly admired nor the more ambitious table pieces of fish owe anything to Chardin. Among his fruit pictures are a few which resemble Chardin in their symmetrical arrangements, but in them the fruit is frequently isolated on a strongly receding table top, smaller in relation to the size of the canvas, and brushed in more quickly than in comparable subjects by Chardin (pp. 49–50)." Chardin's influence on Manet is not the point. Besides, influence is not what one finds in the two paintings by Manet which McCoubrey cites. The flower pieces and the larger paintings of fish may not owe anything to Chardin in a narrow sense; but they seem to me inconceivable without his prior example.

In addition, there are the connections remarked in n. 85 between the cat in Chardin's *Raie dépouillée*, and those in Manet's *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume* and *Olympia*.

123. Proust 1913, pp. 43–44. ("L'autre jour, il [Courbet] entra chez Deforge. Diaz y était: 'Combien que vous vendez votre Turc? dit-il à Diaz, en désignant un de ses tableaux à l'étalage. —Mais, répond Diaz, ce n'est pas un Turc, c'est une Vierge. —Alors cela ne peut pas faire mon affaire, je voulais un Turc.' Et le voilà regagnant le café de Madrid avec ses amis, en riant aux éclats. Diaz courait derrière lui, voulant le pourfendre avec sa jambe de bois. Quel fumiste, hein! Mais il a beau gouailler, il a des côtés très français, ce maître peintre, car, il n'y a pas à dire, nous avons en France un fonds de probité qui nous ramène toujours à la vérité, malgré les tours de force des acrobates. Regarde les Lenain, les Watteau, les Chardin, David lui-même. Quel sens du vrai!")

124. Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," pp. 73–74; for French text see appendix 1.

125. Proust 1913, p. 19 (son aversion pour la Renaissance italienne, sa fidélité à la simplicité et à la mesure de notre art français).

126. *Idem*, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," p. 73; for French text see appendix 1.

127. The relation of Manet's *La Pêche* to the painting of the same title by Annibale Carracci in the Louvre has already been discussed. It is striking, however, that while Manet may have had Annibale's painting in mind, it was to two paintings by Rubens that he chose to refer specifically.

128. Though not necessary to Raphael. In "L'Art d'Édouard Manet" Proust remarks that Manet regarded Leonardo as much superior to Raphael (p. 74). And in his *Souvenirs* Proust writes: "In Italy, he showed himself very taken with Titian and Tintoretto, little seduced by the Raphaels and Michelangelos" (Proust 1913, p. 36). (En Italie, il se montra très épris de Titien, des Tintoret, peu séduit par les Raphael et les Michel-Ange.) Paul Jamot observes that Manet sometimes borrowed from masters he did not cherish ("Études sur Manet I," pp. 47–48); his use of Raphael in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* seems to be a case in point.

129. See the passages already quoted from *Les Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, as well as his remarks about Watteau in *Galerie d'Arenburg à Bruxelles* (Paris, 1859), p. 103: "His master, his initiator—if he had another master than his own genius—would be Rubens. As a practitioner, he was closer to Rubens than to anyone." (Son maître, son initiateur,—

s'il avait en d'autre maître que son propre génie,—serait Rubens. Comme praticien, il tient plus à Rubens qu'à personne.)

130. The Goncourts played a role in this. Their "Philosophie de Watteau" connected Watteau and Rubens, though only casually (first published in *L'Artiste* [Sept. 7, 1856]: 127–29). More important, they published in 1857 and again in 1860 the Comte de Caylus's previously lost account of Watteau's life, in which Watteau's interest in Rubens is documented. See Adhémar, *Watteau*, pp. 155–56, for a brief discussion of the Goncourts' publications; and pp. 175–83, for Caylus's "Vie de Watteau." See also the introduction by J.-P. Bouillon to Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *L'Art du dix-huitième siècle et autres textes sur l'art* (Paris, 1967), pp. 9–32, for an annotated discussion of their views on art.

131. Bürger [Thoré], "Nouvelles Tendances de l'art," *Salons de T. Thoré*, 1844–48 (Paris, 1868), p. xxix (sorte d'Espagnols égarés). The essay was written in Brussels in 1857 (p. xliii). In the first of three articles on the 1860 exhibition of French paintings at Martinet's, Thoré wrote: "There is something Spanish in the superb painting entitled *La Crèche* in the Louvre" (Bürger [Thoré] 1860 [I]: 263). (Il y a quelque chose d'espagnol dans le superbe tableau intitulé *La Crèche* au musée du Louvre.)

132. Champfleury, "Nouvelles Recherches sur la vie et l'oeuvre des frères Le Nain," p. 179; *Les Frères Le Nain*, p. 13 (certainement les Le Nain avaient été élevés à l'école flamande, par un maître flamand, par la vue de tableaux flamands qui ont eu une grande influence sur leur avenir. Ils sont tout à la fois Flamands et Espagnols; un annotateur de catalogues du XVIII^e siècle ne manquait jamais de définir ainsi leurs toiles: "dans le goût de *Morillos*," et cet annotateur avait quelque clairvoyance. Par le costume, ils sont souvent Flamands, par le pinceau Espagnols. Il y a là des délicatesses à trouver pour me faire bien comprendre, car en même temps ils sont très Français).

133. *Idem*, *Les Frères Le Nain*, pp. 97–98. (*Six petits enfants*. L'un joue du violon, un charmant objet de fantaisie, l'autre, du hautbois. Ils sont presque sur le même plan, et semblent comme indifférents les uns aux autres. Fond de mur gris-sombre. Le sol offre des nuances verdâtres. Très-brillant de couleur, quoique dans une gamme paisible. Se rapproche beaucoup des Velasquez par le même sentiment cristallin des teintes. Plaît par son caractère simple et doux. Sa naïveté vous frappe comme une bizarrerie gracieuse.)

134. Henri de La Borde, "De quelques traditions de l'art français à propos du tableau de M. Ingres, Jésus au milieu des docteurs," *GBA*, 1st ser., 13 (Nov. 1, 1862): 389. (Dirait-on qu'en prétendant reconnaître les inclinations ou les traditions françaises dans le talent de M. Ingres, nous oublions les emprunts, assez dignes d'attention pourtant, que ce talent a pu faire à l'art grec et à l'art italien? Certes, l'influence de pareils modèles a été grande sur le peintre du *Virgile* et de l'*Apothéose d'Homère*, du *Voeu de Louis XIII* et de *Saint Symphorien*. Aujourd'hui encore, le tableau qu'il nous donne révèle à cet égard des admirations obstinées, des études poursuivies avec une ardeur infatigable; mais il ne dénonce pas, tant s'en faut, la manie de l'imitation et l'érudition servile. En voyant le *Jésus au milieu des docteurs*, on pourra se rappeler telle composition de Raphaël ou de Fra Bartolommeo exprimant, comme celle-ci, le goût de l'équilibre absolu, de la rigoureuse pondération des lignes; la fraîcheur et la limpidité du coloris remettront en mémoire les fresques d'Andrea del Sarto, tandis que la franchise et la diversité des types nous feront songer aux oeuvres, si admirables en ce sens, des Masaccio et des Filippino Lippi: suit-il de là que la mérite du tableau consiste dans l'amalgame d'éléments empruntés? La méthode de M. Ingres n'a-t-elle d'autre principe que l'éclecticisme, d'autre fin que l'introduction dans la peinture d'une sorte d'ordre composite dont les découvertes d'autrui feront les frais, et quelques combinaisons adroites la fortune?)

135. *Ibid.* (S'il en était ainsi, on ne s'expliquerait pas chez le maître cette facilité singulière à varier, à renouveler son style en raison de chaque sujet qu'il traite, de chaque exemple que la réalité lui fournit.)

136. Castagnary, "Salon de 1866," *Salons*, 1:232–33.

Ce fut une des prétentions du romantisme de fonder l'école nationale. La grande levée de boucliers contre la présence des Romains et des Grecs dans la littérature et dans l'art se fit au nom des idées de nationalité. Ce souvenir est amusant; car c'est justement de cette époque que date le cosmopolitisme dans l'art et le débordement de toutes les imitations. Il n'y a pas vingt ans encore, toutes les écoles de tous les temps et de tous les lieux se trouvèrent à la fois chez nous. A côté de M. Ingres, qui s'inspirait de Rome et d'Athènes, M. Eugène Delacroix se réclamait d'Anvers et de Venise, M. Meissonier de la Flandre, et quant à Ary Scheffer, c'est à son compatriote Rembrandt qu'il demandait le secret de la couleur. Au-dessous de ces illustres chefs de file chacun imitait qui il pouvait. C'était une Babel, une anarchie, un pêle-mêle qui n'eurent d'égal et ne devaient avoir pour parallèle que cet effroyable tourbillonnement de tableaux empruntés à tous les âges, à tous les pays, à tous les styles, dont depuis plus de trente ans la salle des commissaires priseurs a comme infecté Paris.

C'est cet enviable état que l'éclectisme bâtard de notre époque, voudrait prolonger et prolongera, si une jeunesse plus hardie ne vient prendre l'affaire en main, et si le classicisme avec le romantisme ne sont pas définitivement extirpés.

137. *Ibid.*, p. 233 (exprimer la vie et faire vrai).

138. Castagnary wrote in 1864: "Our painter will forget all painting previous to him, and bygone societies, and the interpretations to which they will have given rise. One doesn't make a book with books, one doesn't make a painting with paintings" ("Salon de 1864," *Salons*, 1:188). (Notre peintre oubliera la peinture antérieure à lui, et les sociétés écoulées, et les interprétations auxquelles elles auront donné lieu. On ne fait pas de livre avec des livres, on ne fait pas de tableau avec des tableaux.)

139. The classic discussion of eclecticism in nineteenth-century painting is by Baudelaire, in his "Salon of 1846," where it is seen in terms that are at once metaphysical and political. Roughly, Baudelaire contrasts eclecticism with conviction, faith, and naïveté, by which he means the spontaneous expression of one's individuality within a more comprehensive style or manner. In previous ages, faith, or at any rate the absence of doubt, was provided by viable traditions or schools of painting. Whereas Baudelaire felt that by his own time tradition as such had lapsed, and artists were compelled to seek conviction in themselves alone. Few artists in any age would have been equal to this task; and in 1846 Baudelaire felt that only Delacroix was. I don't want to discuss Baudelaire's concept of eclecticism here, except to say that unlike Castagnary twenty years later, he did not also contrast eclecticism with Frenchness. On the contrary, Baudelaire tended from the outset to identify French nationalism with its grosser manifestations, as in his remarks in the "Salon of 1846" on Horace Vernet, and to contrast nationalism as such with his own ideal of cosmopolitanism and universality, of being a man of the whole world, a citizen of the universe, like Constantin Guys. (One might say that for Baudelaire universality precluded, or entailed the shedding of, nationality.)

The above suggests that the modern historian ought not to apply the term eclecticism to nineteenth-century artists, either by stating that a particular artist—say Couture—was eclectic, or by insisting that another artist—often Manet—was *not*. What is needed is careful analysis of what the concept of eclecticism meant to the nineteenth century itself: how it was used and understood by the leading artists and critics before the triumph of Impressionism. The picture that results will be extremely complicated. For example, Théophile Gautier in *Les Beaux-Arts en Europe*, 1855 (Paris, 1856) both associated French art with eclecticism and asserted that the modern French school was the best in the world.

140. Max Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P. P. Rubens*, 5 vols. (Antwerp, 1886–92), 3:60–61, cat. no. 574. Rooses reproduces the engraving by Jac. Schmuzer, 1793.

141. There is, however, at least the possibility of a specific connection between the *Gypsies* and Watteau: the head of the female gypsy is virtually identical to that of the woman sitting on the ground in Watteau's *L'Amour paisible* (fig. 77), a version of which was exhibited at Martinet's in 1860. The distant mountain in *L'Amour paisible* resembles the one in the *Gypsies*. The motif of a guitar on a performer's back in the *Gypsies* is also found in Watteau, in Moyreau's engraving after the lost *Partie quarrée*, for example (Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 209, cat. no. 66).

142. Charles Sterling, "Manet et Rubens," *L'Amour de l'art* 13 (Sept.–Oct. 1932): 290. [The Vosterman engraving was not illustrated in "Manet's Sources"; also I have moved the illustration of the *Surprised Nymph* from the notes, where it appeared earlier on in "Manet's Sources," to the text.] Here the question arises whether any French painting mediated between the Rubens source and Manet's final picture. While it is impossible to be sure, I suggest that such a role may have been played by Fragonard's *Le Billet doux* (ca. 1776; fig. 76), which in 1860 also hung in the exhibition of French paintings on the boulevard des Italiens (see Georges Wildenstein, *The Paintings of Fragonard* [New York, 1960], p. 284, cat. no. 388). The bouquet and the small dog have their equivalents in other paintings by Manet as well. Moreover, Fragonard's *Le Chant* (Wildenstein, p. 255, cat. no. 244), which was also in that exhibition, may bear a relation to Manet's painting *The Reader* of 1861. At the very least, Manet must have been struck by the extraordinary persistence in French painting of certain conventions—roughly, of direct but restrained, relatively undramatic confrontation of the beholder—which Chesneau's essay of 1863 suggests was then one of the most salient features of the French painting of the past, but which subsequent histories have tended not to discuss.

143. [This is to assume that *La Pêche* was painted in 1861, a dating that recent scholarship has made less certain (see Manet 1983, pp. 71–73, cat. no. 12, where it is dated 1861–63).]

144. This is registered by the critics. For example, Thoré describes Manet's painting as "a young Parisian woman in the costume of an *Espada*, shaking her purple cape in the circus of a bullfight," and as "the young Parisienne disguised as an *Espada*" (Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1863," in *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:424) (une demoiselle de Paris en costume d'*Espada*, agitant son manteau pourpre dans le cirque d'un combat de taureaux, . . . la jeune parisienne déguisée en *Espada*).

There is at least a family resemblance between *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* and specific figures in paintings by Watteau which Manet knew, e.g. the same woman in *Une Mascarade* that I have connected with Manet's *Young Woman Reclining in Spanish Costume*.

145. Thoré connected Manet's painting with Goya at the time (*ibid.*). Jean Collins Harris relates the group of men standing near the wall with the similar group in *Tauromaquia* No. 19, and the bull and picador with the virtually identical motif in *Tauromaquia* No. 5. In addition, the man climbing over the wall in Manet's painting was clearly taken from *Tauromaquia* No. 30. Moreover, the upper portion of Victorine's body, in particular the pose of the head and right arm, may have been based on Velázquez's equestrian portrait of *Don Gaspar de Guzman, Conde de Olivares*, with which Manet would have been familiar through Goya's etching.

146. Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P. P. Rubens*, 3:18, cat. no. 522/1.

147. Émile Galichon, review of W. Bürger [Thoré], *Galerie Suermondt, à Aix-la-Chapelle* [Paris, 1860], *GBA*, 1st ser., 8 (Nov. 1, 1860): 186–90. The small illustration is on p. 186. Galichon refers to Rubens's painting as "a *Fortune* or a *Venus*, a vivid and

charming study made for a life-size figure” (une *Fortune* ou une *Vénus*, étude vive et charmante faite pour une figure de grandeur naturelle). Thoré himself describes the painting as probably having been made for some Triumph of Venus (*Galerie Suermondt*, p. 124). Zacharie Astruc, who by 1862 was close to Manet, described the *Mlle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* as depicting “a victorious woman in a circus” (*Le Salon*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863]) (une femme victorieuse dans une cirque). It is possible that Manet not only used Rubens’s painting as one of the sources for his own picture, but was deliberately playing on Victorine Meurent’s name (or initial) as well? At any rate, his painting represents the triumph of Victorine, his (future) Venus.

148. Proust, “L’Art d’Édouard Manet,” p. 74; for French text see appendix 1.

149. But Manet seems never to have come to admire the Italian painters brought to France by Francis I. In his *Souvenirs* Proust quotes Manet as admiring the portraits of Velásquez, Goya, Hals, “and among us Largillière, Nattier, whom one mustn’t mock. They were all right, those scoundrels. Too much arrangement, but they didn’t lose sight of nature. And the Clouets! When you think that Rosso and Primaticcio were preferred to Clouet!” (Proust 1913, p. 79) (et chez nous les Largillière, les Nattier, qu’il ne faut pas blâmer. C’étaient des bonshommes, ces mâtons-là. Trop d’arrangement, mais ils ne perdaient pas de vue la nature. Et les Clouet! Quand on pense qu’on a préféré à Clouet le Rosso et le Primaticcio!). Manet’s remarks seem to have been made around 1876, if Proust’s recollection is accurate.

150. Proust, “L’Art d’Édouard Manet,” p. 74; for French text see appendix 1. One wonders how much Proust knew. Is it possible that he was privy to Manet’s intentions as regards Frenchness but felt constrained (by Manet himself?) to no more than hint at them?

151. My account of the significance of Manet’s references to Italian art in the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* does not explain why it was at this particular moment that (if I am right) he arrived at a canon of authentically French painting that included the Italianate French masters.

152. Thoré’s belief in the exemplary character of seventeenth-century Dutch painting, which he saw as national, realistic, and humanitarian in impulse, was complemented by his view of the Italian painting of the Renaissance as essentially Catholic, symbolic, and politically reactionary. These views recur continually in his later writings. In the conclusion to his study of the museums of Amsterdam and The Hague, Thoré said of Dutch painting:

Ah! it’s no longer a mystic art, enveloped in old superstitions, a mythological art, reviving old symbols, a princely and aristocratic art, in consequence an art of exceptions and consecrated uniquely to the glorification of those who dominate the human species. It’s no longer an art of popes and kings, of gods and heroes. Raphael worked for Julius II and Leo X; Titian for Charles V and Francis I; Rubens still worked for the archduke Albert and the kings of Spain, for the Medicis of France and Charles I of England. But Rembrandt and the Dutch worked only for Holland and humanity. (Bürger [Thoré], *Musées de la Hollande I, Amsterdam et La Haye* [Paris, 1858], pp. 323–24)

Ah! ce n’est plus l’art mystique, enveloppant de vieilles superstitions, l’art mythologique, ressuscitant de vieux symboles, l’art princier, aristocratique, exceptionnel par conséquent, et consacré uniquement à la glorification des dominateurs de l’espèce humaine. Ce n’est plus l’art des papes et des rois, des dieux et des héros. Raphaël avait travaillé pour Jules II et Léon X; Tiziano, pour Charles-Quint et François I^{er}; Rubens encore travaillait pour l’archiduc Albert et les rois d’Espagne, pour les Médicis de France et Charles I^{er} d’Angleterre. Mais Rembrandt et les Hollandais n’ont travaillé que pour la Hollande et l’humanité.

For an explicit comparison between Raphael and Rembrandt see Bürger [Thoré], *Musées de la Hollande II, Musée van der Hoop à Amsterdam et musée de Rotterdam* (Paris,

1860), p. x. See also the passages from his “Salons” of the 1860s cited in the last section of this chapter.

153. Michel Florisoone, “Manet inspiré de Venise,” *L’Amour de l’art* 18 (Jan. 1937): 26–27. Tintoretto’s painting is in the Louvre, Veronese’s in the Hermitage, but Manet could easily have known the latter through engravings such as the one by Gaspard Duchange. The Veronese connection seems the more important of the two. It is interesting to note that in the eighteenth century Veronese’s painting was in the Crozat Collection, Paris, along with the Rubens *Bacchus* which I have claimed Manet used in the *Gypsies*. Now, Caylus’s life of Watteau, which the Goncourts published in 1857 and 1860, contains the information that for a time Watteau actually lived at Crozat’s and while there studied the paintings in his collection (Adhémar, *Watteau*, p. 180). Is it possible that Manet deliberately turned to the engravings of the *Recueil Crozat* in search of sources for his own paintings, in order further to secure both the relation of his work to that of Watteau and its connectedness through the medium of Frenchness with the art of foreign schools? Another painting in the Crozat Collection, Veronese’s *Finding of Moses*, which Manet could have known through an engraving by E. Jeaurat, perhaps lies behind his attempts to paint such a subject in 1861. At any rate, there is a striking similarity between Jeaurat’s engraving and the painting by Manet in the Oslo National Gallery which has been called both *Finding of Moses* and *Surprised Nymph*. [In this note I confuse the Crozat Collection, to which Rubens’s *Bacchus* and Veronese’s *Descent from the Cross* in fact belonged, with the *Recueil Crozat*, the three-volume compilation of reproductive engravings after major Italian paintings in French collections published under Crozat’s direction. Duchange’s engraving of Veronese’s *Descent from the Cross* and Jeaurat’s engraving of Veronese’s *Finding of Moses* appeared in the *Recueil*, but the latter painting was then in the royal collection. Recently, Juliet Wilson-Bareau has suggested (without reference to “Manet’s Sources”) that Manet in the 1860s relied heavily on the engravings of the *Recueil Crozat* as models for his art; see the discussion of this point in chap. 2.]

154. Gustave Planche, “Géricault,” *Portraits d’artistes* (Paris, 1853), pp. 352–53; originally published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* 10 (Apr.–June 1851): 502–31. (Géricault, sans accorder moins d’importance à l’effet dramatique, traite avec un soin persévérant l’imitation de la réalité; il s’efforce d’en reproduire tous les détails avec un soin scrupuleux, et ses efforts sont presque toujours couronnés de succès. La poitrine du jeune homme étendu aux pieds de son père, qui est sans contredit la figure la plus remarquable du tableau que j’étudie, ne laisse rien à désirer sous le rapport de l’imitation; les fausses côtes sont indiquées avec une précision qui défie tous les reproches. On trouverait difficilement, dans l’histoire entière de la peinture, un modèle rendu plus exactement. Toutes les parties de ce cadavre sont traduites avec une fidélité qui étonne, qui épouvante. Ni David, ni Girodet, ni Gros n’ont jamais trouvé, pour représenter la forme humaine, la puissance, l’énergie que nous admirons dans Géricault. *Le Déluge* de Girodet, si justement applaudi d’ailleurs pour la science qu’il nous révèle, demeure bien loin de la figure qui tout d’abord attire l’attention dans *le Radeau de la Méduse*.)

155. *Ibid.*, p. 320 (une passion pour la réalité qui ne pouvait accepter aucune contrainte); p. 325 (a représenté naïvement, franchement ce qu’il avait vu); p. 339 (tout entier au désir de substituer la réalité à la convention).

156. *Ibid.*, p. 354 (ne s’est jamais proposé, du moins dans ses oeuvres connues, qu’une seule chose, l’expression de réalité). Planche goes on to say that while Géricault’s concentration on reality was understandable and even salutary as a reaction against David’s emphasis on the antique, it imposed limits on his achievement; that despite his prodigious talent he was not a complete painter, an artist to be ranked alongside Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo. Planche adds that this would not be worth saying if the French public had

not been told over and over that Géricault had revived French painting and was a master beyond reproach (pp. 354–56).

157. See Georges Riat, *Gustave Courbet* (Paris, 1906), p. 58.

158. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale* (Paris, 1865), pp. 133–34. (Un seul tableau comme le *Naufrage de la Méduse*, de Géricault, venant un quart de siècle après le *Marat expirant*, de David, rachète toute une galerie de madones, d'odalisques, d'apothéoses et de saints Symphoriens; il suffit à indiquer la route de l'art à travers les générations, et permet d'attendre.)

159. Hamilton, *Manet and His Critics*, p. 55: "Here he challenged not only the established academic standards for such subjects but set out to test, as it were, the values of his own esthetic against that of the realist group led by Courbet, for that master had indicated his impatience with all religious painting by declaring that he could not paint an angel because he had never seen one." Proust in his *Souvenirs* adverts to Courbet's having said "that he had never seen men with wings" (Proust 1913, p. 34) (qu'il n'avait jamais vu des hommes avec des ailes).

160. By the early 1860s Géricault had come to seem an alternative source for realist aspirations. In 1863 Chesneau wrote: "Géricault having died too soon to legitimate and assure the lastingness of the principle he followed, the nineteenth century still awaits its interpreter and its school of interpretation" ("Le Réalisme et l'esprit français dans l'art," pp. 39–40). (Géricault étant mort trop jeune pour légitimer et assurer la durée du principe auquel il obéissait, le XIX^e siècle attend encore son interprète et son école d'interprétation.) Later on in *L'Art et les artistes modernes* he added: "The man who has done the greatest harm to the future of French realism is the very one who has usurped the flag, I mean Courbet" (p. 271). (L'homme qui a fait le plus de tort à l'avenir du réalisme français est celui-là même qui en a usurpé le drapeau, c'est M. Courbet.)

A parallel view is found in the Goncourts' novel *Manette Salomon*, which ostensibly is set in the 1840s and 1850s but which largely reflects the issues and debates of the first half of the 1860s (it was written between December 1864 and August 1866). It is no exaggeration to say that the novel is haunted by the figure of Géricault and the ideal of realism and modernity which he is seen to have embodied. A negative estimate of Courbet's art is implicit in the book as a whole. Coriolis, the protagonist, was modeled partly on Manet (see Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," p. 75).

I am not suggesting that Manet's circumventing of Courbet in the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* relied on these or related developments. At most, it paralleled them.

161. Chennevières, "Le Comte Clément de Ris," *Souvenirs*, 1:40. The letter reads:

Mon cher ami, mon ignorance de votre adresse et aussi une maladie de volonté qui me fait toujours renvoyer mes devoirs indéfiniment, m'ont empêché de vous remercier de vos charmants petits contes. Ne m'en veuillez pas, et croyez que je ne suis jamais insensible à un bon souvenir.—Voici l'Exposition. Je désire vous recommander vivement deux de mes amis, dont l'un a déjà eu à se louer de votre bienveillance: M. Manet et M. Fantin. M. Manet envoie un *Épisode d'une course de taureaux* et un *Christ ressuscitant, assisté par les anges*.—M. Fantin envoie un *Hommage à feu Eugène Delacroix* et *Tannhäuser au Vénusberg*. Vous verrez quelles merveilleuses facultés se révèlent dans ces tableaux, et, dans quelque catégorie qu'ils sont jetés, faites votre possible pour les trouver de bonnes places.—Votre ami bien reconnaissant,—CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

To my knowledge, this letter has never been cited in connection with Manet. [It has since been published in the standard edition of Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, ed. Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler, 2 vols. (Paris, 1973), 2:350–51.]

162. Note, however, the analogy between the wooden block and the large stone, both

of which have writing carved into them, in the *Marat* and the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* respectively.

163. The battle occurred on June 19. Manet's *Battle of the Kearsarge and the Alabama* was exhibited in Cadart's window within a month.

164. A possible source for the right-hand portion of Manet's painting, with the horses coming right at the beholder, is Janet-Lange's *Néron disputant le prix de la course aux chars*, a lithograph illustration of which may be found in *L'Artiste*, Nov. 4, 1855. A short description of the picture on p. 140 reads: "This painting was much remarked at the Salon of 1855. The effect is gripping." (Ce tableau a été fort remarqué au Salon de 1855. L'effet en est saisissant.) For a convincing reconstruction of the *View of a Race in the Bois de Boulogne* of 1864 see Jean Collins Harris, "Manet's Racetrack Paintings," *Art Bulletin* 48 (Mar. 1966): 78–82.

165. I am not claiming that the *Dead Torero* is not almost exactly based on the *Orlando Muerto*; obviously it is. I am suggesting that Manet's decision to use the *Orlando Muerto* in the first place may have been motivated by the desire to make his own independent equivalent to Géricault's figure. Manet would not have been alone in his involvement with it: perhaps more than any single image, Géricault's youthful corpse haunted the great French painters of the nineteenth century. One thinks of Delacroix (e.g. the bodies in the *Scenes from the Massacre at Scio* and *Liberty Leading the People*), of Géricault's chief heritor Daumier (e.g. the lithograph *Rue Transnonain*, fig. 191), of Courbet who admired Géricault more than any modern master (e.g. his early *Bacchante* among other pictures). It is, I think, relevant that Manet based the dead soldier in his *Guerre civile* lithograph of 1871 (fig. 192) on the *Dead Torero*, as if to make explicit the latent political or at any rate national connotations of the earlier painting, connotations which then were perhaps wholly a function of its relation to Géricault. (Géricault's significance in this regard is discussed below.) Moreover, the *Guerre civile* seems to bear some sort of explicit



Figure 191. Honoré Daumier, *Rue Transnonain*, lithograph, 1834.



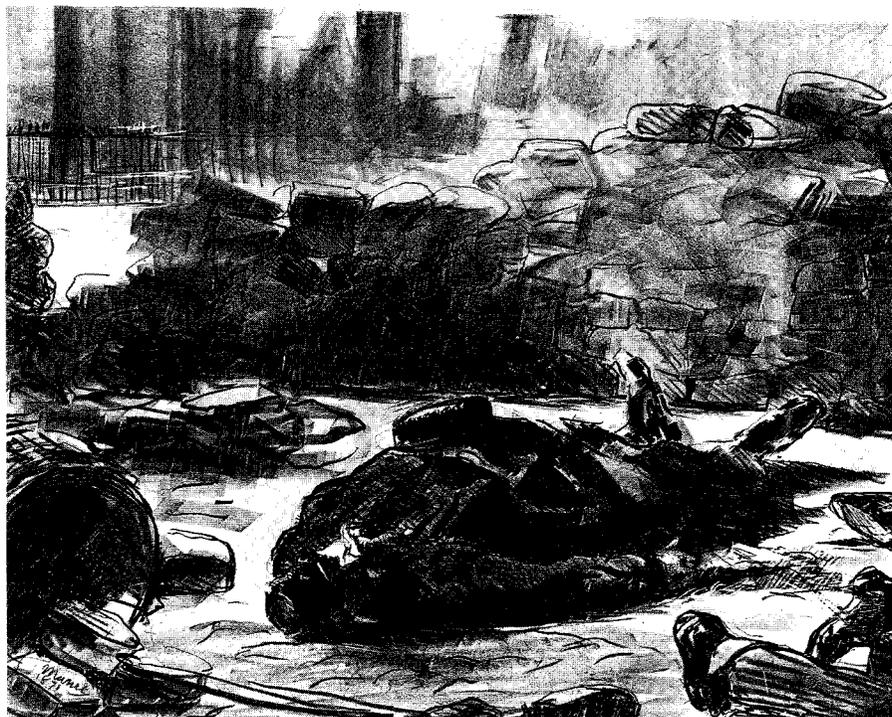


Figure 192. Édouard Manet, *Guerre civile*, lithograph, 1871.

relation to Daumier's *Rue Transnonain* of 1834; and since the latter clearly depends on the figure of the dead man in the *Raft of the Medusa*, the inference is strong that in his lithograph of 1871 Manet fully intended to align himself with Géricault and Daumier, and that by basing the lithograph on his own *Dead Torero* he characteristically acknowledged that painting's involvement with them as well.

166. Alain De Leiris, "Manet's *Christ Scourged* and the Problem of His Religious Paintings," *Art Bulletin* 41 (June 1959): 198–201. (In fact Thoré spotted Manet's use of Van Dyck when the *Christ Mocked* was exhibited in the Salon of 1865.) De Leiris writes: "In the years 1864 and 1865 Manet seems to turn away from Italian Renaissance sources, apparent in the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*, to the starker naturalism of the Spanish masters, and to come to share and indulge in his contemporaries' taste for Spanish subject matter. In this shift the Venetians are not forgotten, but a new vigor and starkness come to Manet's style along with an objectivity in the interpretation of subject matter for which Manet found precedents in Spanish art and . . . in northern Baroque art as well" (p. 199). But as we have seen, Manet's use of Spanish art began much earlier; and his problem was not how to forego Italian sources but whether he was able to use them at all. Anne Coffin Hanson suggests that the *Christ Mocked*'s sources may include paintings by Terbrugghen and Velásquez (*Édouard Manet*, p. 91).

167. The Flameng engraving accompanied Champfleury's third and last article on the *Le Nains* (*GBA*, 1st ser., 8 [Dec. 15, 1860], opp. p. 331). A similar motif is found in the Louvre's *La Crèche*, and it is possible that Manet had that painting in mind as well. And

there is a striking resemblance between the figures of the Virgin and Child and the woman seated on the ground and holding an infant in Manet's *Gypsies*. [The sentence in parentheses that immediately precedes the endnote number has been added to the original text, and this note has been modified accordingly.]

168. Proust 1913, p. 48.

169. Bürger [Thoré], "Van Der Meer de Delft," *GBA*, 1st ser., 21 (Oct. 1, 1866): 297–330; (Nov. 1, 1866): 458–70; (Dec. 1, 1866): 542–75. The basic conception of the *Luncheon*—a domestic interior—as well as its lighting, mood, accessories, and something of its *mise-en-scène*, seem to me clearly related to pictures by Vermeer such as those reproduced in Thoré's articles. Note also the similarity between the engraved monogram (an *E* and an *M* superimposed?) on the coffeepot the maid holds in the *Luncheon* and the various examples of Vermeer's monogram Thoré reproduces (fig. 193). For discussions of Thoré's writings on Vermeer see Meltzoff, "The Rediscovery of Vermeer," and Blum, *Vermeer and Thoré-Bürger*.



Figure 193. Vermeer's monogram.

170. Cf. the helmets and swords in the left foregrounds of *Andromache Mourning Hector* and the *Luncheon*. Manet borrowed those pieces from a friend (Tabarant, *Manet et ses oeuvres*, p. 53), perhaps expressly for this picture; at any rate, he does not use them in any other picture. The similarities between the ways in which Manet's painting on the one hand and David's and Guérin's paintings on the other are put together are striking; of course, this may be the result of coincidence rather than of conscious emulation. If Manet was in fact thinking of David and Guérin, the question arises what the *Luncheon*'s relation is to the theme of domestic tragedy in *Andromache Mourning Hector* and the *Return of Marcus Sextus*. Florisoone, incidentally, feels that the portrait of the young Léon Koëlla in the *Luncheon* is close to David in handling and inspiration (*Manet*, p. xviii). (Léon Koëlla, almost certainly Manet's son, was born in 1852, more than ten years before Manet married the boy's mother, Suzanne Leenhoff.) [In recent years the suggestion has gained credence that Léon's father was in fact the painter's father, Auguste Manet. See Mina Curtiss, "Letters of Édouard Manet to His Wife during the Siege of Paris: 1870–71," *Apollo* 113/232 (June 1981): 378–89.]

No connection between David and Guérin on the one hand and Vermeer and Dutch painting generally on the other can be found in Thoré or any other writer. If Manet actually intended such a connection, it was based on nothing more than his intuition of analogous qualities in the paintings themselves. "The great masters often resemble each other in very different productions," Thoré wrote in 1857 (*Les Trésors d'art en Angleterre*,

p. 78). (Les grands maîtres se ressemblent souvent dans les créations très-différentes.) After the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*, and more emphatically after his trip to Spain in the summer of 1865, such resemblances, whether or not anyone else had ever noted them, came to play an increasingly important role in Manet's art.

171. Proust 1913, p. 95. ("Lorsque nous allons à Amsterdam, le tableau des *Syndics* nous empoigne. Pourquoi? parce que c'est l'impression vraie d'une chose vue.")

172. Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," p. 72; for the French text see appendix 1.

173. Bazin, "Manet et la tradition," p. 157.

174. Sterling, "Manet et Rubens," p. 290.

175. In fact, the *Street Singer*, *Lola de Valence*, and *Portrait of Mme Brunet*, all of 1862, seem related to a single source: Velásquez's *Portrait of the Infant Don Ferdinand of Austria*, which Manet would have known through Goya's engraving. The relation to the pose of the figure in Velásquez's painting is clearest in the case of *Lola de Valence*, which suggests that that picture preceded the *Street Singer* and the *Portrait of Mme Brunet*.

176. Or at least Rembrandt's infinitely greater relevance to the needs of the nineteenth century (see Thoré's introduction to *Musée van der Hoop à Amsterdam* cited above).

177. See *ibid.* Also his *Musées de la Hollande, Amsterdam et La Haye*, pp. 323–25; and "Nouvelles Tendances de l'art," pp. xxx–xxxiv. (These are just a few of the numerous references one might cite.)

178. Thoré seems to have connected Chardin more than any other French painter with Dutch art (see Bürger [Thoré] 1860 [III]: 333–34). During the first half of the 1860s this seems at most to have helped Manet take advantage of his experience of Dutch still lifes and flower pieces. For example, in 1864 Manet painted a number of pictures in those genres which I have claimed relate generally to Chardin but which almost certainly reflect the experience of Dutch prototypes seen by him in Holland in late 1863 as well.

179. See also the illustration of Frans Hals's *Portrait of Willem van Heythuijsen* (fig. 194) accompanying the first of two articles by Thoré on the Dutch painter (Bürger [Thoré], "Frans Hals," *GBA*, 1st ser., 24 [Mar. 1, 1868]: 219–32; [May 1, 1868]: 431–48). The illustration is opposite p. 228.

180. Roughly, Sandblad sees the Japanese prints as instrumental in promoting what he regards as having been Manet's concern with artistic form for its own sake around the time of *Olympia*. He argues that the detachment implicit in Manet's "flâneur realism," the concept Sandblad uses to describe Manet's esthetic in *Music in the Tuileries*, enabled the painter to move quickly to a preoccupation with almost purely formal concerns. It is clear, I hope, that I see both the *Music* and *Olympia* in radically different terms.

181. Ernest Chesneau, "Le Japon à Paris," *GBA*, 2d ser., 18 (1878): 387. (En 1867 l'Exposition universelle acheva de mettre le Japon à la mode.)

182. Ernest Chesneau, "L'Art japonais," in *Les Nations rivales dans l'art* (Paris, 1868), p. 424. ([O]n peut dire que les artistes japonais ont pour la réalité un respect profond qui s'allie chez eux à une intelligence esthétique admirable. Ils ont le don d'assouplir le réel aux caprices d'imagination les plus étonnants, sans jamais trahir ni dénaturer cette réalité, principe et point de départ infaillibles de toutes leurs combinaisons de formes. La nature leur fournit toujours l'élément primordial. Seulement ils en usent librement au point de vue du caractère.) Chesneau also remarks of Japanese depictions of women: "The type in those images has a lot in common with that of our classic Pierrot" (p. 424). (Le type en ces images a beaucoup de celui de notre classique Pierrot.) Sandblad emphasizes the importance of Chesneau's articles on Japanese art (Sandblad 1954, pp. 74–77).

183. Thomas Couture, *Méthode et entretiens d'atelier* (Paris, 1867), pp. 361–62.

Vivrai-je assez pour voir renaître le véritable art français? . . . Je le vois venir, ah! que vous êtes heureux d'être jeunes.

Tout me l'annonce, cet art que j'ai tant rêvé: l'indifférence du public pour celui qui existe est d'un bon augure,—pourquoi lui, si vivant, s'intéresserait-il à cette peinture issue des tombeaux.

Il n'y a plus que quelques peintres, clients d'un monde qui s'éteint, qui produisent encore pour la satisfaction de petits appétits bourgeois. L'art national est à naître ou de moins à continuer, car depuis Gros et Géricault il est interrompu, et même je dirai malgré mon admiration pour l'art de la révolution, qu'ils n'avoient pas complètement trouvé l'art français, ils semblaient n'aborder les sujets modernes qu'à regret, ils n'étoient pas francs d'allure, l'étude et les fleurs de rhétorique se montraient trop, enfin cet art nouveau faisait encore ses classes.

Reprenez aujourd'hui cette belle peinture interrompue, et soyez encore plus de sol, plus franchement français par la forme, et votre art égalera en grandeur, en majesté, les plus splendides pages vénitiennes. Vous deviendrez non les copistes, mais les égaux des Grecs.

Regardez autour de vous et produisez.

184. *Ibid.*, p. 312. (En France, la peinture simplement d'imitation est loin de nous satisfaire; il faut que l'art s'élève; comment s'élève-t-il, c'est en s'augmentant par la pensée,



Figure 194. Engraving after Frans Hals, *Portrait of Willem van Heythuijsen*.

par la poésie, par la philosophie, ou par le sentiment chrétien; plus l'artiste ajoute de qualités à celles du peintre, plus il est grand.)

185. *Ibid.*, p. 380 (il faut que nos peintres, nos sculpteurs, nos architectes les mieux doués cessent de satisfaire les goûts particuliers; il faut qu'ils s'adressent à la nation).

186. Chennevières, "Le Louvre en 1848," *Souvenirs*, 3 (1886):57.

187. See Eleanor Patterson Spencer, "The Academic Point of View in the Second Empire," in *Courbet and the Naturalistic Movement*, ed. George Boas (Baltimore, 1938); also J. Howe, "Thomas Couture" (M. A. diss., University of Chicago, 1952), pp. 53–54.

188. Couture, *Méthode et entretiens*, pp. 68–76.

189. Those admirations recur throughout Thoré's "Salons" of the 1840s. His "Salon de 1845" is dedicated to Béranger. The dedication begins: "Your name, monsieur, represents better than any other the direct meaning of our national tradition in the arts and letters" (*Salons de T. Thoré*, p. 99). And it ends: "You are, as Pierre Leroux has said, the son of that great generation of the end of the eighteenth century that made the Revolution. You are of the people and you are a philosopher, like Diderot and Voltaire, and, like them, you have placed your poetry at the service of humanity" (p. 108). (Votre nom, monsieur, représentent mieux qu'aucun autre le sens direct de notre tradition nationale dans les lettres et dans les arts. . . . Vous êtes, comme l'a dit Pierre Leroux, le fils de cette grande génération de la fin du dix-huitième siècle, qui fit la Révolution. Vous êtes peuple et philosophe, comme Diderot et Voltaire, et, comme eux, vous avez mis votre poésie au service de l'Humanité.) The dedication of his "Salon de 1846" to George Sand begins: "Like Béranger, you are of your time and your country; you are at once of nineteenth-century France and eternal humanity" (p. 203). (Comme Béranger, vous êtes à la fois de France de dix-neuvième siècle et de l'Humanité éternelle.) There are various admiring references to Michelet as well.

I do not discuss here the relation of Thoré's earlier criticism to his later writings on art, or his intellectual development generally. Both deserve serious examination, as does the relation of his thought, both early and late, to that of Michelet, Quinet, Leroux, Sand, Proudhon, Taine, and others.

190. For more on those sympathies see G. Bertauts-Couture, *Thomas Couture (1815–79), sa vie, son oeuvre, son caractère, ses idées, sa méthode, par lui-même et par son petit-fils*, preface by Camille Maclair (Paris, 1932). In a letter of April 1848, Michelet addressed Couture as "illustre ami" (p. 27). And in his preface, Camille Maclair writes: "In the case of Couture, it seems to us that his philosophical intentions were somewhat 'forty-eightish': those of a brave man living in the atmosphere of liberals, of ideologues, from the grandiose Michelet to the popular Béranger" (n.p.). (Dans le cas de Couture, il nous apparaît bien que ses intentions philosophiques étaient un peu 'quarante-huitardes': celles d'un brave homme vivant dans l'atmosphère des libéraux, des idéologues, depuis le grandiose Michelet jusqu'au populaire Béranger.)

191. See Jean Seznec, "The Romans of the Decadence and Their Historical Significance," *GBA*, 6th ser., 24 (Oct. 1943): 221–32; and Francine Lifton Klagsbrun, "Thomas Couture and the Romans of the Decadence" (M. A. diss., New York University, 1958).

192. Seznec, "Romans of the Decadence," p. 228.

193. Géricault too seems to have been an important source of inspiration. The physical character and even the actions of some of Couture's figures imitate the physique and actions of figures in the *Raft of the Medusa* (and perhaps in other paintings by Géricault as well). Couture also seems to have based individual figures in the *Voluntary Enlistments* on ones in the *Tennis Court Oath*. The *Romans of the Decadence*, too, is involved far more

closely with the *Raft of the Medusa* than may at first appear. Figure after figure can be seen to have its equivalent in Géricault's painting as well as in David's.

194. For Couture's account of Persigny's visit to his atelier and the revoking of the commission see Bertauts-Couture, *Thomas Couture*, pp. 45–46.

195. Proust 1913.

196. Couture, *Méthode et entretiens*, p. 279. (Nous ne devons pas, nous, peintres, entrer dans des considérations politiques et discuter les sentiments que nous voulons représenter; lorsque nous les avons choisis, tous nos efforts doivent tendre à les exalter dans leurs beautés.)

197. See Bertauts-Couture, *Thomas Couture*, p. 46, where it is claimed that Couture's refusal (if that is what it was) to paint in the head of Napoleon III in the *Baptism of the Imperial Prince* was aimed at extorting permission to finish the *Voluntary Enlistments*.

198. The correspondence between Michelet's thought and the program of the *Romans of the Decadence* concerns far more than the view that contemporary society was corrupt and that the ideals of the French Revolution had been abandoned. For example, Couture's picture was based on two verses from Juvenal: "We are suffering today from the fatal results of a long peace; more damaging than arms, luxury has rushed upon us, and avenges the enslaved universe" (Seznec, "Romans of the Decadence," pp. 222–23); while in Michelet's *Le Peuple* of 1846 (Paris, 1946) the thirty years of peace since Waterloo are seen as having worked to France's ruin (pp. 27–28, n. 1), and it is implicit in the book as a whole that the resurrection of the ideals of the French Revolution almost certainly would mean war with England and other hostile powers.

Furthermore, Rome in its decadence was finally overwhelmed by the invasions of the barbarians. And in January 1846, Michelet wrote:

Often today one compares the rise of the people, its progress, to the invasion of the *Barbarians*. The word pleases me, I accept it. . . . *Barbarians!* Yes, that's to say full of a new sap, living and youthful. *Barbarians*, that's to say voyagers marching toward the Rome of the future, going slowly, no doubt, each generation advancing a little, pausing with death, but with successive generations continuing no less. ("À M. Edgar Quinet," *Le Peuple*, p. 24)

Souvent aujourd'hui l'on compare l'ascension du peuple, son progrès, à l'invasion des *Barbares*. Le mot me plaît, je l'accepte. . . . *Barbares!* Oui, c'est-à-dire pleins d'une sève nouvelle, vivante et rajeunissante. *Barbares*, c'est-à-dire voyageurs en marche vers la Rome de l'avenir, allant lentement, sans doute, chaque génération avançant un peu, faisant halte dans la mort, mais d'autres n'en continuent pas moins.

It was in November 1844 that Michelet began to deliver the lectures that led to the writing of *Le Peuple*.

Michelet moreover refers to Couture in *Le Peuple*, though not by name, as "one of the greatest painters of the epoch" (p. 155; see also p. 303) (l'un des plus grands peintres de l'époque).

199. Only the first three lessons were actually professed at the Collège de France. At that point the course was suspended by the government of Louis-Philippe. But Michelet went on to publish seven more lessons, one per week, up until the Revolution of 1848 broke out. The entire course was published with several related pieces as *L'Étudiant, cours de 1847–48* (Paris, 1877). The reference here is to the seventh lesson (Jan. 27, 1848) called "La Légende de la Révolution."

200. Michelet, *L'Étudiant*, p. 289.

Le mot de fraternité est très-faible pour exprimer le sentiment qui domine ce livre; union, unité vaudraient mieux, l'unité d'un monde en une âme.

Cette unité en action, c'est le caractère divin des grands jours de la Révolution, tels que je les ai racontés, celui de la Prise de la Bastille, et de nos Fédérations, et du Départ de 92, de tant d'autres moments sublimes. Voilà ce qu'il fallait dégager et mettre en lumière, si l'on voulait donner vraiment le fond, la substance de la Révolution.

201. Ibid., p. 168. (Il ne faut pas dire la Révolution, il faut dire la Fondation.)

202. Michelet, *Le Peuple*, p. 29. (Par-devant l'Europe, la France, sachez-le, n'aura qu'un seul nom, inexpiable, qui est son vrai nom éternel: la Révolution!)

203. In *Le Peuple* Michelet wrote that while Thierry saw history as *narration* and Guizot as *analysis*, "I have named it *resurrection*, and that name will last" (p. 25) (je l'ai nommée *résurrection*, et ce nom lui restera).

204. Michelet, *L'Étudiant*, p. 301 (fonder la République dans les esprits); p. 300.

La foi politique de la France qui doit déterminer ses actes et ses paroles, sa politique et son enseignement, ne doit pas rester à l'état de sentiment, ou de vague spéculation; il faut lui donner la base de l'histoire et de l'expérience.

Voici la France reveillée, debout; qu'est-ce qu'elle va enseigner à ses enfants, à son peuple héroïque, au monde qui fait cercle autour d'elle? . . . Est-ce la rhétorique? est-ce l'arithmétique? . . . est-ce le mécanisme gouvernemental, la politique abstraite, à la Sieyès? . . . Non, elle doit, avant tout, fixer et promulguer les principes qui constitueront notre moralité civique, le dogme de la République, le *Credo* de la patrie. Elle doit enseigner deux choses qui n'en font qu'une, et qui sont le coeur de la France: *La foi de la Révolution*, et la même foi en pratique, *l'histoire de la Révolution*.

205. Michelet, *Le Peuple*, p. 257.

Pour cela, il lui eût fallu, non renier le passé, mais le revendiquer au contraire, le ressaisir et le faire sien, comme elle faisait du présent, montrer qu'elle avait, avec l'autorité de la raison, celle de l'histoire, de toute notre nationalité historique, que la Révolution était la tardive, mais juste et nécessaire manifestation du génie de ce peuple, qu'elle n'était que la France même ayant enfin trouvé son droit.

Elle ne fit rien de cela, et la raison abstraite, qu'elle invoquait seule, ne la soutint pas en présence des réalités terribles qui se soulevaient contre elle. Elle douta d'elle-même, s'abdiqua et s'effaça.

206. Ibid., p. 258. (La première question de l'éducation est celle-ci: "Avez-vous la foi? donnez-vous la foi?")

207. Ibid., pp. 259-60.

La foi, c'est la base commune d'inspiration et d'action. Nulle grande chose sans elle. . . .

Ici, s'élève une objection grave. "La foi, comment la donner, quand je l'ai si peu moi-même? La foi en la patrie, comme la foi religieuse, a faibli en moi."

Si la foi et la raison étaient des choses opposées, n'ayant nul moyen raisonnable d'obtenir la foi, il faudrait, comme les mystiques, rester là, soupîrer, attendre. Mais la foi digne de l'homme, c'est une croyance d'amour dans ce que prouve la raison. Son objet, ce n'est pas telle merveille accidentelle, c'est le miracle permanent de la nature et de l'histoire.

Pour reprendre foi à la France, espérer dans son avenir, il faut remonter son passé, approfondir son génie naturel. Si vous le faites sérieusement et de coeur, vous verrez, de cette étude, de ces prémisses posées, la conséquence suivre infailliblement. De la déduction du passé, découlera pour vous l'avenir, la mission de la France; elle vous apparaîtra en pleine lumière, vous croirez, et vous aimerez à croire; la foi n'est rien autre chose.

208. Ibid., pp. 233-34, n. 2.

Nul objet d'art, nulle industrie, même de luxe, nulle forme de culture élevée, n'est sans action sur la masse, sans influence sur les derniers, sur les plus pauvres. Dans ce grand corps d'une nation, la circulation spirituelle se fait, insensible, descend, monte, va au plus haut, au plus bas. Telle idée entre par les yeux (modes, boutiques, musées, etc.), telle autre par la conversation, par la langue qui

est le grand dépôt du progrès commun. Tous reçoivent la pensée de tous, sans l'analyser peut-être, mais enfin ils la reçoivent.

209. Michelet, *L'Étudiant*, pp. 119-39.

210. Ibid., p. 129.

On sait l'étrange réaction de 1816, et comme la France semble se renier elle-même. Eh bien! de plus en plus, Géricault l'adopta. Il protesta pour elle, par l'originalité toute française de son génie, et par le choix exclusif des types nationaux. Poussin a peint des Italiens, David des Romains et des Grecs, Géricault, au milieu des mélanges bâtards de la Restauration, conserva ferme et pure la pensée nationale. Il ne subit pas l'invasion, ne donna rien à la réaction.

211. Ibid., p. 130.

En 1822, Géricault peint son radeau et le naufrage de la France. Il est seul, il navigue seul, pousse vers l'avenir . . . sans s'informer, ni s'aider de la réaction. Cela est héroïque.

C'est la France elle-même, c'est notre société tout entière qu'il embarqua sur ce radeau de la *Méduse*. . . Image si cruellement vraie que l'original refusa de se reconnaître. On recula devant cette peinture terrible; on passa vite devant; on tâcha de ne pas voir et de ne pas comprendre.

212. Ibid., p. 131 (l'artiste national d'une époque, celui qui, seul, eut alors la vraie tradition; je l'ai dit, et le redis: A ce moment, Géricault fut la France).

213. Ibid., pp. 132-33.

C'est le reproche grave qu'on doit lui faire. Il n'a pas eu la foi dans l'éternité de la Patrie.

Comment n'y crut-il pas? Il venait de lui créer ses puissants et immortels symboles, sa première peinture populaire. La France était en lui.

Il l'ignore, il ne voulut plus vivre.

214. Ibid., p. 137. (Que ce grand homme nous serve par sa vie, par sa mort; ne cédon pas, comme lui, au découragement.)

215. Chesneau, *Les Chefs d'école* (Paris, 1862), pp. 393-98.

216. Bürger [Thoré], *Salons de T. Thoré*, pp. x-xi.

217. Introduction to Maurice Chaumelin, *Art contemporain* (Paris, 1873), pp. vii-xv; originally published in the *Revue universelle des arts* in 1855.

218. Introduction to *Salons de T. Thoré*, pp. xiii-xliv; dated at the end "Bruxelles, 1857."

219. Ibid., pp. xiv-xv.

[1] y a maintenant en France, et partout, une inquiétude singulière, une aspiration incompressible vers une vie essentiellement différente de la vie passée. Toutes les conditions de l'ancienne société sont bouleversées, dans la science et dans les religions qui sont le résumé de la science, dans la politique et dans l'économie sociale qui est l'application de la politique, dans l'agriculture, l'industrie et le commerce, qui sont les éléments de l'économie sociale. D'incomparables découvertes ont donné à toutes les idées, à tous les faits, une extension imprévue et indéfinie. Il y a comme un télégraphe invisible, qui fait circuler presque instantanément et partout les impressions des peuples, les pensées des hommes, les événements, les nouveautés de toute sorte. Le moindre tressaillement moral ou physique, éprouvé sur un point quelconque, se perpétue de proche en proche et se transmet tout autour de globe. L'Humanité est en train de se constituer, et bientôt elle aura conscience d'elle-même jusqu'aux extrémités de ses membres.

Le caractère de la société moderne—de la société future—sera l'universalité.

Tandis qu'autrefois—hier—chaque peuple se renfermait dans les petites circonscriptions de son territoire, de ses traditions spéciales, de son culte idolâtrique, de ses lois égoïstes, de ses préjugés ténébreux, de ses coutumes et de son langage, il tend aujourd'hui à s'étendre hors de ses bornes étroites, à ouvrir ses frontières, à généraliser ses traditions et sa mythologie, à humaniser ses lois, à éclairer ses conceptions, à élargir ses usages, à confrondre ses intérêts, à prodiguer partout son activité, sa langue et son génie.



220. Bürger [Thoré], “Des tendances de l’art au XIX^e siècle” (above n. 217), p. xiv.

Quand les arts de tous pays, avec leurs qualités indigènes, se seront ainsi rapprochés souvent, quand ils auront pris l’habitude d’échanges réciproques, le caractère de l’art y gagnera partout une incalculable étendue, sans que le génie particulier à chaque peuple en soit altéré. Il se formera de la sorte une école européenne d’abord, au lieu des sectes nationales qui divisent encore la grande famille artiste selon la topographie des frontières; puis, une école universelle, familiarisée avec le monde, et à laquelle rien d’humain ne sera étranger.

221. *Ibid.*, p. xv.

L’esthétique et la critique au XIX^e siècle doivent donc, suivant nous, abdiquer toute école, tout système, toute nationalité, tout préjugé local ou historique. Elles ne doivent être d’aucun pays, ni d’aucun temps, afin de favoriser la convergence sympathique et providentielle des facultés créatrices attribuées aux différents peuples.

. . . On dit que l’art est l’expression de la société: assurément, puisqu’on appelle société le faisceau des manifestations humaines. . . . Le progrès de l’art contemporain consiste donc à traduire dans une forme harmonieuse le sentiment irrésistible qui entraîne le monde vers l’unité.

222. This is obviously a complex question and may not have been clear even to Thoré. At times he seems to believe that the different races and nationalities will eventually coalesce into one race, one people (“Nouvelles Tendances de l’art” [n. 218 above], pp. xvii–xviii). But the category of nationality was basic to his thinking; and he certainly does not seem to feel that what he meant by nationality was in basic conflict with what he meant by universality in his own time.

223. Bürger [Thoré], *Les Trésors d’art en Angleterre*, p. viii.

Une histoire générale de l’art semble être dans les tendances et les nécessités de la civilisation moderne. Les monographies nationales ne suffisent plus. Le caractère de notre temps, en art, en littérature, en sciences, aussi bien qu’en économie sociale et en industrie, c’est la généralisation, c’est l’universalité. Les frontières morales sont abaissées entre les peuples. Ils sentent désormais, non-seulement la concordance de leurs intérêts, mais la solidarité de leur imagination et de leur intelligence.

Cette histoire universelle de l’art, comment la faire, sinon en récoltant des faits, des dates, des particularités de toute sorte, qui aident à comprendre les différentes époques, les différents pays, les génies différents, et surtout à saisir les analogies et les harmonies qui les relient dans une grande unité?

224. Once again Manet’s art is fruitfully seen in the context of his generation. In n. 97 I discuss the importance of the concept of the *tableau* (as contrasted with that of the *morceau*) as it appears in the criticism of Zacharie Astruc. Another theme in Astruc’s writing connects with Manet’s art during the first half of the 1860s: his insistence that ambitious painting can no longer circumscribe itself by the traditional genres. Here, for example, is Astruc in 1860: “I consider, first of all, that one cannot claim to be a painter even with a solid talent as a landscapist. . . . Painting is not fragmented—it is one. It sees everything, it analyzes everything: it is the expression of the colorful whole that sums up the world: from man, his dwelling place, the objects that surround him, to the passions that make him act. Specialties only end up trivializing art. I am irritated by this new tendency that leads so many artists to stick to a path that has become facile and even lucrative, neglecting the solid basis of learning that would have assured them undeniable authority. As a result, narrowness of view, inferiority of arrangement, and without doubt, in the long run, negation of force. It is not with such principles that a great school is formed, or a great example given, not only to the future but to contemporaries. . . . The categories must disappear, to make way for the résumé. It is necessary that the landscapist efface himself in

favor of the painter. Only then will nature progress” (*Le Salon intime* [Paris, 1860], pp. 100–01; for French text see chap. 2, n. 106).

From the perspective of Impressionism it may seem that landscape painting was artistically progressive throughout the nineteenth century; and in the sense that previous developments in landscape (e.g. the Barbizon School) contributed to Impressionism, this is not simply mistaken. But it overlooks the historical truth that for Manet and his generation, at any rate in the late 1850s and early 1860s, landscape as such not only did not seem rich with promise: it actually appears to have been antithetical to their collective intuition as to what the comprehensive, authoritative, and exemplary painting of the future would consist in. And, of course, as things turned out, they were not wrong. Earlier I noted that Manet’s most ambitious paintings of the first half of the 1860s were large arrangements of two or more figures. Now I want to suggest that those pictures may perhaps be thought of as constituting a new *genre* of painting, which in effect sought to comprehend, and thereby to supersede, all the others. The *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* represents a kind of culmination of this development, being at once landscape, portrait, and still life—to say nothing of the implications of its use of previous art. In other words, Manet’s relation during these years to the traditional genres seems to have been analogous to his relation to the different national schools: his explicit aspiration was to bring them together in a natural and objective unity, the unity that I have called painting *altogether*.

225. Bürger [Thoré] 1860 (I): 259. (Assurément, pour arriver à faire une histoire de l’art européen depuis la Renaissance, ce qui semble tourmenter notre époque, il faut établir une justice distributive entre les écoles, constater leurs qualités essentielles et distinctives, reviser les prétentions de chaque pays et lui attribuer ce qui lui revient dans le développement général. Par instinct, on sent aujourd’hui chez presque tous les peuples qu’il se prépare une sorte de Jugement dernier, après quoi, le passé étant liquidé, on entrera dans un nouveau monde.)

226. Michelet, *Le Peuple*, pp. 233–34. (Le plus puissant moyen de Dieu pour créer et augmenter l’originalité distinctive, c’est de maintenir le monde harmoniquement divisé en ces grands et beaux systèmes qu’on appelle des nations, dont chacun ouvrant à l’homme un champ divers d’activité, est une éducation vivante. Plus l’homme avance, plus il entre dans le génie de sa patrie, mieux il concourt à l’harmonie du globe; il apprend à connaître cette patrie, et dans sa valeur propre, et dans sa valeur relative, comme une note du grand concert; il s’y associe par elle; en elle, il aime le monde. La patrie est l’initiation nécessaire à l’universelle patrie.)

By concentrating on Michelet I do not mean to imply that other thinkers—his intimate friend Quinet, for example—were not also instrumental in formulating the vision of France that I adumbrate in these pages. I regard Michelet as the most important single figure in that development, and for reasons of conciseness have chosen to discuss his work in isolation from theirs.

227. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

Pour nous, quoi qu’il advienne de nous, pauvre ou riche, heureux, malheureux, vivant, et par delà la mort, nous remercierons toujours Dieu, de nous avoir donné cette grande patrie, la France. Et cela, non pas seulement à cause de tant de choses glorieuses qu’elle a faites, mais surtout parce qu’en elle nous trouvons à la fois le représentant des libertés du monde et le pays sympathique entre tous, l’initiation à l’amour universel. . . .

Sans doute, tout grand peuple représente une idée importante au genre humain. Mais que cela, grand Dieu, est bien plus vrai de la France! Supposez un moment qu’elle s’éclipse, qu’elle finisse, le lien sympathique du monde est relâché, dissout, et probablement détruit. L’amour qui fait la vie du globe, en serait atteint en ce qu’il a de plus vivant. La terre entrerait dans l’âge glacé où déjà tout près de nous sont arrivés d’autres globes.

228. *Ibid.*, p. 247 (la patrie universelle), (bien plus qu'une nation; c'est la fraternité vivante), (confondu son intérêt et sa destinée avec ceux de l'humanité).

229. *Ibid.*, p. 267 (que Dieu lui a fait la grâce d'avoir cette patrie, qui promulgua, écrivit de son sang, la loi de l'équité divine, de la fraternité, que le Dieu des nations a parlé par la France).

230. *Ibid.*, p. 239. (Nous sommes les fils de ceux qui par l'effort d'une nationalité héroïque, ont fait l'ouvrage du monde, et fondé, pour toute nation, l'évangile de l'égalité. Nos pères n'ont pas compris la fraternité comme cette vague sympathie qui fait accepter, aimer tout, qui mêle, abâtardit, confond. Ils crurent que la fraternité n'était pas l'aveugle mélange des existences et des caractères, mais bien l'union des coeurs. Ils gardèrent pour eux, pour la France, l'originalité de dévouement, du sacrifice, que personne ne lui disputa; seule, elle arrosa de son sang cet arbre qu'elle plantait.)

231. *Ibid.*, p. 268 (la France a donné sa vie pour le monde).

232. *Ibid.*, p. 243, n. 2 (ce n'est pas le machinisme industriel de l'Angleterre, ce n'est pas le machinisme scolastique de l'Allemagne, qui fait la vie du monde; c'est le souffle de la France, dans quelque état qu'elle soit, la chaleur latente de sa Révolution que l'Europe porte toujours en elle).

233. *Ibid.*, p. 229 (peut nous réunir, et par nous, sauver le monde).

234. *Ibid.*, p. 271. (La patrie, ma patrie peut seule sauver le monde.)

235. For Manet's political sympathies see Sandblad 1954, pp. 148–58; Harris, "Graphic Work of Édouard Manet," pp. 173–79, esp. p. 174, n. 5; and Proust 1913, pp. 57–58. In 1849 the young Manet wrote his father from Rio de Janeiro (where he had gone on a training voyage in an unsuccessful attempt to enter the merchant marine): "Try to hold onto a good Republic until our return; because I'm afraid that Louis-Napoleon isn't very republican" (quoted by Caillet and Courthion, ed., *Manet raconté par lui-même*, p. 42). (Tâchez de nous garder, pour notre retour, une bonne République; car je crains que Louis-Napoléon ne soit pas très républicain.)

236. Chesneau, "Le Salon de Refusés," *L'Art et les artistes modernes*, p. 190, n. 1.

237. "Les Sujets modernes," *ibid.*, p. 279: "[W]hat would become of you, young Mr. Manet, who corrects Raphael with Courbet?" (que deviendriez-vous, jeune monsieur Manet, qui corrigez Raphaël par Courbet?)

238. Bürger [Thoré], *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:425. For the French text, see Chap. 4, n. 83.

239. *Ibid.*, 2:98–99.

Voici une autre victime de la férocité des moeurs, victime volontaire, étendue roide dans le cirque d'un combat de taureaux, qui continue à l'extrémité de la vaste arène. Ce toréador, évanoui pour le plaisir de quelques milliers de spectateurs affolés, est une figure de grandeur naturelle, audacieusement copiée d'après un chef-d'oeuvre de la galerie Pourtalès. . . peint par Velazquez tout simplement. M. Manet ne se gêne pas plus pour "prendre son bien où il le trouve," que pour jeter sur la toile son coloris splendide et bizarre, qui irrite les "bourgeois" jusqu'à l'injure. Sa peinture est une espèce de défi, et il semble vouloir agacer le public comme les picadores de son cirque espagnol, piquant des flèches de rubans multicolores dans le nuque d'un adversaire sauvage.—Il n'a pas encore saisi le taureau par les cornes.

M. Manet a les qualités d'un magicien, des effets lumineux, des tons flamboyants, qui pastichent Velazquez et Goya, ses maîtres de prédilection. C'est à eux deux qu'il a songé en composant et en exécutant son Cirque.

240. *Ibid.*, 2:99 (c'est un autre maître espagnol, le Greco, qu'il a pastiché avec une égale furie, sans doute en manière de sarcasme contre les amoureux transis de la peinture discrète et proprette).

241. *Ibid.*, 2:100 (Assez maintenant sur ces excentricités qui cachent un vrai peintre, dont, quelque jour, les oeuvres seront peut-être applaudies. Rappelons-nous les débuts d'Eugène Delacroix, son triomphe à l'exposition universelle de 1855 et sa vente—après décès!)

242. For the text of Baudelaire's letter see Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, *Manet raconté par lui-même*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1926), 1:59. [The letter has since been collected in Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, 2:386–87.]

243. *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:137 (tout naturellement coloriste à la façon de ce peintre exquis et fantasque).

244. *Ibid.*, 2:138. (Nous consignons toujours en passant que la peinture de Manet n'est pas un *pastiche* de Goya, et nous avons plaisir à répéter que ce jeune peintre est un vrai peintre, plus peintre à lui tout seul que la bande entière des grands prix de Rome.)

245. *Ibid.*, 2:191. (Peintre, il l'est plus que tous les grands prix de Rome ensemble.)

246. *Ibid.*, 2:192–93.

Pour exprimer l'idée ou l'image de la persécution et de la piété qu'elle suscite, si vous continuez à adopter un symbole catholique stéréotypé, il n'y a pas de raison pour ne pas continuer aussi à exprimer la force et la beauté modernes par les symboles païens, par Hercule et Vénus. Or la mission de l'art—et son instinct—sont justement de créer des formes plastiques, adéquates aux idées et aux moeurs de chaque époque, sans désertier le caractère permanent, typique, de la vie universelle.

Il arrive aussi que pastichant une vieille idée vous êtes entraîné à imiter de vieilles formes et de vieilles pratiques. Si vous peignez Vénus, Diane, Galatée, des nymphes ou des naïades, comment ne pas songer à la statuaire grecque et à la renaissance italienne qui en ressuscitait le style? Si vous peignez des martyrs chrétiens, qui donc a plus cruellement dramatisé la torture et la douleur que les Espagnols mystiques et surtout que Ribera? Voilà Ribot tombant avec son *Saint-Sébastien* dans les noirceurs de Ribera!

247. *Ibid.*, 2:193. (C'est fatal, irrésistible: il ne paraît pas que Manet veuille être pris pour un routinier de l'art pensif; néanmoins, ayant eu la malheureuse idée de peindre un Christ dans le prétoire, bon! voilà que cet original copie presque la célèbre composition de van Dyck! L'autre année, faisant un sujet espagnol qu'il n'avait jamais vu, bon! voilà qu'il copiait le Velazquez de la galerie Pourtalès!)

248. *Ibid.*, 2:239.

Suivant nous et quelques esprits aventureux, l'art du Midi n'est plus qu'une tradition, très-glorieuse, mais morte. Il a vécu—*vixit*, et il ne paraît pas qu'il compte désormais comme vivant, au milieu de la civilisation toute moderne qui se prépare. Aux expositions universelles de Paris, de Manchester, de Londres, est-ce qu'on a remarqué la peinture des Italiens et des Espagnols? O les grands et nobles peuples—dans l'histoire! Quand la peinture française se tourne vers l'Italie, elle tourne vers le passé. L'archéologie sans doute est fort intéressante, mais ce n'est pas l'affaire des artistes, qui doivent être inventeurs et non compilateurs. L'instinct de la nouveauté périt chez qui s'enferme au milieu de ruines. Et la vie, n'est-ce pas le renouveau?

249. *Ibid.*, 2:279–80.

Ce que Courbet représente dans l'école contemporaine, c'est un franc naturalisme, absolument antipodique aux manières prétentieuses et fausses des peintres récemment adoptées par un monde frivole. Sa peinture pose deux questions à ceux qui étudient les tendances de l'art et les moyens de rénovation.

Il s'agit de savoir si l'art doit se traîner toujours sur les traces du passé: idées, symboles, images de ce qui n'est plus, pastiches rétrospectifs, étrangers désormais à la conscience, aux moeurs, aux faits d'une société nouvelle.

Que l'inspiration de l'artiste n'ait plus sa source dans l'antiquité païenne ni dans le moyen âge catholique, et la forme serait émancipée en même temps que l'invention.

Car le sujet comporte la plastique. Un sujet absurde et contre nature, tel qu'un centaure ou un ange, entraîne une plastique de fantaisie, puisque l'artiste ne peut pas consulter la réalité naturelle. Où trouver le modèle d'un chérubin avec deux ailes aux tempes, ou d'un faune à pieds de bouc?

250. *Ibid.*, 2:318.

J'aime mieux les folles ébauches de Manet que les Hercules académiques. Et donc, j'ai été revoir son atelier, où j'ai trouvé un grand portrait d'homme en noir, dans le sentiment des portraits de Velazquez, et que le jury lui a refusé. Il y avait là aussi, outre un "paysage de mer," comme dit Courbet, et des fleurs exquises, une étude de jeune fille en robe rose, qui sera peut-être refusée au prochain Salon. Ces tons roses sur fond gris défileraient les plus fins coloristes. Ébauche, c'est vrai, comme est, au Louvre, l'*Île de Cythère*, par Watteau. Watteau aurait pu pousser son ébauche à la perfection. Manet se débat encore contre cette difficulté extrême de la peinture, qui est de finir certaines parties d'un tableau pour donner à l'ensemble sa valeur effective. Mais on peut prédire qu'il aura son tour de succès comme tous les persécutés du Salon.

2. "Manet's Sources" Reconsidered

1. Reff 1969, p. 40.

2. It may be relevant that Manet himself seems to have come to have doubts about the pose of the Absinthe Drinker's legs; at any rate, when he exhibited the *Absinthe Drinker* in his one-man show of 1867, he reframed it in a way that eliminated the legs, as a contemporary caricature reveals. Subsequently he converted the painting back to its original composition (more or less), adding at this time the bright green absinthe in a glass on the wall beside the painting's protagonist. See Anne Birgitte Fonsmark, "'The Absinthe Drinker'—and Manet's Picture-Making," *Hafnia: Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art*, no. 11 (1987): 76–92. Fonsmark stresses that the painting as it exists today is the product of two distinct periods of work (1858–59 and at some time between 1867 and 1872, when it was sold to Durand-Ruel), and calls attention to the oddness of the treatment of the legs in the finished work. My thanks to T. J. Clark for bringing Fonsmark's article to my attention. Another point I might have made is that Manet's *Polichinelle* (1873) is unquestionably based on *L'Indifférent*, as was noted by Germain Bazin, "Manet et la tradition," *L'Amour de l'art* 13 (May 1932): 152.

3. Reff 1969, p. 41.

4. Cited in *ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 42. The source for the seated figure of the violinist in the *Old Musician* is an antique statue in the Louvre; see Alain De Leiris, "Manet, Guérout and Chrysispos," *Art Bulletin* 46 (Sept. 1964): 401–4. Reff also charges me with ignoring the relevance of Ernest Meissonier's painting of Polichinelle to several versions of Manet's *Polichinelle* as well as "Gerald Ackerman's discovery that [Manet's *Dead Toreador*] closely resembles Gérôme's widely acclaimed *Dead Caesar*" (p. 42), but neither of those supposed omissions bears on my argument, the second in particular being a red herring.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 44. See also his criticism of my association of Manet's *Luncheon in the Studio* with "two Neo-Classical pictures of death and despair, David's *Andromache Mourning Hector* and Guérin's *Return of Marcus Sextus*" (pp. 44–45), and of the forced reasoning in my linking of Manet's early friendship with Eugène Devéria with his later use of a lithograph by Achille Devéria as a source for the first conception of *Olympia* (p. 47).

7. Theodore Reff, "Manet and Blanc's 'Histoire des peintres,'" *Burlington Magazine* 112 (July 1970): 456–58, at p. 458.

8. I also misidentify Offenbach as Champfleury in the *Music in the Tuileries* (see Reff 1969, p. 48, n. 27); give Thoré's pseudonym William (or W.) Bürger as Willem Bürger;

and imply that the paintings depicted in the *Recueil Crozat* were in Crozat's personal collection. Also, in connection with my discovery of the importance to Manet and his contemporaries of Duranty's *théâtre de Polichinelle*, I state that the roofed structure in the right-hand portion of Manet's lithograph *The Balloon* (fig. 28) depicts Duranty's puppet theater (and by implication that the setting is the Tuileries). However, in an important article Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers have shown that in fact the setting is the Esplanade des Invalides on the occasion of the Fête de l'Empereur on August 15, 1862 ("Manet's 'Balloon': French Diversion, the Fête de l'Empereur 1862," *Print Collector's Newsletter* 14 [May–June 1983]: 38–46). Accordingly, the roofed structure is not a puppet theater but rather one of two large stages that were used for performances of military pantomimes.

9. The address of Martinet's was 26 boulevard des Italiens, a fashionable location. The gallery also published a highly interesting newspaper-format journal, *Le Courrier artistique*, which for five years starting June 15, 1861, appeared every two weeks. The *Courrier artistique* listed many if not all of the paintings shown at Martinet's, in addition to containing "Salons" and other articles on art-related subjects. On Louis Martinet, the gallery's founder and a former student of Gros, see Gustave Ribeaucourt, *Une Figure d'artiste: Louis Martinet (1814–1894)* (Paris, 1894); and Lorne Huston, "Le Salon et les expositions d'art: Réflexions à partir de l'expérience de Louis Martinet (1861–65)," *GBA*, 6th ser., 116 (July–Aug. 1990): 45–50. The larger context of the role of private versus public exhibitions during a slightly later period is examined by Martha Ward, "Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions," *Art Bulletin* 73 (Dec. 1991): 599–622; and Patricia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon: Art and the State in the Early Third Republic* (Cambridge, 1993). The pioneering work on the emergence of what the authors call the "dealer-critic system" (which however does not mention Martinet) is Harrison C. and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (New York, 1965).

10. Bürger [Thoré] 1860.

11. See e.g. Kenneth Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914–1925* (Princeton, 1989); Paul Hayes Tucker, *Monet in the '90s: The Series Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1989); Nancy Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven and London, 1991); James D. Herbert, *Fauve Painting: The Making of Cultural Politics* (New Haven and London, 1992); and Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton, 1993).

12. See Francis Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1976), pp. 112–16, where he takes a common-sense approach to the question of Frenchness, rapping Champfleury and Thoré on the knuckles for some of their claims (p. 116) and deploring the extent to which a concern with nationality led to a "distortion in our appreciation and understanding of French art that has remained with us to this day" (p. 117); and pp. 146–51, on Thoré, "the archetypal hero of this book" (p. 146). For more on Thoré see Frances S. Jowell, "Thoré-Bürger and the Revival of Frans Hals," *Art Bulletin* 56 (Mar. 1974): 101–17; *idem*, *Thoré-Bürger and the Art of the Past*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1977); *idem*, "Politique et esthétique: du citoyen Thoré à William Bürger," *La Critique d'art en France, 1850–1900*, ed. Jean-Paul Bouillon (Saint-Étienne, 1989), pp. 25–41; and *idem*, "The Rediscovery of Frans Hals," in *Frans Hals*, exhib. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Oct. 1–Dec. 31, 1989; London: Royal Academy of Arts, Jan. 13–Apr. 8, 1989; Haarlem: Frans Halsmuseum, May 11–July 22, 1989), pp. 61–86.

13. One work, the *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* (1866; fig. 81), is perhaps an exception to this generalization; see the brief discussion of that painting in this chapter.

14. W. Bürger [Thoré], “Sur Metsu,” *L’Artiste*, Oct. 10, 1858, 88. (Ne vous semble-t-il pas que l’Europe aujourd’hui est en quête d’un art nouveau, plus compréhensif que toutes les écoles précédentes? Et n’est-ce pas la connaissance du passé qui peut aider à la préparation de l’avenir?)

15. Albert Boime, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision* (New Haven and London, 1980), p. 160 and passim.

16. Pierre Vaisse, Introduction générale, in *L’Enrôlement des volontaires de 1792: Thomas Couture (1815–1879): Les artistes au service de la patrie en danger*, exhib. cat. (Beauvais: Musée départemental de l’Oise, Oct. 5–Dec. 31, 1989), pp. 13–29.

17. A fuller appreciation of the relations between the Manets and the Michelets became possible only with the publication of volumes 3 and 4 of Michelet’s *Journal* in 1976. There one discovers a pattern of reciprocal visits, beginning in 1867 and perhaps promoted by the two wives but in any case testifying to mutual respect. By October 1868 the friendship was far enough advanced for the Manets to have offered the Michelets an etching; it’s not clear whether the gift was accepted but in any case Michelet wrote that he feared ridicule, remembering the controversy over Olympia and her cat (Jules Michelet, *Journal*, 4 vols., ed. Paul Viallaneix and Claude Digeon [Paris, 1959–76], 4:69). Interestingly, Edmond Bazire in 1884 remarked that among the illustrious figures who had befriended and encouraged Manet was Michelet (*Édouard Manet* [Paris, 1884], p. 142). Michelet’s *Journal* records his encounters with the young Couture in volume 1.

One further, tiny point. In her dissertation on Thoré, Frances Jowell notes that there are only a handful of references to Michelet in Thoré’s writings and that the latter was a lifelong friend of another historian, Michelet’s rival, Henri Martin (*Thoré-Bürger*, pp. 140–42, and 353, n. 62). Having now read Martin, however, I persist in finding Thoré’s thought closer to Michelet’s than to his; the paucity of explicit references to Michelet—surprising in view of the dedication of early “Salons” to Béranger and George Sand—is perhaps to be explained precisely by a desire not to cite the rival of his friend.

18. See in this connection the important article by Philip Nord, “Manet and Radical Politics,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 19 (winter 1989): 447–80. Also, in a recent article Carol Armstrong refers to “Manet’s Sources” approvingly but proceeds, without producing new evidence, to characterize Manet’s quotations of earlier art as “eclectic,” a designation my essay explicitly rejected. “I would only differ with this important material [she writes apropos my discussion of the *Old Musician* and my grounding of his borrowings in a recuperation of the French past] in its opposition between the French and international sources—Manet seems, instead, to have seen internationalism as definitive of Frenchness” (“Manet/Manette: Encoloring the Eye,” *Stanford Humanities Review* 5 (1992): 43, n. 20). She goes on to cite Victor Cousin’s philosophy of eclecticism and “the 1850s theorizing (by Thiers et al.) of eclecticism as the national genius of France” (ibid.). But what reason is there to associate Cousin and Thiers with Manet in the first place? Moreover, how is an “eclectic” attitude compatible with the vision of Frenchness that emerges precisely in the *Old Musician*? And is it accurate to say that my account opposes French and international sources?

For a study of Michelet’s treatment of art in his historical writings see Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven and London, 1993), pp. 253–77.

19. Chap. 1, nn. 26 and, esp., 97.

20. See Fried 1980, pp. 71–105; and Fried 1990, pp. 234–38.

21. See Steven Z. Levine, *Monet and His Critics*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1976); and Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of the Avant-Garde* (Chicago and London, 1995).

22. Zacharie Astruc, *Les Dieux en voyage* (Paris, 1889), p. 144. (“Nous ne sortons pas de la Renaissance; nous n’avons cessé de marcher dans les bottes italiennes. Il suffit qu’on puisse nous comparer à quelque Italien de chic pour faire notre fortune et chacun badigeonne sa nymphe ou sa petite *déposition de croix*. J’aime beaucoup Véronèse—mais c’est à travers Chardin.”)

23. Within a year this changed; see Fried 1970 for an early statement of Diderot’s importance. Of course, the issue of theatricality had been central to my art criticism for some time (see my “Art and Objecthood,” *Artforum* 5 [June 1967]: 12–23); and a few years before that I took a first, crude stab at characterizing the “alienating” and “estranging” character of Manet’s paintings of the 1860s in *Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella* (see introduction, n. 62).

24. See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York, 1973); *idem*, *A Map of Misreading* (New York, 1975); *idem*, *Poetry and Repression: Revisionism from Blake to Stevens* (New Haven and London, 1976); and *idem*, *The Breaking of the Vessels*, The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine (Chicago and London, 1982). Bloom’s *Anxiety of Influence* was preceded by W. Jackson Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (1970; rpt. New York, 1972). For attempts to apply Bloom’s ideas to the history of painting see Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix* (Cambridge, 1984); Marc Gotlieb, “From Genre to Decoration: Studies in the Theory and Criticism of French Salon Painting” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1991); and *idem*, *Meissonier at the Pantheon* (Princeton, forthcoming).

25. See for example R. Wittkower, “Imitation, Eclecticism, and Genius,” in *Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Earl R. Wasserman (Baltimore, 1965); Charles Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style* (Kluckstadt, 1977); Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford, 1979), esp. chap. 2, “Imitation”; C. W. Pigman III, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 33 (spring 1980): 1–32; Stephen Orgel, “The Renaissance Artist as Plagiarist,” *ELH* 48 (fall 1981): 476–95; Jeffrey M. Muller, “Rubens’s Theory and Practice of the Imitation of Art,” *Art Bulletin* 64 (June 1982): 229–47; Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven and London, 1982); and David Quint, *Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Versions of the Source* (New Haven and London, 1983). See also various essays by Richard Shiff, esp. “Mastercopy,” *Iris* (Paris) 1 (Sept. 1983): 113–27; “Representation, Copying, and the Technique of Originality,” *New Literary History* 15 (winter 1984): 331–63; and “The Original, the Imitation, the Copy, and the Spontaneous Classic,” *Yale French Studies*, no. 66 (1984): 27–54.

This is an apt place to cite Leo Steinberg’s introductory essay, “The Glorious Company,” in Jean Lipman and Richard Marshall, *Art about Art*, exhib. cat. (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, July 19–Sept. 24, 1978), pp. 8–31. Perhaps the most valuable contribution made by Steinberg’s essay is its consideration of various names for the phenomenon in question (pp. 20–25). He concludes that no single term (certainly not “source,” which implies that the earlier work more or less simply generates the later one) comes close to being adequate: “Is there, then, no satisfactory designation for this trucking out of and into art? I doubt if there even should be, for we are not dealing with any one thing. When Sir Joshua Reynolds discussed ‘Imitation’ in the sixth of his *Discourses*, he

tossed out, as his context kept changing, the following terms: Borrowing; Gathering; Depredation; Appropriating; Assimilating; Submitting to Infection (or contagion); Being impressed—as wax or molten metal is—by a die; Being fertilized like a soil; Being impregnated. A single term that would comprehend such miscellanea as impregnation, contracting infection, and depredation is hardly worth having. And the reality is bigger still. The varieties of artistic trespass or repercussion (or whatever you call it) are inexhaustible because there is as much unpredictable originality in quoting, imitating, transposing, and echoing, as there is in inventing. The ways in which artists relate their works to their antecedents—and their reasons for doing so—are as open to innovation as art itself, and so much for that” (p. 25).

26. Michel Foucault, “Fantasia of the Library,” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, N.Y., 1977), pp. 91–93. Foucault writes: “*Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and *Olympia* were perhaps the first ‘museum’ paintings, the first paintings in European art that were less a response to the achievement of Giorgione, Raphael, and Velásquez than an acknowledgment (supported by this singular and obvious connection, using this legible reference to cloak its operation) of the new and substantial relationship of painting to itself, as a manifestation of the existence of museums and the particular reality and interdependence that paintings acquire in museums. In the same period, [Flaubert’s] *Temptation [of Saint Anthony]* was the first literary work to comprehend the greenish institutions where books are accumulated and where the slow and incontrovertible vegetation of learning quietly proliferates. Flaubert is to the library what Manet is to the museum” (p. 92). Foucault’s essay originally appeared in 1967.

27. In *Les Frères Le Nain*, exhib. cat. (Paris: Grand Palais, Oct. 3, 1978–Jan. 8, 1979), Jacques Thuillier and Michel Laclotte argue that sufficient evidence does not exist to allow scholars to attribute specific works to one or another of the three brothers Louis, Antoine, and Mathieu (pp. 75–87).

28. Reff 1969, p. 42.

29. Chap. 1, n. 88.

30. Bürger [Thoré] 1860 (I):263. Two recent discussions of Manet’s *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* should be mentioned. First, Nancy Locke has established that in December 1857 Manet’s father was stricken with a paralysis, almost certainly the result of tertiary syphilis—the same condition that ultimately led to the painter’s death (“New Documentary Information on Manet’s ‘Portrait of the Artist’s Parents,’” *Burlington Magazine* 133 [April 1991]: 249–52). As a result Auguste Manet was left unable to function mentally, or at least unable to speak, and his death in September 1862 was a natural sequel to his collapse. Locke goes on to suggest that the averted gazes of both parents in Manet’s canvas should be seen as a strategy for dealing pictorially with Auguste Manet’s condition, which effectively ruled out a more direct or frontal mode of presentation. If this is so, *Le Nain’s Repas de paysans* and related works would have provided a useful model.

Second, Richard Wollheim has found in the *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* the key work for understanding what he describes as “the great sequence of suspended encounters” in Manet’s art (*Painting as an Art*, The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1984 [Princeton, 1987], p. 155). Wollheim’s remarks on the *Portrait of the Artist’s Parents* are part of a longer analysis of what he takes to be an implied spectator in Manet’s paintings (see his chap. 3, “The Spectator in the Picture: Friedrich, Manet, Hals”). I shall comment briefly on Wollheim’s reading of Manet in chapter 4, but for the moment I will simply say that his tendency to attribute definite if unspecifiable psychological states to the personages in Manet’s pictures seems to me largely mistaken, and that in general I believe his attempt to

distinguish between external and internal spectators of paintings cannot be sustained (see *ibid.*, pp. 364–65, n. 34, where he considers that “the conflation of the external and the external spectator” mars my analyses of the structure of beholding in *Absorption and Theatricality* and several essays on Courbet I published on the way to *Courbet’s Realism*). More recently he has rethought the issue and has concluded that the fact that “Fried’s conceptualization makes do with one less spectator” no longer presents a difficulty for his view (“Who’s Looking at the Painting,” unpublished paper). However, there remain significant differences between us with respect to the larger question of the status of the beholder. See the further discussion of Wollheim’s views in chap. 4, fn. at end of sect. 4.

31. Reff 1969, pp. 41–42.

32. Beatrice Farwell, “Manet’s ‘Espada’ and Marcantonio,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 2 (1969): 197–207.

33. Cf. Steinberg’s analyses of similar multiple recyclings in “Glorious Company.”

34. Wilson-Bareau 1986, pp. 27–36.

35. “It may seem fanciful to suggest that these paintings owed so much to the engravings in the Crozat *recueil*, but the relevance of the reversed images in the engravings appears to support the view that they may have been almost as important to Manet as his study of the darkened paintings themselves in the Louvre” (*ibid.*, p. 37). On the creation of the *Recueil Crozat* see Francis Haskell, *The Painful Birth of the Art Book*, Walter Neurath Memorial Lecture 1987 (New York, 1987).

36. The preface observes that whereas Flemish reproductive engravers were limited by their training and could faithfully render only the works of Flemish masters, and the fiery Italians lacked the phlegm that was required by engraving as a medium, the French, “whose genius has in it something of the Flemish and something of the Italian,” have proved more apt than either of the others to cultivate all the aspects of engraving (*Recueil d’estampes d’après les plus beaux tableaux et d’après les plus beaux desseins qui sont en France*, 3 vols. [Paris, 1729 and 1742], 1:iii–iv) (dont le genie tient quelque chose de celui des Flamands, & quelque chose de celui des Italiens).

37. See Charles Sterling, “Manet et Rubens,” *L’Amour de l’art* 13 (Sept.–Oct. 1932): 290, where the *Surprised Nymph* is associated with an engraving by Vosterman. Reff, however, suggests that a more available image would have been the one in the chapter on Rubens in the volumes on the École flamande in Blanc’s *Histoire des peintres* (“Manet and Blanc’s ‘Histoire des peintres,’” p. 457). That chapter also includes engravings after the *Landscape with Rainbow and Castle Garden*, sources of Manet’s *La Pêche*.

38. See Bazin, “Manet et la tradition,” p. 157.

39. According to Thoré, whose enthusiasm rises from the page, Fragonard was one of the stars of the Martinet exhibition (Bürger [Thoré] 1860 (II): 346–49; (III): 235–36); he doesn’t refer specifically to the *Billet doux*.

On the basis of a comparison with the *Old Musician*, I also argue in chapter 1 that the *Surprised Nymph* doesn’t face us so much as turn its *side* to us (so to speak). However, my reading attributes significance to the nymph’s being alone in the painting. But Beatrice Farwell has shown that the satyr originally present in the foliage just behind the nymph must have been painted out only after Manet’s death (“Manet’s ‘Nympe Surprise,’” *Burlington Magazine* 117 [Apr. 1975]: 225–29).

40. See especially her discussion of the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*, pp. 37–47.

41. See chap. 1, n. 70.

42. The status of Raimondi’s engraving as representative of Raphael’s oeuvre is discussed by Hubert Damisch, *Le Jugement de Paris* (Paris, 1992), pp. 65–76. See also Damisch’s remarks on the *Déjeuner*, pp. 53–64, 173–79.

43. Antonin Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," *Le Studio* 21 (Jan. 15, 1901): 73; see appendix 1. The Giorgione connection was first remarked by Astruc in 1863 (chap. 1, n. 68). Wilson-Bareau points out that an engraving after the *Concert champêtre* was published in the *Recueil Crozat* (1986, p. 37).

44. I make the connection in chapter 1. See also Reff, "Courbet and Manet," *Arts Magazine* 54 (Mar. 1980): 100; Farwell 1981, pp. 248–250; and Manet 1983, pp. 168–69.

45. At one point Manet called it *La Partie carrée* (*Party of Four*), a traditional title for fêtes champêtres (Manet 1983, p. 170).

46. On the dating of *L'Amour paisible* and other factual matters see Margaret Morgan Grasselli and Pierre Rosenberg (with the assistance of Nicole Parmantier), *Watteau 1684–1721*, exhib. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, June 17–Sept. 23, 1984; Paris: Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Oct. 23, 1984–Jan. 28, 1985; Berlin: Schloss Charlottenburg, Feb. 22–May 26, 1985), pp. 422–25, cat. no. 66.

47. See Léon Lagrange, "Les Cabinets d'amateurs à Paris—La Galerie de M. le duc de Morny," *GBA*, 1st ser., 14 (May 19, 1863): 391. A photograph of what the authors believe may be the Morny copy is reproduced in *Watteau*, p. 423, fig. 2.

48. Farwell emphasizes what she sees as the particular closeness of the *Champs-Élysées* to the *Déjeuner* (Farwell 1981, pp. 245–46).

49. Indeed Thoré in 1847 singled out the *Champs-Élysées* as one of "the most French and the most individual" paintings in Watteau's oeuvre, adding that "one doesn't sense in it any preoccupation with other schools," with the exception of the Flemish school in the person of Rubens ("Galerie de M. le comte de Morny," *L'Artiste*, July 25, 1847, 53; cited by Jowell, *Thoré-Bürger and the Art of the Past*, pp. 352–53, n. 57). (Cette peinture est une des plus françaises et des plus individuelles que Watteau ait jamais faites; on n'y sent aucune préoccupation des autres écoles, et elle ne rappelle aucun maître, si ce n'est peut-être Rubens, dans la qualité fleurie des tons de la chair.)

50. In his critique of "Manet's Sources" Reff dismisses my suggestion that the wading bather in the *Déjeuner* is ultimately derived from Watteau's *La Villageoise* (fig. 34), arguing instead that it is based on the stooping figure of St. John from Raphael's tapestry cartoon, *The Miraculous Draft of Fishes* (Reff 1969, p. 46). Here too, however, the plausibility of the latter connection in no way implies that Manet's bather was not *also* based on Watteau's figure—indeed the superimposition of Raphael and Watteau sources would have matched the similar superimposition in the principal group. (On the other hand, the Manet drawing I associate with *La Villageoise* doubtless was made in the 1850s, not in the course of composing the *Déjeuner*.)

51. See Clark 1985, p. 94. The authors of those commentaries are Amédée Cantaloube, "Salon de 1865," *Le Grand Journal*, May 21, 1865, and the pseudonymous Pierrot, "Une Première Visite au Salon," *Les Tablettes de Pierrot—Histoire de la semaine*, May 14, 1865. As Clark says, "[they] are surely one and the same writer" (p. 288, n. 60).

52. On the affinity between *Olympia* and the *Large Odalisque* see Théodore Reff, *Manet: Olympia*, Art in Context (London, 1976), pp. 75–76. As for Manet's attitude toward Ingres, Antonin Proust in "L'Art d'Édouard Manet" says that Manet considered Ingres the "master of Masters" (maître des Maîtres) in the nineteenth century and, apropos *Olympia*, observes that both painters shared a preoccupation with "seeking in the contours of [their] figures an irreproachable purity of line" (Reff, *Manet: Olympia*, p. 76; see also chap. 1, n. 148). (This is said in connection with Manet's passion for the French tradition.) On the other hand, Proust doesn't actually claim that Manet admired Ingres in 1863, and there is the contrary testimony of a letter from Fantin-Latour to Whistler writ-

ten shortly after the opening of Salon des Refusés (probably in May 1863) in which he reports that Manet and Baudelaire have been heard to say "that Monsieur Ingres isn't a painter" (que Monsieur Ingres n'est pas un peintre!) (Glasgow University Library, letter F9).

Not directly relevant to the question of Manet's attitude toward Ingres in 1863 but interesting nonetheless is the report in *Le Courrier artistique* (of Oct. 15, 1861) that Ingres had visited the current exhibition (which included Manet's *Guitarero*) and had greatly admired works that seemed almost incompatible with his artistic personality (1st yr., no. 9, p. 34). The notice goes on to quote Ingres as saying, "The present-day young school is very strong, monsieur; it includes great talent, and no nation in the world would dare to compete with us." ("La jeune école actuelle est bien forte, Monsieur; il y a chez elle un grand talent, et aucune nation du monde n'oserait lutter avec nous.")

53. Reff, *Manet: Olympia*, p. 76.

54. *Le Courrier artistique*, 2d yr., no. 20 (Apr. 1, 1863). (*Marat assassiné dans son bain* atteint aux dernières limites de l'effet dans le simple. C'est du réalisme dans toute l'acceptation du mot, mais c'est du réalisme doublé d'un sentiment grandiose.)

55. The contents of the new museum comprised works from the Campana collection, assembled in Rome by Giovanni Pietro Campana in the 1840s and 1850s. For a narrative of the formation of the collection and its later vicissitudes see Helen and Albert Borowitz, *Pawnshop and Palaces: The Fall and Rise of the Campana Art Museum* (Washington, D.C., and London, 1991), esp. chaps. 8–11.

56. Musée du Louvre, M.I. 546. See *Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures du Musée du Louvre*, vol. 2, *Italie, Espagne, Allemagne, Grande-Bretagne et divers. Supplément au catalogue des tableaux flamands et hollandais*, coordination by Arnauld Brejon de Lavarnée and Dominique Thiébault (Paris, 1981), p. 157. Both Berenson and Van Marle assign the panel to Jacopo del Sellaio. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:199; and Raimond Van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols. (The Hague, 1931), 12:407–8.

57. Wilson-Bareau 1986, p. 44.

58. Astruc, "Le Musée Napoléon III," *Le Pays*, June 26, 1862. (Le morceau capital est sa *Vénus*, admirable chef-d'oeuvre conçu dans une disposition d'un bizarre presque inquiétant.)

59. *Ibid.* (Quel amante t'a trahie, *Vénus*? . . . L'amoureuse fille regarde devant elle avec la prunelle calme du sphinx; sa bouche est immobile, une amère douleur blémit ses joues; mais son front garde l'immuable sérénité des forces; statue froide, impassible. Rien ne bat dans cette jeune poitrine qu'emprisonne une robe de gaz recouverte d'une étoffe pourpre serrée sur les jambes.)

60. *Ibid.* (Dans le fond, pour horizon à ce beau sphinx, qui me donne à déchiffrer mes propres angoisses, coule un fleuve, le fleuve de l'oubli, sans doute, baignant de ses eaux troubles des temples, des palais, de fraîches rives, berçant des navires où semblent embarqués les plaisirs voyageurs de Watteau.) He goes on to say that the landscape is a marvel, laid out like a beautiful Poussin, solid as the best Venetians, true as the Flemish, and with a grandeur of tone that outdoes all other painters, even Lorenzo Costa: again, it's the cast of mind, the automatic appeal to interschool comparisons, that I mean to stress. (Le paysage est une merveille, disposé pour le style comme un beau Poussin, solide comme les meilleurs Vénitiens, vrai comme les Flamands, dans une grandeur de ton qui ne redoute aucune rivalité, pas même celle de Lorenzo Costa, ce sublime paysagiste qui a su mêler splendidement la nature à son action.)

61. *Ibid.* (La jeune femme glace le regard; elle épouvante, elle torture et charme; ses

yeux pénétrants, fixés sur vous, éclairés d'un rayon glacial et magnifique, sont affreusement cruels. Voilà bien Vénus telle que la rêvent les poètes: tantôt vampire, tantôt syrène—belle, implacable et lasse sans abattement,—c'est-à-dire toujours maîtresse et tyran!

62. The same term is used of the *Venus* by Henri Delaborde, "Musée Napoléon III—Collection Campana—Les Tableaux," *GBA*, 1st ser., 13 (Dec. 1, 1862): 501. A line engraving of the *Venus* accompanies Delaborde's article, further testimony to the painting's allure.

63. Proust, "L'Art d'Édouard Manet," p.72; for French text see appendix 1.

64. Astruc, "Trésors d'art de Paris: Exposition rétrospective," *L'Étendard*, July 13, 1866. (Botticelli . . . est une des passions du grand groupe réaliste moderne.)

65. Astruc, "Le Musée Napoléon III," *Le Pays*, June 2, 1862, emphasis added. (Toutes les écoles modernes se retrouvent en germe—que dis je! affirmées dans les vieux maîtres.) The context leaves no doubt that Astruc is referring here not to the Old Masters in general but to the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century painters he and his contemporaries called the "primitives."

66. The literature on the development and significance of the modern art museum is large and growing. A sample of recent studies: Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," *Art History* 3 (Dec. 1980): 448–69; Francis Haskell, "The Artist and the Museum," *New York Review of Books* 34 (Dec. 3, 1987): 38–42; Douglas Crimp, "The End of Art and the Origin of the Museum," *Art Journal* 46 (winter 1987): 261–66; Daniel J. Sherman, *Worthy Monuments: The Politics of Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989); Yve-Alain Bois, "Exposition: Esthétique de la distraction, espace de démonstration," *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 29 (autumn 1989): 57–79; Philip Fisher, *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums* (New York, 1991); Jean-Louis Déotte, *Le Musée, l'origine de l'esthétique* (Paris, 1993); and Andrew L. McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, 1994).

67. Jacques de Biez, *Édouard Manet* (Paris, 1884), p. 26 (les primitifs, radieux de souvenirs, plein de promesses). This is said in the context of the claim that Manet and Ingres had the same vision of a return to nature by way of the primitives (*ibid.*); indeed de Biez calls Manet "a French primitive" (un primitif français).

68. Interestingly, though, Manet's friend Astruc didn't share the general enthusiasm for Géricault. "The *Raft of the Medusa*, by our Géricault, is only a large dramatic tableau," he wrote in 1867, "not a great deed like Delacroix's *Liberty at the Barricades*, in the Luxembourg, developed in the form of an epic allegory. . . . The *Liberty* scarcely translates the physiognomy of the time. There is in it scarcely any of the meaning of the time; it adds nothing essential, it interprets nothing essential. What is there is a drama no sooner seen than forgotten. By what means does it become great, then?—by the power of art" ("Exposition Universelle—Les Beaux-Arts—École anglaise," *L'Étendard*, May 3, 1867). (Le Radeau de la Méduse, de notre Géricault, n'est qu'un grand tableau dramatique,—point un grand fait comme la Barricade de Delacroix, au Luxembourg, développée sous la forme d'une épique allégorie—comme le Boissy d'Anglas ou le Marquis de Dreux-Brézé devant le tiers-État. A peine le premier traduit-il la physionomie du temps. Il n'en est point la signification; il n'y ajoute ou n'interprète rien d'essentiel. C'est là du drame aussitôt oublié que vu. Par quel côté se grandit-il donc?—par la puissance de l'art.) Astruc doesn't say that he finds the *Raft* theatrical but that seems to be the implication of his remarks.

69. On the Saint-Eustache project see Jane Van Nimmen, "Thomas Couture's Murals in Saint-Eustache, Paris," in *Thomas Couture: Paintings and Drawings in American Col-*

lections, exhib. cat. (College Park, Md.: University of Maryland Art Gallery, Feb. 5–Mar. 15, 1970), pp. 27–47; Boime, *Thomas Couture*, pp. 231–63; and the brief remarks in Bruno Foucart, *Le Renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France (1800–1866)* (Paris, 1987), pp. 272–73. I first associated the Saint-Eustache murals with Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* in Fried 1970, p. 45, n. 17.

70. According to Boime: "The project was painted on canvas which was later attached in the *marouflé* technique to the wall: Couture completed the better part of the job in his studio and retouched the work in situ. We know from his *Entretiens* that a scaffolding was constructed for his activity in Saint-Eustache, and it is likely that he began the detailed work there some time in 1854. He applied the finishing touches in May 1856 and varnished the murals during the last week of September. The chapel was finally opened to the public on 12 October 1856, and the eager crowd of visitors demonstrated that Couture was one of the most exciting painters of the period" (*Thomas Couture*, p. 235).

71. In view of the case made in "Manet's Sources" for Couture's involvement with Michelet's thought, as well as of my discussion there of Michelet's political reading of the *Raft*, that Géricault's masterpiece presides over the *Stella Maris* raises the further question of the political meaning of the Saint-Eustache project as a whole: specifically, does it carry the subversive message that the collapse of the Second Republic and by implication the establishment of the Second Empire amounted to the shipwreck of France? I suggest it does in Fried 1970, pp. 36–40; Boime takes issue with this, arguing instead (very interestingly) for a Michelet-influenced anticlerical content (*Thomas Couture*, pp. 247–61); finally, Pierre Vaisse supports my reading (while modifying it in several respects) in his general introduction to the catalogue for the Couture exhibition of 1989 (*L'Enrôlement des volontaires de 1792*, p. 23). See also the discussion of Couture's relations with the imperial regime in Pierre Vaisse, "Couture et le Second Empire," *Revue de l'art* (1977): 43–68.

72. See Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, pp. 84–105, esp. pp. 101–3.

73. See Manet 1983, pp. 202–3.

74. On Couture's technique see the excellent account in Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London and New York, 1971), pp. 71–75.

75. See Fried 1970, pp. 43–44, where I relate this to a struggle against theatricality.

76. In chapter 1 (n. 161) I publish the letter from Baudelaire to Chennevières in which the title of Manet's painting is given as *Christ ressuscitant, assisté par les anges*. For the communication in which David described the subject of his painting as "Marat à son dernier soupir," see Daniel and Guy Wildenstein, *Louis David, Recueil de documents complémentaires au catalogue complet de l'oeuvre de l'artiste* (Paris, 1973), document 601 (cited by T. J. Clark, "Painting in the Year Two," *Representations*, no. 47 [summer 1994]: 13).

Manet's most recent biographer, Eric Darragon, also takes that letter to mean that the figure of Christ should be seen as reviving; as he points out, Théophile Gautier suggests that this is the case, no doubt because he too had been informed by Baudelaire (Darragon 1989, pp. 96–97). (Thoré as well says that Manet's Christ may be "in the process of resuscitating, under the wings of the two angels who attend him" [Bürger (Thoré), *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:99].) (Peut-être est-il en train de ressusciter, sous les ailes des deux anges qui l'assistent.) Darragon goes on to relate the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* to Ernest Renan's *Vie de Jésus*, published in June 1863, a book he believes "pouvait intéresser un peintre comme Manet pour des raisons beaucoup plus profondes que le simple goût de la provocation. Car le livre de Renan s'achève avec le mystère chrétien par excellence, la résurrec-

tion, où commence à proprement parler le domaine de la foi. 'Pouvoir divin de l'amour! moments sacrés où la passion d'une hallucinée donne au monde un Dieu ressuscité,' écrit-il en évoquant le rôle capital de Marie-Madeleine. Le réalisme de Manet s'appliquait donc à l'une des conclusions les plus scandaleuses du livre en dressant devant le public du Salon une 'vérité' par laquelle le témoignage de l'image, définie comme un acte de foi, prenait par rapport aux textes et aux exégèses une dimension nouvelle" (pp. 97–98). (Darragon's arguments are partly anticipated by Jane Mayo Roos, "Édouard Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*: A Matter of Interpretation," *Arts Magazine* 58 [Apr. 1984]: 83–91.)

Darragon (p. 97) and Roos (p. 85) allude in passing to Manet's friend the Abbé Augustin Hurel's *L'Art religieux contemporain: Étude critique* (Paris, 1868). Unfortunately, Hurel doesn't analyze the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* or the *Christ Mocked*. But in the context of a discussion of the difficult relations between artists and the public he mentions Manet's private exhibition of 1867 (p. 237 n.) and goes on to say of an unnamed artist, almost certainly Manet: "What does this artist propose? What is his idea? What's the tendency of his work? An antisocial or antireligious theory is doubtless concealed in the depths of this talent. Let us hold off our support, or rather let us fear equally to grant it and then refuse it; let's not recklessly create either a vogue or an antagonism that would later be a blow to our self-esteem, a danger for our doctrines, and a disturbance for our life. Anyway, let's be on our guard against either tendency. It's as if two adversaries were trying to anticipate and surprise the other, as in an American gunfight (p. 238)." (Que se propose cet artiste? quelle est sa pensée? à quoi tend son oeuvre? Une théorie antisociale ou antireligieuse se cache sans doute au fond de ce talent. Différons notre suffrage, ou plutôt craignons également de l'accorder et de le refuser; ne créons pas imprudemment une vogue ou une défaveur qui seraient plus tard un échec pour notre amour-propre, un danger pour nos doctrines et une inquiétude pour notre vie. De la sorte, et de part et d'autre, l'on s'observe. Il semble deux adversaires cherchant à se prévenir et à se surprendre. C'est comme un duel américain.)

For his part, Reff expressed skepticism both about the proposed *Marat* connection and about my claim that Christ in Manet's canvas is resuscitating on the grounds that they "depend primarily on verbal instead of visual evidence" (Reff 1969, p. 47).

77. Finally, I want to cite in this connection one other famous work by a recent French master, Ingres's *The Source* (1856; fig. 195), exhibited at Martinet's in June 1861 (see *Le Courrier artistique*, 1st yr., no. 1, June 15, 1861, p. 2). My point is not that Ingres's famous nude in any way undergirds the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*. But we are free to note the parallels between the absolute frontality of the standing girl and the seated Christ, between the inexpressiveness of both figures' physiognomies, and between the weight that is given in both pictures to the immediate foreground (the very bottom of the picture field). It may be that nothing in Manet's art is more elusive than the question of his relations with Ingres, and my introduction of *The Source* in this context is meant to acknowledge that fact.

78. Manet 1983, p. 304.

79. See Reff, "Manet's Portrait of Zola," *Burlington Magazine* 117 (Jan. 1975): 35–44; and Manet 1983, pp. 280–85.

80. Sharon Flescher, "Manet's 'Portrait of Zacharie Astruc': A Study of a Friendship and New Light on a Problematic Painting," *Arts Magazine* 52 (June 1978): 100–101. The references are carried respectively by the book of Japanese prints, the closed, seemingly Spanish fan, and "the brilliantly colored peeled lemon, the glass, and the overall still-life arrangement" (p. 100). Flescher doesn't relate this to "Manet's Sources."

81. See Manet 1983, p. 304.

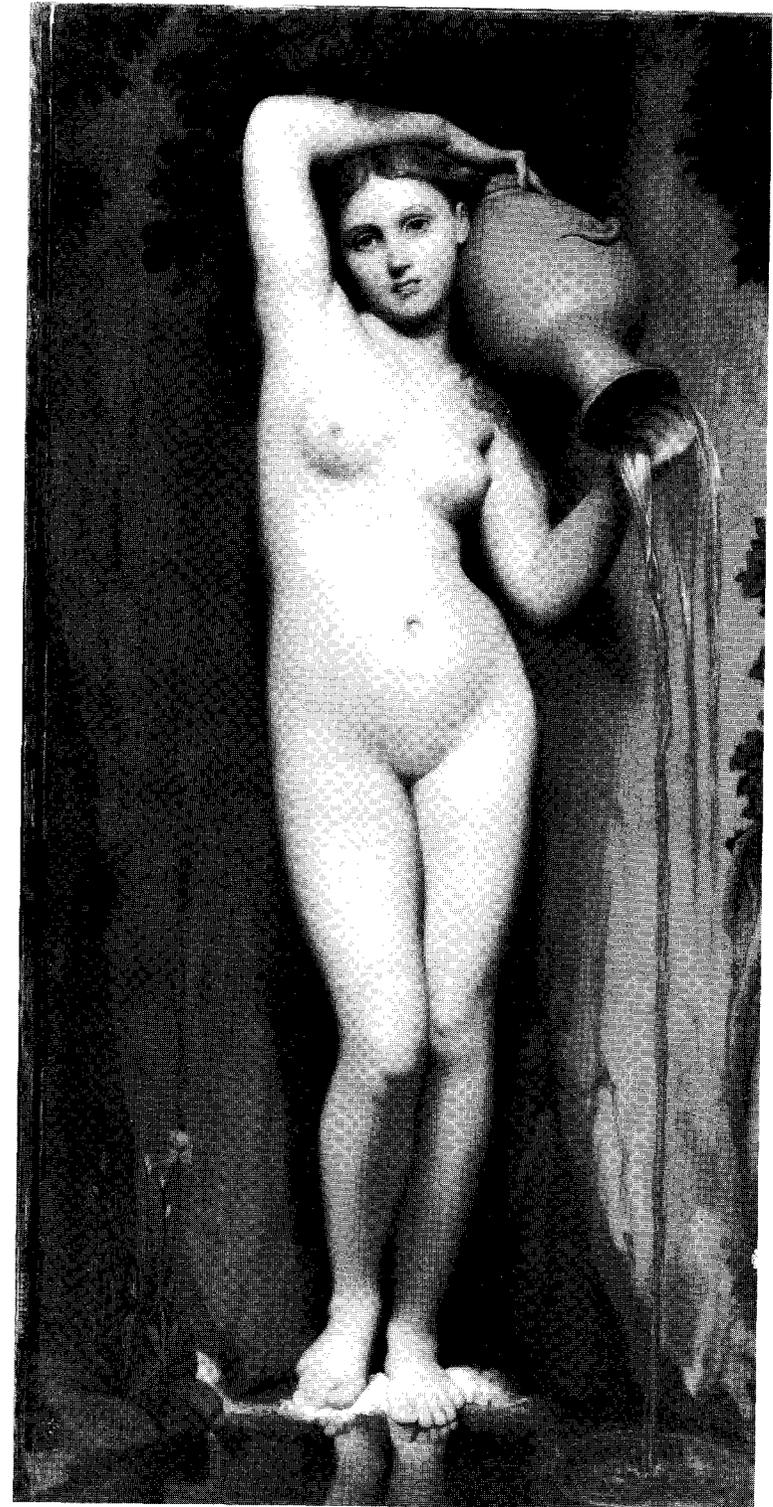


Figure 195. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *La Source*, 1856.

82. See *ibid.*, pp. 293–94. The topic of Manet's involvement with Dutch art is briefly treated by Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, *French Realism and the Dutch Masters: The Influence of Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painting on the Development of French Painting between 1830 and 1870* (Utrecht, 1974), pp. 42–46.

83. I owe the latter suggestion to T. J. Clark. A similar ball lies in the lower right-hand corner of the *Music in the Tuileries*. See also the engraving after Frans Hals's *Portrait of Willem van Heythuisen* reproduced in chap. 1, n. 179 (fig. 194) as a possible (loose) source for the figure of Guillemet.

84. Astruc, "L'Empire du Soleil Levant," *L'Étendard*, Feb. 27, 1867. For a discussion of Astruc's *japonisme* see Flescher, *Zacharie Astruc*, pp. 328–404.

85. Astruc, "L'Empire du Soleil Levant." (On peut avancer ceci en toute assurance: l'originalité fait défaut à notre art européen. Nous nous coulons doucement dans quelques moules acceptés, et c'est tout. Nul ne procède par l'impression personnelle absolument indépendante. On veut à l'avance l'assentiment du public; et, préjugant toujours de sa manière de voir, de son initiative, on le condamne à d'éternelles redites qui ne le portent à éprouver ni absolu dégoût ni véritable plaisir,—mais qui lui font dire, sans autre émotion: "Je connais cela; c'est bien." Rarement il échappe à son monotone sommeil d'esprit par quelque secousse de génie,—fût-elle maladroite.)

86. *Ibid.* (C'est un art national. Il traduit la vie féodale, seigneurale, très complexe de ce peuple, et vient directement de la nature qu'il envisage sous toutes ses faces. En plus d'un endroit, on dirait qu'il continue les Vénitiens: les Carpaccio, les Bellin, les Lorenzo Costa.)

87. *Ibid.* (L'art japonais, qui se prend corps à corps avec la nature, qui n'est point, comme chez nous, préparé de longue main, affaire de transmission absolue, borné à des genres, restreint à deux ou trois combinaisons, nous a surtout étonnés.)

88. A third perspective is Chesneau's in his essay "De l'influence des expositions internationales sur l'avenir de l'art," where he expresses concern that increasing contact among different national schools will lead to the loss of those qualities that made each school distinctive (*Les Nations rivales dans l'art* [Paris, 1868], pp. 457–67). But he goes on to suggest that the period of cosmopolitanism that has just begun will be merely transitional, and expresses the hope that eventually great artists will exert a more profound influence on humanity for not being confined within particular traditions (pp. 464–65).

89. See Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1861," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:84. In a second "Salon" of that year Thoré asserted unequivocally (p. 92): "To be a master is not to resemble anyone. Otherwise, one is only the student or follower of someone." (Être maître, c'est ne ressembler à personne. Autrement, on n'est que l'élève ou le sectateur de quelqu'un.) Not surprisingly, on the various occasions when Astruc wrote in praise of Manet, he mostly ignored the latter's use of earlier art, of which he must have been aware. At the same time, Astruc recognized that without the guidance of earlier art contemporary painting ran the risk of losing its essentially pictorial qualities. "Will we descend to the level of the English makers of images," he wrote in 1868, "when we will have rejected all influence of the past? . . . What means are there for conciliating the fertile examples of the great art [of the past] with the necessities of our modern minds?" ("Exposition Universelle—Beaux-Arts—France," *L'Étendard*, Feb. 27, 1868). (Descendons-nous au niveau des Anglais imagiers, quand nous aurons repoussé toute influence du passé? . . . Quel moyen pour concilier les fertiles exemples du grand art avec les nécessités de notre esprit moderne?) Interestingly, Proust quotes Manet to the effect that he found museums depressing, in part because they killed portraits (Proust 1897, p. 42); the special significance of portraits for Manet and his generation will emerge in chapters 3 and 4.

90. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1846," *Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 97–200; key passages on the need for a "criterion" and the importance of "memory" can be found on pp. 108, 119, 147, 148–49, 166, 168–69, and 180. The first of those passages in particular underscores the paradox of what I have referred to as "immediate" memorability: "The right way to know if a picture is melodious is to look at it from far enough away to make it impossible to understand its subject or to distinguish its lines. If it is melodious, it *already has* a meaning, and it *has already* taken its place in your store of memories" (p. 108, emphasis added). (La bonne manière de savoir si un tableau est mélodieux est de le regarder d'assez loin pour n'en comprendre ni le sujet ni les lignes. S'il est mélodieux, il a déjà un sens, et il a déjà pris sa place dans le répertoire des souvenirs.) I have also consulted Baudelaire: *'Salon de 1846'*, ed. David Kelley (Oxford, 1975), which contains a useful introduction and bibliography.

91. See Fried 1984. See also Richard Shiff, "Remembering Impressions" (a response to Fried 1984) and Michael Fried, "Forget It: A Response to Richard Shiff," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (winter 1986): 439–48 and 449–52. In Fried 1984 I suggest that Baudelaire's inability to theorize the relationship between new and older art (other than to insist that the first have nothing to do with the second) is analogous to his inability throughout his critical writing to distinguish in principle between legitimate and illegitimate uses of poetry in painting (see pp. 518–19 and 535–36, n. 15).

92. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1846," p. 166, n. 1. ("La véritable mémoire, considérée sous un point de vue philosophique, ne consiste, je pense, que dans une imagination très vive, facile à émouvoir, et par conséquent susceptible d'évoquer à l'appui de chaque sensation les scènes du passé, en les douant, comme par enchantement, de la vie et du caractère propres à chacune d'elles.") The unannotated quotation is from E. T. A. Hoffmann, "Dernières Aventures du chien Berganza," *Contes fantastiques*, trans. Henri Egmont (Paris, 1836). For a general discussion of Baudelaire's interest in Hoffmann, see Rosemary Lloyd, *Baudelaire et Hoffmann: Affinités et influences* (Cambridge and New York, 1979).

93. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1845," *Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 16–19. Significantly, the reader is directed to the discussion of Haussoullier's canvas by a footnote in the "Salon de 1846" (p. 101, n. 1), which in effect annexes the Haussoullier passage to the later "Salon."

94. "Salon de 1845," pp. 18–19. (Oserons-nous, après avoir si franchement déployé nos sympathies (mais notre vilain devoir nous oblige à penser à tout), oserons-nous dire que le nom de Jean Bellin et de quelques Vénitiens des premiers temps nous a traversé la mémoire, après notre douce contemplation? M. Haussoullier serait-il de ces hommes qui en savent trop long sur leur art? C'est là un fléau bien dangereux, et qui comprime dans leur naïveté bien d'excellents mouvements.)

Earlier in his discussion of the *Fountain of Youth* (p. 16), Baudelaire reassured the artist that his painting might be mocked, "but it would remain in the memory of anyone who had eyes and feeling" (mais elle restera dans la mémoire de quiconque a de l'oeil et du sentiment).

95. *Ibid.*, p. 18. (Cette peinture a, selon nous, une qualité très importante, dans un musée surtout—elle est très voyante.—Il n'y a pas moyen de ne pas la voir.)

96. See Baudelaire's brief account of the failure of his previous attempts to enclose himself in a system and judge art according to a single criterion in his "Exposition Universelle de 1855," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 215. To escape the embarrassment of having constantly to adjust his system to take account of works that lay outside its terms but whose vitality was unmistakable, "I became happy to feel; I returned to seek asylum in an impeccable naïveté." (Pour échapper à l'horreur de ces apostasies philosophiques, je me

suis orgueilleusement résigné à la modestie: je me suis contenté de sentir; je suis revenu chercher un asile dans l'impeccable naïveté.)

97. See Fried 1984, pp. 519–22.

98. Baudelaire, letter of May 11, 1865, *Correspondence*, 2:496–97 (*vous n'êtes que le premier dans la décrépitude de votre art*). For the context in which this is said, see the epigraphs.

99. It might be noted that Baudelaire in his last major text on painting, "The Painter of Modern Life," again took up the theme of memory but did so in connection with an account of the creative process that effectively circumvents all relation to previous works of art ("Le Peintre de la vie moderne," *Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 453–502; see esp. the section headed "L'Art mnémonique," pp. 469–72). Put another way, one reason for making Constantin Guys the protagonist of that essay may have been that the Guys's eschewal of the ordinary sorts of pictorial ambition meant that the art of the museums was irrelevant to his practice. See also Fried 1984, p. 533.

100. For example, Castagnary wrote in 1863: "Genre painting, singularly enlarged, leaves its former limits, attacks the universality of nature and life, threatens finally to alone become all the painting of the future; and no philosopher, no prophet dreams of establishing the legitimacy of that unexpected extension, nor of deducing the probable consequences. Of all the elements that previously composed the art of painting, one part, that which was said to be the noblest and was believed to be the most alive [i.e. history painting], has fallen from the trunk of the tree like a sapless branch; another part, which was regarded as unimportant and ephemeral, brings forth unhopéd-for shoots and covers itself with a dense snow of blossoms" (Jules-Antoine Castagnary, "Salon de 1863: Les Nouvelles Tendances de l'art," *Revue du monde colonial* 8 [1863]: 504–5). (La peinture de genre, singulièrement grossie, sort de ses anciennes limites, s'attaque à l'universalité de la Nature et de la Vie, menace enfin de devenir à elle seule toute la peinture de l'avenir; et nul philosophe, nul prophète ne songe à établir la légitimité de cette extension imprévue, ni à en déduire les conséquences probables. De toutes les choses enfin qui composaient autrefois l'art du peintre, une part, celle qui composaient la plus noble et qu'on croyait la plus vivace, s'est desséchée sur le tronc comme une branche oubliée de la sève; l'autre, qu'on tenait pour misérable et qu'on jugeait éphémère, pousse des rameaux inespérés et se couvre d'une neige épaississante de fleurs.)

Recent discussions of this and related developments include Nicholas Green, "Dealing in Temperaments: Economic Transformation of the Artistic Field in France during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Art History* 10 (March 1987), 59–78; Leila Kinney, "Genre: A Social Contract?," *Art Journal* 46 (winter 1987): 267–77; Patricia Mainardi, *Art and Politics in the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867* (New Haven and London, 1987); *idem*, *End of the Salon*; and Gotlieb, "From Genre to Decoration" and *Meissonier at the Pantheon*.

101. See e.g. Ernest Chesneau, "Salon du 1864," *Le Constitutionnel*, May 1, 1864: "The confusion of genres increasing from year to year also makes increasingly difficult the task of the writer who, studying the Salon, would like to present the results of that study in a form as clear as possible and as literary as the public has the right to demand. He is no longer able to compose his text on the Salon as a coherent work in which each section is foreseen and has its determined place, even before the pen has written the first words. In the past . . . the critic posited three large divisions, *History*, *Genre*, and *Landscape*, under which all the paintings securely grouped themselves. Today it isn't any longer the case: the old frames are broken, the limits are effaced, the brush of the most experienced geographer in these matters hesitates and doesn't know any longer where to trace the colored

lines that would circumscribe the principal provinces on the map of the Salon." (La confusion des genres augmentant d'année en année rend aussi chaque année plus difficile la tâche de l'écrivain qui, étudiant le Salon, voudrait présenter les résultats de cette étude sous une forme aussi claire que possible et aussi littéraire que le public a le droit de l'exiger. Il ne peut plus désormais composer son travail sur l'Exposition comme une oeuvre d'ensemble où toute partie est prévue, à sa place déterminée, avant même que la plume en ait écrit les premiers mots. Autrefois . . . le critique posait trois grands divisions qui venaient se ranger sûrement tous les tableaux sous la rubrique, *Histoire*, *Genre* et *Paysage*. Aujourd'hui ce n'est plus cela: les vieux cadres sont rompus, les limites s'effacent, le pinceau du géographe le plus expérimenté en ces matières hésite et ne sait plus où tracer les lignes colorées qui encadreraient les principales provinces sur la carte de l'Exposition.)

Or in the words of Maxime Du Camp: "The divisions we draw are absolutely arbitrary, because all the kinds of painting are so mixed together, history painting is descended so much toward genre painting, and genre painting has so much penetrated landscape painting, that it is extremely difficult to make a normal and regular classification" (*Le Salon de 1861* [Paris, 1861], p. 81). (Les divisions que nous faisons sont absolument arbitraires, car toutes les espèces de peintures se sont tellement mêlées, la peinture d'histoire est tellement descendue jusqu'à la peinture de genre, et la peinture de genre a tellement pénétré le paysage qu'il est fort difficile de faire une classification normale et régulière.)

102. Edmond About, "Salon de 1868," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 2d per., 75 (June 1, 1868): 741. (Avec la perfection miraculeuse des procédés, la division du travail, cette loi de l'industrie moderne, envahit peu à peu la peinture. Le temps n'est peut-être loin où tel peintre de genre fera et refera toute sa vie une femme au coin du feu, et toujours la même.)

103. Chesneau, "L'Art contemporain," *L'Artiste*, Apr. 1, 1863, 148. (Les grands artistes n'ont point de spécialité; la nature tout entière et l'homme leur appartiennent.)

104. See e.g. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1846," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 121; and Paul de Saint-Victor, "Le Génie de Eugène Delacroix," *L'Artiste*, Nov. 1, 1864, 195. See also Astruc, who wrote in 1868: "Velásquez, barely Spanish by his choice of subjects, shows himself European by his style and ideas. He is a universal genius, one hard to localize, like our Delacroix. His admirable gifts could have been exercised fully as well in Venice or Paris as in Madrid" ("Exposition Universelle," *L'Étendard*, Mar. 1868). (Velásquez, à peine Espagnol par le choix des sujets, se montre européen par le style et les idées. C'est un génie universel peu ou point localisé comme un Delacroix chez nous. Ce sont d'admirables dons qui pouvaient aussi bien s'exercer à Venise, à Paris qu'à Madrid.) This statement is part of a larger discussion of Spanish painting, which Astruc saw as the product of something other than a *school*. That is, the great Spaniards seemed to him to possess a universalizing vision of painting that transcended merely national considerations. "Velásquez," he wrote, "will be that cosmopolitan genius endowed with a knowledgeable eclecticism which led him to choose the best art from everywhere and then apply it in an essentially personal manner." (Velásquez sera ce génie cosmopolite doué d'un savant éclectisme qui lui fait choisir partout le mieux pour une application rendue ensuite essentiellement personnelle.) And in the same article he praised the Spaniards for their energetic "multiplicity of vision, an eclecticism which extended from Italy to France, stopping especially here" (les multiplicités de la vision, un éclectisme qui va de l'Italie à la France, s'arrêtant plus spécialement chez nous). Here as elsewhere in Astruc's criticism, we have the sense that he is indirectly describing Manet's art, or at any rate that his understanding of one or another historical crux has been mediated by his experience of his friend's painting. Another feature of Astruc's remarks is the way they exemplify what I take to have been

an uncontrollable slippage between considerations of genre (the usual grounds for praising Delacroix's universality) and those of nationality (the grounds, more or less, of Astruc's comparison of Delacroix to Velásquez).

105. The discussion that follows expands on observations first made in chap. 1, n. 224.

106. Astruc, *Le Salon intime: Exposition au boulevard des Italiens* (Paris, 1860), pp. 99–101.

Le paysage est un enfant gâté de la critique qui ne cesse de crier au prodige. Quoi qu'on en ait dit, il faut pourtant avoir le courage d'établir que cette production spéciale de notre temps n'établit qu'une maigre formule d'art. Science commode à la portée de tout esprit un peu organisé, elle ne mérite qu'un regard distrait. Elle sert d'excuse à la paresse. Nous connaissons fort bien et sa portée et ses complications. Pour s'élever à sa hauteur, il suffit d'un coup d'oeil juste et d'une ou deux bonnes années de travail. J'estime, tout d'abord, que l'on n'est point un peintre, même avec un talent solide de paysagiste, pas plus que l'on n'est un musicien pour quelques bluettes de piano. Le paysage (que l'on me pardonne cette figure) est un instrument dans le grand orchestre des gammes qui doivent tout embrasser indifféremment. La peinture ne se fragmente point—elle est une. Elle voit tout, elle analyse tout; elle est l'expression de l'ensemble coloré qui résume le monde; allant à l'homme, à la maison qu'il habite, aux objets qui l'entourent—à la passion que le fait agir. Les spécialités n'aboutissent qu'à rapetisser l'art. Je suis fâché de cette tendance nouvelle qui porte tant d'esprits à se réfugier dans une voie rendue facile, et même lucrative, désertant les bonnes bases de l'enseignement qui devait leur assurer une autorité incontestable. De là, étroitesse de vues, infériorité d'ordonnance, et sans nul doute, à la longue, négation de force. Ce n'est point avec de tels principes qu'une école importante se forme et qu'un grand exemple est donné, non-seulement à l'avenir, mais aux contemporains. . . . Les catégories doivent disparaître, pour faire place au résumé. Il est nécessaire que le paysagiste s'efface devant le peintre. Alors seulement la nature sera en progrès.

107. For a recent restatement of that idea see Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism: The Mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art* (New York, 1984), pp. 9–48, 133–79.

108. Rosen and Zerner encapsulate that alleged development in a phrase. Of Gérault's paintings of severed limbs they write, "with the abolition of subject, painting took a first step toward abstraction" (*ibid.*, p. 46). More recently, Robert L. Herbert has remarked of the various small-scale contemporary personages in Renoir's *Pont des Arts* (1867): "These casually posed figures, standing and walking about, have supplanted Job and his friends. Religion, history, and mythology, the mainstays of French painting until 1848, were simply done away with by the impressionists [among whom Herbert includes Manet]. This casting out of history had been well launched by Courbet, Millet, and other artists in the 1850s, but the process was completed and urbanized, as it were, by the impressionists. It was a drastic 'purification,' a wrenching of art into the present" (*Impressionism: Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* [New Haven and London, 1988], p. 7). For a different and stimulating account of nineteenth-century landscape painting in France, one that attaches great importance to the example of Romantic music (Beethoven's in particular), see Kermit S. Champa, "The Rise of Landscape Painting in France," in Champa et al., *The Rise of Landscape Painting in France*, exhib. cat. (Manchester, N.H.: The Currier Gallery of Art, Jan. 29–Apr. 28, 1991; New York: IBM Gallery of Science and Art, July 30–Sept. 28, 1991; Atlanta: High Museum of Art, Jan. 28–Mar. 29, 1992), pp. 23–55.

109. See e.g. Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1864," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:14–19, and Zola, "Édouard Manet," *Écrits sur l'art*, pp. 158–61.

110. See Fried 1980, pp. 71–105.

111. Astruc, "Récit douloureux," *Le Quart d'heure*, vol. 4, no. 11 (July 20, 1859): 195–226.

112. "What Delacroix pursues with a kind of drunkenness is violent life, terrible movement," Duranty wrote. "In all the beings which his brush creates, he imprints agitation, tumult. If he paints a lone personage, there will still be tumult in the picture. . . . Delacroix only knows, only loves, that tormented population, full of fever and action, which dances drunkenly over the canvas, which twists, which reverses itself, which runs, howls, climbs" ("Salon de 1859," *Le Courrier de Paris*, Apr. 19, 1859). (Mais ce que poursuit M. Delacroix avec une sorte d'ivresse, c'est la vie violente, le mouvement terrible. A tous les êtres que crée son pinceau, il imprime l'agitation, le tumulte. S'il peint un seul personnage, il y aura encore du tumulte dans la toile. . . . M. Delacroix ne connaît, n'aime, que cette population tourmentée, pleine de fièvre et d'action, qui danse envirée sur la toile, se tord, se renverse, court, hurle, grimpe.) In that article, too, Duranty criticized the contemporary practice of landscape: "Landscape, as it is understood today, becomes tiring, it embarrasses and impedes." (Le paysage, tel qu'on l'entend aujourd'hui, devient fatigant, il accroche et gêne.)

113. On Monet's figure paintings of the 1860s see e.g. Kermit Swiler Champa, *Studies in Early Impressionism* (New Haven and London, 1973), pp. 1–12, 22–32; Joel Isaacson, *Monet: 'Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe'*, *Art in Context* (London, 1972); and Herbert, *Impressionism*, pp. 174–80.

114. See Anne Wagner, "Why Monet Gave Up Figure Painting," *Art Bulletin* 76 (Dec. 1994): 613–29. Wagner argues that "Monet gave up figure painting as the vehicle and measure of his contribution to a modern painting not—or at least not simply—because he 'preferred' landscape, but because figure painting, as he conceived it, was an activity ultimately emotionally intolerable to him; it was overdetermined from the start, since it involved a difficult positioning of himself as subject in relation to the fiction of reality represented with such studied urgency in his pictures" (p. 613). Among the subjective factors Wagner posits is "on the one hand, [a] need to control the objects of his vision, both people and landscape, and on the other, the necessity somehow to deflect or circumvent the threat involved in confrontation with the individual before him. In fact I would argue that these patterns of control and avoidance [as evinced, for example, in his early predilection for caricature], which track Monet's efforts to secure an imaginative distance from his subject, structure his work with the figure. How else might we explain the repetitive insistent morphology of the 1860s figures: men and women, whether alone or in groups, shown in profile or three-quarter view or, very often, with their backs turned four-square to the painter? Their gaze seldom meets the spectator's eyes, because it seldom met the eyes of the artist." She stresses the extent to which, in her view, this was not a matter of conscious intention: "it points to a pronounced lack of willingness to confront other egos, other subjects, particularly as he painted; he did not mean to be looked at as he looked." And although she acknowledges the possible influence of Courbet, in whose work figures with their backs turned are often found, she claims "by contrast that Monet's characteristic deployment of the figure in painting depends on deep-structured and psychologically necessary responses to the actual situation of painting—responses, that is, to the stresses of confrontation between the painter and his object/subject. These psychological factors, moreover, must be thought of as keying the availability and relevance of what art history sees as 'influences'—in this case, of Courbet, fashion prints, and even Vermeer's compositional structures. It is in the psychological sense that we may most usefully call these choices 'personal,' though the irony is that this 'personal' aspect motivates exactly those

strategies which keep his subjects at a certain distance from his gaze” (pp. 626–27). (She adds: “This is an odd constraint for a figure painter to labor under, the fear of being looked at while one paints” [p. 627].) But of course I would relate this aspect of Monet’s figure paintings—as well as an almost opposite characteristic, their studied avoidance of strongly absorptive effects—to my problematic of absorption and theatricality, which is to say I would largely depsychologize the problem in favor of understanding those paintings as a response to a particular historical situation that precisely concerned the imagined relations of the represented figures, and by extension the paintings themselves, to painter and beholder. In terms of the argument I shall be developing, Monet seems to have wanted to avoid the complementary alternatives of “strong” absorptive closure and “blank” Manet-like facingness, and to have found it all but impossible to devise a third alternative that would provide a comparable basis for ambitious figure painting.

115. See in this connection Ward, *Pissarro*.

116. Some of the complexity of this problem is suggested by Clark’s statement that “landscape, for Monet as for many other painters in the later nineteenth century, was the one genre left. They seemed to believe—the belief was not often stated explicitly, but the drift of practice is unmistakable—that nature possessed consistency now, in a way that nothing else did. It had a presence and a unity which agreed profoundly (this was the crucial point) with the act of painting. The flat unison of a picture like Monet’s was *like* landscape, like the look of sky and water *en plein air*; and these were the things on which painting could thrive. No other subject proved to match so well with the actual material of oil and canvas; no other offered painting the right kind of resistance, the kind which had the medium seem more real the harder it was pressed in the service of an illusion” (Clark 1985, p. 182). The complexity arises when we consider that such a vision of the profound affinity between the act of painting and landscape subject matter depended on (or at least implied) a conception of painting as essentially the articulation of a flat surface—also as the pursuit of “decorative” unity—both of which I have associated with the advent of Impressionism. In other words, there was nothing inevitable about the affinity between painting and landscape, as Clark recognizes when he goes on to say: “This was a powerful belief and in some ways a merited one. The achievements of the previous generation, and above all the work of Courbet and the Barbizon school, could be taken to confirm it; though they also suggested—in Millet’s art the suggestion was particularly strong—that the genre of landscape would have to be rephrased and extended if it were to go on providing matter for major art” (ibid.). Still, “for Monet and his colleagues,” Clark concludes, “landscape was the guarantee of *painting* above all; it was the thing that justified their insistence on manner and making, on the artisanal facts of the art. Perhaps that guarantee would not hold, least of all in places like Argenteuil. But painting in a sense had nowhere else to go” (p. 185). Within a generation, however, it would discover other possibilities.

117. For example, Astruc wrote in 1863: “It’s necessary to limit the taste for landscape and never cry that one is a masterpiece. It’s an inferior genre; it’s a special article in that great code of art that encompasses many” (*Le Salon*, no. 14 [May 17, 1863]). (Il faut limiter son goût pour le paysage et ne jamais crier au chef-d’oeuvre. C’est un genre inférieur; c’est un article spécial dans ce grand code de l’art qui en comprend beaucoup.) And: “Here is a great danger for talent: *landscape*—an absolutely inferior genre which makes of the painter a kind of pianist always and uniquely concerned with the mechanism of his instrument; landscape scarcely elevates taste, scarcely accentuates force—it strengthens only the feelings—a small result” (ibid., no. 15 [May 18, 1863]). (Ici un grand écueil pour le talent: le *paysage*—genre absolument inférieur qui fait du peintre une manière de

pianiste toujours et uniquement occupé du mécanisme de son clavier; le paysage n’élève point le goût, n’accentue point les forces—il ne fortifie que le sentiment—petit résultat.)

118. Astruc, “Salon de 1868,” *L’Étendard*, June 27, 1868. (La *Lise* de M. Renoir complète la trinité bizarre intronisée par la très curieuse et puissamment expressive *Olympia*, d’orageuse mémoire.)

119. Astruc, “Salon de 1868,” *L’Étendard*, Aug. 5, 1868. (Voici une nouvelle heureuse et peu répandue assurément: le paysage se meurt, le paysage est mort. Le résultat poursuivi depuis dix ans sera bientôt atteint. Certes, nous n’avons pas la prétention de croire qu’une si brillante défaite est due à nos coups seulement; bien d’autres ont compris que cette étude paresseuse n’apportait qu’une vitalité factice à notre école et ne lui ont sans doute pas ménagé les critiques; mais enfin, nous fûmes seul d’abord à signaler ce mal, en nous insurgant contre une prétendue découverte qui privait nos peintres des plus grands résultats de leur art, pour les attacher seulement à des produits secondaires. La jeunesse, cela est visible, se rallie à la figure. Elle a compris que son domaine embrasse tout: l’homme, l’objet, la plante, la fleur, l’arbre;—la nature, dans son ensemble harmonieux, tel est le vaste sujet proposé au peintre.)

120. A year later Alfred Sensier, for decades the champion of Millet and Théodore Rousseau and a lifelong advocate of absorptive painting, made the opposite case in landscape’s favor. “The true painters were formerly the great landscapists,” he wrote, “the landscapists will one day be universal artists” (“Le Salon de 1869, Le Paysage et les paysans,” *Revue internationale de l’art et de la curiosité*, May 15, 1869, p. 405). (Les vrais peintres étaient jadis de grands paysagistes, les paysagistes seront un jour des artistes universels.)

121. The paragraph that begins with this statement reads in its entirety:

The landscape school will dissolve in the universal school; we will have great artistic personalities to oppose to those of older art,—like them passionate about ideas whose realization will take place in nature and [like them] combining in a superior way expressions that form a whole,—placing man within the frame of the fields or woods, or of streets or noble buildings,—by the banks of rivers, on the ocean, in his active life or in dreams,—without making these alone the subjects of poems—without reserving for the elements man dominates an exclusive place of their own.

L’école de paysage se fondra dans l’école universelle; nous aurons de grands caractères artistiques à opposer aux anciens,—comme eux se passionnant pour les idées dont la réalisation se trouve dans la nature et combinant avec supériorité des expressions qui sont un tout;—mettant l’homme dans le cadre ou des champs ou des bois, ou des rues ou des nobles architectures,—au bord des fleuves, sur l’Océan, dans sa vie d’activité ou de rêve,—sans se faire un poème d’exception,—sans réserver aux éléments qu’il domine une place à part tout à fait exclusive.

Further on in the same article Astruc wrote: “Landscape painting—manifested by the group and declared sovereign—disappears. There are some superior exceptions who still support it; but before long it will dissolve in a wiser unity, in a more complete artistic formula, and it will assume again the place that the Old Masters always meant it to have.” (Le paysage—manifesté par la groupe et proclamé souverain—disparaît. Ce sont des exceptions supérieures qui le maintiennent encore; mais dans un temps donné il se fondra dans une unité plus savante, dans une formule d’art plus complète, et reprendra la place que lui ont toujours destinée les maîtres.)

122. Cf. Clement Greenberg: “That its background falls away hurts *Déjeuner sur l’herbe*—which would have profited by having its canvas cut down at the top and sides” (“Manet in Philadelphia,” *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4, *Modernism with a Vengeance*, 1957–1969, ed. John O’Brian [Chicago and London, 1993], p. 243).

123. The bird in flight was first identified as a bullfinch by Wayne Andersen in his article, “Manet and the Judgment of Paris,” first published in *Art News* in February 1973, and recently reprinted in *My Self* (Geneva, 1990), pp. 431–41. Andersen argues that the bullfinch amounts to a symbolic transformation of the winged Victoria in the *Judgment of Paris* (p. 437) and more broadly that the *Déjeuner* must be seen in relation to Raphael’s composition as a whole (and indeed to the story of the Judgment of Paris). My reading of the bullfinch as evoking the dove of the Holy Ghost, hence religious painting as a genre, responds not just to the iconographical connotations of the hovering bird in Manet’s picture but also to the bird’s excessiveness and outrageousness, the impossibility of integrating it within any real-world narrative/descriptive scheme. It is the sign within the *Déjeuner* of the uncanny and preposterous, the intervention of something “beyond” realism as the latter was then understood.

124. I call attention to the combining of distinct genres in the *Déjeuner* in chap. 1, n. 224, and again in Fried 1984, p. 541, n. 43. In a chapter on the *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* in her book, *Naked Authority: The Body in Western Painting, 1830–1908* (Cambridge, 1990), Marcia Pointon writes: “The boundaries between genres that had been so closely policed by the École des Beaux-Arts and the Academy are here challenged in a work which coterminously and symptomatically presents examples in all four genres: the nude of history painting (courtesy of Marcantonio after Raphael), the contemporary portrait (the painter’s brother Gustav [sic] and the Dutch sculptor Ferdinand Leenhof [sic], and Victorine Meurand [sic]), landscape, and still-life in the foreground. The structural relations between these separate components are secured by the variation in the handling of paint in different parts of the canvas. Most notably the naked woman is painted with a high degree of finish in contrast to the liquid approximation of the painting of the landscape background” (p. 126). (Actually it remains uncertain whether the male figure in question was posed for by Gustave [not Gustav] or Eugène Manet [see Manet 1983, p. 169].) For Pointon that combining of genres is analogous to the *Déjeuner*’s structure of oppositions among the four “individuals” it comprises, an analogy she relates in turn to what she sees as the painting’s simultaneous activation and subversion of an “allegorical” pictorial mode (esp. pp. 125–26). None of this is very clear or particularly helpful.

125. Le Capitaine Pompilius [Carle Desnoyers], “Lettres particulières sur le Salon,” *Le Petit Journal*, no. 131 (June 11, 1863), emphasis added. For the French text of the portion of this article that concerns Manet see appendix 3.

126. The evidence for that identification involves bringing together several items from different issues of *Le Petit Journal*. (1) In the May 14 issue one “Hérald” wrote that Le Capitaine Pompilius had been dispatched to cover the Salon but that being young and French, therefore loving bushes and flowers, he had come across a horticultural exhibition. (2) The May 15 issue contains a review of the exhibition of the Société d’horticulture signed by Carle Desnoyers, which would seem to make him a prime candidate for being Pompilius. (3) The original article by Hérald begins as follows: “Le capitaine Pompilius est un brave et franc volontaire, servant par vocation, ou, comme le comte Ory, pour plaire aux dames et pour se désennuyer, mais n’en étant que plus exact à ses devoirs et fidèle à sa consigne.” The phrase “pour se désennuyer” is a pun on “Desnoyers.”

For a brief biographical notice for Biéville (Charles-Henri-Étienne-Edmond Desnoyers de), see Pierre Moreau and Mgr. Louis Pichard, *Dictionnaire des lettres français, le dix-neuvième siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1971), 1:162.

127. See Fernand Desnoyers, *Salon des Refusés: La Peinture en 1863* (Paris, 1863). In fact a fourth piece of evidence for the identification of Pompilius is that his June 11 “Lettre sur le Salon” explains that he would have gone into greater detail about the Salon des

Refusés were it not that “the Refusés [i.e. the artists in question] have a special organ in an original and humorous publication devoted to them by a writer as convinced and as conscientious as he is brilliant and original, in a word, by Fernand Desnoyers” (les Refusés ont un organe spécial dans une publication originale et humoristique à eux consacrée par un écrivain aussi convaincu, aussi consciencieux qu’il est spirituel et originel, en un mot par M. Fernand Desnoyers).

128. Marilyn R. Brown, “Manet’s *Old Musician*: Portrait of a Gypsy and Naturalist Allegory,” *Studies in the History of Art* 8 (1978): 77–87.

129. The consequences of Haussmannization are emphasized by Clark 1985, pp. 23–78. On the transformation of Paris under Napoleon III see David H. Pinkney, *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (Princeton, 1958); Howard Saalman, *Haussmann: Paris Transformed* (New York, 1971); and David Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (Baltimore, 1985), pp. 63–220.

130. Reff 1982–83, p. 19; the phrase in quotation marks comes from Sandblad 1954, p. 28. Many of the features of Reff’s interpretation of the *Old Musician* are taken up uncritically by Nigel Blake and Francis Frascina in Blake, Briony Fer, Frascina, Tamar Garb, and Charles Harrison, *Modernity and Modernism: French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven and London, 1993), pp. 80–103.

131. Reff 1982–83, p. 174. For example, Reff simply asserts that the bearded man at the far right “was posed by Guérault, the ‘old Jew with a white beard’ mentioned in Manet’s notebook, who thus represents the popular figure of the Wandering Jew,” and suggests that one of the two boys “was perhaps posed for by Alexandre, a poor deranged boy who served as Manet’s assistant and occasional model.” The Guérault connection is a leap of faith: we have *only* a name and a phrase in a notebook, on the strength of which Adolphe Tabarant long ago proposed that he was the model for the old violinist himself (*Manet et ses oeuvres* [Paris, 1947], pp. 46–47); with the discovery of the violinist’s resemblance to Jean Lagrène, that connection was made invalid; but it hardly follows that “Guérault” posed for the bearded figure at the right or indeed for any figure in any painting Manet ever made. For the (to my mind far from certain) identification of the bearded figure at the right as the Wandering Jew see Anne Coffin Hanson, “Popular Imagery and the Work of Edouard Manet,” in Ulrich Finke, ed., *French 19th-Century Painting and Literature* (Manchester, 1972), pp. 144–45; and George Mauner, *Manet Peintre-Philosophe: A Study of the Painter’s Themes* (University Park, Pa., and London, 1975), pp. 74–77. As for the reference to Alexandre (the presumed original for the boy who hangs himself in Baudelaire’s prose poem *La Corde*), it too rests on shaky ground and seems determined by an a priori thematics of marginality and victimage.

132. Reff 1982–83, p. 174.

133. *Ibid.*, p. 177.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

135. *Ibid.*, pp. 178–79. See De Leiris, “Manet, Guérault and Chrysispos,” 401–4. The illustration of the statue reproduced here (fig. 85) is not the same as that in Reff 1982–83. A letter from Charlotte Huré of the Musée du Louvre explains: “[L]’histoire de cette oeuvre est complexe. La statue que Manet a vue et dont je vous joins un contretype d’une photo ancienne (cliché E. Dontenvill-Paris) vers 1920, ne figure plus [dans la] salle des Caryatides sous cette forme car la tête a été reconnue être un portrait d’Aristote. L’oeuvre présentée sous le no. 92 dans le catalogue ‘Manet and Modern Paris’ est le produit d’une reconstruction exécutée sur les indications de M. Charbonneaux vers 1940; la tête est un plâtre, pris sur un marbre du British Museum, adapté d’une manière hypothétique sur le

corps. Les recherches les plus récentes contredisent ce raccord. D'où le retrait du plâtre en 1989 pour la présentation actuelle [as a headless figure]. Il n'existe donc pas de 'Chryssippe intact' d'autant plus que les travaux de Lidiano Bacchielli publiés en 1987 font de la statue un portrait d'Aratos, poète et astronome vers 315–305 av. J.-C." My thanks to Mme Huré for the above information and to M. Pasquier, conservateur général, for permission to publish the Dontenvill-Paris photograph.

136. Reff 1982–83, p. 178.

137. *Ibid.*, p. 174; the first two phrases in quotation marks are from Théodore Duret's *Manet*, the third from Pinkney's *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris*. The Petite Pologne association goes back to Moreau-Nélaton in 1906 (see Tabarant, *Manet et ses oeuvres*, p. 47; and Anne Coffin Hanson, "Manet's Subject Matter and a Source of Popular Imagery," *Museum Studies, Art Institute of Chicago*, 3 [1969]: 70–72).

138. This isn't quite fair. He was antipated by Hanson, who describes the *Old Musician* as "a work of haunting impact" in *Manet and the Modern Tradition*, p. 61.

139. Reff 1982–83, pp. 188–89. Schlesinger's painting appeared in the Salon of 1861; a wood engraving after it appeared in *Le Magasin pittoresque* 29 (1861): 293. The connection was first noted by Hanson, "Popular Imagery and the Work of Édouard Manet," p. 146; see also *idem*, *Manet and the Modern Tradition*, p. 63.

140. It's worth noting that the concept of an "image" as contrasted with that of a *tableau* or related terms was a definite pejorative for certain critics of the 1860s and 1870s. See Astruc's query, "Descendons-nous au niveau des Anglais imagiers . . . ?" cited in n. 89 above, as well as the superb paragraph by Eugène Fromentin in *Les Maîtres d'autrefois* (1876; Brussels, 1991), p. 199, in which the author contrasts works by the Old Masters with those by modern painters precisely in this regard.

141. Jean Clay, "Ointments, Makeup, Pollen," trans. John Shepley, *October*, no. 27 (winter 1983): 4–5. Originally published as "Onguents, fards, pollens," in *Bonjour Monsieur Manet*, exhib. cat. (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée national de l'art moderne, June 8–Oct. 3, 1983), pp. 6–24.

142. This is not to deny that the Schlesinger obviates the need to imagine rotating figures in the Le Nain paintings, a too-elaborate operation I propose in chap. 1, n. 96. It is also necessary to distinguish between Manet's quotations from key pictorial works from the past and the resemblances that may be found, in the case of the *Old Musician* and elsewhere, with popular imagery of various sorts. As Farwell remarks (without realizing the full implications of what she is saying), "While Sandblad, [A. G.] Barskaya, and Michael Fried as well as Hanson all have pointed to specific popular imagery as 'sources' for Manet's work of 1862–3, in no case is there a convincing example of his deriving a motif 'line-for-line' from such an image in the sense in which he derived the *Nymphe Surprise* from Rubens, for instance" (Farwell 1981, p. 114).

143. As noted by Reff 1982–83, p. 178.

144. One more example might be useful. In "Manet's Sources" I associate Manet's *Gypsies* (fig. 43) with an engraving after Rubens's *Bacchus* (fig. 45; actually I should have chosen another engraving of it, from the *Recueil Crozat*). However, Hanson connects the principal figure exclusively with an image called *La Limosine* from *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (*Manet and the Modern Tradition*, p. 61). I'm persuaded that Manet used the latter image in the *Gitanos*; but once again this doesn't displace the Rubens (not especially the suggestive resemblance between the two drinking figures in the Rubens and the boy lifting a jug to drink in the *Gypsies*), which remains the crucial Old Master reference.

3. The Generation of 1863

1. On Legros see esp. Legros 1987–88. See also Alexander Seltzer, "Alphonse Legros: The Development of an Archaic Visual Vocabulary in Nineteenth Century Art" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1980); and *idem*, "Alphonse Legros: Waiting for the Ax to Fall," *Arts Magazine* 62 (Jan. 1988): 40–45. A major source for recent scholars is the unpublished manuscript by Noël Clément-Janin, "Alphonse Legros, sa vie et son oeuvre," Bibliothèque Doucet: Papiers Clément-Janin, MS 470.

2. See Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran, *L'Éducation de la mémoire pittoresque et la formation de l'artiste* (Paris, 1913). Plate IV in that book reproduces a drawing by the young Legros after Holbein's *Portrait of Erasmus* in the Louvre. See also Félix Régamey, *Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran et ses élèves* (Paris, 1903); and Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, "Lecoq de Boisbaudran and Memory Drawing: A Teaching Course between Idealism and Naturalism," in *The European Realist Tradition*, ed. Gabriel P. Weisberg (Bloomington, Ind., 1982), pp. 242–89.

3. The present whereabouts of the *Angelus* is unknown. See Baudelaire, "Salon de 1859," *Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 331–34; "L'Eau-forte est à la mode," *ibid.*, p. 406; and "Peintres et aqua-fortistes," *ibid.*, pp. 410–13. The set of engravings Legros published in 1861 under the title *Esquisses à l'eau-forte* bore the dedication "à son ami Baudelaire."

4. On the *Ex-Voto* see Legros 1987–88, pp. 49–51, cat. no. 16. See also Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 11 (May 14, 1863): 2–3, where he explains that originally the painting depicted a group of women kneeling before a coffin in a dark interior; Legros soon changed his mind, but in a strong light (or a good color reproduction) the coffin can today be seen showing through from underneath.

5. I discuss Duranty in section 4 of "Manet's Sources" (chap. 1). Although he first emerged as a critic in the mid-1850s, he was an exact contemporary of the painters of the generation of 1863. For a magisterial study of Duranty's life and writings in the context of his age see Marcel Crouzet, *Un Méconnu de Réalisme: Duranty* (Paris, 1964).

6. Edmond Duranty, "Ceux qui seront les peintres (À propos des derniers salons)," in *Almanach Parisien*, ed. Fernand Desnoyers (Paris, 1867), pp. 13–14. The entire essay is republished together with a translation in appendix 2.

Duranty's italicization of the adjectives *communes* and *communs* is probably an ironic response to the negative review of the *Ex-Voto* by Paul de Saint-Victor, who referred demeaningly to the women's "laideur ingrate et commune" ("Salon de 1861," *La Presse*, June 25, 1861). The importance of the concept of the *tableau* and related notions for the artists and critics of the 1860s, first touched on in "Manet's Sources," will be further explored in this chapter and in the first section of chapter 4.

7. See Fried 1990, pp. 40–45.

8. See Fried 1980 and 1990.

9. So for example Chesneau wrote in 1859: "Millet's works are remarkable by virtue of what seems a preestablished absence of personality. Behind his *Gleaners* as behind the *Woman Pasturing Her Cow* one doesn't perceive the artist saying: 'See how these women are unhappy' . . . He avoids all dramatic effect because it would be false. And if these women are unhappy, it's we who have to draw that conclusion, they themselves are unaware of it; wholly occupied with their labor, living their hard life, they are oblivious to being beheld, and if they weren't, they wouldn't change their demeanor in any way" ("Libre Étude sur l'art contemporain: Salon de 1859," *Revue des races latines*, 3d yr., vol. 14 [1859]: 123). (Les oeuvres de M. Millet sont remarquables par une absence évidemment

préconçue de personnalité. Derrière ses *Glaneuses* comme derrière la *Femme faisant paître sa vache*, on ne s'aperçoit pas l'artiste disant: "Voyez comme ces femmes sont malheureuses." . . . Il évite tout effet dramatique parce qu'il serait faux. Et si ces femmes sont malheureuses, c'est nous qui devons tirer cette conclusion, elles l'ignorent elles-mêmes, tout occupées de leur labeur, vivant de leur pénible vie, elles ne se doutent pas qu'on les regarde, et s'en douteraient-elles, qu'elles ne changeraient rien à leur allure.) For one moment, in 1863, Chesneau feared that Millet's art risked being a dangerous influence on the younger generation (see his "L'École française au Salon de 1863," *L'Art et les artistes modernes en France et en Angleterre* [Paris, 1864], pp. 283–84), but he continued to admire him as an antitheatrical master par excellence; see for example the remarks from his memorial article, "Jean-François Millet," *GBA*, 2d ser., 11 (May 1, 1875): 434–35, quoted and discussed in Fried 1980, pp. 221–22.

Similarly, Du Camp wrote in 1861: "There is one point in regard to which I can't praise Millet enough: his personages never *pose*, one would say that they must always be unaware that they are exhibited in a golden frame before the curiosity of the public; they are there for themselves, and not for anyone else. Most personages that artists show us now seem to say to us: 'Look at me, and above all find me beautiful. . . .' In painting, the French school might be called the school of the Pose. Millet escapes all that absolutely, and that's a real virtue for an artist. His personages are entirely absorbed by the occupation in which they are engaged" (*Le Salon de 1861* [Paris, 1861], pp. 114–15). (Mais il est un point sur lequel je ne saurais donner à M. Millet de trop grands éloges: ses personnages ne *posent* jamais, on dirait qu'ils doivent ignorer toujours qu'ils seront exposés dans un cadre doré à la curiosité du public; ils sont là pour eux-mêmes, et non point pour les autres. La plupart de tous ceux que les artistes nous montrent maintenant semblent nous dire: "Regardez-moi, et surtout trouvez-moi beau. . ." En peinture, l'école française pourrait s'appeler l'école de la Pose. M. Millet y échappe absolument, et c'est une vertu réelle pour un artiste. Ses personnages sont tout entiers absorbés par l'occupation à laquelle ils se livrent.) Du Camp's testimony is impressive in that he is highly critical of Millet's art in other respects.

As for Astruc, a critic whose writings have already engaged our attention, his admiration for Millet was unstinting (see below).

10. My use of the male pronoun for the beholder is consonant with the gendering of the beholder as male in the criticism and painting with which I am dealing.

11. See Baudelaire, "Salon of 1859," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 372; Gautier, "Salon de 1861," *Le Moniteur universel*, July 6, 1861; Duranty, "Salon de 1870," *Paris-Journal*, May 15, 1870; and Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1861," *La Presse*, June 25, 1861. Saint-Victor described what he took to have been a change in style on Millet's part in terms of a turn toward theatricality. As he recalled them, Millet's first peasant pictures depicted sowers and gleaners "sincerely given over to the work of the fields," hence their critical success. But "from that day, Millet's peasants were lost; they overdid their poverty, they exaggerated their rustiness. . . . Expression gave way to a melancholy cretinism that his fanatic admirers took for a transcendent naïveté. One goes far in false grandiosity." (Le succès vint de lui-même à ces humbles figures si sincèrement adonnées au travail des champs. . . . Dès ce jour, les paysans de M. Millet furent perdus; ils outrèrent leur indigence, ils exagèrent leur rusticité. . . . L'expression même fit place à un crétinisme mélancolique qui passa chez les fanatiques pour une naïveté transcendante. On va loin, dans le faux grandiose.) As early as 1857, though, Saint-Victor's response to Millet's art was violently negative precisely because the women in *The Gleaners* seemed to him to "pose like the three Fates of pauperism" and in general because Millet's figures struck him as theatrical

("Salon de 1857," *La Presse*, Aug. 4, 1857) (elles posent comme les trois Parques du paupérisme).

12. Astruc, *L'Écho des beaux-arts*, June 12, 1870. (On ne l'aime pas à moitié: il fanatise ou repousse.) Millet could even do both at the same time: of two paintings by him in the Salon of 1864, the *Shepherdess Guarding Her Flock* and the *New-Born Lamb*, the first was universally admired, the second almost universally detested.

13. Fried 1990, p. 79–80.

14. See Théodore Pelloquet, "Salon de 1863," *L'Exposition*, July 1, 1863; and Théodore Duret, *Les Peintres français en 1867* (Paris, 1867), pp. 37–48, 85–98.

15. See e.g. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1861," June 25, 1861; Léon Lagrange, "Salon de 1861," *GBA*, 1st ser., 11 (July 1, 1861): 52; Louis Leroy, "Salon de 1861," *Le Charivari*, June 7, 1861; Olivier Merson, *Exposition de 1861: La Peinture en France* (Paris, 1861), p. 219.

16. No doubt he also had in mind the accord between the subject and the restrained (or "tight") painterliness of the handling, a permanent feature of Legros's art. Writing in 1875, A. Poulet-Malassis commented admiringly on the way in which Legros's *Chaudronnier* "gave us another proof of that master faculty of incorporating execution in the subject, of dissolving them in a harmonious and indissoluble unity" (*Monsieur Alphonse Legros au Salon de 1875: Note critique et biographique* [Paris and London, 1875], p. 8) (nous donne une autre preuve de cette faculté maîtresse d'incorporer l'exécution au sujet, de les fondre dans une harmonieuse et indissoluble unité).

17. Du Camp, *Le Salon de 1861*, pp. 34–35, 99. (Il est d'une simplicité lugubre comme la mort; rien de théâtral, rien de forcé. . . . [Apropos Tissot:] il y a de la naïveté dans le dessin, mais cette naïveté me semble bien voulue). In the same *Salon*, however, Du Camp admired Puvis de Chavanne's strong will, which led to a good artistic result (pp. 75–76) (il a suivi imperturbablement sa propre volonté, et, comme sa volonté était très-forte, il est arrivé à un bon résultat).

18. The letter is dated June 2, 1863; see Jean-François Millet, *Écrits choisis* (Caen, 1990), p. 44. (Que les choses n'aient point l'air d'être amalgamées au hasard et par occasion, mais qu'elles aient entre elles une liaison indispensable et forcée.) Two years earlier, Thoré had praised Millet for possessing "a wholly personal style and an opinionated will" ("Salon de 1861," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:35) (un style tout personnel et une volonté opiniâtre). In the same "Salon" Thoré had criticized a painting by Courbet for lacking "those willed effects that always strike one in Courbet's works" and attributed to those who came from the Jura, as Courbet did, "an invincible will" (1:99) (l'ensemble manque de ces effets volontaires qui frappent toujours dans les œuvres de Courbet. . . . Ces enfants du Jura ont une volonté invincible). Baudelaire too in his "Exposition Universelle de 1855" characterized Courbet as "a powerful worker, a wild and patient will" (*Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 225) (un puissant ouvrier, une sauvage et patiente volonté). But Courbet is less often seen in those terms than are Legros, Fantin-Latour, Ernest Meissonier, Puvis de Chavannes, Ribot, and Moreau—all, including Courbet, absorptive painters to a greater or lesser degree. It's also true that Manet is sometimes criticized for the willed harshness, incompleteness, or unintelligibility of his art; but the negative judgment here bears not on the factor of will so much as on the particular qualities the critics find objectionable. Or rather the seeming willing of *those* qualities leads to the charge of *parti pris* and the further accusation of seeking to attract attention at any price (see chap. 4).

In *Courbet's Realism* I compared Courbet's paintings with photography with respect to the different relations in each between will and automatism (pp. 278–83); I would now add Millet's paintings to that comparison inasmuch as they were seen by both admirers

and detractors as intensely willed representations of figures absorbed to the point of outright automatism. In any case, the valorization of will and willing in the art criticism of the 1860s refutes Edgar Wind's assurance that *voulu* is always "a term of aesthetic censure" (Edgar Wind, *Art and Anarchy* [New York, 1963], p. 88).

19. This by no means exhausts the interest of Duranty's article, which (as I shall claim further on) anticipates the argument of his famous brochure of 1876, *La Nouvelle Peinture*, in important respects. Two further points are worth noting. First, Duranty gave pride of place chronologically to Legros's *Ex-Voto* rather than to Manet's *Guitarrero* in the same Salon, which is consistent with his greater comfort with Legros's absorptive compositions. And second, Duranty seems annoyed that the artists he supported were reluctant to call themselves realists although in his view there was only one legitimate path to follow and that was realism (or indeed Realism). Duranty might have been reacting in part to Zola's brash assertion in 1866 that "the word 'realist' doesn't mean anything to me, who advocate subordinating the real to temperament" ("Mon Salon," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 108). (Le mot 'réaliste' ne signifie rien pour moi, qui déclare subordonner le réel au tempérament.)

20. Joris-Karl Huysmans, *L'Oblat* (Paris, 1903), p. 220. (Les expressions simples et concentrées de ces orantes recueillies, absorbées, loin des visiteurs, devant la croix, dégageaient une saveur religieuse réelle.) As might be expected, Huysmans in his art criticism passionately admired painting that seemed to him genuinely absorptive (see his remarks on Fantin-Latour and Caillebotte, the latter of whom he esteemed above Manet) and found nothing more repulsive than works that depicted personages who appeared to be playing to the gallery (see his *L'Art moderne/Certains* [Paris, 1975]). Huysmans admired Millet's pastels but not his paintings (see pp. 411–19).

21. On the link between tears and blindness see Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago and London, 1993). For more on Derrida's *Memoirs* see chap. 5 of this book.

22. See Fried 1980, pp. 48–49.

23. Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1861," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:111. (Elles sont si recueillies dans leur pieuse imploration, qu'elles seront exaucées, bien sûr. . . L'une est en blanc, et vue de dos)

24. *Ibid.* (M. Legros doit travailler tout seul, dans la retraite, car il ne paraît pas se préoccuper des autres peintres ni du public.)

25. On Fantin see esp. Fantin-Latour 1982–83. The standard early biographical study is Adolphe Jullien, *Fantin-Latour, sa vie et ses amitiés* (Paris, 1909).

26. See Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 95–96, cat. no. 21, and pp. 141–43, cat. no. 42.

27. Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1863," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:384 (Thoré's notes or perhaps his memory let him down; there is no white collar). (Mais le plus charmant, le plus intime, le plus naturellement distingué de tous les portraits de femme est celui d'une *Liseuse*, par M. Fantin-Latour. Jeune fille blonde, en modeste caraco brun et jupon gris, assise, vue jusqu'aux genoux, sur un fond uni, neutre. Aucun accessoire qui puisse distraire la *Liseuse* ni ceux qui la regardent. Elle tient des deux mains son livre vu en raccourci, et dont la tranche est frappé de lumière. Sa petite main droite, également en lumière sur les pages du livre, est délicieuse. Quelle attention! Comme elle lit bien et comme elle pense à ce qu'elle lit! Et qu'elle est de race fine, malgré sa toilette discrète! Et comme la couleur est juste, harmonieuse, tranquille! L'heureuse femme, avec son jupon de laine grise et son petit col blanc!)

28. On the *Homage to Delacroix*, see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 167–80.

29. Gautier, "Salon de 1864," *Le Moniteur universel*, June 25, 1864. (Sur le devant

sont groupés, vus à mi-corps, et tournant le dos à l'objet de leur vénération pour regarder le public, les amis du peintre, artistes et littérateurs, que réunit une commune admiration du maître illustre tant regretté de tous. L'oeuvre de M. Fantin-Latour est plutôt une collection de portraits qu'une composition raisonnée et dirigée dans le sens de son motif; mais ces portraits sont eux-mêmes fort bien peints et très-ressemblants. . . Il y a, malgré la bizarrerie de l'arrangement ou pour mieux dire malgré l'absence de tout arrangement, un véritable mérite dans cette toile dont le public s'est fort préoccupé.)

30. Chesneau, "Salon de 1864," *Le Constitutionnel*, June 7, 1864. (Mais le tableau en lui-même n'existe point comme tableau, il n'est là ni composition, ni intention nettement marquée, ce n'est point une oeuvre en un mot.)

31. *Ibid.* ([N]e pense-t-il point qu'il serait temps de songer à présenter au public autre chose que des morceaux intéressants pour quelques amateurs seulement?)

32. Leroy, "Salon de 1864," *Charivari*, May 11, 1864. (En quoi le portrait d'un grand artiste placé sur une table à laquelle des personnages tournent le dos peut-il constituer un hommage suffisant à sa mémoire? Je l'ignore. Ah! si vous n'eussiez montré une statue ou un buste du merveilleux coloriste et qu'autour du piédestal j'eusse vu dans des poses admiratives ou simplement recueillies les apôtres du maître, j'aurais compris.)

33. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12652.

34. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12653.

35. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12639.

36. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12401. On the project that eventuated in *The Toast! Homage to Truth*, see Léonce Bénédite, "Histoire d'un tableau: 'Le Toast,' par Fantin-Latour," *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 17 (1905): 21–31 and 121–36; and Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 181–92.

37. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12485, RF 12486, RF 12467.

38. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12395. In Fantin-Latour 1982–83, Douglas Druick suggests that for the composition of the "Dinner" Fantin apparently drew "upon his knowledge of the Old Masters in the Louvre, including Philippe de Champaigne's *Last Supper* (Inv. 1124), with its symmetrical arrangement and cropped figures at either side, and François Puget's *Réunion de musiciens* (then entitled *Portraits de plusieurs musiciens et artistes du siècle de Louis XIV*; Inv. 7436), in which the table comes right down to the lower edge of the composition and the objects on it are seen from above" (p. 184).

39. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12519, RF 12414. Manet seems to have been the reference for individual figures in other drawings for these projects.

40. Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, RF 12418, RF 12419 (for the drawings). Fantin's correspondence suggests that he would have liked to include Legros, the English painter Edwin Edwards, and the German painter Otto Scholderer, each of whom, for different reasons, was unable to pose for him; the final painting comprised portraits of Fantin, Whistler (in a Japanese robe), Manet, Bracquemond, Cordier, Duranty, Astruc, Antoine Vollon, and Jean-Charles Cazin (see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 191). The preparatory drawings for "Truth," "The Dinner," *The Toast!*, and *The Toast! Homage to Truth* are also discussed by Luce Abèlès, *Fantin-Latour: Coin de table. Verlainne, Rimbaud et les vilains bonshommes*, Les Dossiers du Musée d'Orsay 18 (1987), pp. 6–12. My thanks to Douglas Druick for making a photograph of the oil sketch available to me.

41. According to Auvray, Fantin depicted himself seated in the center foreground, his back to the public but with his head turned toward the beholder. (Another critic, Amédée Cantaloube, tells us that Fantin pointed with his finger at the figure of Truth ["Le Salon de 1865," *Le Grand Journal*, May 21, 1865].) Among the other figures in the painting were



two men “seen from the rear, with their hats on their heads in the presence of a naked woman whom they gaze at from the front” (Louis Auvray, *Salon de 1865* [Paris, 1865], pp. 51–52) (deux autres vus de dos, avec le chapeau sur la tête en présence d’une femme nue qu’ils regardent en face). For his part, Laincel ironically deplores the bad manners of those in the painting (he doesn’t say how many or whether we see them from the rear) who “in front of a woman—of Truth!—keep their hats on their heads—horrible stovepipe hats!” (Louis de Laincel, *Promenade aux Champs-Élysées. L’Art et la démocratie. Causes de décadence. Le Salon de 1865* [Paris 1865], p. 13). (Ces Messieurs sont dénués de politesses et des sentiments de convenance les plus élémentaires. Comment donc en face d’une femme, de la Vérité! ils gardent sur leur tête leur chapeau,—un affreux tuyau de poêle!)

42. In a fascinating article on exhibition spaces in Paris between the 1870s and 1890s, Martha Ward has pointed out that male visitors to the Salon (and most other exhibitions) typically did not remove their hats (“Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions,” *Art Bulletin* 73 [Dec. 1991]: 606, 609).

43. “Then, nonchalant and distracted, they look about, this one to the right, that one to the left. One would say that having Truth before them, they don’t see her, don’t want to see her and don’t look at all as if they’re seeing her” (Laincel, *Promenade aux Champs-Élysées*, p. 13; it’s not clear grammatically whether Laincel is referring to the men in hats or the other figures). (Puis, nonchalants et distraits, ils regardent, qui à droite, qui à gauche. On dirait qu’ayant la Vérité devant eux, ils ne la voient pas, ne veulent pas la voir et ne tiennent pas du tout à la voir.)

44. Fantin to Edwards, Feb. 3, 1865. (Ils boivent à la vérité leur idéal et par une de ces licences permises à la peinture et qui sont un de ses charmes, leur Idéale, le sujet de leur toast, apparaît pour celui qui regarde le tableau.) This is part of a longer description of the composition, quoted in translation in Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 191. Fantin’s letters to Edwards are in the Bibliothèque Municipale, Grenoble.

45. Edwards to Fantin, letter dated Feb. 1865 (je trouve très spirituel que les convives n’ont pas l’air d’apercevoir la Vérité—elle doit apparaître aux spectateurs et à mon cher seulement). Edwards’s letters to Fantin are in the archives at Brame and Lorenceau, Paris. My thanks to Philippe Brame for allowing me to consult those archives and to Douglas Druick for sharing with me his extensive knowledge of Fantin’s work and correspondence.

46. Fantin to Edwards, Feb. 15, 1865. (Vous avez raison, il n’y [sic] que moi, qui la verrai. Oui, Shakespeare, mais moi! Banquo ne fit pas tant peur à Macbeth, que la Vérité pour moi.)

47. See Auvray, *Salon de 1865*, p. 52, and Cantaloube, “Le Salon de 1865,” both cited in n. 41 above. See also Fantin’s description of the composition in his letter to Edwards of Feb. 3, 1865 (Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 191). According to Jankowitz, the picture was so devoid of atmosphere that the figure of the painter in the foreground risked being crushed against the frame (V. de Jankovitz, *Étude sur le Salon de 1865* [Besançon, 1865], p. 65). (De plus, l’oeuvre est si dépourvue d’atmosphère, que l’auteur, dont la figure est au premier plan, menace d’être écrasé contre le cadre par tous les assistants.)

48. Fantin to Edwards, Feb. 15, 1865. (Mais que je vais être batonné, oh mon dos, il me cuit déjà, je commence à me faire sentir [sic] cela sur le dos.) See also the letter of Feb. 3, 1865.

49. Ibid. (A présent, au catalogue je n’aurai que ce mot, “le Toast” et moi, alors je montre la Vérité, cela fait Toast à la Vérité.)

50. See Jankowitz, *Étude sur le Salon de 1865*, p. 65.

51. See Fantin-Latour, 1982–83, pp. 155–57, cat. no. 48, and pp. 159–61, cat. no. 50.

52. Baudelaire’s essay, “Richard Wagner et *Tannhäuser* à Paris” commemorates his encounter with Wagner’s music and may profitably be read in conjunction with Fantin’s *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* (*Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 689–728) and indeed with the transvaluation of will and excess in the interests of intensity that we noted in both Duranty’s account of Legros’s *Ex-Voto* and the *Ex-Voto* itself. “Everything implied by the words *will, desire, concentration, nervous intensity, explosion*, can be felt and intuited in [Wagner’s] works,” Baudelaire wrote. “In matters of art, I admit that I don’t hate extremism; moderation has never seemed to me the sign of a vigorous artistic nature. I love those excesses of health, those overflowings of will which inscribe themselves in works of art like burning tar in the soil of a volcano, and which, in ordinary life, often mark the phrase, full of delight, following a great moral or physical crisis” (p. 719). (Tout ce qu’impliquent les mots: *volonté, désir, concentration, intensité nerveuse, explosion*, se sent et se fait deviner dans ses oeuvres. . . . En matière d’art j’avoue que je ne hais pas l’outrance; la modération ne m’a jamais semblé le signe d’une nature artistique vigoureuse. J’aime ces excès de santé, ces débordements de volonté qui s’inscrivent dans les oeuvres comme le bitume enflammé dans le sol d’un volcan, et qui, dans la vie ordinaire, marquent souvent la phase, pleine de délices, succédant à une grande crise morale ou physique.) On Baudelaire on Wagner see Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Musica ficta* (*Figures de Wagner*) (Paris, 1991), pp. 25–90.

53. Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 97–99.

54. Chesneau, “L’École française au Salon de 1863” (above n. 9), pp. 187–88. (C’est une marqueterie de tons violents, et, malgré l’abondance de couleurs vives, ce n’est point là l’ébauche d’une oeuvre de coloriste. Les couleurs ne sont pas la couleur, et le portrait de jeune fille tenant un livre, peinture si sobre d’éclat, prouve que M. Fantin-Latour sait cela mieux que personne. On ne devine pas à quelle impulsion il a obéi lorsqu’il a méconnu si étrangement des lois qu’il s’impose et qu’il respecte fort bien lorsqu’il le veut. . . . M. Fantin-Latour a eu tort d’envoyer sa *Féerie* à l’état d’esquisse.)

55. A good discussion of these terms in nineteenth-century usage is by Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London and New York, 1971), esp. pp. 36–41, 43–47. In the criticism we shall be considering, *esquisse* often seems to coincide more or less with what we today mean by “sketch.” *Ébauche* suggests something more ambitious, the penultimate version of a work of some complexity or indeed the first, loosely painted layer (or underpainting) of such a work; the second meaning in particular is what critics had in mind when they accused Manet of painting only *ébauches*, that is, of being unable or unwilling to make finished paintings (more on this in chap. 4).

56. See Gautier, “Salon de 1864,” *Le Moniteur universel*, June 17, 1864. Druick notes that the work as it stands today is more finished than when it was shown in the Salon of 1864 (Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 162).

57. Madame Fantin-Latour, *Catalogue de l’oeuvre complète (1849–1907) de Fantin-Latour* (Paris, 1911), p. 30; quoted in translation in Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 155. (Une jeune princesse des contes de fées descend les marches d’un palais de fantaisie, et voit devant elle un jeune prince Charmant, avec une suite, qui lui offre de précieux présents.)

58. See Fantin-Latour, 1982–83, pp. 155–57 and 159–60.

59. Jules-Antoine Castagnary, “Salon de 1877,” *Salons*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1892), 2:304. (La couleur est charmante et le dessin sûr; mais ce qui est incomparable et ce qui produit sur le public une si grande impression, c’est l’intimité, le calme, l’honnêteté paisible de cet

intérieur. Je ne sais rien de plus puissamment expressive dans ce genre. Il y a une contagion du bien qui vous gagne. Après avoir contemplé, on se sent pénétré de meilleurs sentiments. Quelle en est la raison? Pourquoi le spectacle de ces deux filles humbles et discrètes, produit-il cet effet sur moi; tandis que tous les Christ, tous les Vierges, tous les Saint-Étienne et tous les Saint-Sébastien me laissent indifférent ou me font hausser les épaules? J'indique le problème à ceux qui cherchent comment l'art pouvait exercer une action morale directe.)

60. *Idem*, "Salon de 1878," *Salons*, 2:342. (Nous connaissons les deux demoiselles; cette année M. Fantin-Latour a jugé poli de nous présenter le père et la mère. La famille est complète, mais le tableau n'y a pas gagné. C'était pourtant un bien joli intérieur que cette *Lecture*, d'un charme si profond, d'une intimité si pénétrante. Avec les nouveaux venus, le parfum s'est évaporé, et il ne reste plus que quatre personnages assez gauchement groupés et peints sans finesse ni éclat.) On *The Dubourg Family* see Fantin-Latour, 1982–83, pp. 249–51, cat. no. 90.

61. Castagnary, "Salon de 1879," *Salons*, 2:381–83. (Seul, entre les hommes de son temps, cet artiste original possède le don de moraliser sans prêcher. Sa peinture est vertueuse, et, en outre, excellente. . . . Vous connaissez le sujet? Il représente deux jeunes filles, deux artistes, qui travaille. L'une debout, dessine d'après un modèle qu'on ne voit pas; l'autre assise, la tête un peu penchée, copie un plâtre placé sur la table. . . . Je n'aime pas beaucoup le type de la brune restée debout, mais la figure assise, n'est-elle pas un morceau délicieuse, un chef-d'oeuvre dans un chef-d'oeuvre?) On *The Drawing Lesson or Portraits* see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 253–55, cat. no. 93.

62. Baudelaire, "Salon de 1859," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 334. (Dans une oeuvre moins intime et moins pénétrante, il n'eût pas été tolérable.)

63. Castagnary, "Salon de 1869," *Salons*, 1:356. (Est-elle assez mère, cette paysanne à qui le soleil a fait le teint hâlé et le travail les mains calleuses? Elle l'est de tout le mouvement de son corps et de toute l'attention de ses yeux; elle l'est depuis le regard qui dirige jusqu'à la main qui voudrait exécuter. Et cette petite fille, vrai sauvageon des champs qui a des airs de chevreau embarrassé, est-elle assez vierge et gauche? Vous pouvez rester là aussi longtemps que vous voudrez, peu de tableaux s'imposent autant, ont une force plus pénétrante. J'y suis revenu, et chaque fois j'ai été plus profondément atteint. D'où vient cela? De la beauté des lignes assurément, de la puissance du modelé, du charme de la couleur, mais surtout, croyez-moi, de la vérité de nature. Rien n'est factice ici; ce ne sont pas des modèles sortis de leurs habitudes pour venir devant nous prendre une pose arbitraire, ce sont des êtres vivants, envisagés dans leur cadre naturel et se manifestant à nous avec leurs costumes, leurs habitudes, leurs sentiments, leurs idées, dans les conditions normales et ordinaires de leur champêtre existence.) On *the Knitting Lesson* see Robert Herbert, *Jean-François Millet*, exhib. cat. (Paris: Grand Palais, Oct. 17, 1965–Jan. 5, 1976; London: Hayward Gallery, Jan. 22–Mar. 7, 1976), p. 148, cat. no. 91.

64. For Astruc's use of the phrase "the frame of nature" in a similar context apropos Millet see n. 94 below. Significantly, Fantin greatly admired Millet; see his letters to Otto Scholderer of Oct. 14, 1874, Feb. 1875, Apr. 11, 1875, and June 11, 1875, in the last of which, accompanying a gift of drawings by Millet and Corot, he refers to "Millet whom I can never praise to you enough" (Brame and Lorenceau archives) (Millet dont je ne peux vous faire assez l'éloge).

65. Chesneau, "Salon de 1875," *Paris-Journal*, May 12, 1863; the article is entitled "Les Refusés de 1863."

Une volonté tenace, obstinée, persistant en dépit de toutes les traverses, telle est, pour appliquer le mot de Taine, la *faculté-maîtresse* du peintre.

Ceux qui ne reculent point devant une certaine austérité puritaine, et qui ont su briser la première glace que l'artiste établit entre le public et ses oeuvres, comme de parti-pris, n'ont pas attendu jusqu'à ce jour pour proclamer les rares et sérieux mérites des portraits annuellement envoyés aux Salons par M. Fantin-Latour. Ils regrettent seulement cette froideur du premier aspect que l'artiste leur impose.

Mais combien parmi ceux-là ignorent que ce qu'ils doivent dans leur pensée attribuer au tempérament même du peintre, n'est au contraire que l'effet de la discipline excessive dont il s'est fait une loi sévère, vraiment trop sévère.

Nul plus que cet homme, qui affecte une sobriété de couleurs voisine de l'indigence, n'est au fond plus amoureux, plus passionné des fêtes, des fanfares, des prestiges, des feux d'artifice, de la coloration.

Autrefois il a envoyé au Salons, on a tantôt reçu, tantôt refusé des esquisses de lui qu'il intitulait *Féeries*, où il trahissait tout l'emportement, toute la fougue, toutes les folies ardentes de son vrai tempérament.

A-t-il fait un voeu? Je ne sais. Toujours est-il que la sagesse actuelle de ses procédés accuse le plus extraordinaire empire de la volonté sur l'instinct.

66. Cf. Astruc, "Salon de 1870," *L'Écho des beaux-arts*, June 5, 1870. Astruc refers there to "those two faces, so opposed, of the most singular artistic mind that I know" (ces deux faces, si opposées du plus singulier esprit d'art que je connaisse). See also the quotations from Duranty in n. 68 below.

67. Théodore de Banville, "Salon de 1872," *Le National*, May 16, 1872 (et il semble que je ne sais quelle brume légère, presque invisible, les estompe et les enveloppe: M. Fantin a-t-il voulu exprimer ce voile de l'indifférence publique que toute poète doit secouer et déchirer avant d'entrer dans la pleine possession de sa vertu, et dans la jouissance définitive de la gloire?).

68. Duranty expressed a comparable perception. For example, in 1870 he wrote of Fantin's characteristic facture: "It creates the effect of an artist enclosed within a bourgeois and unable to break through that envelope, with the result that neither of the two natures prevails and both are at odds" ("Salon de 1870," *Paris-Journal*, May 8, 1870). (Il fait l'effet d'un artiste enfermé dans un bourgeois, et ne pouvant percer son enveloppe, de sorte qu'aucune des deux natures ne l'emporte et que toutes deux se contrarient.) And seven years later he said of Fantin: "He has always lived enclosed in art as in a refuge, watching lots of others run avidly, pantingly, tongues hanging out, in pursuit of notoriety" ("Réflexions d'un bourgeois sur le Salon de Peinture," *GBA*, 2d ser., 19 [June 1, 1877]: 550). (Il a toujours vécu enfermé dans l'art comme dans un refuge, regardant passer tant de gens qui courent avides, haletants, la langue pendante, après la notoriété.) The image in both cases is one of enclosure, as if Fantin and his paintings didn't quite inhabit the same world as the latter's viewers (cf. the discussion of "cloistering" later in this chapter).

The second article also speaks of "the scrupulousness with which Fantin eliminated from his paintings everything that could grossly strike the beholder; the personages remained without gesture, without pose, without action, the accessories were virtually nil or purposeless, the coloring was discrete, silent, although rich and sleek, *composition* was absolutely absent, and from this willed negation that one cannot speak of without smiling, from this austerity which makes one think of the sackcloth and ashes of penitence, came works that were extremely curious, original, and gripping for those who don't look at paintings as posters" (p. 551) (avec quel scrupule il écartait de ces tableaux tout ce qui pouvait frapper grossièrement le spectateur; les personnages restaient sans gestes, sans attitude, sans action, les accessoires étaient presque nuls ou sans intention, les colorations discrètes, silencieuses, quoique riches et grasses, la *composition* absolument absente, et de cette négation volontaire dont on ne peut parler sans sourire, de cette austérité qui fait

penser au sac et aux cendres de pénitence, ressortaient des oeuvres extrêmement curieuses, originales, saisissantes pour quiconque ne regarde pas des tableaux comme des affiches).

69. The scholarly literature on Whistler is extensive; often-cited biographies include Elizabeth R. and Joseph Pennell, *The Life of James McNeill Whistler*, 2 vols., (London and Philadelphia, 1908); Stanley Weintraub, *Whistler: A Biography* (New York, 1974); Hilary Taylor, *James McNeill Whistler* (New York, 1978); and Gordon Fleming, *The Young Whistler, 1834–66* (London, 1978). The standard catalogue raisonné is Andrew McLaren Young, Margaret MacDonald, Robin Spencer, with Hamish Miles, *The Paintings of James McNeill Whistler*, 2 vols. (New Haven and London, 1980). For works by Whistler in the Freer Art Gallery, Washington, D. C., see David Park Curry, *James McNeill Whistler at the Freer Gallery of Art* (New York and London, 1984). As mentioned in the introduction to the present book, Whistler settled permanently in London in 1863 taking Legros with him, but his early paintings and etchings are mainly to be understood in the context of French developments. The early dissolution of the young realist group was noted by the critic Paul Mantz, who commented in 1865: “Evidently their enthusiasm is dampened, the group is troubled and disperses” (Paul Mantz, “Salon de 1865,” *GBA*, 1st ser., 19 [July 1, 1865]: 6). (Évidemment l’enthousiasme s’éteint, le groupe se trouble et se disperse.)

70. On the *Woman in White* see Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1: 17–20, cat. no. 38.

71. Fernand Desnoyers, *Salon des Refusés: La Peinture en 1863* (Paris, 1863), p. 27. Desnoyers’s attempt to render in words the effect of Whistler’s painting is worth citing at length: “C’est le portrait d’une spirite, d’un médium. La figure, l’attitude, la physionomie, la couleur, sont étranges. C’est tout à la fois simple et fantastique. Le visage a une expression tourmentée et charmante qui fixe l’attention. Il y a quelque chose de vague et de profond dans le regard de cette jeune fille, qui est d’une beauté si particulière, que le public ne sait s’il doit la trouver laide ou jolie.”

72. Le Capitaine Pompilius [Carle Desnoyers], “Lettres particulières sur le Salon,” *Le Petit Journal*, June 11, 1863.

73. Horace de Viel-Castel, “Salon de 1863,” *La France*, May 21, 1863.

74. Paul Mantz, “Salon de 1863,” *GBA*, 1st ser., 15 (July 1, 1863): 64. (D’où vient cette blanche apparition? Que nous veut-elle avec ses cheveux dénoués, ses grands yeux noyés dans l’extase, son attitude alanguie et cette fleur sans pétales aux doigts de sa main pendante?)

75. Jules Claretie [Arsène Arnaud], “Lettres familières sur le Salon de 1863,” *Jean Diable*, June 6, 1863. (Mais est-ce le portrait d’une folle, cette figure roide et fixe qu’on prendrait pour lady Macbeth ou pour Ophélie?)

76. Along with, perhaps, an unspecifiable sexual allure; see Mantz’s remarks quoted above as well as Castagnary’s belief that Whistler’s picture represents a young woman on her wedding night (*Salons*, 1:179–80).

77. See Chesneau, “Le Salon des Refusés,” *L’Art et les artistes modernes*, p. 191; and Un Bourgeois de Paris [Auguste Villemot?], “Salon de 1863,” *La Gazette de France*, July 21, 1863.

78. Alexandre Pothey, “Lettres à un millionnaire sur le Salon de 1863,” *Le Boulevard*, May 31, 1863. (La figure de M. Whistler est mal dans le cadre; nous pensons que quelques pouces de toile, ajoutés au-dessus de la tête, lui donneraient encore plus d’éclat.)

79. Viel-Castel, “Salon de 1863” (une peau de loup, dont la tête empaillée et pourvue d’yeux d’email, se dresse menaçante vers le spectateur).

80. It may be, too, that the woman’s facial expression appeared more absorbed before Whistler reworked the face, probably in the spring of 1872. A photograph made between 1865 and 1870 (New York Public Library, Avery Collection) “shows a thinner face and smaller mouth, the eyes are larger and have a more wistful expression, and the hair to the left of the head is more abundant and curly. In addition the cuffs at the wrist are striped, and the hand holding the lily is more slender, unforeshortened, with the thumb hidden from view. X-rays of the face and hands . . . show that these areas have been heavily reworked and also reveal that the canvas was once damaged underneath the right eye” (Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1:19).

As for the real or imagined aggressiveness of the bear’s head, a somewhat later work by a major painter of the rising generation rehearses that motif (or one very like it) in unambiguous terms. In 1870 the future Impressionist Claude Monet depicted a severed boar’s head (fig. 196) directly facing the beholder along with, lying alongside it point first, the large hunting knife that presumably had been used to do the severing. The result is a work of tremendous force in which the boar’s head (its tiny eyes almost indiscernible) and the heavy, gleaming knife (wiped clean of every trace of blood but all the more menacing for that) converge in what is virtually an assault on vision itself. (The painting’s composition, we might say, reverses that of Monet’s contemporary roadscares and riverscapes, in which converging lines signify perspective recession into deep space.) On the *Boar’s Head* see the exhibition catalog, *Les Oubliés du Caire: Chefs-d’oeuvre des Musées du Caire* (Paris:

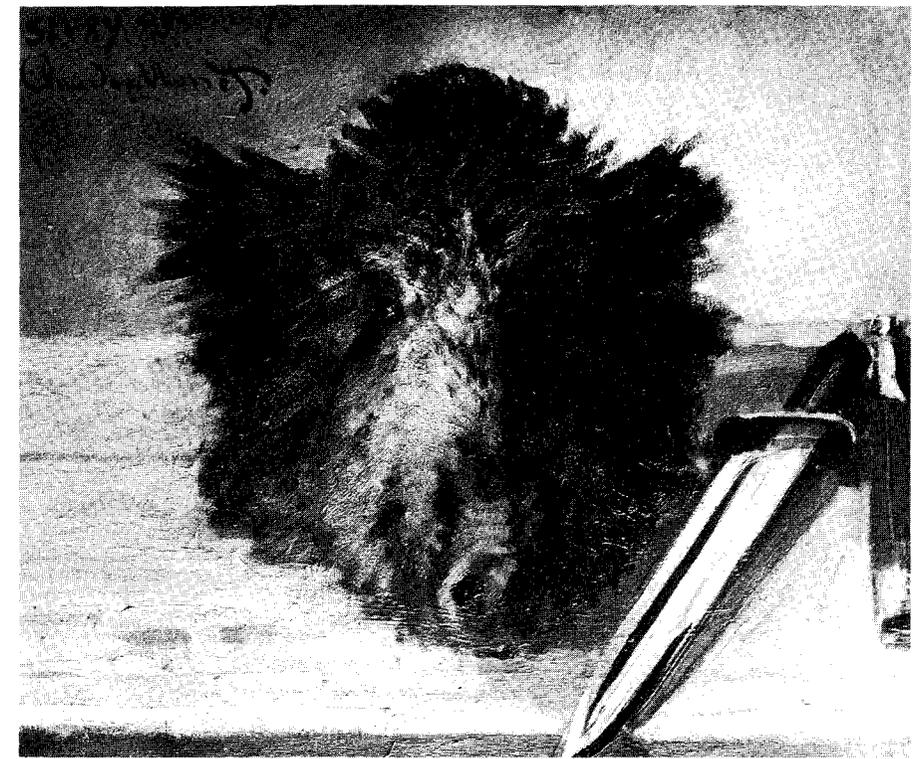


Figure 196. Claude Monet, *Boar's Head*, 1870.

Musée d'Orsay, Oct. 5, 1994–Jan. 8, 1995), p. 152, cat. no. 97. To what extent we are entitled to see Monet's *Boar's Head* as actively recalling the bear's head in Whistler's *Woman in White* is impossible to say.

81. On those paintings see Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1:24–25, cat. no. 47; 1:34, cat. no. 60; 1:30, cat. no. 56, respectively. The second and third works are also discussed in Curry, *Whistler at the Freer Gallery*, pp. 104 and 106, pls. 4 and 6 respectively.

82. See Fried 1990, chap. 6, “Courbet's ‘Femininity.’”

83. See *ibid.*, pp. 155–71.

84. On that painting see Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1:26–27, cat. no. 50; and Curry, *Whistler at the Freer Gallery*, p. 105, pl. 5.

85. In the opinion of Auvray, for example, Whistler had merely reproduced on a large scale “a small painting on porcelain, without modeling, without expression, without movement” (*Salon de 1865*, p. 59). (Mais reproduire en grand une petite peinture de porcelaine, sans modelé, sans expression, sans mouvement!) The one critic who frankly admired Whistler's painting was Alfred Sensier, writing under the nom de plume Jean Ravenel, “Salon de 1865,” *L'Époque* (June 21, 1865).

86. See Saint-Victor, “Salon de 1865,” *La Presse*, May 28, 1865, who wrote: “There is no one under that long floral robe; it's any old head, planted on a clothed bamboo.” (Il n'y a personne sous cette longue robe à ramages; c'est une tête quelconque, plantée sur un bambou habillé.) His commentary ends by stating that “[colored] patches don't make a *tableau*” (des taches ne font pas un tableau). See also C. Postwer, “Exposition de peinture & sculpture de 1865,” *La Fraternité*, June 10, 1865.

87. See Mantz in 1863, cited in n. 74. The same note is struck at greater length by Thoré the same year: “The *Woman in White* by Whistler will displease lovers of objective painting, and they will say: ‘Ah! how droll that is! No one has ever seen such a woman! She has the air of a phantom!’ —Okay, yes, exactly! The image is rare, conceived and painted like a vision that would appear in a dream, not to everyone, but to a poet. What's the good of art if it didn't let us see what one has never seen? —*All right!*” (Bürger [Thoré], *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:424). (La *Dame blanche* de M. Whistler déplaira aux amateurs de la peinture objective, et ils diront: “Ah! que c'est drôle! on n'a jamais vu cette femme-là! elle a l'air d'un fantôme!” —Eh bien, oui, justement! l'image est rare, conçue et peinte comme une vision qui apparaîtrait en rêve, non pas à tout le monde, mais à un poète. A quoi serait bon l'art, s'il ne faisait pas voir ce qu'on n'a jamais vu? —*All right!*) Cf. also the remarks by Louis Étienne cited in n. 165 below.

88. In fact, in *At the Piano* and another early work, *The Music Room* (1859), the walls are hung with what seem to be framed prints or paintings covered with at once transparent and reflective glass.

89. Charles Bataille, “Le Salon de 1865,” *L'Univers illustré*, May 10, 1865 (faite avec un rien).

90. On the *Music Room* see Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1:13 cat. no. 34; and Curry, *Whistler at the Freer Gallery*, pp. 102–3, pl. 3. The scene takes place in the London home of the Seymour Haden family; the woman in the mirror has been identified as Haden's wife and Whistler's half sister, Deborah, and it has been suggested that she may be playing the piano. Haden, a doctor, was soon to become famous as an etcher, and before the 1860s were out he and Whistler would no longer be on terms. See the discussion of their relations in Katherine A. Lochnan, *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven and London, 1984).

91. Théodore Duret, *Histoire de James McNeill Whistler et de son oeuvre* (Paris,

1904), p. 58. (Il est arrivé là, à une limite qu'on ne saurait dépasser, il a atteint cette extrême région où la peinture devenue vague, en faisant un pas de plus, tomberait dans l'indéterminisme absolu et ne pourrait plus rien dire aux yeux.)

92. On that painting see Young et al., *Paintings of Whistler*, 1:123, cat. no. 212.

93. Astruc, *Le Salon intime: Exposition au boulevard des Italiens* (Paris, 1860), p. 66. (Les mouvements sont d'une observation excessive . . . une force intime de plus surprenant effet. . . . Nous ne sommes plus devant une peinture, mais devant la nature.)

94. Astruc, “Exposition Universelle,” *L'Étendard*, Jan. 8, 1868. Astruc's remarks on Millet in 1868 are worth citing at length:

He has defined his manner in two words, in a letter that has become celebrated: “Characterize the work.” To study in depth an artistic nature so powerful, astonishingly willful, it suffices to analyze the terms of that letter, which isn't one of his least good works. . . .

It's impossible to formulate a more subtle esthetic and to more powerfully show the individuality of his thought. In comparison with that reasoning, that concentration of talent, that new and strong expression, in comparison with the works of that hand that engraves the things [it represents] with such intensity, all other painters are weak. Yes, his execution is awkward, monotonous, often puerile; he lets one see his effort, he reveals the difficulties of his craft that are for others play; but see the master, observe the miracles of that will endowed for the aim that it pursues. . . . His personages are always in accord with the frame of nature which serves as their background, things are placed with surprising relations of intimacy in their movement, their effect, their symmetry. . . . Nothing for the spectator,—here, no theater,—everything for the fact in itself. . . .

Millet never paints just to paint,—the artist wishes to express. In each accent, there is always something like an undertone of thought, so much does the face of the work absorb [the viewer], with its unaccustomed depths, its peacefulness or its sadness and the unity of impression that results from it.

Il a défini sa manière en deux mots, dans une lettre demeurée célèbre: “Caractériser l'oeuvre.” Pour étudier à fond une nature aussi puissante, étonnamment volontaire, il suffirait d'analyser les termes de cette lettre, qui n'est pas un de ses moins bons ouvrages. . . .

Il est impossible de formuler une plus savante esthétique et de montrer avec plus de puissance l'individualité de sa pensée. Auprès de cette raison, de cette concentration de talent, de cette expression si neuve et forte, auprès des ouvrages sortis de cette main qui grave les choses avec une pareille intensité, tous les autres peintres sont chétifs. Oui, son travail est maladroit, monotone, souvent puéril; il montre sa peine, il affiche des difficultés de métier qui sont pour autres un jeu; mais voyez le maître, observez les miracles de cette volonté douée pour le but qu'elle poursuit. . . . Les personnages conviennent toujours au cadre de la nature qui leur sert de fond, les choses se placent avec de surprenantes relations d'intimité dans leur mouvement, leur effet, leur symétrie. . . . Rien pour le spectateur, —ici, point de théâtre,—tout pour le fait en lui-même.

Millet ne peint jamais pour peindre,—l'artiste veut exprimer. Dans chaque accent, il y a toujours comme un sous-entendu de pensée, tant la face de l'oeuvre absorbe, avec ses profondeurs inaccoutumées, sa paix ou sa tristesse et l'unité d'impression qui en résulte.

95. Astruc, “Salon de 1868,” *L'Étendard*, July 19, 1868. The first paragraph of his article entitled “Les Portraits” reads: “You can be a great genius, you are not a great painter, in the fullest sense of the word, if it's established that your oeuvre doesn't include even one beautiful portrait. It's the touchstone of perfect and, above all, reasoned creations.” (Vous pouvez être un grand génie, vous n'êtes pas un grand peintre, dans toute l'acception de ce mot, s'il demeure établi que votre oeuvre ne renferme pas un seul beau portrait. C'est la pierre de touche des créations parfaites et surtout raisonnées.)

96. *Idem*, “Trésors d'art de Paris: Exposition rétrospective,” *L'Étendard*, July 13, 1866 (attache davantage le regard).

97. *Idem*, “Salon de 1868,” *L’Étendard*, July 19, 1868. ([L]e portrait doit s’exposer par le langage expressif des traits, et nous communiquer pour ainsi dire sa pensée dès que nous l’envisageons; il doit frapper, par conséquent,—et c’est l’inverse du tableau qui laisse peu à peu pénétrer ses plus belles parties.) The verb *envisageons* acknowledges that we face the portrait even as it faces us.

98. *Ibid.* (Le portrait n’a point les ressources du ton, les agréments du faire, les surprises de l’idée; il est puissant, il impressionne comme un objet ayant pris à un être l’intensité de sa vie personnelle.)

99. A work by Astruc himself that allegorizes his fascination with the portrait is his sculpture, *The Seller of Masks*, exhibited in the Salon of 1882 (fig. 197); see Chesneau,



Figure 197. Zacharie Astruc, lithograph after his sculpture, *The Seller of Masks*, 1882.

“Salon de 1882,” *Annuaire illustré des beaux-arts, 1882* (Paris, 1882), p. 230, and the illustration of the sculpture by Astruc on p. 115 (reproduced here). According to Chesneau, among the portrait-masks being hawked by the young seller are those of Victor Hugo, Gambetta, Gounod, Banville, Corot, Dumas *fils*, Berlioz, Carpeaux, Faure, Delacroix, Balzac, and Barbey d’Aurevilly.

See also L. Lauren-Pichat’s discussion of Astruc’s entries (water colors and plasters) in the Salon of 1869, where a certain double or divided structure can be sensed in the following description: “His watercolors are violent; the sites are bizarre, the fantasies macabre; strangeness mixes with feeling. He likes monks who hold the skulls of dead men” (“Salon de 1869,” *Le Reveil*, June 12, 1869). The remainder of Lauren-Pichat’s commentary makes it clear that Astruc favored absorptive motifs (e.g. a life-size plaster of an old man reading, a bas-relief of a reclining monk kissing a skull). The review concludes: “One is well aware of a little pity for Manet in this art; but we are able to hope that Z. Astruc doesn’t seek to give us a sculptor who would be a pendant to that painter. Let them look at each other and correct each by the other”—which perhaps means that Manet should be more absorptive (what it means for Astruc I have no idea). (Ses aquarelles sont violentes; les sites sont bizarres, les fantaisies macabres; l’étrangeté s’y mêle au sentiment. Il aime les moines qui manient les têtes de mort. . . . On remarque bien un peu de pitié pour M. Manet dans cet art; mais nous pouvons espérer que M. Z. Astruc ne cherche pas à nous donner un sculpteur qui ferait pendant à ce peintre. Qu’ils se regardent l’un l’autre et se corrigent l’un par l’autre.)

Astruc’s views on the portrait may be compared with those of Castagnary, who wrote in 1867:

Of all the objects that can affect the artist’s gaze and thought, the human being, taken in its male or female individuality and conditioned by social moeurs, is the most interesting that he can reproduce and the most likely to captivate us. It’s he [or she] that expresses the largest sum of intellectual life and who allows the painter to raise himself to the level of a moralist.

Even more, a man, a woman, a young girl, represented in the diversity of their functions, their temperaments, their characters, characterized by the moeurs that surround them and by the society that produced them, reveal not only individual life but in addition the collective life. With a single portrait by Clouet, Holbein, Van Dyck, Titian, Rigaud, or David, you are able to reconstruct, along with the personage who served as model, the entire epoch in which that personage lived. And that is why the portrait, which puts to work the painter’s highest faculties, remains the culminating point of the art of painting. (Castagnary, “Salon of 1867,” *Salons*, 1:245)

De tous les objets qui peuvent affecter le regard et la pensée de l’artiste, l’être humain, pris dans son individualité mâle ou femelle et conditionné par les moeurs sociales, est le plus intéressant qu’il puisse reproduire et le plus fait pour nous captiver. C’est lui qui exprime la plus grande somme de vie intellectuelle et qui permet au peintre de s’élever jusqu’au moraliste.

Bien plus, l’homme, la femme, la jeune fille, représentés dans la diversité de leurs fonctions, de leurs tempéraments, de leurs caractères, caractérisés par les moeurs qui les enveloppent et par la société qui les produit, ne sont pas seulement révélateurs de la vie individuelle, mais encore de la vie collective. Avec un seul portrait de Clouet, d’Holbein, de Van Dyck, de Titien, de Rigaud, de David, vous pouvez reconstruire, avec le personnage qui a servi de modèle, l’époque tout entière où ce personnage a vécu. Et c’est pourquoi le portrait, qui met en oeuvre les plus hautes facultés du peintre, demeure le point culminant de l’art de la peinture.

Cf. also Chesneau’s remarks, in his account of the Salon of 1863, to the effect that the portrait was the genre most likely to last but that it was also one of the most difficult (*L’Art et les artistes modernes*, p. 259); and Proust on Manet’s enthusiasm for portraits by various artists, especially Clouet (Proust 1897, p. 42). Apropos the Clouets, as early as 1850 Léon de Laborde in *La Renaissance des arts à la cour de France* (Paris, 1850), seeking

to refute the notion that there wasn't any art worth the name in France before Vouet, Poussin, and Le Brun, championed the Clouets who, he wrote, "[knew] well at bottom that a portrait is the highest mission of art" (p. 97) (sachant bien au fond qu'un portrait est la plus haute mission de l'art). For Laborde, too, the portrait was a particular strength of French painting (pp. 44–45). See Eve Endicott, "The Revival of the French Primitives" (Senior Honors Thesis, Harvard University, 1970).

Astruc's advocacy of the portrait as well as his distaste for landscape are interestingly discussed in relation to Bazille's *Vue de village* and related works by Dianne Williams Pitman, "The Art of Frédéric Bazille (1841–1870)" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1989), chap. 3.

100. See Fried 1990, chap. 2, and the present book, chap. 5.

101. It's likely that Manet was familiar with Astruc's ideas about the portrait and that his *Portrait of Zacharie Astruc* (fig. 81) should be understood as in implicit dialogue with them. In "Manet's Sources" I suggest that it represents Manet's most extreme attempt to make a portrait bear full conviction as a *tableau*; see also the discussion of that work in Sharon Flescher, "Manet's 'Portrait of Zacharie Astruc': A Study of a Friendship and New Light on a Problematic Painting," *Arts Magazine* 52 (June 1978): 98–105.

102. See Whistler's letter to Fantin of late January 1864 (Washington, D.C., Library of Congress). To the best of my knowledge, there is no recent monographic study of Ribot, but see Louis de Fourcaud, *Théodore Ribot, sa vie et ses oeuvres* (Paris, 1885); Gabriel P. Weisberg, "Théodule Ribot and 'The Little Milkmaid,'" *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 63 (Oct. 1976): 253–63; and *idem*, entries on Ribot in *The Other Nineteenth Century: Paintings and Sculpture in the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph M. Tanenbaum* (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1978), pp. 157–75.

103. Jankovitz, *Étude sur le Salon de 1865*, p. 51 (il a le tempérament le plus violent de l'école française, et semble avoir peint cette année avec un ébauchoir).

104. Geronte [Louis Leroy?], "Le Salon de 1865," *Gazette de France*, June 2, 1865 (le plus prodigieux morceau d'exécution du Salon tout entier, et ce cadavre raidi par la mort dans la dernière convulsion de sa douleur est digne des plus grands maîtres).

105. Jean Ravenel [Alfred Sensier], "Salon de 1865," *L'Époque*, May 20, 1865. He also called Ribot "this worker of will and courage" (ce travailleur de volonté et de courage).

106. Carolus Duran too awaits his modern monographer, but see Jules Claretie [Arsène Arnaud], *Peintres et sculpteurs contemporains*, 2d ser. (Paris, 1884), pp. 153–76; and Sharon Flescher, *Zacharie Astruc: Critic, Artist and Japoniste, 1833–1907*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London 1978), pp. 9–12. A recent article by Atsushi Miura interestingly associates Carolus Duran's double portrait of Fantin-Latour and Oulevay in the Musée d'Orsay with Giovanni Cariani's *Portrait of Two Young Men* in the Louvre ("Un Double Portrait par Carolus-Duran: Fantin-Latour et Oulevay," *GBA*, 6th ser., 124 [July–Aug. 1994]: 25–34).

107. The painting depicted a group of friends bringing flowers to the sleeping artist; in fact Carolus Duran had fallen seriously ill and had been nursed back to health by Astruc, who presumably was among the visitors. According to the *Courrier artistique*, 1st yr., no. 13 (Dec. 15, 1861), it was then on view at Martinet's.

108. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 9 (May 10–11, 1863).

Plusieurs moines de l'ordre de Saint-François sont agenouillés au pied d'une croix dans un paysage austère. Des pierres, de grandes roches grises, un peu d'herbe baignée de petits filets d'eau qui s'épanchent goutte à goutte, quelques fleurs égayant le gazon—puis, une plaine que l'ombre du soir enveloppe, une montagne tirant sur l'horizon sa ligne vigoureuse, un ciel à peine éclairé,

noir—et, par places, déchiré de bleu—voilà le site. La lumière se retire; le soleil a déjà disparu; les moines, silencieux, reposent leurs regards sur la nature, avant le sommeil plus doux à goûter.

L'un d'eux tient sa tête dans sa main; un autre se renverse, traversant le ciel de ses ardents prunelles qui voudraient contempler Dieu; celui-ci penche son front vers la terre, dans une attitude d'humilité profonde; le supérieur, debout, vêtu de noir, tend ses bras vers la croix de bois avec une ferveur saisissante. On le voit prier; on entend sa voix prononçant les formules de l'oraison avec une violente tendresse et la mélancolie que donnent les dialogues célestes dans cette élévation continuelle de la créature vers son Rédempteur.

Cette contemplation chrétienne émeut et trouble. On est pénétré d'admiration devant ces êtres innocents et doux, ces enfants sinistres et sublimes—dieux par le devoir, hommes par l'action monotone—ces privilégiés du sentiment qui ne veulent pas d'autre bonheur ici-bas que l'intimité du néant, la grâce de leur farouche vertu ou l'isolement vers le ciel—et qui se prennent à soupirer—adorables maniaques—voyant flottant dans l'espace le nuage qu'emporte le vent. C'est qu'ils le croient plus près de Dieux qu'eux, et lui confient leurs pensées dont l'unique voyage est le ciel.

Le peintre s'est inspiré de cette piété. Avec quelle simplicité il en a traduit l'accent, le mystère! qu'il est près de leur âme! comme il l'entend frémir! quel beau style religieux il prête à leur prière! Heureux fervents, le monde ne les occupe guère. . . . une unique aspiration tient leurs yeux émerveillés—l'image des anges, des bienheureux, des martyrs. Ce n'est pas le peintre qui troublera leur belle prière.

109. Édouard Lockroy, "Cinquième lettre d'un éclectique," *Courrier artistique*, 2d yr., no. 26 (May 30, 1863): 102. Lockroy also remarked that the painting was made "with care, with love, with will." (Elle est faite avec soin, avec amour, avec volonté.)

110. "Lettres d'un bourgeois de Paris," *La Gazette de France*, July 11, 1863 (ce réalisme très acceptable qui, dans une circonstance donnée, procède comme le doute méthodique de Descartes, et fait table rase de tous les raffinements de la science pour peindre simplement la nature, sans y ajouter aucun de ces ornemens de convention qui ne pourraient qu'affaiblir l'impression, au lieu de la fortifier).

111. Vignon, *Le Salon de 1863*, p. 380. (Son tableau, il ne l'a point composé d'après les traditions académiques ni modelé sur aucun type convenu; peut-être sait-il beaucoup et a-t-il fait table rase; peut-être ne sait-il rien que le maniement de la brosse. Un soir, en se promenant dans la campagne de Rome, dans ce désert superbe dont les grandes lignes semblent les horizons choisis pour de hautes destinées, il a rencontré son tableau tout fait.)

112. Olivier Merson, "Salon de 1863," *L'Opinion nationale*, May 2, 1863 (recueillement profond. . . . Ce n'est pas une composition dans la véritable acception du mot: les figures sont disséminées, et l'artiste ne s'est pas le moins du monde préoccupé d'harmonie littéraire).

113. Chesneau, "Salon de 1863," *L'Art et les artistes modernes*, p. 254. (Ces hommes agenouillés dans le tableau de M. Duran, sont des croyants isolés au sein de la nature; la brise qui passe et les caresse les laisse indifférents, tout émus qu'ils sont de l'haleine céleste qui jette ses parfums dans leur âme.)

114. *Ibid.* (franchement originale, moderne et très-élevée).

115. Gautier, "Salon de 1866," *Le Moniteur universel*, July 4, 1866. (La scène est bien disposée, d'une manière un peu théâtrale peut-être pour nous, chez qui la douleur se traduit par des attitudes mornes, mais admirable chez les Italiens, grands gesticulateurs. L'assassiné vient d'être rapporté tout sanglant, et la famille autour du corps se livre à des manifestations excessives de désespoir et de colère.)

116. Viel-Castel, "Salon de 1869," *Le Pays*, May 13, 1869 (une de ces toiles rares qui marquent dans une époque comme une oeuvre caractéristique et *démeurent* dans l'avenir comme le saint François de Zurbaran, le Christ de Ribéra, le portrait au *gant* du Titien).

117. Chesneau, "Cercle de l'union artistique: Exposition de 1873," *Paris-Journal*, Feb. 25, 1873, on Carolus Duran's *Portrait of Mme Ratazzi*. (On conçoit que dans cette recherche de l'extériorité fastueuse disparaissent les nuances charmantes et touchantes de l'intimité, les accents fugitifs de l'expression, les délicatesses de l'être moral connu, aimé des familières et des proches.)

118. Castagnary, "Salon de 1869," *Salons*, 1:364. (C'est un portrait tout extérieur, de surface pour ainsi dire, l'étude d'une toilette, ou plutôt d'une pose élégante.) Castagnary continued to criticize Carolus Duran's portraits for their purely exterior qualities until in 1876 he encountered the painter's absorptive *Portrait of Émile de Girardin*, in which the famous editor has been depicted in the act of writing or rather of intense reflection, as if seeking the precise phrasing for what he wants to say. Predictably, Castagnary approved, finding that "Carolus Duran has shown himself in this work truly an artist" ("Salon de 1876," *Salons*, 2:238). (M. Carolus Duran s'est montré dans cette oeuvre véritablement artiste.)

Another critic, A. Bonnin, raved about the *Portrait of Mme ****, but his commitment to a conventional set of antitheatrical assumptions meant that he was forced to see its protagonist as virtually unaware of being beheld. "She doesn't pose before a painter," he wrote, "she isn't self-conscious, she hasn't dressed herself up for posterity; she is as she appears every day; the artist has surprised her without her knowing it in the natural abandon of an ordinary hour of her life" ("Salon de 1869," *La France*, June 3, 1869). (Elle ne pose pas devant un peintre; elle n'est pas endimanchée; elle n'a pas fait toilette pour la postérité; elle est ce qu'elle paraît tous les jours; l'artiste l'a surprise à son insu dans l'abandon naturel d'une heure indifférente de sa vie.)

For his part, Viel-Castel insisted on the woman's distinction, so different from the vulgarity and insecurity of the demimonde, which seeks to "seize the eye of the passer-by" ("Salon de 1869"). (Elle vit, elle passe, la femme élégante et distinguée de la société moderne, vue dans sa beauté et l'ampleur de sa toilette, vue par les yeux d'un homme du monde, d'un artiste et d'un poète à la fois. . . . Voilà l'élégance parfaite à laquelle le demimonde n'atteindra jamais, car, malgré l'impudence qu'il affiche, il sent sa misère, la bassesse de son origine doublée de la bassesse de l'âme et de la vulgarité vicieuse de tous les jours, et croit n'avoir jamais assez accumulé de soieries, de dentelles et de colifichets étagés, comme une pagode chinoise, pour dissimuler ses pauvres turpitudes et tirer l'oeil au passant.)

119. In a somewhat different register, Jules Claretie, writing in 1872, described Carolus Duran's portraits in terms that link them with my argument. "Durant [sic] has a system of extracting a dominant note from a model, and of exploiting that note so as accentuate to an extreme the physiognomy that he wants to render. Thus, nothing is avoided, softened, or cleverly dissimulated. Everything is clear, absolute, frank to the point of brutality; everything is willed, and the impression that arises from this virile art is a singular impression of vitality and power" (cited in *Peintres et sculpteurs contemporains*, p. 164). (M. Durant a pour système de dégager d'un modèle la note dominante, et d'appuyer sur cette note de façon à accentuer jusqu'à l'extrême la physionomie qu'il veut rendre. Aussi, rien d'évité, d'adouci, d'habillement dissimulé. Tout est net, absolu, franc jusqu'à devenir brutal; tout est voulu, et l'impression qui se dégage de cet art viril est une impression singulière de vitalité et de puissance.)

120. Meissonier was born in 1815 (the same year as Couture) and died in 1891. There is no modern monograph, but see the catalog of the recent exhibition curated by Philippe Durey and Constance Cain Hungerford, *Ernest Meissonier: Rétrospective* (Lyon: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Mar. 25–June 27, 1993). An important study by Marc Gotlieb,

Meissonier at the Pantheon, is forthcoming. A basic early study is M. O. Gréard, *Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier, ses souvenirs, ses entretiens, précédés d'une étude sur sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1897).

121. Gautier, "Artistes contemporains—Meissonier," *GBA*, 1st ser., 12 (May 1, 1862): 423 (absorbe toute son attention, ce n'est pas un thème bien compliqué, mais cela attache comme la vie). Gautier goes on to praise the firmness and largeness of Meissonier's facture, which seen through a loupe recalls that of Philippe de Champagne or Van Dyck (p. 426).

122. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1857," *La Presse*, Aug. 11, 1857. (Ses petits personnages . . . ne savent guère que lire, écrire, fumer leur pipe, jouer de la contrebasse, et causer entre la poire et le fromage, les coudes sur la table. Ce répertoire est borné.)

123. Mantz, "Salon de 1857," *Revue française* 10 (1857): 51. (Serait-ce aussi se montrer bien exigeant que de demander à l'habile artiste de renouveler un peu le choix de ses sujets?)

124. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1861," *La Presse*, July 14, 1861.

125. See Hungerford, "Le Redingote grise," in *Ernest Meissonier: Rétrospective*, pp. 188–99 and pp. 200–1, cat. 106 (where the painting is dated 1860–64); and *idem*, "Ernest Meissonier's First Military Paintings: 2 '1814, the Campaign of France,'" *Arts Magazine* 54 (Jan. 1980): 98–107.

126. Charles Beaurin, "Une Date dans l'histoire de l'art: Les Salons de 1864 et 1865," *L'Artiste*, April 1, 1866, 147. (Napoléon réfléchit, soucieux, la tête inclinée, le regard ouvert devant lui, devant l'avenir, devant la brume. Vaste pensée, profond calcul, puissant volenté qui ne peut pas s'empêcher son étoile de s'éteindre à l'horizon.)

127. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1864," *La Presse*, June 2, 1864. (Son visage est sublime de désespoir résigné; il sent que son génie n'est pas mort, mais qu'il est vaincu; il voit sombrer son étoile dans le ciel obscur. Mais il défie encore la fatalité, et la résolution des luttes suprêmes imprime une fixité tragique à ses traits.)

128. Théophile Gautier *fils*, "Salon de 1864," *Le Monde illustré*, 19 (1864), May 14, 1864 (montre la volonté luttant contre la fatalité). See also Théophile Gautier, "Salon de 1864," *Le Moniteur universel*, May 18, 1864, for whom 1814 attained a tragic grandeur even as it avoided all hint of theatricality. Napoleon, Gautier went on, was shown brooding on his plans for battle, with no ray of hope on his features. "Only the will to defend France to the end placed there its immovable character." (La volonté de défendre la France jusqu'au bout y met seule son caractère immuable.)

129. "I don't want any returns to the past, any supposed resurrections, any paintings made according to an ideal formed by ideal fragments gathered from different ages," Zola wrote in 1866 ("Mon Salon," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 109). (Je ne veux pas des retours au passé, des prétendues resurrections, des tableaux peints suivant un idéal formé de morceaux d'idéal qu'on a ramassés dans tous les temps.) And in "Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique" (1867) he insisted on the need for the viewer of Manet's art to proceed as the artist had done, by "[forgetting] the riches of museums and the necessities of supposed rules [and by banishing] the memory of paintings heaped up by dead painters" so as to see in Manet's work "only a translation of reality, by a particular temperament, beautiful with human interest" (*Écrits sur l'art*, p. 148). (Il faut procéder comme l'artiste a procédé lui-même: oublier les richesses des musées et les nécessités des prétendues règles, chasser le souvenir des tableaux entassés par les peintres morts; ne plus voir que la nature face à face, telle qu'elle est; ne chercher enfin dans les oeuvres d'Édouard Manet qu'une traduction de la réalité, particulière à un tempérament, belle d'un intérêt humain.)

130. "I could care less about the French school! I have no traditions myself . . ."

(“Mon Salon,” *Écrits sur L’Art*, p. 134). (Je me moque bien de l’école française! Je n’ai pas de traditions, moi . . .)

131. “There are two thousand tableaux [in the Salon], and there aren’t ten men” (ibid., p. 109). (Il y a là deux mille tableaux, et il n’y a pas dix hommes.)

132. So for example his discussion of Millet in “Mon Salon” says nothing about the expressive and dramaturgical aspects of the latter’s art that had been the focus of critical commentary for a decade (ibid., p. 129).

133. “I don’t discuss a length of drapery, the position of a limb, the expression of a physiognomy” (ibid., p. 134) (je ne discute pas un pan de draperie, l’attitude d’un membre, l’expression d’une physionomie). He also wrote with approval of Manet, “What one calls composition doesn’t exist for him” (“Édouard Manet,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 153) (ce qu’on appelle la composition n’existe pas pour lui).

134. Émile Zola, *L’Oeuvre* (Paris, 1983), pp. 52–53; quotations in English are based on Zola, *The Masterpiece*, trans. Thomas Walton (Ann Arbor, 1968), though I have not hesitated to modify Walton’s version when that has seemed desirable.

Un long silence se fit, tous deux regardaient, immobiles. C’était une toile de cinq mètres sur trois, entièrement couverte, mais dont quelques morceaux à peine se dégagaient de l’ébauche. Cette ébauche, jetée d’un coup, avait une violence superbe, une ardente vie de couleurs. Dans un trou de forêt, aux murs épais de verdure, tombait une ondée de soleil; seule, à gauche, une allée sombre s’enfonçait, avec une tache de lumière, très loin. Là, sur l’herbe, au milieu des végétations de juin, une femme nue était couchée, un bras sous la tête, enflant la gorge; et elle souriait, sans regard, les paupières closes, dans la pluie d’or qui la baignait. Au fond, deux autres petites femmes, une brune, une blonde, également nues, luttèrent en riant, détachaient, parmi les verts des feuilles, deux adorables notes de chair. Et, comme au premier plan, le peintre avait eu besoin d’une opposition noire, il s’était bonnement satisfait, en y asseyant un monsieur, vêtu d’un simple veston de velours. Ce monsieur tournait le dos, on ne voyait de lui que sa main gauche, sur laquelle il s’appuyait dans l’herbe.

135. See Robert J. Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet: A Study of ‘L’Oeuvre’* (Ann Arbor, 1968), pp. 103–4. The literature on *L’Oeuvre* is extensive; in addition to Niess, see esp. Patrick Brady, “*L’Oeuvre*” de Émile Zola: *Roman sur les arts* (Geneva, 1969); the essays gathered in *Émile Zola and the Arts*, ed. Jean-Max Guieu and Alison Hilton (Washington, D.C., 1988); and Kermit Swiler Champa, “*Masterpiece*” *Studies: Manet, Zola, Van Gogh, & Monet* (University Park, Pa., 1994), chap. 2, “Zola’s *L’Oeuvre*: Its Status as an Art-Historical Text (*Wie es eigentlich gewesen ist?*),” pp. 51–90.

136. Something not dissimilar takes place in Duranty’s story about an artist of Manet’s generation, “Le Peintre Louis Martin,” first published in 1872 in *Le Siècle* and republished in slightly revised form in *Le Pays des arts* (Paris, 1881). Martin, like Manet, exhibits a painting at the Salon des Refusés; it depicts a garden scene with several figures: “A woman worked alongside a child sleeping in a small carriage; partly hidden by the rows of climbing plants, a gardener watered the flowers and a young man, his arms crossed, leaned against a tree, daydreaming, gazing toward the horizon. The artist had wanted to render the universal brilliance, the struggle of colors under direct rays of sunlight, all that evidently not without relation to the intense and equal colorations of Japanese and Chinese images” (*Le Pays des arts*, p. 328). (Une femme travaillait à côté d’un enfant endormi dans une petite voiture; à demi cachés par les haies de plantes grimpantes, un jardinier arrosait et un jeune homme, les bras croisés, appuyé contre un arbre, rêvait, regardant l’horizon. L’artiste avait voulu rendre l’éclat universel, la lutte des couleurs en pleins rayons du soleil, et cela évidemment n’était pas sans rapport avec les colorations intenses et égales des images japonaises et chinoises.) There is little of Courbet in this, but Duranty has followed his natural preference for scenes of absorption.

137. No doubt Fagerolles was a composite of various artists, but it seems likely that one of his originals was Carolus Duran. At any rate, in 1875 Zola described Carolus Duran as an adroit artist who knows how to “make Manet comprehensible to the bourgeois” while always staying safely within accepted limits (“Salon de 1875,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 297). (Seulement Carolus-Duran est un adroit; il rend Manet compréhensible au bourgeois, il s’en inspire seulement jusqu’à des limites connues, en l’assaisonnant au goût du public.)

138. Zola, *L’Oeuvre*, pp. 307–8. (“Oh! mon tableau est bien simple, *Un Déjeuner*, comme j’ai nommé ça, deux messieurs et trois dames sous des arbres, les invités d’un château qui ont emporté une collation et qui la mangent dans une clairière. . . . Tu verras, c’est assez original.”)

139. Ibid., p. 325 (retrouvait son *Plein Air*, dans ce *Déjeuner*, la même note blonde, la même formule d’art, mais combien adoucie, truquée, gâtée, d’une élégance d’épiderme, arrangée avec une adresse infinie pour les satisfactions basses du public).

140. Ibid., pp. 326–27; English translation, pp. 290–91.

Ces dos enflés, ces admirations montant en une marée d’échines, finissaient par exaspérer Claude; et, pris du besoin de voir les têtes dont se composait un succès, il tourna le tas, il manoeuvra de façon à s’adosser contre la cimaise. Là, il avait le public de face, dans le jour gris que filtraient la toile du plafond, éteignant le milieu de la salle; tandis que la lumière vive, glissée des bords de l’écran, éclairait les tableaux des murs, d’une nappe blanche, où l’or des cadres prenait le ton chaud de soleil. Tout de suite, il reconnut les gens qui l’avaient hué, autrefois: si ce n’était ceux-là, c’étaient leurs frères; mais sérieux, extasiés, embellis de respectueuse attention. L’air mauvais des figures, cette fatigue de la lutte, cette bile de l’envie tirant et jaunissant la peau, qu’il avait remarquées d’abord, s’attendrissaient ici, dans l’unanime régal d’un mensonge aimable. Deux grosses dames, la bouche ouverte, bâillaient d’aise. De vieux messieurs arrondissaient les yeux, d’un air entendu. Un mari expliquait tout bas le sujet à sa jeune femme, qui hochait le menton, dans un joli mouvement du col. Il y avait des émerveillements béats, étonnés, profonds, gais, austères, des sourires inconscients, des airs mourants de tête. Les chapeaux noirs se renversaient à demi, les fleurs des femmes coulaient sur leurs nuques. Et tous ces visages s’immobilisaient une minute, étaient poussés, remplacés par d’autres qui leur ressemblaient, continuellement.

141. See Zola, “Édouard Manet,” *Écrits sur l’art*, pp. 142–43, 163–69.

142. Fantin-Latour, letter to Scholderer, Apr. 25, 1875, Brame and Lorenceau archives, Paris.

Mon Dieu, faites le mourir, disais-je à chaque instant; ce n’est qu’à 3 h. du matin qu’il est devenu calme, peu à peu la respiration est devenue calme, puis il a plaint doucement comme si il disait “ah! je repose enfin.” Voyez vous, mon cher Scholderer, à ce moment j’étais dans un état extraordinaire; j’étais si heureux, je l’embrassais, je lui parlais, je le voyais délivré de la souffrance horrible, il paraissait si heureux, mais je ne lui voyais aucune connaissance, tout cela était l’intérieur qui se réfléchissait sur la face, puis alors est arrivé un état que je ne peux pas raconter, des éclairs qui passait [sic] sur la face, une suite d’expressions différentes; l’Intelligence avait pris la place de l’Imbecillité, il devient grave. Oh! c’était admirable, j’ai regardé pendant quelques minutes le plus grand spectacle que l’on puisse voir; je ne cessais de dire “Oh! que c’est beau, que c’est beau.”

143. Still another manifestation of the new sensibility was the revival in the 1860s of interest in the art of Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805). As I show in *Absorption and Theatricality*, Greuze was the major painter of the first phase of the antitheatrical tradition, which is to say that the contrast between Greuze’s genre paintings and those of his predecessor Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin provides early evidence for the radical transformation of French painting that took place starting in the 1750s. In brief, Chardin’s genre paintings combine a thematics of absorption with a representational modality

keyed to what might be described as the resolutely ordinary or everyday; whereas in Greuze's pictures of the mid-1750s and after absorption is always "excessive," always a heightened response to an extraordinary situation, one that has been narrativized, moralized, sentimentalized, and often sexualized so as to *compel* the figures' absorption and thus sustain the metaphysical illusion that they are unaware of being beheld. At first Greuze's work was enthusiastically received, but by the 1780s it had largely fallen out of fashion as the various means and devices that had served to immerse his personages within the painted scene came increasingly to be perceived as seeking merely to manipulate the viewer emotionally.

The eclipse of his reputation continued throughout much of the nineteenth century, but about 1860 the situation began to change. An early sign of this was Thoré's largely favorable discussion of Greuze in his three-part article on the landmark exhibition of French paintings from private collections at Martinet's (Bürger [Thoré] 1860 [III]:236–38). Three years later the Goncourt brothers published the essay on Greuze they went on to include as a chapter of *L'Art du dix-huitième siècle*. And in 1868 an entire issue of *L'Artiste* (Oct. 1, 1868), one of the two leading French journals on painting and related arts, was given over to a series of articles (some excerpted from previously published books and essays) on different aspects of Greuze's life and work by more than a dozen writers, including Arsène Houssaye, Gautier, Thoré, Chesneau, the Goncourts, and Saint-Victor. (The issue marked the dedication of a statue to Greuze in his native town of Tournus.) What was at stake in those developments, I suggest, was not simply a new recognition of the merits of a neglected French master but the discovery of a certain parallel between the intensification of absorption in Greuze's art and the thematics of excess that we have seen at work in French painting and its criticism in the 1860s.

In this connection it's worth noting that Astruc in 1863 likened Ribot's *Prayer* to "a slightly black and strengthened Greuze" (*Le Salon*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863]). (On dirait un Greuze un peu noir et fortifié.) And that Carolus Duran's *Murdered Man* has much in common with Greuze's more emotionally heated genre paintings as regards both subject matter and mise-en-scène, though not physical dimensions or execution. Finally, two paintings by the Alsatian painter Gustave Brion, *A Bible Reading in Alsace* and *A Protestant Marriage in Alsace*, enjoyed surprising success at the Salons of 1868 and 1869 largely by reviving Greuze's absorptive subject matter and something of his composition with a sobriety of drawing and execution that made them acceptable to a broad spectrum of taste (see e.g. Paul Mantz's comparison of Brion with Greuze as well as his praise for the internal equilibrium of Brion's composition and the "intimacy" and "character" of his heads ["Salon de 1869," *GBA*, 1st ser., 2 (July 1, 1869): 6–7]) (sans chercher dans M. Brion que Diderot a découvert dans Greuze, il nous suffit de trouver dans le *Mariage protestant*, comme l'an passé dans la *Lecture de la Bible*, une forte saveur morale et beaucoup de bonne peinture. M. Brion ne donne rien à hasard: il compose son tableau, il équilibre ses groupes, et, bien que l'expression soit chez lui discrète et contenue, il fait dire aux physiologies, aux attitudes de ses personnages tout ce qu'elles doivent dire. Sans aller jusqu'au portrait, ses têtes ont de l'intimité et du caractère.)

Apropos the 1860 exhibition at Martinet's, among the paintings exhibited there was Greuze's *Danaë* (also thought to be *Aegina Visited by Jupiter*), today in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Although different in basic respects from *Olympia*, the *Danaë* or *Aegina* belongs to the context in which the former was conceived, as do the following remarks in Thoré's commentary on Greuze's canvas: "Every painter with any ambition has always wanted to paint his nude, just as much as Titian or Correggio. Rembrandt himself painted his *Danaë*, which is one of the prodigies of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. Velázquez

painted his *Venus*, which was one of the prodigies of the Manchester exhibition. In our time, hasn't Ingres painted his *Odalisque*, which is considered one of his masterpieces?" (Bürger [Thoré] 1860 [III]:236). (Tout peintre un peu ambitieux a toujours voulu faire sa Femme nue, aussi bien que Titien ou Corrège. Rembrandt lui-même a fait sa *Danaë*, qui est un des prodiges de l'Ermitage à Saint-Petersbourg. Velázquez a fait sa *Vénus*, qui était un des prodiges de l'exhibition de Manchester. De nos jours, M. Ingres n'a-t-il pas fait son *Odalisque*, qui passe pour un de ses chefs-d'oeuvre?)

144. Saint-Victor, "Société des Aqua-fortistes. Eaux-fortes modernes, publication d'oeuvres originales et inédites," *La Presse*, Apr. 27, 1863.

Tous les aqua-fortistes devraient fréquenter les cloîtres; ils y trouveraient ce que recherche leur outil de caprice et de liberté: des haillons pittoresques, des têtes caractéristiques, des intérieurs entrecoupés de clartés et d'ombres, le mystère et l'étrangeté. . . . [L]e *Chartreux jouant un violoncelle* de M. Morse [Moïse] se modèle avec ampleur et justesse. Le vieillard penche sur l'instrument son crâne dénudé. Voué au silence par la Règle, il semble converser avec lui; privé de la société des hommes, il se réfugie dans le monde des sons; la voix des cordes lui tient lieu de la voix humaine.

145. Dubosc de Pesquidoux, "Salon de 1863," *L'Union*, July 10, 1863.

J'entends par peinture réaliste religieuse un certain genre de tableaux qui s'attache à des sujets courans et modernes de religieux et de *sainteté*, pour employer le mot technique. Les processions, les ex-votos, les consécration d'église, les cérémonies de toute espèce, les faits et personnages religieux passant sous nos yeux journellement, constituent un filon nouveau que beaucoup d'artistes exploitent de nos jours, et ils font bien. Tout aussi moderne, tout aussi vivante que le genre proprement dit, cette peinture, inaugurée depuis peu de temps parmi nous, est plus élevée et plus intéressante, et agit plus sûrement sur le public.

. . . [L]es moines, les prêtres, les soeurs, les enfans de chœur, que ces artistes mettent en scène ont une réalité et une vie merveilleuse.

146. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 1 (May 1, 1863). (Le caractère! note suprême, qu'il faut moins demander aux modes d'expression qu'à l'imposante grandeur d'une réalité poursuivie dans ses plus fugitifs aperçus, et se présentant à nos yeux avec cette personnalité inexplicable qui frappe, retient, émeut.)

147. Millet, "Lettre à Pelloquet," *Écrits choisis*, p. 45. (Caractériser! voilà le but.)

148. On the Société des Aquafortistes, see Janine Bailly-Hertzberg, *L'Eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle: La Société des Aquafortistes, 1862–1867*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1972).

149. Saint-Victor, "Société des Aqua-fortistes." (En gravure comme en peinture, M. Ribot se voue au tablier blanc. Il s'est cloîtré dans l'office pour s'y livrer à l'étude exclusive, unique, absorbante du mitron et du marmiton.)

150. Chesneau, "Salon de 1868," *Le Constitutionnel*, June 12, 1868. (En effet, il s'est ouvert un domaine d'observation très spéciale où il se mont de jour en jour avec une liberté plus magistrale; il a toujours eu une passion toute particulière pour les scènes de la vie cléricale et monastique. Par l'eau-forte et par le tableau, il a reproduit tour à tour les grandes architectures de nos églises, la physionomie intime et extérieure des hommes et des choses qui vivent habituellement enfermés dans l'ombre des cloîtres et dans le demi-jour des cathédrales.)

151. Astruc, "Salon de 1868," *L'Étendard*, May 29, 1868. (De telles oeuvres veulent un milieu choisi; il me semble qu'elles sont fatalement perdues au milieu de ces grandes batailles de cadres aux luxuriantes tonalités qui sollicite beaucoup plus le sens de la curiosité que celui de la méditation; mais prenez-les, placez-les dans un jour favorable, dans le cadre nécessaire, et vous-même considérez-les avec le sentiment qui les anime; bientôt

vous vous sentirez pénétré de leur effet. Plus que jamais, l'auteur de l'*Assassiné* circonscrit son drame et donne une intime vitalité, un nerf spécial à sa production.)

152. Georges Lafenestre, "Salon de 1869," *L'Art vivant: La Peinture et la sculpture aux Salons de 1868 à 1877*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1881), 1:80. (Le genre qu'il [Legros] affectionne n'est pas, à vrai dire, le genre religieux. On l'appellerait, avec plus de raison, le genre des religieux.)

153. There is no modern study of Legros's graphic work, but see Bailly-Hertzberg, *L'Eau-forte*, 2:131–38; Seltzer, "Alphonse Legros"; and H. J. L. Wright, *The Etchings, Drypoints and Lithographs of Alphonse Legros*, Print Collector's Club, Publication 13, 1934.

154. Mantz, "Salon de 1868," *L'Illustration*, May 16, 1868. (M. Legros était alors un peintre un peu barbare, la laideur ne l'effrayait pas; son pinceau sans finesse associait durement les tons blancs et les tons noirs; mais il allait loin dans le caractère, il frappait fort et il frappait juste.) A year later Mantz wrote: "Alphonse Legros is another painter who has become much wiser. He commenced with extremely striking singularities, and we can't forget the violent paintings of his beginnings, when he opposed whites and blacks and sought the eloquence of ugliness" ("Salon de 1869," *GBA*, 2d ser., 1 [June 1, 1869]: 500). (Alphonse Legros est encore un peintre qui s'est fort assagi. Il avait commencé par des singularités très-frappantes, et nous ne saurions oublier les violents tableaux de ses débuts, alors qu'il opposait les blancs et les noirs, et qu'il cherchait l'éloquence de la laideur.)

155. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 11 (May 14, 1863). (Les belles choses frappent—elles sont absolues.)

156. *Ibid.* (Le bedeau est plein de caractère. . . . Il imprime à l'âme une recueillement extrême.)

157. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1869," *La Liberté*, May 30, 1869 (une force et une gravité singulière. . . . Toute la rigidité de la vie monastique est empreinte dans l'austérité maintien et sur la physionomie macérée de cette vieille soeur de charité qui tricote des bas, assise contre une table. . . . On peut dire qu'il [Bonvin] est le Chardin de la claustration et la misère). Bonvin (1817–87), a full generation older than Legros, Fantin, Whistler, et al., was one of the most consistently and rigorously absorptive artists of the century. Sympathetic to the art of the younger artists, Bonvin in 1859 held an intimate exhibition of about eight works by Fantin, Whistler, Legros, and Ribot (also possibly Antoine Vollon) in his studio, the so-called Atelier Flamand, on the rue Saint-Jacques in Paris. For details of that exhibition see Colleen Denney, "Exhibitions in Artists' Studios: François Bonvin's 1859 *Salon des Refusés*," *GBA*, 6th ser., 122 (Sept. 1993): 97–108. On Bonvin generally see the monograph by Gabriel P. Weisberg, *Bonvin*, in French and English (Paris, 1979).

158. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1869." (Leurs physionomies affectent cet hébètement consterné qui est l'unique mode d'expression de M. Millet. Si du moins cette stupidité était naturelle! mais elle a la raideur et l'ostentation d'un système.)

159. Just to complicate matters further, Thoré admired both Millet and Breton.

160. Bürger [Thoré], *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:95. (Dans tous ses tableaux, Millet a toujours je ne sais quel caractère qui élève sa création à la hauteur d'un type.) In the same "Salon" he wrote: "What preoccupies [Millet] is the essential character of the personage he wishes to create. Making a sower, for example, he would have the ambition for it to be the Sower in general, the very type of the thing, always as in the Bible or Homer" (p. 101). (Ce qui le préoccupe, c'est le caractère essentiel du personnage qu'il entend créer. Faisant un sèmeur, par exemple, il aurait l'ambition que ce fût le Sèmeur en général, le type même de la chose, toujours comme dans la Bible ou dans Homère.)

161. Mantz, "Salon de 1863," *GBA*, 1st ser., 14 (June 1, 1863): 501; this is said apropos the *Man with the Hoe* (son ardente recherche à concilier l'expression intime avec le type simplifié).

162. Ernest Chesneau, *Notice sur G. Régamey* (Paris and London, 1879), pp. 25, 44. (Guillaume Régamey nous montrait enfin le soldat vrai, simple, sans pose, naïvement tout à ce qu'il fait. . . . [C]e qui domine partout et toujours, c'est le caractère essentiel de la vérité ramenée au type par le fait seul de l'extraordinaire justesse des mouvements et de l'action.)

163. As was recognized by Baudelaire in "Le Peintre de la vie moderne" (*Curiosités esthétiques*, pp. 479–81).

164. Castagnary, "Salon de 1875," *Salons*, 2:168. (A genoux, drapées dans leurs capes brunes, embéguineées de leurs coiffes blanches, elles prient avec une ferveur telle, qu'elles n'entendent, ni le pas des arrivants, ni la voix nazillarde du chantre. . . . M. Alphonse Legros a étudié ces singuliers états d'âme avec un rare bonheur. Par toutes les qualités qu'il enferme, modernité du sujet, vérité des types, justesse des expressions, caractère des draperies, transparence des ombres, unité de l'impression, son tableau est une oeuvre de haut style et l'un de ceux qui honorent le salon de cette année.)

165. Louis Étienne, *Le Jury et les exposants: Salon des Refusés* (Paris, 1863), p. 31. (Tout un caractère, tout une vie à part sont empreints là, et vous forcent à rester et à regarder encore. C'est une apparition, une héroïne inconnue; et au point de vue pictural, il s'émane une saveur artistique recherchée et puissante, qui annonce le chercheur fort.)

166. Clark 1985, p. 49. The next sentence reads: "The modern, to repeat the myth once more, is the marginal; it is ambiguity, it is mixture of classes and classifications, it is anomie and improvisation, it is the reign of generalized illusion."

167. *Ibid.* Clark continues: "What the myth of modernity fails to do—what entitles us to call it mythical—is to put together its account of anomie with that of social division; it fails to map one form of control upon another. The question will be asked of modernist painting in the pages that follow: To what extent does it contrive to do some of that mapping, most often in spite of its ideology?" The "oscillation between the notions of Paris as readable or unreadable, as being this side or the other side of representability" is a central theme in Christopher Prendergast, *Paris and the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1992), p. 16 and passim.

168. Edmond Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture: À propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel (1876)* (Caen, 1988), p. 34. An English translation appears in Charles S. Moffett et al., *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886*, exhib. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Jan. 17–Apr. 6, 1986; San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, Apr. 19–July 6, 1986), pp. 37–49. The translation of individual passages given here is my own.

Et ce que veut le dessin, dans ses modernes ambitions, c'est justement de reconnaître si étroitement la nature, de l'accoler si fortement qu'il soit irréprochable dans tous les rapports des formes, qu'il sache l'inépuisable diversité des caractères. Adieu le corps humain, traité comme un vase, au point de vue du galbe décoratif; adieu l'uniforme monotonie de la charpente, de l'écorché saillant sous le nu; ce qu'il nous faut, c'est la note spéciale de l'individu moderne, dans son vêtement, au milieu de ses habitudes sociales, chez lui ou dans la rue. La donnée devient singulièrement aiguë, c'est l'emmanchement d'un flambeau avec le crayon, c'est l'étude des reflets moraux sur les physionomies et sur l'habit, l'observation de l'intimité de l'homme avec son appartement, du trait spécial que lui imprime sa profession, des gestes qu'elle l'entraîne à faire, des coupes d'aspect lesquelles il se développe et s'accroît le mieux.

The rhetorical continuity of *La Nouvelle Peinture* with the criticism we have been examining is even plainer in Duranty's claim that the modern movement developed "a penetrating [mode of] drawing, wedded to the character of modern beings and things, following them when necessary with infinite sagacity in their demeanors, in their professional intimacy, in the gesture and feeling that stem from their class and rank" (p. 23) (il a apporté un dessin pénétrant, épousant le caractère des êtres et des choses modernes, les suivant au besoin avec une sagacité infinie dans leurs allures, dans leur intimité professionnelle, dans le geste et le sentiment intérieur de leur classe et de leur rang.)

What at first may seem confusing is that Duranty credited the modern movement with getting the artist *out of his* cloister. "The idea," he wrote, "the basic idea was to raise the partition that separates that studio from the common life, or to open the door onto the street. . . . It was necessary to make the painter leave his shop, his cloister where he has relations only with the sky, and to make him mingle with men, in the world" (p. 36). (L'idée, la première idée a été d'enlever la cloison qui sépare l'atelier de la vie commune, ou d'y ouvrir ce jour sur la rue. . . . Il fallait faire sortir le peintre de sa tabatière, de son cloître où il n'est en relations qu'avec le ciel, et le ramener parmi les hommes, dans le monde.) But the world of men as Duranty understood it was a *network* of cloisters, in the sense that I have been using the term. As he went on to say: "One showed the artist what he never realized, that our existence takes place in rooms or in the street, and that rooms and the street have their special laws of illumination and expression" (p. 36). (On lui a montré ensuite, ce qu'il ignorait complètement, que notre existence se passe dans des chambres ou dans la rue, et que les chambres, la rue, ont leurs lois spéciales de lumière et d'expression.) And (p. 38):

[S]ince we embrace nature closely, we will never separate the personage from the background of the apartment or the background of the street. He never appears to us, in real life, against backgrounds that are neutral, empty and vague. But around him and behind him are the furniture, the fireplaces, the wall hangings, a wall that expresses his fortune, his class, his profession: he will be seated at his piano, or he will examine his bit of cotton in his business office, or he will wait offstage for his moment to enter the scene, or he will press down with his iron on his trestle table, or else he will be dining with his family, or he will settle in his armchair to ruminate near his worktable, or he will avoid being run down by carriages as he crosses the street, or he will look at his watch while hurrying along a public thoroughfare. His rest will not be a pause or an aimless, meaningless pose before the photographer's lens, his rest will be in life, an action in its own right.

Et puisque nous accolons étroitement la nature, nous ne séparerons plus le personnage du fond d'appartement ni du fond de rue. Il ne nous apparaît jamais, dans l'existence, sur des fonds neutres, vides et vagues. Mais autour de lui et derrière lui sont des meubles, des cheminées, des tentures de murailles, une paroi qui exprime sa fortune, sa classe, son métier: il sera à son piano, ou il examinera son échantillon de coton dans son bureau commercial, ou il attendra derrière le décor le moment d'entrer en scène, ou il appliquera le fer à repasser sur la table à tréteaux, ou bien il sera en train de déjeuner dans sa famille, ou il s'assoira dans son fauteuil pour ruminer auprès de sa table de travail, ou il évitera des voitures en traversant la rue, ou regardera l'heure à sa montre en pressant le pas sur la place publique. Son repos ne sera pas une pause, ni une pose sans but, sans signification devant l'objectif du photographe, son repos sera dans la vie comme une action.

169. *Ibid.*, p. 34. (Cet homme extraordinaire est au seuil de tout ce que l'art du dix-neuvième siècle aura voulu réaliser.) Carol Armstrong, writing about Duranty and Degas, rejects out of hand the notion that there existed an antitheatrical tradition grounded in Diderot to which Duranty subscribed. Although she quotes Diderot on theatricality (*Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* [Chicago and London, 1991], p. 80) and associates Duranty with Diderot's notion "that a painting's protagon-

nists should appear natural, unstaged, and unselfconscious to the eye of the viewer, and unaware of his glance" (p. 125), she cites *Absorption and Theatricality* only to insist "that Duranty and other nineteenth-century critics looked to Diderot's writing as a model—not for a system of judgment categories, but for what it also provided: an anticategorical, unsystematic style of critical prose and critical attention. From midcentury on, when his art criticism became known [a strange idea: starting in the late 18th century it was never not known], critics increasingly aped the Diderotian style: the breeziness, the playful dialogues and arguments, the mixed modes, the sarcasm, the epigrams, the contradictions, and the carelessnesses—Diderot's critical whimsy, in other words, rather than his theoretical structure" (p. 266, n. 43). Obviously I think this is wrong, not only about Duranty but about other critics as well. Indeed in the case of one major critic, Félix Fénéon, the evidence has been ever so slightly cooked: in a long quotation from Fénéon on Degas (pp. 3–4), the Diderotian claim that Degas didn't work from nature because a model who knows himself or herself to be observed loses all spontaneity has simply been elided, along with the concluding remark, "[N]ever have paintings less evoked the tedious image of a 'model' who 'poses'" (jamais tableaux n'ont moins évoqué la pénible image du 'modèle' qui 'pose'). Here as elsewhere, Armstrong's concern to establish Degas's uniqueness has peculiar consequences.

As I remarked in a footnote to the introduction, Degas is the great *absent* from this book. In the place of the long and detailed analysis that would be required to secure the point, let me say that although Degas's paintings, pastels, and monotypes are rarely straightforwardly or traditionally absorptive in the way that, for example, Gustave Caillebotte's pictures often are, they cannot be understood in isolation from the issues we have been considering. By the same token, while it is true that *La Nouvelle Peinture* shows the influence of Degas (a point stressed by all modern commentators), it was in part Duranty's long-standing commitment to an absorptive esthetic that made him receptive to Degas's art in the first place.

170. See Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture*, pp. 25–26, on the *Ex-Voto*.

171. See the list of actions cited in the second of the long quotations in n. 168, most or all of which are taken from works by Degas and Caillebotte.

Until now I have been citing Clark in support of my questioning of the "myth" of Paris's illegibility during the years in question. However, toward the end of his chapter on *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* in *The Painting of Modern Life* he remarks apropos a canvas by Degas that "Degas seems to have believed for a while in the 1870s that modern life would offer the painter of sufficient skill a new set of characteristic physiognomies; he would be able to elaborate a repertoire of types, gestures, and expressions to stand for his century and give the viewer the feel of its life." And: "The modern city, Degas thought, would produce 'characters'; it would therefore be subject to sharp, ironical notation and equally fine physiognomical encoding. What this confidence amounted to—it was plainer still in the sketches and recipes of Degas's spokesman, Edmond Duranty—was a kind of nostalgia for times when identities had been stamped on a man's skin; and this at a moment when the mapping of the psyche around the polarities of 'inside' and 'outside' was being displaced by quite other topographies." Clark goes on:

These were eventually to issue in a new kind of polarity—that of conscious and unconscious mind—which theorized (among other things) the great fact of character in bourgeois society: that the "inside" *cannot* be read from the "outside," and that the determinant facts of mind need have no visual effects, or may appear at most as interruptions in the flow of public signals. The previous pictorial concept of the psyche had depended on a notion of the self as something acted out, in familiar contexts and informing roles. This chapter has tried to describe the circumstances in which such acting out became rare. (Clark 1985, p. 255)

And finally: “What is visible in modern life, in other words, is not character but class” (p. 258). The question, however, is whether such a claim can be sustained, indeed whether Clark’s description of Duranty’s theorizing as essentially physiognomic and nostalgic is justified, in view of the discursive network we have just examined. (“A physiognomics of exteriority” is also the key to Armstrong’s reading of Duranty’s criticism in *Odd Man Out* [esp. p. 87].) See in this connection Carlo Ginzburg’s discussion of what he calls a “conjectural model” of human knowledge and of the relation between ideas of character and individuality in “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method,” trans. Anna Davin, *History Workshop* 9 (spring 1980): 5–36.

4. Manet in His Generation

1. See Stephen Melville’s review of *Courbet’s Realism*, “Compelling Acts, Haunting Convictions,” *Art History* 14 (Mar. 1991): 117.
2. Metonymics, in the sense that the ideal aim of Courbet’s Realism is that of continuation or “prolongation” between painter-beholder and painting; see *ibid.*, 116–21.
3. Fried 1990, pp. 200–201, with minor changes.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 286–87. Facing and facingness are thematized repeatedly in “Manet’s Sources” as well; see e.g. chap. 1, nn. 26, 89, 96, and 111.
5. See the discussion of Shaftesbury in Fried 1980, p. 89.
6. See Fried 1980, pp. 71–105.
7. See chap. 1, n. 97, and Fried 1990, pp. 234–38. A classic statement to this effect toward the end of the 1860s is by Albert Wolff, “Salon de 1869,” *Le Figaro*, May 11, 1869: “It is well understand that Courbet paints what’s called the *morceau* like a master, but does that suffice for an artist to maintain himself on the pedestal where an imprudent enthusiasm has placed him? . . . Courbet is and will only be a great artist in the inferior art of painting a *morceau*.” (Il est bien entendu que M. Courbet peint ce qu’on appelle le *morceau* comme un maître, mais celà suffit-il à un artiste pour se maintenir sur le piédestal où un imprudent enthousiasme l’a placé? . . . Courbet n’est et ne sera un grand artiste que dans l’art inférieur de peindre un *morceau*.)
8. Astruc, *Le Salon intime: Exposition au boulevard des Italiens* (Paris, 1860), p. 65. (M. Courbet n’apporte pas, dans l’ordonnance de ses oeuvres, tout le soin désirable. Il n’est point brulé de cette flamme d’art qui s’attache désespérément et sans relâche à chaque détail. Il y a du laisser-aller négligent et quelque incurie dans la conception de l’ensemble. . . . À l’inverse de Delacroix, qui ne voit plus qu’un ensemble où résonne l’idée, lui se plaît au *morceau* spécial qui l’éloigne. Du *morceau* on monte à l’ensemble, au tableau: de là des erreurs et des contradictions d’accord. Il ne se préoccupe pas assez à l’avance de la disposition du tableau.)
9. *Ibid.* (les plus saines de tout le Salon).
10. Jean Rousseau, “Salon de 1864,” *L’Univers illustré* (June 1, 1864). See introduction, n. 27, for the original French.
11. Eugène Delacroix, “L’Idéal et le réalisme,” *L’Artiste*, June 1, 1868, p. 339. (Le réaliste le plus obstiné est bien forcé d’employer, pour rendre la nature, certaines conventions de composition ou d’exécution. S’il est question de la composition, il ne peut prendre un *morceau* isolé ou même une collection de *morceaux* pour en faire un tableau. Il faut bien circonscrire l’idée pour que l’esprit du spectateur ne flotte pas sur un tout nécessairement découpé; sans cela il n’y aurait pas d’art.)
12. Bürger [Thoré], “Salon de 1863,” *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:414. (L’art français, tel qu’on le voit dans ses oeuvres proscrites, semble commencer ou recommencer. Il est

baroque et sauvage, quelquefois très-juste et même profond. Les sujets ne sont plus les mêmes que dans les salles officielles: peu de mythologie ou d’histoire; la vie présente, et surtout dans les types populaires; peu de recherche et point de goût: ce qui se manifeste tel quel, beau ou laid, distingué ou vulgaire. Et une pratique toute différente des pratiques consacrées par la longue domination de l’art italien. Au lieu de chercher les contours, ce que l’Académie appelle de *dessin*, au lieu de s’acharner au détail, ce que les amateurs classiques appellent le *fini*, on aspire à rendre l’effet dans son unité frappante, sans souci de la correction des lignes ni de la minutie des accessoires.)

13. Gonzague Privat, *Place aux jeunes! Causeries critiques sur le Salon de 1865* (Paris, 1865), p. 136. (M. Manet a cherché le *tableau* sans se préoccuper assez de la forme et des détails.)

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 63–64. (Dans l’*Olympia*, de M. Manet, ne vous en déplaie, il y a plus que du bon, il y règne de solides et rares qualités de peinture. La jeune fille est d’un ton mat, ses chairs sont d’une délicatesse exquise, d’une finesse, d’un rapport juste sur les draps blancs. Le fond est charmant, les rideaux verts qui ferment le lit sont d’une couleur légère et aérienne. Mais le public, le gros public, qui trouve plus commode de rire que regarder, ne comprend rien du tout à cet art trop abstrait pour son intelligence.)

15. *Ibid.*, p. 64. (Selon moi, le jour où M. Manet arrivera avec une oeuvre plus compréhensible pour tout le monde, ce sera à qui lui fera fête.)

16. *Ibid.*, p. 65. (Si ces braves gens, qui plaisantent grossièrement M. Manet, pouvaient savoir le peu qu’il faudrait pour leur rendre lisible cette peinture trop artistique; s’ils savaient combien sont rares l’originalité, la finesse dans la couleur et l’harmonie, ils ne tueraient pas sous de vulgaires railleries un homme convaincu que l’on irrite par un présomptueux dédain.)

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 65–66. (Si cet artiste fût venu au temps de Velasquez, l’illustre Espagnol eût fortement encouragé le hardi jeune homme; il l’eût sincèrement engagé à persévérer, sans prendre garde au qu’en dira-t-on, il lui eût dit: “Continuez, monsieur, laissez dire et faites! Soyez persuadé que certaines gens vous comprendront; n’exagérez pas vos qualités, elles deviendraient des défauts; acharnez-vous à rendre la nature dans toute sa vérité; peignez beaucoup le *morceau*, mais gardez bien précieusement votre tempérament artistique; marchez avec conviction dans votre voie.”)

Toward the end of his pamphlet Privat returned to Manet’s defense. “If Manet weren’t a true artist,” he wrote, “a good temperament, *would his Olympia live? Why are certain people frightened by the look of this young woman? Why does she make others laugh? Because she’s alive, and that life is visible to everyone; because one feels that she could move, this woman whom one finds ugly and badly built, not without reason. But finally, in fact, this painting is a hundred times better than the yellow and dangling *Odalisque* that puffs itself up across from it*” (p. 137). (Si M. Manet n’était pas un véritable artiste, d’un bon tempérament, son *Olympia vivrait-elle? Pourquoi certaines gens sont-ils effrayés par l’aspect de la jeune femme? pourquoi en fait-elle rire d’autres? Parce qu’elle vit, que cette vie est sensible pour tout le monde; parce qu’on sent qu’elle pourrait remuer, cette femme que l’on trouve laide et mal faite, non sans quelque raison. Mais enfin, par le fait, ce tableau est cent fois meilleur que la jaune et pandouillarde *Odalisque* qui se gonfle en face de lui.)*

Clark in his chapter on *Olympia* grants that Privat wanted to say something favorable about Manet but argues that his remarks on the picture itself are “*preliminary* to a discussion which does not, in fact, follow” (Clark 1985, p. 290, n. 75). Clark also wishes to minimize the force of Privat’s claim that Manet’s art was “too abstract” for the public’s intelligence (*ibid.*, and p. 295, n. 30). My own assessment of Privat’s critical performance,

including the latter claim, is much more positive. But as Clark says, “about Gonzague Privat it is possible to disagree” (p. 290, n. 75).

18. Antonin Proust reports that while Manet was still studying with Couture, people said, “At Couture’s there is someone named Manet who it seems paints astonishing *morceaux*, but who isn’t on good terms with the models” (Proust 1897, p. 12). (On disait couramment: “Il y a chez Couture un nommé Manet qui fait, paraît-il, des morceaux étonnants, mais qui n’est pas commode avec les modèles.”)

19. By 1874 Privat’s attitude toward Manet had hardened. For him, both the *Bon Bock*, which had enjoyed public success, and the *Chemin de fer*, which was widely criticized, came to the same thing artistically. “Manet does what he does and will not do otherwise,” he wrote. “As an example of painting nothing could be better, as an artistic realization one has the right to demand more. The patch is there [a reference to the familiar idea that Manet painted with “patches” of color], but all effort stops at that point” (Gonzague-Privat, “Salon de 1874,” *L’Événement*, June 22, 1874). (M. Manet fait ainsi et ne fera pas autrement; comme note de peinture rien de mieux, comme réalisation d’art on est en droit de demander davantage. La tache y est, mais l’effort s’arrête là.) He continued in terms that bear on the argument to come: “The day when Manet will consent to research a hand, to investigate a head, to paint a figure otherwise than as a still life, in sum to get more emotionally involved, his success will be certain.” (Le jour où M. Manet consentira à chercher une main, à fouiller une tête, à peindre une figure autrement comme une nature morte, à s’enflammer davantage, pour tout dire, son succès sera certain.)

20. Théodore Pelloquet, *L’Exposition: Journal du Salon de 1863*, no. 22 (July 23, 1863).

En réalité, je ne sais pas où va M. Manet, et je ne crois pas me tromper bien fort, en supposant qu’il ne le sait pas trop lui-même. Il y a dans ses toiles la preuve qu’il a l’organisation d’un peintre. Il possède une bonne palette, mais il ne suffit pas de posséder une bonne palette, il importe encore et surtout de savoir s’en servir. S’il pense le contraire, je lui conseille de se faire teinturier.

M. Manet ne sait pas composer un tableau, ou plutôt, il ne se rend pas compte de ce qu’on entend par un tableau. Je ne dis pas qu’on apprenne cela comme une recette, mais enfin il faut arriver à le savoir. Si on le sait d’une autre façon que les autres, tant mieux; c’est la priviège des grands peintres. Mais quand il place deux ou trois figures nues, sur une grande toile, à côté de deux ou trois autres vêtements de paletots, au milieu d’un paysage, brossé tant bien que mal, je voudrais qu’il me fit comprendre son intention. Je ne lui demande pas un enseignement philosophique, mais la traduction visible d’une impression quelconque. Je cherche la sienne et je ne la trouve pas; c’est un rébus d’une dimension exagérée et qu’on ne devinera jamais.

21. Jules-Antoine Castagnary, “Salon de 1870,” *Salons*, 1:429. (Je n’ai rien à dire de ce peintre qui depuis dix ans semble avoir pris à tâche de nous montrer à chaque salon qu’il possède une partie des qualités nécessaires pour faire des tableaux. Ces qualités je ne les nie pas; mais j’attends les tableaux.)

22. Bibliothèque Doucet, Carton 20 Peintres (j’appellerais tableaux tout morceaux réussis qui naturellement [the words “font une” are then crossed out] sans recherche de composition en font une). In general I have made no effort to correct errors of spelling or grammar in the passages from artists’ letters cited in the pages that follow.

23. I have already alluded to Baudelaire’s remarks on the *Angelus* in his “Salon of 1859.” More interesting, however, is Astruc’s commentary of the same year, which begins by asking whether the painter has himself gone to the church in order to understand the “religious intimacy” (l’intimité religieuse) of the personages and goes on to describe the painting as follows:

A large old woman, with a stately white cap, kneels and joins her hands in the foreground. She mutters her prayers with a tender vivacity. A little girl in a gray dress and black apron is against her. An umbrella precedes them. That umbrella intrigues one and makes one smile! What a crime! it sprawls in the dust . . . [ellipsis in original]. Further back, other women pray, one, among the others, in a red jacket, in gloves, who is saying her rosary;—but as there are numerous beads, she is seated. Near her, the candlelighter bundles herself up and falls asleep in her black hood. She seems like a crow on its perch,—and I can hear from where I am her mechanical croaking: “candles! candles! . . .” The gray and violet flagstones mount up to the reddish woodwork in the background. On the wall, a funerary plaque is displayed. An open door gives access to a shadowy corridor where some chairs are. To the right is a small boy who looks at the church—or at the holy-water sprinkler, that Catholic scarecrow—with great uneasiness, all the while turning his cap in his hands. He has been told to wait: his mother is taking a look around the church. A young woman seen only in part, dressed in black with a pretty bonnet with violet ribbons, arrives, holding a book in her hand, head slightly bowed, with that half-coquettish half-religious allure of pretty women in church, because she is pretty, oh! charming and modest too.

I truly take great pleasure in speaking of this painting in which art and nature unite so well—and which I see lost in a chaos of unhealthy discordance [at the Salon]—a violet among brambles. A violet, I’ve said of it: it has the qualities of that flower;—the same modest simplicity, the same fragrance, and the color,—joking aside—is not far, I swear, from having adopted its mysterious tone.

I have no wish to give a detailed account of this picture, all of which is successful. I prefer to say to you that there is in it a striking charm of nature,—lots of intelligence,—a pictorial ignorance [i.e. a deliberate naïveté]—a sense of relish and youth—and that curious character of life that is not composed and is simply rendered. He resembles no one unless it is the old Gothic artists. From this perspective, his closest forebear seems to me to be Hemling [sic]. But he is still more himself, that is to say, original, simple, seeing and extremely taken by reality,—which is good. He has a great feeling for color, but color maintained in a severe tone,—almost sad.

I can assure you that he paints with passion, and that he has the devil in his flesh in spite of this Christian absorption. His temperament will astonish. . . .

This lively character will force everything,—even the public’s indifference. (“Les 14 Stations du Salon [1859],” *Le Quart d’heure*, vol. 4, no. 10 [July 5, 1869]: 54–56)

Une grande vieille femme, à pompeuse coiffe blanche, s’agenouille et joint les mains sur le devant. Elle marmotte ses prières avec une tendre vivacité. Une petite fille en robe grise et tablier noir est contre elle. Un parapluie les précède. Ce parapluie intrigue et fait sourire! Quel crime! il est étalé dans la poussière . . . Au fond, d’autres femmes prient, une, entr’autres, en camisole rouge, gantée, qui égrène son chapelet;—mais comme il y a de nombreuses mailles, elle s’est assise. Près d’elle, l’allumeuse de bougies s’emmaillotte et s’endort dans sa capuche noire. On dirait un corbeau sur perchoir,—et j’entends d’ici son croassement machinal: “des bougies! des bougies! . . .” Les dalles grises et violettes montent jusqu’à la boiserie rousse du fond. Sur le mur, une plaque mortuaire s’étale. Une porte sans battants donne accès dans un couloir sombre où sont des chaises. A droite est un petit garçon qui regarde l’église—ou le goupillonneur, ce catholique épouvantail, avec une grande inquiétude, tout en roulant sa casquette entre ses mains. On lui a dit d’attendre: la mère fait le tour de l’église. Une jeune fille que l’on ne voit pas en entier, habillée de noir avec un joli bonnet à rubans violets, vient, tenant un livre à la main, la tête un peu penchée, avec l’allure demi-coquette demi-religieuse des jolies femmes à l’église, car elle est jolie, oh! charmante, et modeste.

J’ai véritablement un grand bonheur à parler de cette peinture où l’art et la nature s’unissent si bien—et que je vois perdue dans un fatras de malsaines discordances—violette au milieu de ronces. Violette, je l’ai dit: elle a les qualités de cette fleur;—même simplicité modeste, même parfum, et la couleur,—folie à part,—n’est pas loin, ma foi, d’avoir adopté sa gamme mystérieuse.

Je ne veux pas détailler les parties qui sont toutes heureuses. Je préfère vous dire qu’il y a là un charme de nature saisissant,—beaucoup d’esprit,—une ignorance pittoresque,—de la saveur, de la jeunesse—et ce caractère curieux de la vie non composée et rendue simplement. Il ne ressemble à personne, si ce n’est aux vieux gothiques. A ce compte, son plus proche parent me paraît être

Hemling [sic]. Mais il est encore plus lui-même, c'est-à-dire, original, simple, voyant et très-épris de réalité,—ce qui est bien. Il a un grand sentiment de la couleur, mais elle se maintient dans un ton sévère,—presque triste.

Je puis assurer qu'il peint avec feu, et qu'il a le diable au corps malgré ce chrétien recueillement. Son tempérament étonnera. . . .

Ce caractère forcera tout,—même l'indifférence du public.

By now Astruc's terms of criticism are familiar, but a few points are worth noting. First, the kneeling woman's umbrella is seen by Astruc as a marker of her absorption in prayer, as if she were unaware that she had let it drop or that it was lying in the dust. But the verb *étaler* that Astruc uses in this connection means not just to sprawl but also to show or display, as if for sale. And in fact the same verb is applied to the mode of presentation of the mortuary plaque (Legros seems to think there is just one), which as we have noted directly faces the viewer. So the umbrella in itself, Astruc's language suggests, embodies the double or divided structure with respect to the beholder at work in the painting as a whole. And second, something of the same tension or division is implied by first likening the *Angelus* to a modest violet and then immediately saying that there is in it "a striking [*saisissant*] charm of nature," by comparing Legros to Memling (Fromentin's epitome of reclusiveness) and then saying that he is taken by reality, by assuring the reader that despite the artist's Christian absorption he has the devil in his flesh, and by noting Legros's preference for "life that is not composed" and concluding with the remark that he will "force everything"—including, presumably, composition itself.

24. Whistler to Fantin-Latour, Library of Congress, Pennell Collection. (Mais, mon cher, Millais a cette année produit vraiment un *vrai tableau*, enfin une chose tout ce qu'il y [sic] d'artistique—tu l'aimeras beaucoup.)

25. Bibliothèque Doucet, Carton 20 Peintres. In that letter Legros asks in return to be called "Master Painter" (Maître Peintre), which suggests a sense of closeness to Courbet.

26. Rousseau, "Salon de 1864," *L'Univers illustré*, June 1, 1864. ("Comme peintres . . . nous procédons du mouvement imprimé par M. Courbet, et nous ne croyons nullement, en le reconnaissant, détruire notre originalité personnelle.")

27. In a letter to Fantin dated March 11, 1865, Scholderer defended Courbet against what he took to be Fantin's slights, saying among other things that the painters Fantin placed above Courbet—Ingres and Delacroix—were nothing compared to him. "Is it Delacroix who shows me the path to understanding nature? For me, never" (Brame and Lorenceau archives). (Est-ce que Delacroix me montre le chemin à connaître la nature? à moi jamais.)

28. Whistler to Fantin-Latour, Library of Congress, Pennell Collection. The letter is quoted and discussed in various studies of Whistler, including Katharine A. Lochnan, *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven and London, 1984), p. 155.

29. Fantin-Latour to Whistler, letter of November 10, 1862, Brame and Lorenceau archives. (J'ai de plus que les autres, le débat entre la Vie humaine et la vie Artistique.— Cette simple question. *l'étude d'après Nature le tableau*. me tient en suspens depuis plus d'un an, je n'ai encore rien ou presque rien trouvé, et cela me dévore. Sitôt que je ne peint plus cela me tourmente. . . . Ce que je cherche, c'est faire bien, ce bien de quelques grands Artistes. Ce bien qui fait que l'on revient toujours à de certaines oeuvres, à de certains Artistes qui ont su ce que c'était que l'Art. Cette beauté qui est de tout les temps dans tous les pays, cette mystérieuse harmonie, ces rapports, Deux tons mis à côté qui produise un tout vrai beau complet.)

30. Ibid. (Mon rêve de bonheur est un Atelier dans un endroit tranquille avec le modèle sans cesse, non pas le modèle qui paye son portrait, horreur!! . . . le modèle de 3h de

4h, 5h—que l'on fait poser avec rigueur (c'est son métier). Après le dîner de retirer dans une chambre petite chaude en Hiver—des Cartons de Gravures et Passer à Songer devant les Autres, et l'on y apprend quelque chose à cette exercice et au lieu du monde stupide on a là des conversations charmantes avec les plus belles intelligences du Monde.)

31. Fantin-Latour to Legros, letter quoted in Noël Clément-Janin, "Alphonse Legros, sa vie et son oeuvre," Bibliothèque Doucet, MS 470, pp. 60–61. (Aucune nouvelle, pas de tableau au Salon; je t'en ai voulu de te faire du tort à toi-même et de nous laisser ainsi, surtout dans un moment si intéressant pour tous. Tu es, tu le sais bien, un des rares peintres. Nous nous disons cela bien souvent avec Whistler avec Manet, Scholderer dans ses lettres, quel dommage ce Legros qui ne fait plus rien pour nous, qui n'est plus le peintre d'autrefois! Au Salon dernier, voilà, mon tableau était meilleur, mais comme ton *Lutrin*, par morceau, mais pas dans l'ensemble. Whistler un peu de même, mais il avait contre lui surtout, que ses idées ne sont pas dans le courant, que cela n'a fait l'effet de la *Fille blanche*. C'est lui qui est en progrès. C'est étonnant, comme autrefois tes tableaux les siens maintenant me font un grand effet. Ses colorations larges m'ont fait beaucoup réfléchir, aussi les tableaux de Manet. Tu ne peux t'imaginer le grand effet qu'il faisait à l'exposition, cela m'a été bien utile de les voir, quant à l'effet sur le public cela a été immense, cela m'a fait plaisir et m'a donné raison.)

In the remainder of the letter Fantin elaborated on Manet's succès de scandale, mentioned Ribot's success and Lecoq's official award, and recalled the time when he and Legros in a small room on the rue du Dragon began the movement that was now flourishing. Something of Fantin's continuing perplexity as to his own path may be felt in the unnoticed contradiction in his account of his present activities: "You see me always in the Louvre looking, reflecting, always returning to a few men who for me are alone in the right. You see from here it's the facing meal of the *Marriage of Cana*. I do almost nothing now that isn't after nature [except, presumably, when copying in the Louvre]. I am more and more all alone in my opinion and I no longer discuss except with myself." (Tu me vois toujours au Louvre regardant, réfléchissant, revenant toujours aux quelques hommes qui pour moi sont seuls dans le vrai. tu vois d'ici c'est le repas en face des Noces de Cana. Je ne fais presque plus que d'après nature. Je suis tout seul de mon opinion de plus en plus je ne discute plus qu'avec moi.) His description of Veronese's canvas as *le repas en face* shows his continuing attraction to facing structures.

32. It was Fantin who had introduced the Edwardses to Schumann's music; for more on the circumstances surrounding the etching see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 143, cat. no. 63.

33. A similar structure is already in place in Legros's *Portrait of the Artist's Father* (1857; fig. 88) in Tours, where a variety of objects on a table surface in the immediate foreground (a quill pen, some keys, a stamping device for sealing letters with wax[!]) are variously oriented in toward and out from the "world" of the picture. Moreover, Legros's signature on a folded leaf of paper is oriented toward the beholder (and away from the absorbed figure of the artist's father) much as is the writing in *Un Morceau de Schumann* (which however postdates Legros's canvas by seven years). Cf. also my discussion (chap. 5) of Legros's etching *Le Souper* (1858–60). On the *Portrait of the Artist's Father* see Legros 1987–88, pp. 38–39, cat. no. 6.

34. Castagnary, "Salon de 1864," *Le Grand Journal*, June 12, 1864 (l'homme tombé et présenté en raccourci est un morceau excellent; mais où est la perspective et que devient l'ensemble du tableau?).

35. Chesneau, "Salon de 1868," *Le Constitutionnel*, June 12, 1868. (Le *Lutrin*, dans sa large simplicité, est peut-être un morceau de tableau plutôt qu'un tableau; mais

l'*Amende honorable* est vraiment une oeuvre supérieure.) For Chesneau's honorific use of the term *oeuvre*, see the remarks in his "Salon de 1864" on Fantin's *Homage to Delacroix* quoted in chapter 3. I compare the *Amende honorable* with Manet's *Execution of Maximilian* toward the end of chapter 4.

36. Chesneau, "La Jeune École," *Les Nations rivales dans l'art* (Paris, 1868), p. 324 (leur attachement exclusif à la peinture de morceau, leur éloignement—moins volontaire qu'ils ne le disent—pour l'idée et l'expression. . . . Qu'il arrive au tableau. Qu'il nous révèle enfin l'artiste, après avoir révélé une fois de plus le peintre dans cet excellent portrait de M. Manet).

37. One more passage from a letter from Fantin to Whistler is revealing in this connection (letter dated Oct. 1862, Brame and Lorenceau archives): "Arrangement, disposition, composition, etc.—mysterious words harmonious laws—not at all conventions—needs of the Artist—glory of Raphael, Michelangelo, etc. etc.—for me a stammering a hesitation, an affair of feeling—which must however become a law, something mathematical, like form, like light, color, I find a parallel with color that proceeds by oppositions to arrive at harmony that is to say to make of a canvas a whole, to put in a small space an image with all the forces all the principles of nature—[then crossed out: instead of taking a part] there you see I cross out I can't say more of what I wish to say ah the pen only serves those who have banalities to say—" Where Fantin's breathless theorizing breaks down is where he tries to bring together an ideal of artistic unity with a conception of the unity of nature, which his realist premises make almost unthinkable. (Arrangement, disposition, composition, etc.—mots mystérieux lois harmonieuses—nullement de convention—besoins de l'Artiste—gloire des Raphaël, Michel-Ange, etc., etc.—pour moi un begäiment une hésitation, une affaire de sentiment—qui doit être pourtant une loi, une chose mathématique, comme la forme, comme la lumière, la couleur, je trouve des rapprochements avec la coloration qui procède par oppositions pour arriver à l'harmonie c'est à dire à faire d'une toile un tout, de mettre sur un petit espace une image avec toutes les forces tous les principes de la nature [then crossed out: au lieu d'en prendre une partie] tiens tu vois je rature je ne peux plus dire ce que je veux dire ah la plume ne sert que les gens qui ait les banalités à dire—)

38. *Édouard Manet: Voyage en Espagne*, ed. Juliet Wilson-Bareau (Caen, 1988), p. 44. (Le morceau le plus étonnant de cet oeuvre splendide et peut-être le plus étonnant morceau de peinture que l'on ait jamais fait est le tableau indiqué au catalogue, portrait d'un acteur célèbre au temps de Philippe IV; le fond disparaît, c'est de l'air qui entoure ce bonhomme tout habillé de noir et vivant; et les *fileuses*, le beau portrait d'Alonzo Cano, *las Meninas* (les nains), tableau extraordinaire aussi, ses philosophes, étonnants morceaux—tous les nains, un surtout assis de face les poings sur les hanches, peinture de choix pour un vrai connaisseur, ses magnifiques portraits, il faudrait tout énumérer, il n'y a que des chefs-d'oeuvre. . . .)

39. Chesneau, "Salon de 1864," *Le Constitutionnel*, June 14, 1865. (Cette année les tableaux de M. Manet figurent parmi les oeuvres admises au concours des récompenses. Le jury a été indulgent.)

40. Astruc, "Salon des Champs-Élysées," *L'Étendard*, July 23, 1867. ("Ah! jeunes gens pratiquez le beau en cherchant le vrai, sans manière, vous inspirant des simplicités de la nature si harmonieuses dans ses prodiges de fécondité. Abandonnez le détail; élargissez le morceau jusqu'à l'oeuvre.")

41. "There is a defender of present things [i.e. contemporary art]; he has placed his pen at the service of the new painting and its free practitioners. Manet seduced him early on" (ibid., July 28, 1867). ("Voilà un défenseur des choses présentes; il a mis sa plume au

service de la jeune peinture et des libres caractères. Manet l'a séduit de bonne heure.")

42. See Steven Z. Levine, *Monet and His Critics*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1976), pp. 1–51.

43. This is a large topic. Suffice it to say that the Impressionist bracketing of the *tableau* was not a matter of simple indifference. For one thing, it did not imply a rejection of the ideal of unity; rather, the Impressionists were seen from the first by sympathetic critics as aiming at a different sort of unity, keyed to notions of *décor* and *décoration* (see Steven Z. Levine, "Décor/Decorative/Decoration in Claude Monet's Art," *Arts Magazine* 51 [Feb. 1977]: 136–39, and the coda to this book). And in the work of Monet and Pissarro a sense of the inadequacy or incompleteness of the single Impressionist picture by the standards of the *tableau* led to the elaboration of the *series*, "homogeneously treated *ensembles* of paintings of related *motifs* meant for joint exhibition" and aiming at a complex, internally differentiated but also powerfully unified decorative effect (Levine, *Monet and His Critics*, esp. p. 109; see also Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of the Avant-Garde* [Chicago and London, 1995]).

44. Pelloquet, *L'Exposition* (above n. 20). (On y chercherait vainement l'indication d'un mouvement. De quelque façon qu'il veuille indiquer une attitude ou un geste, le membre et le corps qu'il a essayé de peindre restent inertes, comme empailés.)

45. Ernest Chesneau, "Salon annexe des ouvrages d'art refusés par le jury," *L'Art et les artistes modernes en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, 1864), p. 189. (Il a le goût corrompu par l'amour du bizarre, et cependant il a des gaucheries que j'ose à peine, en un tel sujet, qualifier de naïves. Cette naïveté n'est point déplaisante, à condition toutefois qu'elle ne durera pas, et que le jeune artiste saura un jour nous montrer autre chose que des étoffes vides de corps qui les soutiennent. Les figures de M. Manet font involontairement songer aux marionnettes des Champs-Élysées: une tête solide et un vêtement flasque.)

46. Adrien Paul, "Salon de 1863," *Le Siècle*, July 19, 1863.

47. Ibid. (Ah si cette naïade effrontée n'y était pas!)

48. Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1863," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:425–26 (sous ces brillants costumes, manque un peu la personne elle-même; les têtes devraient être peintes autrement que les draperies, avec plus d'accent et de profondeur).

49. E. Spuller, "M. Édouard Manet et sa peinture," *Le Nain jaune*, June 8, 1867. (Vous vous trouverez entouré de personnages doués de toutes les apparences de la réalité, au fond dépourvus de ce qui la constitue, je veux dire l'expression. Tout cela est froid, sans accent; rien n'est remué en vous, et vos yeux mêmes qui tout à l'heure, patients et dociles, s'accommodaient à la fantaisie de l'artiste, n'aperçoivent bientôt plus que des personnages tristes, sans grâce, d'un aspect étrange, d'une coloration noire et lourde.)

50. Bürger [Thoré], "Salon de 1868," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:532. (Son vice actuel est une sorte de panthéisme qui n'estime pas plus une tête qu'une pantoufle; qui parfois accorde même plus d'importance à un bouquet de fleurs qu'à la physionomie d'une femme, par exemple dans son fameux tableau du *Chat noir*; qui peint tout presque uniformément, les meubles, les tapis, les livres, les costumes, les chairs, les accents du visage, par exemple dans son portrait de M. Émile Zola, exposé au présent Salon.)

51. Zola, "Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 159. (Les peintres, surtout Édouard Manet qui est un peintre analyste, n'ont pas cette préoccupation du sujet qui tourmente la foule avant tout; le sujet pour eux est un prétexte à peindre, tandis que pour la foule le sujet seul existe.)

52. Ibid., p. 134 (je ne discute pas un pan de draperie, l'attitude d'un membre, l'expression d'une physionomie).

53. Jacques de Biez, "Édouard Manet," *Le Voltaire*, May 2, 1883.
54. See Paul Mantz, "Les Oeuvres de Manet," *Le Temps*, Jan. 16, 1884, who complained that "Manet's works, seen from the point of view of the motif, have very little physiognomy. Except for the beer drinker who savors his bock while smoking, except for *Lola de Valence* . . . , the actors he puts on stage are mostly mute personages. They pose immobile before the photographic lens. They have the calm of still life, and are *morceaux* of painting the interest of which resides uniquely in the technical questions that they give rise to." ([L]es oeuvres de Manet, prises au point de vue du motif, ont bien peu de physiologie. Sauf le buveur de bière qui savoure son bock en fumant, sauf *Lola de Valence* . . . , les acteurs qu'il met en scène sont pour le plupart des personnages muets. Ils posent immobiles devant l'objectif. Ils participent du calme de la nature morte, et sont des morceaux de peinture dont l'intérêt réside uniquement dans les questions techniques qu'ils soulèvent.)
55. "Manet's divinity was the truth of air, the truth of light," de Biez wrote in 1884 ("Édouard Manet"). (Cette divinité, c'est la vérité de l'air, la vérité de la lumière.)
56. See Reff 1982–83.
57. Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven and London, 1988), p. 172. Roughly twenty years earlier Linda Nochlin wrote: "What has never been sufficiently taken into account by 'serious' criticism [of the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia*] is the character of these works as monumental and ironic put-ons, *blagues*, a favorite form of destructive wit of the period, inflated to gigantic dimensions—pictorial versions of those endemic pranks which threatened to destroy all serious values, to profane and vulgarize the most sacred verities of the times" ("The Invention of the Avant-Garde: France, 1830–80," in *Avant-Garde Art*, ed. Thomas B. Hess and John Ashbery [New York and London, 1967, 1968], p. 20). Farwell, responding to Nochlin, thinks this goes too far: "It is hard to believe that Manet seriously sought to consolidate his Salon career with a put-on" (Farwell 1981, p. 238). And the *Déjeuner* "is a large and serious picture, not a mere joke" (*ibid.*, p. 256). On the other hand, Farwell's bottom-line sense of the meaning of the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* is disappointing. She imagines Manet having posed to himself and then having answered certain questions with respect to the nude: "What does a civilized man dream of, hypocrisy aside, as a desirable image of the good life? And if he seeks to buy it in reality, what does he actually get? The answers, radical then and still radical today, were *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*" (*ibid.*, p. 271). The *Déjeuner* is related to the Goncourts' notion of *la blague* (without crediting Nochlin or anyone else) in Darragon 1989, p. 86.
58. Herbert, *Impressionism*, p. 61.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
60. *Ibid.* pp. 80–81. Herbert also writes: "It is precisely because Manet first establishes a cold dialogue between the statuesque barmaid and the viewer that the second dialogue in the mirror [between the reflections of the barmaid and the customer] gains its peculiar force. We can't really be that man, yet because we are in the position he would occupy in front of the bar, he becomes our second self. His disembodied image seems to stand for a male client's hidden thoughts when facing such an attractive woman. The apparently aberrant detachment of the reflection in the mirror from the woman, and of the man from ourselves, is the game this wily artist is playing. The very fulcrum on which the picture balances, in other words, is a violation of the conventions of traditional art. To have 'corrected' it would have destroyed the painting" (p. 81).
61. Clark 1985, p. 253. The reference to Paul Alexis is to his description of Manet's

- painting that appeared in *Le Réveil* one month before the Salon opened (see *ibid.*, p. 239); the reference to Simmel is to his 1903 essay, "The Metropolis and Modern Life," which Herbert also cites (*Impressionism*, p. 50 and *passim*).
62. Herbert, *Impressionism*, p. xv.
63. Clark 1985, pp. 250–51. However, in an earlier essay on the *Bar* Clark wrote of the barmaid: "She is impassive and self-contained; her gaze resists interpretation; her expression is impenetrable: it is the face, to paraphrase a remark of Michael Fried's, of the painting itself, in which the painting stares at us [a reference to chap. 1, n. 26]. All these things—and I am casting around, as Fried was, for words to suggest the complex, shifting relationship we have with that face, that pose, that expression—cannot simply be a matter of buying and selling, the mere professional impassivity of the barmaid" ("The Bar at the Folies-Bergère," in *The Wolf and the Lamb: Popular Culture in France from the Old Regime to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jacques Beauroy, Marc Bertrand, and Edward T. Gargan [Saratoga, Calif., 1977], p. 237). And in a footnote to that paraphrase Clark adds: "The phrases come in the context of a different argument, one about Manet's stress in the 1860s on the *painting* as a unity. Not that this is necessarily in conflict with what I am arguing here: it might be said, and sometimes I believe Fried is saying, that in order to confront the beholder with the unity of the picture *as painted surface* all the other kinds of unity which are built into our normal appropriation of the work of art—including the unity of ourselves, the 'beholder'—have to be deconstituted." I take this to mean (among other things) that I am not the "inveterate modernist" of the later passage, any more than Clark represents for me the social historian of art *tout court*. I will add, though, that it now seems crucially important to distinguish between what Manet would have meant by the "unity of the picture" in the 1860s and what Clark refers to as its unity "as painted surface," an Impressionist idea. Finally, when I say as I have just done that Clark's interpretation of the barmaid's face fails to address the larger question of inexpressive or unreadable faciality in Manet's art I do not mean to rule out the possibility—which indeed seems to be the case—that Manet in the 1870s and 1880s sometimes sought to depict subtle and in principle describable psychological states of a sort that are rarely found in his paintings of the 1860s. The fact remains, however, that readings of the barmaid's expression have been almost comically diverse; see Steven Z. Levine, "Manet's Man Meets the Gleam of Her Gaze: A Psychoanalytic Novel," in *Current Methodologies: Thirteen Approaches to Manet's 'Bar at the Folies-Bergère'*, ed. Bradford R. Collins (forthcoming).
64. Clark 1985, p. 252.
65. On the *Vocation* see Legros 1987–88, pp. 65–66, cat. no. 31.
66. This was already remarked in chap. 1, n. 26.
67. *Le Courrier artistique* for Dec. 1, 1861 (1st yr., no. 12) lists a painting by Legros called *Moines en prière* as on view at Martinet's at that time. Both the *Ex-Voto* and the *Vocation* are warmly praised by Baudelaire (who doesn't give their titles) in "L'Exposition à la Galerie Martinet en 1861," *Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 402. In those brief remarks Baudelaire refers to the "concentrated and luminous landscape" (emphasis added) in the *Ex-Voto* (un paysage concentré et lumineux), further attesting to the effect that I have called forcing, and says of the *Ex-Voto* that it makes one think "of the most solid Spanish compositions" (fait penser aux plus solides compositions espagnoles), among which we might cite Velázquez's *Drinkers*.
68. See e.g. the account of that incident in Henry Osborn Taylor, *The Mediaeval Mind: A History of the Development of Thought and Emotion in the Middle Ages*, 2 vols., (Cambridge, Mass., 1925), 1:441–43. My thanks to Daniel Weiss for this reference.



69. See Michael Fried, *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration: On Thomas Eakins and Stephen Crane* (Chicago and London, 1987), pp. 42–45; Fried 1980, p. 43; and Fried 1990, pp. 179–80.

70. I have deliberately used the French *coup d'oeil* in order to avoid the English “glance,” which before it can be used in this context must be stipulated as *not* carrying the range of meanings associated with it by Norman Bryson in the chapter entitled “The Gaze and the Glance” in his *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze* (New Haven and London, 1983), pp. 87–131. Bryson himself treats *coup d'oeil* and “glance” as more or less synonymous. But as he implicitly acknowledges, the word “glance” can connote “a furtive or sideways look whose attention is always elsewhere, which shifts to conceal its own existence, and which is capable of carrying unofficial, *sub rosa* messages of hostility, collusion, rebellion, and lust” (p. 94)—none of which holds for the French *coup d'oeil*. In fact the opposition Bryson draws between two fundamentally different acts of vision, “one vigilant, masterful, ‘spiritual,’ [the *regard* or “gaze”] and the other subversive, random, disorderly [the *coup d'oeil* or “glance”]” (p. 93), while crucial for his purposes, is far too ideologically biased to capture the distinction I have just made between an indefinitely protracted act of seeing and what I call “a single immeasurably brief *coup d'oeil*.” The latter, to take up Bryson’s language, is no less “masterful” or “‘spiritual’” than the former. In the remainder of this book I shall feel free to use the word “glance” to mean an act of “instantaneous” perception *tout court*.

71. See Clement Greenberg, “The Case for Abstract Art,” *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4, *Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957–1969*, ed. John O’Brian (Chicago, 1993), pp. 80–81. For Greenberg, the quality of “at-onceness” is a mark of all successful paintings: “[I]deally the whole of a picture should be taken in at a glance; its unity should be immediately evident, and the supreme quality of a picture, the highest measure of its power to move and control the visual imagination, should reside in its unity. And this is something to be grasped only in an indivisible instant of time” (p. 80). As readers of *Absorption and Theatricality* will have recognized, this amounts to an updated restatement of Grimm’s and Diderot’s (and before them, Shaftesbury’s) conception of the aesthetics of the autonomous easel picture. Indeed the updating is by way of the early Impressionist notion of “decorative” unity, which also was imagined as to declaring itself (or failing to do so) instantaneously. My own use of the term “at-onceness” in the present context is meant rather to direct attention to a particular temporal effect, one that in principle is neither superior nor inferior to any other.

72. The *Street Singer* is often underrated in the Manet literature. But not by Jacques-Émile Blanche, whose brief description deserves to be left untranslated: “[V]oici la *Chanteuse des rues*. Cette fille mange des cerises; le sac de bigarreaux s’appuie sur le bras gauche, dont la main tient une guitare; pâle, affligée d’un gros nez, les yeux en boules de loto, avec sa toque, son *caraco* gris et sa jupe bouffante ‘à tirettes,’ elle semble collée à une porte d’estaminet à persiennes d’un vert de banc; à l’intérieur de cet endroit louche, on aperçoit tromblons et gibus de buveurs. De cette chanteuse populaire, à la figure plate, sans expression; de l’ensemble de cette composition assez ordinaire, Manet a fait une page plus ‘distinguée,’ plus succulente qu’un portrait de Goya, mieux peinte qu’une Infante de Vélasquez; bizarre et stylisée comme un Ingres” (*Manet* [Paris, 1924], p. 26).

73. See Daniel Arasse, “L’Ange spectateur: La ‘Madone Sixtine’ et Walter Benjamin,” *Traverses*, n.s., no. 3 (fall 1992): 8–19. Interestingly, Arasse argues that the “anges spectateurs [at the bottom of the picture] ne servent pas seulement de relais au regard dévot porté sur le tableau d’autel; ils annoncent l’autonomie artistique de la représentation à laquelle ils appartiennent et dont ils marquent le seuil” (p. 17). As he also says: “Par son

dispositif de présentation, par ce qui se passe à ses bords supérieurs et, plus encore, à son rebord inférieur, la représentation se présente elle-même comme oeuvre d’art: tout en représentant (au moyen de figures) le concept chrétien de *revelatio*, elle affirme l’autonomie artistique de cette représentation” (ibid.). See also the brief discussion of the implied movement of the Virgin in John Shearman, *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*, The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1988 (Princeton, 1992), p. 105; and the remarks on the implication of the metaphor of the curtain in Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago and London, 1994), pp. 478–84, 488.

74. “Lettres d’un bourgeois de Paris,” *La Gazette de France*, July 21, 1863. (M. Manet a les *qualités* qu’il faut pour être refusé à l’unanimité par tous les jurys du monde. Son coloris aigre et agaçant entre dans les yeux comme une scie d’acier; ses personnages se découpent à l’emporte pièce, avec une crudité qu’aucun compromis n’adoucit. Il a toute l’âpreté de ces fruits verts qui ne doivent jamais mûrir. Les critiques d’estaminet se pâment devant ces belles toiles d’un réalisme à faire paraître M. Courbet lui-même académique.)

75. A notion sometimes applied to Manet’s work and in particular to the treatment of figures in the *Déjeuner*. See e.g. René Payant, “L’Art à propos de l’art,” *Parachute: Revue d’art contemporain* 16 (autumn 1979): 5–8 (where the figure of the nude bather is seen as superimposed on the rest of the image in an *effet collage*); and Hubert Damisch, *Le Jugement de Paris* (Paris, 1992), p. 175 (where the terms *découpage*, *montage*, and *collage* are all loosely equated). Cf. also Blanche’s description of the *Street Singer* in n. 72 above.

76. Sandblad 1954, p. 82.

77. Marc de Montifaud [Marie-Amélie Chatroule de Montifaud], “Salon de 1867,” *L’Artiste*, May 1, 1867: 247. (On est d’abord inquiet et surpris de l’obscurité, mais peu à peu on s’aperçoit que ces massifs d’ombres se dégagent dans une clarté qui vient de la profondeur des bois et qui, avançant graduellement sur les plans du fond, gagnent les plans principaux par des valeurs d’une transition si mesurée, si pénétrante, si largement distribuée, qu’il n’y a pas une mousse, pas un lichen, pas une fibre d’arbrisseau, qui ne se détende d’aise sous les antres verdurants.) Montifaud’s description perfectly fits the masterly *Stream of the Black Well, Valley of the Loue (Doubs)* (1855) in the National Gallery of Art (illustrated in Fried 1990, p. 342, fig. 111).

78. See Fried 1980, pp. 88–92.

79. On David’s pictorial dramaturgy see Fried 1970, pp. 41–42; Fried 1980, pp. 154–60, 175–78; Fried 1990, pp. 15–20; and *idem*, “David et l’antithéâtralité,” in Régis Michel, ed., *David contre David*, Actes du colloque organisé au Musée du Louvre par le service culturel du 6 au 10 décembre 1989, 2 vols. (Paris, 1993), 1:201–27.

80. Recently Kermit Swiler Champa has summed up the effect of Manet’s characteristic figure paintings as follows: “[T]he various female figures seem to serve as familiar and interesting imaging pegs for Manet to hang his paintings on, and pretty much the same could be said for his male figures. Whatever their gender, Manet’s figures tend to be motif and readable as such. Their development is, however, always stunningly original in pictorial terms. At base, figures are Manet’s way of seizing his viewer’s attention rapidly, at times frontally using spectator-contracting gaze, at other times both frontally and laterally to introduce a kind of perpendicular pictorial counterpoint, but one that always refuses either to narrate, or to indent the picture spatially in any abrupt or complicated fashion. A fictive pictorial immediacy is what Manet seems to want, and what he usually gets. In addition, the narratively thin character of that immediacy serves rapidly and very consistently to establish Manet’s images as ‘paintings’—as original Manet’s” (“*Masterpiece*” *Studies: Manet, Zola, Van Gogh, & Monet* [University Park, Pa., 1994], pp. 42–

43). This is excellent, but its closing claim—that narrative thinness establishes Manet's images as “‘paintings’”—risks implying that other works of the time were somehow not seen as “paintings,” or at least not to the same degree, which would be untrue (as Champa perhaps suspects: hence the scare quotes around “paintings” in the final sentence). For a similar implication, see the passage from *Three American Painters* quoted in the introduction, n. 62.

81. They were seen as “philosophers” by Comte Horace du Viel-Castel, “Salon de 1863,” *La France*, May 21, 1863, and as “two rapins, dressed in velvet, talk[ing] esthetics with a woman clothed in her virtue” by Louis Enault, “Le Salon de 1863,” *La Gazette des étrangers*, May 24, 1863 (deux rapins, habillés de velours, causaient esthétique avec une femme habillée de sa vertu). Cf. Mary Vidal's insistence on the “conversational” basis of Watteau's art, including his fêtes champêtres, in *Watteau's Painted Conversations* (New Haven and London, 1992).

82. Louis Etienne, *Le Jury et les exposants: Salon des Refusés* (Paris, 1863), p. 30 (je cherche en vain ce que peut signifier ce logogriphe peu séant).

83. Bürger [Thoré], “Salon de 1863,” *Salons de W. Bürger*, 1:425. (La femme nue n'est pas de belle forme, malheureusement, et on n'imaginerait rien de plus laid que le monsieur étendu près d'elle et qui n'a pas même eu l'idée d'ôter, en plein air, son horrible chapeau en bourrelet. C'est ce contraste d'un animal si antipathique au caractère d'une scène champêtre, avec cette baigneuse sans voiles, qui est choquant. Je ne devine pas ce qui a pu faire choisir à un artiste intelligent et distingué une composition si absurde, que l'élé-gance et le charme des personnages eussent peut-être justifiée.)

84. Paul Mantz, “Salon de 1869,” *GBA*, 2d ser., 2 (July 1, 1869): 13. (On ne sait pas bien ce que ces honnêtes personnes font à leur balcon. . . . L'accentuation d'un type, le caractérisation d'un sentiment ou d'une idée, seraient vainement cherchées dans ce tableau sans pensée.) Mantz concludes his discussion of the *Balcony* by saying, “His painting has almost as much interest as a still life” (ibid.). (Son tableau a presque autant d'intérêt qu'une nature morte.)

85. In his comments on Carolus Duran's portrait Mantz began by recalling the painter's “violent” origins and his earlier pursuit of reality “à la Courbet” and closed with the following: “The dress is painted ravishingly; but it doesn't attract the eye of the spectator more than it ought to, and nothing prevents him from examining at his leisure the head from which the individuality of the model shines forth and above all the eyes, which are full of eloquence. In its victorious charm, this portrait is serious and is bound to last; it's a landmark in the history of the feminine ideal” (“Salon de 1869,” *GBA*, 2d ser., 1 [June 1, 1869]: 503). (La robe est peinte à ravir; mais elle n'arrête pas plus qu'il ne convient l'oeil spectateur, et rien ne l'empêche d'examiner à loisir la tête où éclate l'individualité du modèle, et les yeux surtout, qui sont pleins d'éloquence. Dans son charme victorieux, ce portrait est grave et devra rester; c'est une note dans l'histoire de l'idéal féminin.) Not just the evocation of the sitter's liveness and individuality but also the perfect relation between the treatment of her costume and the rendering of her head and features are what Mantz and other critics routinely found lacking in Manet's art.

Interestingly, the portrait's admirers weren't wholly in agreement about what the woman was doing. Olivier Merson, for example, believed that “Mme D. is about to leave; as she puts on her gloves, she crosses a salon and while passing sends you the most gracious smile” (“Salon de 1869,” *Le Monde illustré*, May 22, 1869). (Mme. D. est prête à sortir; tout en mettant ses gants, elle traverse un salon et vous envoie au passage le plus gracieux sourire.) Élie Roy, on the other hand, thought that the woman had just returned home. “She enters,” he wrote, “moved by the rapidity of her walk, in a hurry to see a male

friend, her face radiant with an honest brightness, her eyes full of caresses, and it seems that she brings with her a breath of spring air” (“Salon de 1869,” *L'Artiste*, Sept. 1, 1869, p. 356). (Elle entre, émue par la rapidité de la marche, pressée de voir un ami, le front rayonnant d'un éclat honnête, les yeux pleins de caresse, et il semble qu'elle apporte avec elle une bouffée d'air printanier.) No doubt Roy was correct in thinking that Carolus's sitter was meant to be seen as having just returned from a walk or visit rather than as being about to leave. But however the woman's actions were understood, the painting struck contemporary viewers as a tour de force of vividness and intelligibility.

86. Castagnary, *Salons*, 1:364–65.

A quoi tient cette stérilité? A ce que, tout en basant son art sur la nature, il néglige de lui donner pour but l'interprétation même de la vie. Ses sujets, il les emprunte aux poètes ou les prend dans son imagination; il ne s'occupe pas de les découvrir sur le vif des mœurs. De là, dans ses compositions, une grande part d'arbitraire. En regardant ce *Déjeuner*, par exemple, je vois, sur une table où le café est servi, un citron à moitié pelé et des huitres fraîches; ces objets ne marchent guère ensemble. Pourquoi les avoir mis? Je le sais bien, le pourquoi. C'est parce que M. Manet a au plus haut point le sentiment de la tache colorante, qu'il excelle à reproduire ce qui est inanimé, et que, se sentant supérieure dans les natures mortes, il se trouve naturellement porté à en faire le plus possible. . . . De même que M. Manet assemble, pour le seul plaisir de frapper les yeux, des natures mortes qui devraient s'exclure; de même, il distribue ses personnages au hasard, sans que rien de nécessaire et de forcé ne commande leur composition. De là l'incertitude, et souvent l'obscurité dans la pensée. Que fait ce jeune homme du *Déjeuner*, qui est assis au premier plan et qui semble regarder le public? Il est bien peint, c'est vrai, brossé d'une main hardie; mais où est-il? Dans la salle à manger? Alors, ayant le dos à la table, il a le mur entre lui et nous, et sa position ne s'explique plus. Sur ce *Balcon* j'aperçois deux femmes, dont une toute jeune. Sont-ce les deux soeurs? Est-ce la mère et la fille? Je ne sais. Et puis, l'une est assise et semble s'être placée uniquement pour jouir du spectacle de la rue; l'autre se gante comme si elle allait sortir. Cette attitude contradictoire me déroute. Certes, j'aime la couleur, et je reconnais volontiers que M. Manet a le ton juste, souvent même agréable. . . . Mais le sentiment des fonctions, mais le sentiment de la convenance sont choses indispensables. . . . Comme les personnages dans une comédie, il faut que dans un tableau chaque figure soit à son plan, remplisse son rôle et concoure ainsi à l'expression de l'idée générale. Rien d'arbitraire et rien de superflu, telle est la loi de toute composition artistique.

87. Ibid., p. 355. (Il est difficile d'écrire une pensée avec plus de netteté, de vigueur et d'harmonie. Rien n'est oublié et il n'y a pas un trait qui ne concoure à l'expression.) For Castagnary's detailed commentary on the *Knitting Lesson* see chap. 3, n. 63.

88. See e.g. Théophile Gautier, “Salon de 1865,” *Le Moniteur universel*, June 24, 1865, where reference is made to Manet's “willed bizarreries, his extravagant excesses and the too visible desire to force attention [on himself] by firing, as we say, a pistol shot in the midst of the Salon . . .” (des bizarreries voulues, des outrances extravagantes et le désir trop visible de forcer l'attention en tirant, comme on dit, un coup de pistolet au milieu de l'Exposition . . .).

89. Marius Chaumelin, “Salon de 1869,” *L'Art contemporain* (Paris, 1873), p. 236. (Le premier aspect de ces deux toiles est peu agréable, nous devons le reconnaître; les personnages,—à l'exception de la femme assise,—ne sont rien moins que beaux, les faces ont quelque chose de morne, de maussade, comme celles de gens qui posent, et, de fait, tous ces gens-là ont l'air de nous dire: regardez-moi! Ils ne pensent pas à autre chose; nous en excepterons toutefois le monsieur qui attend son café et qui rumine tranquillement son déjeuner, sans s'occuper de nous. Ainsi, pas d'expression, pas de sentiment, pas de composition.)

90. Ibid. (à reproduire des sujets d'une vulgarité repoussante, des types sans caractère, des scènes dépourvues de tout intérêt).

91. Ibid., p. 332. (M. Manet a fait le portrait d'un *Balcon* et celui d'un *Déjeuner*.)

92. Duranty, "Salon de 1869," *Paris-Journal*, May 12, 1869, cited in Marcel Crouzet, *Un Méconnu du réalisme: Duranty* (Paris, 1964), pp. 289–90; I have been unable to find a copy of that issue of *Paris-Journal*. (Si l'on voyait vite en passant des gens à un balcon, on aurait une impression assez égale à celle du tableau de M. Manet, mais si l'on prolongeait le coup d'oeil, l'impression changerait; les blancs et les verts, par exemple, perdraient de leur valeur, et d'autres colorations en prendraient une nouvelle. C'est un peu là le secret et de la peinture de M. Manet et de l'opposition qu'on lui fait. Il a toujours saisi une impression de la nature plus vite, et par conséquent autrement que ses critiques.)

The negative version of this explanation was Albert Wolff's insistence that Manet habitually rendered only the first, brutal, gross impression of nature that struck his eyes, an impression "to which thought remained foreign"; so that in the green shutters of the *Balcony* he debased himself "to the point of competing with house painters" ("Salon de 1869," *Le Figaro*, May 20, 1869) (il rend admirablement la première impression de la nature, impression brutale, grossière . . . en jetant sur la toile cette première impression des yeux, à laquelle la pensée demeure étrangère . . . il s'abaisse jusqu'à faire concurrence aux peintres en bâtiment). (The French just quoted brings together portions of different sentences.)

93. Duranty, "Salon de 1870," *Paris-Journal*, May 5, 1870. (Si les autres tracassent sèchement ou caressent mollement leurs têtes, il jette, prompt, sommaire, brutal et large, les siennes dans une mate clarté, un peu crayeuse, supprimant les détails. . . . L'effet violent de la nature, l'intense cruauté de ses aspects, de ses notes opposées le saisissent, le dominant.)

94. Ibid. (Il faudrait entrer enfin dans le sentiment *expressif* de la vie moderne. . . . Il faut arriver à l'imagerie transcendante, l'imagerie admirablement faite, admirablement dessinée, et d'une puissance complète. . . . [E]t nous ne savons plus comment nous défendre, nous justifier devant cette accusation "d'aimer les supériorités *incompréhensibles*" d'un homme auquel nous avons souhaité et pronostiqué les triomphes d'un des premiers peintres de ce temps-ci.) Whatever else Duranty meant by the "expressive feeling of modern life," he wanted Manet to go beyond his characteristic one- and two-figure compositions "and to get excited in grappling bodily with *assemblies* of figures. Because it truly seems that an invisible police keeps an eye on his hardy brush and forbids it society" (ibid.). (Il faudrait se renouveler, laisser là ce personnage, ou ces deux personnages sur fond ardoisé et nu, et s'exciter soi-même en se prenant corps à corps avec le *rassemblement* de figures. Car on dirait vraiment qu'une invisible police surveille ce pinceau hardi et lui interdit la société.)

95. Armand Silvestre, "Salon de 1874," *L'Opinion nationale*, Apr. 15, 1874. (S'il vous arrivait d'apercevoir sur le bord de pierre que surmonte un grillage une femme assise et un enfant près d'elle, la fantaisie vous prendrait-elle d'analyser bien profondément ce spectacle fortuit? Il se pourrait cependant qu'il vous restât quelques instants dans les yeux. C'est cette impression instantanée que M. Manet a voulu rendre, et il n'y a pas lieu de le défendre de n'avoir pas poussé plus loin l'exécution d'un semblable motif. . . . On peut regretter que M. Manet n'ait pas cherché autre chose; mais il est clair qu'il a rendu ce qu'il cherchait, c'est-à-dire, une impression immédiate et très nette.)

96. Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, "Salon de 1874," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 3d ser., 47th yr. (June 1, 1874): 671–72. (Est-ce un portrait à deux personnages ou un tableau de style . . . ? Les informations nous manquent pour résoudre ce problème; nous

hésitons d'autant plus qu'en ce qui concerne la jeune fille ce serait tout au moins un portrait vu de dos. M. Manet a fait tant d'innovations que rien de sa part ne saurait nous étonner.)

97. Years later two other critics, Edmond Bazire and Henry Cochin, returned to the portrait theme. "For [Manet], everything is a portrait," Bazire wrote in 1884, while Cochin explained: "Manet also understood very well the *portrait* of inanimate things; his still lifes, fish, flowers, fruit, vegetables, are strongly painted and natural." See Bazire, *Édouard Manet* (Paris, 1884), p. 139; and Cochin, "L'Exposition des oeuvres d'Édouard Manet," *Le Français*, Feb. 4, 1884. (Pour lui, tout est portrait.) (Manet entendait bien aussi le *portrait* des choses inanimées; ses natures mortes, poissons, fleurs, fruits, légumes, sont fortement peintes et naturelles.)

The idea that Manet was basically a portraitist, which is to say that his still lifes amounted to portraits of various things (fish, flowers, fruit, etc.), is the reverse of the complaint, voiced by some critics of the 1860s, that Manet rendered persons as if they were nothing more than inanimate objects. Obviously I think the emphasis on the portrait, or say on an enlarged and (to use Gontague Privat's term) "abstract" notion of the *portrait-tableau*, was closer to Manet's intentions. But it isn't hard to see how his voiding of psychology and related strategies gave his representations of persons a character that could be associated with still life and that modern art historians, viewing Manet from the perspective of Impressionism and subsequent developments, have made into a virtue. Cf. James H. Rubin's privileging of the still-life metaphor, which he believes captures the essence of Manet's art, in *Manet's Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1994), chap. 3, "A Poetics of Bouquets." For Rubin, "Manet's figures [in his paintings of the 1860s] are bearers of still-life. . . . That is, the patterns and colours to which their costumes give rise seem the veritable subject-matter of such canvases. They embody the values of still-life to the same degree as drapery studies by the Old Masters, except that Manet's are independent works. . . . As in the *Olympia*, these paintings produce an aesthetics of display, rather than narrative. Spread over the surface, indeed, pressing toward the eye, Manet's pigments create a world physically manipulated—like that of still-life objects, except here more intimately fused with the painter's eye as expressed through gesture and touch" (p. 181). Similar reasoning leads Rubin to emphasize the "silence" of Manet's paintings, which in the 1860s were routinely described as the visual equivalent of loud and unpleasant noise (see below).

98. So for example Philippe Burty wrote on the occasion of the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874 that the new esthetic was "based on the swiftest possible rendering of physical sensation" ("The Paris Exhibitions: *Les Impressionistes—Chintreuil*," *The Academy*, May 30, 1874). And Castagnary noted apropos the same exhibition: "This young group has a way of understanding nature that isn't at all tedious or banal. It's lively, it's quick, it's light; it's ravishing. What a rapid intelligence of the object and what an amusing facture. It's summary, true, but how accurate the indications are!" ("Exposition du boulevard des Capucines: Les Impressionistes," *Le Siècle*, Apr. 29, 1874). (Cette jeunesse a une façon de comprendre la nature qui n'a rien d'ennuyeux ni de banal. C'est vif, c'est preste, c'est léger; c'est ravissant. Quelle intelligence rapide de l'objet et quelle facture amusante. C'est sommaire, il est vrai, mais combien les indications sont justes!) See also Chesneau's praise of Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines* in his account of the first Impressionist show, cited in the coda.

99. In the words of René Maizeroy: "He saw, in effect, faster than he painted. His hand was less active than his brain, than his eyes whose acuity was astonishing, and, three-quarters of the time, he abandoned any painting that he hadn't almost finished in the first

sitting” (“Portraits posthumes: Édouard Manet,” *Le Reveil*, Jan. 12, 1884). (Il voyait, en effet, plus vite qu’il ne peignait. Sa main était moins active que son cerveau, que ses yeux dont l’acuité étonnait et, les trois quarts de temps, il abandonnait le tableau qu’il n’avait presque pas fini dans une première séance.) Another critic, Albert Pinard, emphasized the relation between Manet’s speed of seeing and executing and the speed of modern life:

Yes, we live rapidly, we have more notes than reflections, more aperçus than certainties, more whims than willings, and, certainly, that rapidity of life acts on the painter as on all the other human atoms in society.

He sees more rapidly and he renders more rapidly; and as few men will see more rapidly and more accurately, will reproduce [reality] more rapidly and more accurately than Manet, his superiority to contemporary artists is easily comprehensible. His labor is in accord with that of his century. It’s not a matter of establishing different levels of art and of saying that this one is inferior to that one. Do you consider as a superior art that which is able to determine an intense expression by summary means? To realize the maximum of intensity of impression by the minimum of efforts is a pretty miracle. That must be Manet’s dream. (“L’Exposition Manet,” *Le Radical*, Jan. 10, 1884)

Oui, nous vivons vite, nous avons plus de notes que de réflexions, plus d’aperçus que de sûretés, plus de velléités que de vouloirs, et, certainement, cette vitesse de la vie agit sur le peintre comme sur tous les autres atomes humains de la société.

Il voit plus vite et rend plus vite; et comme peu d’hommes verront plus vite et plus juste, reproduiront plus vite et plus juste que Manet, sa supériorité sur les artistes contemporains est aisément compréhensible. Son travail concorde avec celui de son siècle. Il ne s’agit pas d’établir de différents niveaux d’art et de dire que celui-ci est inférieur à celui-là. Considérez-vous comme un art supérieur celui qui arrive à déterminer une expression intense par des moyens sommaires? Réaliser le maximum d’intensité d’impression par le minimum d’efforts est un joli miracle. C’a dû être le rêve de Manet.

100. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 16, May 20, 1863. Astruc also refers to Manet’s paintings as “entirely spontaneous . . . so harmonious, executed with such verve and force that they seem to burst from nature in a single bound” (ibid.). The whole of his remarks on Manet in 1863 are reproduced in appendix 4.

101. Ibid.

102. Étienne, *Le Jury et les exposants*, p. 30. (Le paysage est bien traité dans cette toile, la plus considérable qu’ait envoyé M. Manet; mais les figures sont trop lâchées, et nous se saurions mieux lui exprimer notre critique que de lui rappeler, afin qu’il s’en inspire davantage, la forte étude qu’il a exposée en 1861 dans son *Jeune homme à la lourde épée*.)

103. Castagnary, “Salon de 1863,” *Salons*, 1:173–74. (Le *Bain*, le *Majo*, l’*Espada* sont de bonnes ébauches, j’en conviens. Il y a une certaine vie dans le ton, une certaine franchise dans la touche qui n’ont rien de vulgaire. Mais après? Est-ce là dessiner? Est-ce la peindre? M. Manet croit être ferme et puissant, il n’est que dur; chose singulière, il est aussi mou que dur. Cela vient de ce que tout est incertain chez lui et abandonné au hasard. Pas un détail n’arrive à sa forme précise et rigoureuse.)

104. Ibid. (Je vois des vêtements, sans sentir la charpente anatomique qui les soutient et justifie leurs mouvements. Je vois des doigts sans os et des têtes sans crânes. Je vois des favoris figurés par deux bandes de drap noir qu’on aurait collées sur les joues. Que vois-je encore? l’absence de conviction et de sincérité chez l’artiste.)

105. Ernest Fillonneau, “Salon de 1863,” *Moniteur des arts*, June 6, 1863. (Le *Repos sur l’herbe* et les *Espagnols* de M. Manet, la *Dame blanche* de M. Wistler [sic] nous représentent des peintures par à peu près, où le parti pris et la volonté jouent évidemment un

plus grand rôle que la science et l’étude. . . . Qu’on ne confonde pas la bizarrerie avec l’originalité, la raideur avec le style, la brutalité avec la franchise, l’exagération avec le caractère.)

106. Gautier, “Salon de 1864,” *Le Moniteur universel*, June 25, 1864. (Il attaque le morceau hardiment et sait lui conserver une grande unité de teinte locale. Ses figures se tiennent d’un bout à l’autre dans la gamme adoptée et rassemblent à des préparations du maître. Malheureusement M. Manet, par système, les abandonne à cet état et ne pousse pas son travail plus loin.)

107. *Idem*, “Salon de 1865,” *Le Moniteur universel*, June 24, 1865. (M. Manet a perdu la bataille dans des conditions des plus favorables. . . . L’originalité qui pouvait, avec le temps, se débarrasser de ses scories, est devenue difforme et monstrueuse. Les qualités que l’oeil des connaisseurs savait démêler dans ce chaos, ont disparu sous l’envahissement des défauts naturels et cherchés.)

108. Bürger (Thoré), “Salon de 1864,” *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:98.

109. *Idem*, “Salon de 1866,” ibid., 2:318. For French text see chap. 1, n. 250.

110. Amédée Cantaloube, “Salon de 1864,” *Nouvelle Revue de Paris*, 2 (1864): 601. (Une autre fois, ce sera un peintre puisant dans l’école espagnole le germe d’ébauches ou d’improvisations fougueuses d’un dessin barbare, où l’on entrevoit, il est vrai, quelques traces confuses d’un tempérament de coloriste.)

111. *Idem*, “Salon de 1865,” *Le Grand Journal*, May 21, 1865. (Nous voulons, ici, parler de certaines ébauches informes ou grotesques qui causent une véritable scandale.)

112. Théodore Duret, *Les Peintres français en 1867* (Paris, 1867), pp. 110–11. (Le plus grand reproche que l’on puisse peut-être faire à M. Manet est celui de travailler trop vite et de traiter ses tableaux trop en esquisses. Son faire n’est pas poussé à un point assez arrêté, son modelé manque de fermeté, et ces défauts s’accusent surtout chez lui dans le traitement des figures. Il faut, pour qu’il donne toute sa mesure, qu’un artiste pousse la valeur et la mérite de la forme aussi loin que possible, et M. Manet se condamne à rester fort au-dessous de ce qu’il pourrait être en peignant d’une manière trop rapide et trop hâtive.)

113. Castagnary, *Salons*, 2:89–90 (un profil perdu gracieusement indiqué, une robe de toile bleue modelée avec ampleur, me font passer sur l’inachevé des figures et des mains).

114. *Idem*, “Salon de 1875,” *Salons*, 2:178. (Que si l’on ajoute que M. Manet est un artiste absolument consciencieux, qu’il fait ses toiles sur nature, qu’il n’épargne ni le temps ni la peine pour les amener à bien, qu’il s’en sépare seulement le jour où il juge avoir atteint le but qu’il s’était proposé.)

115. Pelloquet, *L’Exposition*.

L’exécution est loin de m’offrir une compensation suffisante; c’est aussi un rébus. Je vois bien ça et là des morceaux qui approchent de la nature, particulièrement dans une des femmes nues et dans une des têtes du premier plan, mais cela ne suffit pas, et le reste est d’une incohérence tout à fait inexplicable. On ne saurait désigner le travail de M. Manet sous le nom d’esquisse ou d’ébauche. Dans une esquisse bien comprise et bien faite, toutes les parties sont exécutées au même degré les unes que les autres.

L’incohérence, l’inégalité d’exécution de M. Manet [sic] ne s’expliquent et ne se justifient en rien.

116. Le Capitaine Pompilius [Carle Desnoyers], “Lettres particulières sur le Salon,” *Le Petit Journal*, no. 131 (June 11, 1863). For French text see appendix 3, where the whole of Desnoyers’s commentary on Manet in 1863 is given.

117. Ibid.

118. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 11 (May 14, 1863). (Entre tous, je lui reconnais un caractère bien marqué:—l'accent;—il se distingue par une facture plus serrée, par une construction étudiée profondément.) Forty years later Huysmans in his novel *L'Oblat*, describing Legros's *Ex-Voto*, wrote that the woman in white in the foreground "evoked the memory of Manet, but a more pondered, skillful, firm [in facture] Manet" (Joris-Karl Huysmans, *L'Oblat* [Paris, 1903], p. 220) (la femme en blanc évoquait, elle, le souvenir de Manet, mais d'un Manet mieux pondéré, plus savant, plus ferme).

119. Rapinus Beaubleu [Carle Desnoyers], "Salon de 1865," *Le Hanneton*, June 11, 1865. (Mon cher directeur, M. Manet n'a pas sans doute la prétention d'avoir fait deux chefs-d'oeuvre, et je crois même qu'il pouvait mener beaucoup plus loin ses tableaux qui, dans certaines parties, restent presque à l'état d'esquisses. Un peintre de cette valeur devrait se méfier de son extrême facilité qui touche en quelque sorte à l'improvisation. Mais ce défaut prouve une ardeur, une vigueur, un tempérament peu communs à notre époque. M. Manet est en grand progrès sur lui-même: dans la toile *Jésus insulté par les soldats*, il y a des morceaux, principalement la tête du soldat de droite, qui sont traités d'une manière extrêmement remarquable. Aussi dans *Olympia*, où la poitrine, les mains, tous les morceaux faits, en un mot, peuvent servir d'enseignement aux malins de ce temps qui ameuvent, en grimaçant, la foule stupide contre une personnalité très-vive et très-originale.)

The entire "Salon" comprises three short articles; only the third is serious in tone, and only Manet is discussed in detail.

120. See Jean Ravenel [Alfred Sensier], "Salon de 1865," *L'Époque*, June 7, 1865. "The *Christ*," he wrote, "would require a certain technical analysis which we haven't the time to give.—In sum it's hideous, but all the same it is something [he had just said the same about *Olympia*]. A painter is in evidence and this strange group is bathed in light." (*Le Christ* demanderait une certaine analyse technique que nous n'avons pas le temps de donner.—En résumé, c'est hideux, mais c'est encore quelque chose. Le peintre y apparaît et la lumière court sur ce groupe étrange.)

A third critic, Théophile Gautier *fils*, also found good *morceaux* in *Olympia*; it was the *Christ Mocked* that seemed to him to escape description; *Olympia* he saw, incredibly, as making concessions to public taste! See Gautier *fils*, "Salon de 1865," *Le Monde illustré*, May 6, 1865. (*Le Jésus insulté par les soldats* échappe à la description. Dans *Olympia* M. Manet semble avoir fait quelque concession au goût public et à travers le parti pris on discerne des morceaux qui demandent pas mieux que d'être bons.) Gautier *fils* also wrote that the jury ought to have asked Manet to provide a statement of his esthetic to be printed in the *Salon livret*, because simply looking at his paintings left one in the dark—testimony to how difficult his art appeared even to a critic who was not automatically inclined to dismiss it. (Le Jury aurait bien dû pousser l'obligeance jusqu'à demander à M. Manet une notice sur ses *tendances* qu'on aurait fait imprimer au livret; cela aurait peut-être éclairé l'opinion publique: en effet, l'aspect seul des tableaux de M. Manet ne satisfait pas suffisamment l'oeil et l'esprit, il n'explique pas non plus le bruit qu'on a essayé de faire autour de cette nouvelle école; son esthétique est peut-être excellente, mais il est vraiment impossible de s'en faire une idée en face de que fournit sa pratique.)

121. Alan Krell, "Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* in the *Salon des Refusés*: A Reappraisal," *Art Bulletin* 65 (June 1983): 316–20.

122. See esp. Clark 1985 and Darragon 1989. See also T. J. Clark, "Preliminaries to a Possible Treatment of 'Olympia' in 1865," *Screen* 21 (spring 1980): 18–41; Peter Wollen, "Manet: Modernism and Avant Garde" (a response to Clark's article), *Screen* 21 (summer 1980): 15–25; and Clark, "A Note in Reply to Peter Wollen," *Screen* 21 (fall 1980): 97–100. Two recent interpretations of *Olympia* that acknowledge Clark and then purport

to go beyond him are Charles Bernheimer, "Manet's *Olympia*: The Figuration of Scandal," chap. 4 of his *Figures of Ill Repute: Representing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1989), pp. 89–128 (basically, Bernheimer reads the contemporary response to the painting as a function of castration anxiety); and Mieke Bal, "His Master's Eye," in David Michael Levin, ed., *Modernity and Hegemony of Vision* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1993), pp. 379–404 (an explicitly antipatriarchal critique of Clark and Bernheimer that suggests that the black woman holding a bouquet may be simply visiting Olympia friend-to-friend). This isn't the place for a detailed assessment of either, but I will say that I found both Bernheimer's chapter and Bal's essay simplistic and ahistorical (Bal, I think, would take the latter epithet as a compliment).

123. On the *Dead Torero* see Reff 1982–83, pp. 214–15; Manet 1983, pp. 195–98, cat. no. 73; and Wilson-Bareau, "Manet and the Execution of Maximilian," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, pp. 41–44.

124. See Pierre-Louis Mathieu, *Gustave Moreau, with a Catalogue of the Finished Paintings, Watercolors, and Drawings*, trans. James Emmons (Boston, 1976); Julius Kaplan, *The Art of Gustave Moreau: Theory, Style, and Content* (Ann Arbor, 1982); and *idem*, *Gustave Moreau*, exhib. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, July 23–Sept. 1, 1974; and San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Sept. 14–Nov. 3, 1974).

125. See e.g. Thoré, who wrote, "Ah, the lovers of the ideal have their desideratum this time!" ("Salon de 1864," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:15). (Ah! les amants de l'idéal ont leur desideratum cette fois!)

126. See e.g. Jean Rousseau, "Salon de 1864," *Le Figaro*, May 19, 1864, who argued that the heads of Oedipus and the Sphinx remain Moreau's property and that the latter's imitation of Mantegna didn't warrant the term pastiche; Maxime Du Camp, "Salon de 1864," *Les Beaux-Arts à l'Exposition universelle et aux salons de 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866 et 1867* (Paris, 1867), p. 116, who wrote that if pastiche of this sort was so easy to do, he was astonished that no one had tried it before; and Amédée Cantaloube, "Salon de 1864," *Nouvelle Revue de Paris* (1864), 3:604, who asked whether, because Oedipus had dark outlines and a body analogous to those of certain personages in works by Mantegna, it followed that the painting was a pastiche? He continued: "But the crowd comes running and then stops, astonished; but a prince who knows what is beautiful buys the canvas for his gallery; but all the distinguished men take part [in the debate], for or against. It's the same for the writers, moved by the poetry and the strange character of the composition! Let there be lots of such pastiches, many of us will be perfectly happy." (Parce qu'Édipe a des contours cernés et un corps qui a de l'analogie avec ceux de certains personnages du Mantegna, s'ensuit que le peintre qui a fait ces emprunts de détail pour exprimer dans un sujet complexe l'austérité du nu et les marques de la virilité, n'ait fait qu'un pastiche? mais la foule accourt et s'arrête étonné; mais un prince qui connaît ce qui est beau achète la toile pour sa galerie; mais tous les hommes distingués prennent parti, pour ou contre. Il en est de même des écrivains, remués par la poésie et le caractère étrange de la composition! Qu'on fasse beaucoup de ces pastiches-là, beaucoup sauront s'en contenter.)

127. Du Camp, "Salon de 1864," p. 112. (M. Moreau n'a rien abandonné au hasard; tout ce qu'il a fait, il l'a voulu faire ainsi. Chaque partie de son tableau est raisonnée et pondérée avec un souci sérieux.)

128. Paul de Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1864," *La Presse*, May 7, 1864. (La première impression est grande et profonde: le tableau ressort du milieu des toiles qui l'entourent, avec une étrangeté saisissante. Il s'en dégage cette idée de force que la volonté imprime à

ses oeuvres. Tout est concerté et prémédité dans l'oeuvre de M. Moreau: pas un trait inutile, pas un détail que ne marque l'empreinte de la réflexion.)

129. Chesneau, "Salon de 1864," *Le Constitutionnel*, May 3, 1864. (Tous les détails, leur forme et leur disposition aussi bien que la combinaison générale du tableau, ont été médités, réfléchis et posés avec intention. Chaque morceau de l'oeuvre de plus petit au plus grand, a été sérieusement voulu.) Chesneau also claimed, contradictorily, that the unity of the painting was such that "all trace of effort is absent," a remark that betrays his allegiance to the Diderotian ideal in its classic form even as his insistence on intention and willing amounted to a partial break with that ideal. ([C]'est là une oeuvre idéale, car elle est composée, dans un but déterminé, d'éléments distincts empruntés à la réalité, réunis, groupés pour une création absolument neuve et soudés pour ainsi dire dans une unité merveilleuse. Il semble que l'oeuvre ait pris forme ainsi, qu'elle n'ait jamais pu être autrement: tout trace d'efforts est absente, la pensée de l'artiste a trouvé sa forme exacte pleine et entière, telle qu'elle ne pourrait être modifiée en aucune façon.)

130. Bürger (Thoré), "Salon de 1864," *Salons de W. Bürger*, 2:16. (Ils sont tête à tête, profil à profil, nez à nez, oeil à oeil. Elle le magnétise de son regard féminin, l'irrésistible!) Thoré went on to support the prize committee's decision to award Moreau's canvas a medal (p. 19).

131. Rousseau, "Salon de 1864" (quel drame dans les expressions de ces deux figures, par elles-mêmes si peu significatives! . . . Et Oedipe, qui semble le regarder sans le voir, paraît bien perdu dans les profondes contemplations d'un problème de vie ou de mort).

132. C. de Sault [Mme de Charnace], "Salon de 1864," *Le Temps*, May 12, 1864. (On sent là quelque chose de profond, de solennel et d'intime à la fois qui porte au recueillement et qui s'impose aux méditations du spectateur.)

133. Cantaloube, "Salon de 1864," p. 604. (Le sujet traité par le peintre se perçoit dès la première impression et frappe vivement l'esprit, parce que l'idée en est plastique et non littéraire.) Not that a commitment to an esthetics of absorption necessarily conduced to clarity of content; one aspect of Moreau's originality is that the two were often disengaged. As Kaplan writes: "The mysteriousness at the core of *Oedipus and the Sphinx* derives from a characteristic he borrowed from Michelangelo and employed for the first time in this work: the use of static figures whose staring expressions suggest they are lost in thought or dream. Moreau himself said that his pictures were mysterious and one reason for this was the characteristic transfixed quality of the figures in them. He called this stasis 'la belle inertie.' He wrote that all the figures in Michelangelo's work seemed to be asleep—their movements unconscious. They seem absorbed in a dream world and inhabit a divine and non-material realm quite different from our own. They do not enact clearly recognizable scenes, and in some inexplicable way their actual movements often seem in contradiction to the meaning we attach to them. Despite our curiosity, they are enigmatic and puzzling and refuse to let us know what they are doing and thinking" (*Gustave Moreau*, p. 23). For Moreau's brilliant short text on Michelangelo see the indispensable collection of his writings, *L'Assembleur de rêves: Écrits complets de Gustave Moreau*, ed. Pierre-Louis Mathieu (Fontfroide, 1984), pp. 197–98.

134. Gautier wrote that Manet's Christ "seems never to have known the use of washing. The lividity of death is mixed with muddy half-tones, with dirty, black shadows which the Resurrection will never wash clean, if so decayed a cadaver is capable of resuscitating at all" ("Salon de 1864," *Le Moniteur universel*, June 25, 1864). (Si le Christ de M. Lazerges est trop blanc, trop propre, trop savonné, en revanche, celui de M. Manet ne semble pas avoir connu jamais l'usage des ablutions. La lividité de la mort se mêle chez lui à des démi-teintes crasseuses, à des ombres sales et noires dont jamais la résurrection ne le débarbouillera, si un cadavre tellement avancé peut ressusciter toutefois.)

135. See Jean Clay, "Ointments, Makeup, Pollen," trans. John Shepley, *October*, no. 27 (winter 1983): 20–22. Clay makes a first distinction between flatness and "a movement toward the flat," which leads him to posit a further distinction between "surface and superficies" (p. 20). By "surface" Clay refers to a feature of the picture support (its literal flatness, so to speak); certain modernist paintings (by Gauguin, Vuillard until 1905, the Nabis, Juan Gris, Matisse before 1918) are "organized in accordance with the support, leaning on it and clinging to it," seeking "to equate the support and the painting" (ibid.). The term "superficies" refers to something else, a sort of "film" or "windowpane" just this side of the surface against which certain of Manet's figures—sliding forward, as it were—"end up crushed" (p. 21). Of the *Angels at the Tomb of Christ* Clay writes: "Thanks to the lighting, to the viewing angle, to the daring frontal pose, and to the closing off of the represented space, the dead Christ . . . seems on the point of sliding toward us. His archaizing monumentality, however, holds him back. In any case, it is the 'staging' that arouses our conflicting feelings" (ibid.).

136. The most detailed discussion of these features of the painting is by Jane Mayo Roos, "Édouard Manet's *Angels at the Tomb of Christ*: A Matter of Interpretation," *Arts Magazine* 58 (Apr. 1984): 83–91.

137. See the discussion of the wound in Roos, who argues that its placement on the left should not be seen as a simple error. "The gospel of John, the only gospel to mention the wound, does not specify into which side of Christ the lance was thrust," she observes. "Since the purpose of the wound was to make certain Christ was dead, realist artists since the Renaissance had often placed the wound on Christ's left side, in close proximity to the heart. . . . By the mid-19th century, as one contemporary writer remarked, 'il y a diversité, parmi les artistes, au sujet du côté de Jésus-Christ que fut percé d'une lance, après sa mort'" (ibid., p. 88). Cf. Baudelaire's caution to Manet in a letter of April 1864: "[I]t appears that the blow from the lance was definitely to the right. You had better change the location of the wound before the opening [of the Salon]. Verify this in the four Gospels. And take care not to give ill-wishers an occasion to laugh at you" (Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, 2 vols., ed. Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler [Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1973], 2:352). (À propos, il paraît que décidément le coup de lance a été porté à droite. Il faudra donc que vous alliez changer la blessure de place, avant l'ouverture. Vérifiez donc la chose dans les quatre évangélistes. Et prenez garde de prêter à rire aux malveillants.)

138. Castagnary, "Salon de 1864," *Le Grand Journal*, June 12, 1864. (Quant au *Christ entouré par les anges*, c'est un cauchemar sur lequel il n'est pas bon d'arrêter la vue.)

139. Saint-Victor, "Salon de 1864," *La Presse*, June 19, 1864. (La foi du charbonnier règne dans cette école qui aurait besoin d'être ramonée. Les petites pauvresses [in the Ribot] rebutent les yeux par leur malpropreté volontaire. Mais après le Christ à la Cave, soutenu par les deux ramoneurs ailés de M. Manet, *holà!*)

140. Du Camp, "Salon de 1864," p. 113. (Le rendu est aussi fini que possible; rien n'a été négligé; les accessoires aussi bien que les personnages ont été poussés à la limite extrême)

141. Rousseau, "Salon de 1864" (May 19 and May 1, 1864). (L'oeuvre de M. Moreau choque les regards, presque autant qu'elle les frappe, par l'autorité inexorable de son dessin et l'impérieuse précision de sa facture. . . . Son tableau . . . ne vise pas à réussir par des bizarreries d'effet ou d'accessoires, toujours faciles, mais par la pure perfection du rendu, qui est du fini le plus acharné.)

142. Rousseau, "Salon de 1864," *L'Univers illustré*, June 18, 1864. (Il faudrait être aveugle pour ne pas voir dans cette oeuvre si profondément sentie et d'une exécution si ferme, si certaine, la trace des observations patientes et des longues contemplations. Son

imprévu n'a rien d'excentrique; c'est cette nouveauté qui se rencontre dans la vérité même, quand on la fouille à quelque profondeur, et qui, dans les sciences, prend le nom de découverte.)

143. Du Camp, "Salon de 1866," *Les Beaux-Arts*, p. 209. (Il est en opposition flagrante avec tous ses confrères; il les laisse chercher des succès faciles, s'épuiser sur les côtés sensuels de la peinture, et se contenter des à peu près équivoques qui ont valu quelque bruit à leur nom. . . . Il veut, cela est visible, et je crois qu'il ne quitte un tableau qu'après avoir dépensé à le parfaire toute la somme d'efforts dont il est capable.)

144. Léon Lagrange, "Salon de 1864," *GBA*, 1st ser., 16 (June 1, 1864): 506. (Nous discuterons cependant, non pas les ébauches de M. Manet, qui voudra bien nous pardonner de le fourvoyer en si bonne compagnie, mais la tentative sérieuse de M. Gustave Moreau.)

145. De Sault [Mme de Charnace], "Salon de 1864."

S'il vous plaît, donc, cher lecteur, passons de l'un à l'autre sans transition. Vous reculez, le contraste vous heurte? N'écoutez pas votre dégoût. Vous êtes le public, vous avez mission de juger. Courage, donc! promenez vos regards de l'Œdipe que nous laissons sur le droite à ce prétendu Christ: comparez les pieds avec les pieds, les mains avec les mains, les draperies avec les draperies, la tête du sphinx avec les têtes des anges.

—Ah! direz-vous, M. Manet ou tout autre peut faire beaucoup de semblables tableaux en une année. —Sans doute, et c'est tant pis. —Tandis qu'un Œdipe, on n'en peut faire souvent. —Tant pis encore; mais du moins l'artiste qui consacrerait dix ans à un tel ouvrage, n'aurait pas perdu son temps.

The nearest thing to a defense of Manet against such charges came from Baudelaire's friend Charles Asselineau, who didn't share the general enthusiasm for Moreau and who wrote of Manet: "One senses in the rapidity of his execution the impatience of a man always in a rush to arrive at a result, always in haste to savor the piece of fruit at the risk of only half-peeling it. . . . In a word, Manet has . . . that devil in the flesh which leads him to treat things brusquely and which his contempt for platitudes makes him seek out. O charming impetuosity! How you console us for imperturbable mediocrity and precocious pedantry"—the latter probably an allusion to Moreau ("Salon de 1864," *Revue nationale et étrangère* 17 [June 10, 1864]: 286–87). (On devine à la rapidité de son exécution l'impatience d'un homme toujours pressé d'arriver au résultat, toujours en hâte de savourer le fruit au risque de ne l'éplucher qu'à demi. . . . M. Manet a, en un mot . . . ce diable au corps qui fait brusquer les choses et que le mépris pour la platitude fait rechercher. O fougue charmante! comme tu nous consoles de la médiocrité imperturbable, et la pédanterie précoce!) But even Asselineau felt compelled to say that Manet's paintings in the Salon of 1864 didn't seem to him among the painter's strongest.

146. Paillot de Montabert, *Traité de peinture* (1829), cited by Louis Hautecoeur, *Louis David* (Paris, 1954), p. 85. "Paillot de Montabert raconte dans son *Traité de peinture* qu'à son entrée à l'école de David, on ne parlait que du pied avant du fils aîné et qu'on le citait comme un chef-d'oeuvre. 'Et l'on avait grande raison; en lui seul, il renferme tout un cours de peinture.'"

147. Paul Valéry reports the following from Degas's table talk, as recorded by Berthe Morisot:

Degas declared that the study of nature is meaningless, since the art of painting is a question of conventions, and that it was by far the best thing to learn drawing from Holbein; that Édouard [Manet] himself, though he made a boast of slavishly copying nature, was in fact the most mannered painter in the world, never making a brush stroke without thinking of the masters—for

example, he never showed the fingernails, because Frans Hals left them out. ("Degas Dance Drawing," *Degas Manet Morisot*, trans. David Paul, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Paul Valéry* [New York, 1960], p. 83. For the original French see Valéry, *Degas Danse Dessin* [Paris, 1938], p. 126.)

A complementary quotation attributed to Degas comes from an article by George Moore, "Degas: The Painter of Modern Life," *Magazine of Art* 13 (Sept. 1890): 416–25. A visitor (doubtless Moore himself) called on Degas in his apartment in the rue Pigalle and was admitted. "As they entered the apartment the eye of the visitor was caught by a faint drawing in red chalk, placed upon a sideboard; he went straight to it," Moore reports. "Degas said, 'Ah! look at it, I bought it only a few days ago; it is a drawing of a female hand by Ingres; look at those finger-nails, see how they are indicated. That's my idea of genius, a man who finds a hand so lovely, so wonderful, so difficult to render, that he will shut himself up all his life, content to do nothing else but indicate finger-nails'" (p. 419).

148. My description of Olympia's hand is indebted to a seminar paper by Harry Cooper, at present a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard.

149. For an account of *In the Conservatory* that focuses in part on the figures' hands see Jonathan Crary, "Unbinding Vision," *October*, no. 68 (spring 1994): 21–44.

150. Zola, "Mon Salon," *Écrits sur l'art*, p. 200. (Mais je recommande tout particulièrement la main placée sur un genou du personnage; c'est une merveille d'exécution. . . . Si le portrait entier avait pu être poussé au point où en est cette main, la foule elle-même eût crié au chef-d'oeuvre.)

151. Castagnary, "Salon de 1868," *Salons*, 1:314. (Les accessoires, table, livres, gravures, tout ce qui est nature morte, est traité de main de maître. Le personnage principal n'est pas aussi heureux, sauf la main qui est très belle et le velours du paletot qui est étonnant.)

152. *Idem*, "Salon de 1873," *Salons*, 2:89–90. (Pourquoi faut-il qu'il ait négligé à ce point ses extrémités? Les mains, étant en avant de la figure, devraient être logiquement d'un dessin plus serré que celle-ci. Pourquoi sont-elles si déplorablement lâchées? Avec le progrès que fait le goût contemporain, je ne vois que cette cause de querelle entre M. Manet et le public sérieux. Dût-il lui en coûter cher, il devrait s'efforcer bien vite de la faire disparaître.)

Another text of the 1870s is interesting in this connection. Chesneau, in a curious passage in his novel about a contemporary painter, *La Chimère* (Paris, 1879)—dedicated, we might note, to Moreau—imagines a portrait from the early 1860s in which the treatment of the hands alone suffices to announce it as a masterly work. The passage purports to give the text of a review of the portrait, which reads in part: "If one saw only the hands in this beautiful portrait, one would recognize in them a magisterial painting. The hands, that revelation of the woman, those naked hands are a masterpiece of life, of amorous expression, and of voluptuousness" (pp. 254–55). ("Ne vit-on de ce très beau portrait que les mains, on y reconnaîtrait une peinture magistrale. Les mains, cette révélation de la femme, ces mains nues sont un chef-d'oeuvre de vie, d'expression amoureuse et de volupté.")

153. Astruc, *Le Salon*, no. 16 (May 20, 1863); for French text see appendix 4.

This might be compared with the following remarks by Valéry on Degas's attitude toward Manet, in which some of the same terms are deployed: "He admires and envies the assurance of Manet, whose eye and hand are certainty itself, who sees infallibly that which, in the model, will give him the opportunity to put forth all his force, to execute in depth. There is in Manet a decisive power, a sort of strategic instinct for pictorial action. In his best canvases he attains *poetry*, that's to say the summit of art, by means of what I may

perhaps call . . . *resonance of execution*” (Valéry, “Degas Dance Drawing,” 12:25–26, translation modified. For the original French see Valéry, *Degas Danse Dessin*, p. 38).

154. René Maizeroy, “Chez Manet,” *Gils Blas*, Jan. 11, 1882. (Voici l’*Olympia* étendue dans sa blanche nudité sur un lit de repos, indifférente aux bouquets que lui apporte une négresse et aux frottements voluptueux de son chat familial.)

155. Cf. T. J. Clark’s excellent analysis of comparable tensions, inconsistencies, and disparities in *Olympia* in Clark 1985, pp. 134–39. “It is as if the painter welcomes disparity and makes a system of it,” he writes, “as if the picture proposes inconsistencies, of a curiously unrelieved kind—left without excuse or mediation—as the best sort of truth when the subject is nakedness” (p. 135). My point, though, is that such inconsistencies are characteristic of Manet’s practice generally (and of course Clark would agree: see his readings of *Argenteuil* and *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* in the same book).

156. Hector de Callias, “Salon de 1864,” *L’Artiste*, June 1, 1864, p. 242.

. . . il nous rapporte une *Course de Taureaux* divisée en trois plans,—un discours en trois points.—Le premier plan, c’est un toréador, une *espada* peut-être, qui n’a pas su géométriquement enfoncer sa petite épée dans la nuque du taureau, et que le taureau aura enventré avec les deux épées qui lui servent de cornes.

Vient ensuite un taureau microscopique. —C’est la perspective, direz-vous. —Mais non; car au troisième plan, contre les gradins du cirque, les *toreros* représentent une taille raisonnable et semblent rire de ce petit taureau, qu’ils pourraient écraser sous les talons de leurs escarpins.

For a partial reconstruction of the original composition, based on X rays of the two surviving “fragments,” see Reff 1982–83, p. 215.

157. Georges Bataille, *Manet* (1955; Geneva, 1983), p. 114. (Cette opposition des figures atones et d’une figure chargée au contraire de sensibilité subtile, nous la trouvons déjà dans les trois portraits que *Le Balcon* assemble en une seule toile, où l’atonie d’Antoine Guillemet et de Fanny Claus sert d’écrin neutre au joyau qu’est le visage de Berthe Morisot, que de l’intérieur illuminent les ardeurs de l’art et de la beauté.) Earlier in his book Bataille characterized Morisot’s gaze as “excessive” (p. 85), an epithet that is all the more suggestive in that he was surely unaware of the thematization of excess in the pictorial discourse of the period. Actually one feels Morisot is *either* gazing intently or, behind her splendid eyes, absorbed in thought or reverie, but in either case the meaning of that gaze or that absorption has been deliberately withheld, which in part is what Bataille means when he claims “we can say that the subject is, at the same time, given to us and taken away” (*ibid.*). The whole paragraph reads: “*Le Balcon* présente un écartèlement sournois, fondé sur une telle divergence des regards que nous en éprouvons un malaise. Nous n’en pouvons voir en une fois que la fuite dans l’insignifiance et ce n’est qu’après un temps que nous nous éveillons et que l’attention se concentre sur le regard excessif, sur les grands yeux de Berthe Morisot. Si bien que de cette peinture hallucinée, nous pouvons dire que le sujet nous est, dans le même temps, donné et retiré.”

158. Manet 1983, p. 306.

159. The bullfinch and frog are associated with one another by George Mauner, who sees them “as underscoring the theme [of the spirit-matter, soul-body polarity] that Mauner believes governs all of Manet’s art] on an emblematic level, although these ancient signs for the spirit and the flesh are made to appear plausible within the naturalistic context of the setting” (*Manet Peintre-Philosophe: A Study of the Painter’s Themes* [University Park, Pa., and London, 1975], p. 28). Farwell sees the frog as “suggesting an *homage* [sic] to Tintoretto in the Italian gallery at the Louvre, where at the feet of Susannah are found two examples of the creature” (Farwell 1981, p. 197).

160. Stéphane Mallarmé, “Édouard Manet,” *Oeuvres complètes*, pp. 532–33. (Souvenir, il disait, alors, si bien: “L’oeil, une main . . .” que je resonge.)

161. On that painting see Jean Harris, “Manet’s Race Track Paintings,” *Art Bulletin* 48 (Mar. 1966): 78–82; Reff 1982–83, pp. 132–33, cat. no. 42; and Manet 1983, pp. 262–64, cat. no. 99.

162. Cf. Jacques Derrida’s use of the concept of a “remainder,” in French *restance*, in *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (French ed. 1978; Chicago and London, 1987).

163. Two seemingly minor details of the narrow-focus *Races* are emblematic of Manet’s internally disparate practice. The first concerns the near-conjunction of two small but well-defined figures near the top of the grandstand at the left, a top-hatted man following the race through a pair of binoculars and, just below him and to the right, a woman in a bonnet who gazes off to the left, at nothing that we can see. As I read that juxtaposition, the woman’s eccentric gaze almost literally undercuts the man’s strongly purposeful one, thereby encapsulating Manet’s rejection of psychological focus (also of absorption) as a means of organizing the composition as a whole. The second detail, also a near-conjunction, involves the pink flag or banner blowing in the wind from an upright pole further back in space from, but laterally very near, the distance marker and circle. I take the freely painted banner as a token of painterliness, or say of rapidity of execution, and I take its proximity to the distance marker to imply the sort of tension or opposition between stillness and rapidity that I have been analyzing.

164. See Sandblad 1954, pp. 109–58; Aaron Scharf, *Art and Photography* (1968; Harmondsworth, England, 1974), pp. 66–75; Albert Boime, “New Light on Manet’s *Execution of Maximilian*,” *Art Journal* 36 (autumn 1973): 172–208; Brown University 1981; and Wilson-Bureau 1992.

165. Elizabeth Anne McCauley, A. A. E. *Disdéri and the Carte de Visite Portrait Photograph* (New Haven and London, 1985), pp. 173–85.

166. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

167. See Farwell 1981, pp. 125–35, 178–79, 195, 205; Gerald Needham, “Manet, ‘Olympia’ and Pornographic Photography,” in *Woman as Sex Object*, ed. Thomas B. Hess and Linda Nochlin (London, 1972), pp. 80–89; and McCauley, *Disdéri*, p. 172. See also McCauley’s recent, more ambitious study, *Industrial Madness: Commercial Photography in Paris, 1848–1871* (New Haven and London, 1994), chap. 4, “Brauquehais and the Photographic Nude.” Chapter 7, “Art Reproductions for the Masses,” also contains material relevant to this book.

168. Farwell 1981, pp. 161–62, 205.

169. Clay, “Ointments, Makeup, Pollen,” p. 6. Actually the sentence ends with a parenthesis: “(likewise Warhol and Lichtenstein paint not objects but what is perceived of them in the ebb and flow of the mass media).” Clay continues: “Thrust to the front of the stage, restored to the status of an erotic instrument, Victorine is obscene; but this much-denounced obscenity lies neither in the supposed ‘professional’ coldness of the model, nor in the otherwise conventional treatment of the nude; it is due to the integration of a figurative practice foreign to painting. The photograph contaminates the painted image—accelerating here again what Walter Benjamin called the decline of the aura” (pp. 6–7). The passage is revealing in that it shows Clay’s inveterate tendency to compare Manet’s art with later developments and theories (Pop Art, Benjamin on aura), and also because the basic claim is typically overdone: the “obscenity” of *Olympia* cannot be said to lie simply in the “contamination” of painting by photography; there were countless contemporary paintings that openly displayed that “contamination” (Meissonier’s, for example) without seeming “obscene” or indeed provoking audiences in any way.

Some further remarks about Clay’s essay are in order here. For Clay, too, the notion of internal disparity—his term is “discrepancy”—is important. But Clay cautions that we

should not think of Manet's oeuvre as one founded on "willful discrepancy" (p. 8), by which he seems to mean a deliberate pursuit of originality. He proceeds:

Actually it is an indescribable oeuvre, one that constantly breaks the rules that it has just set for itself. One can say nothing about it—about its fabrication, its palette, its conceptions of perspective, its 'backgrounds'—that is not immediately contradicted by this or that group of paintings. . . . There is repeated cleavage and conflict among the components of the painting. It is no longer a matter of painting masterpieces, or entities, but of introducing elements of torsion and contradiction. Of inventing painting while destroying it. A borderline art, always reactive, with no other aim than to place all tradition, even its own, in an untenable position. Here, in defiance of the law, a perverse component of painting is manifested that will be one of its moving forces until Robert Ryman. How to produce discordances, pictorial aporias? How to constrain the forces contending before our eyes in the painting? Manet, by this reckoning, would not be a painter, but discrepancy at work in painting. And this would have been his—albeit unformulated—program. (pp. 8–9)

"[W]ith no other aim than to place all tradition, even its own, in an untenable position"—this is the heart of Clay's vision of Manet (note once more the reference to a recent figure, in this case Ryman, one of Clay's strongest admirations). And it is very far from my account of the painter as striving at once to totalize "tradition" and to place the relations between painting and beholder on a new footing—and thereby, it might be added, to produce masterpieces (an ambition Manet never relinquished; it would be truer to say that his Salon entries, culminating in the *Bar*, were nearly all attempts to produce just that). Put slightly differently, Clay and I share a dissatisfaction with the standard formalist-modernist reading of Manet's art as the first term in a Greenbergian "positivist reduction" (p. 9, n. 15). But my response to that dissatisfaction has been to try to contextualize Manet's undertaking by reinserting him in his artistic generation, which has also meant by reconstructing crucial aspects of the discourse of painting in Paris during the 1860s and after. In contrast, Clay proceeds by a series of "wild" observations (as in "'wild' analysis"), many of which, for all their brilliance, are anachronistic and misleading. See however his highly interesting discussion of the role of *speed* in Manet's art, which (again typically) cites Barthes on Réquichot and concludes with a comparison between Manet and Benjamin (pp. 31–34).

170. "There can be no doubt that Manet, unlike Courbet and Delacroix when they worked from photographs, welcomed and accepted the clarity, the hard edges, and the sharp distinctions between light and dark that photographic images sometimes provided, and that this acceptance was put to artistic use in the reduced modeling and harsh lighting that contributed so much to the vigor of his early style" (Farwell 1981, p. 127). In somewhat greater detail, Clement Greenberg noted that Manet was able to give his browns and grays the feeling of local color by virtue of "the new, syncopated kind of shading-modeling that he adopted. This kind of shading was not entirely new; there were precedents, among them the very recent one of photography. In frontally lit photographs especially, the shading becomes compact and patch-like because it skips so many of the intermediate gradations of light-and-dark value that the sculpturally oriented painting of Renaissance tradition contrived to see. By being juxtaposed more abruptly, without gradual transitions and blurrings, the different shading tones of grey and brown are allowed to come through as particularized colors in their own right. This has the effect, in turn, of letting the local colors that the greys or browns shade come through more purely—which means more flatly. For the sake of luminousness Manet was willing to accept this flatness. . . ." ("Manet in Philadelphia" [originally published in *Artforum* in 1967], in *Collected Essays and Criticism*, 4:242).

171. In an issue of Astruc's newsletter on the Salon of 1863 he described the experience of posing for Disdéri. The photographer, he wrote, "invites us to martyrdom, grimacing in the effort to suppress movements of the head and blinks of the eye" (nous invitait au martyre, grimaçant pour reprimer nos écarts de tête et nos clignements du paupière). And he had Disdéri say: "What a head! No grimaces! You have a deplorable expression on your face; no one is made like that! Put that arm *naturally* there, bend it a little. —Bad, bad! How do you expect me to proceed with a nose that comes from the other side of the mouth! The head isn't together—I would have done a good job, but you're not serious. . . . Stop smiling: that gives you a common air. —Attention, turn your eyes here! It's me you should be looking at—listen, it's only at me! Fix me in the eyes—a little intelligence—in the eyes! Aie! . . . DON'T MOVE NOW!!" ("Spectres solaires, II. Disdéri," *Le Salon*, no. 4 [May 5, 1863]). ("Quelle tête! pas de grimaces! vous avez une déplorable expression de visage; on n'est pas fait comme ça! mettez ce bras *nature*-là, un peu penché. —Mauvais, mauvais! Comment voulez-vous que je marche avec un nez qui va de l'autre côté de la bouche! La tête n'est pas d'ensemble—j'aurais beau faire, vous n'êtes pas sérieux. . . . Pas de sourire: ça vous donne l'air commun. —Attention, par ici les yeux! c'est moi qu'il faut regarder—entendez-vous, moi seul! Fixez-moi dans les yeux—un peu d'intelligence—dans les yeux! aie! . . . NE BOUGEONS PLUS!!")

172. See A. -A. -E. Disdéri, *L'Art de la photographie* (Paris, 1862) and the discussion of that text in Fried 1990, pp. 45–46. The closeness of Disdéri's concerns to those of the generation of 1863 is suggested by his statement: "What must be found is the characteristic pose, that which expresses not this or that moment, but all the moments, the individual in his or her entirety" (p. 281). (Ce qu'il faut trouver, c'est la pose caractéristique, celle qui exprime non pas tel ou tel moment, mais tous les moments, l'individu tout entier.) For more on the relation of Disdéri's views to painting in the 1860s and 1870s, see Dianne Williams Pitman, "The Art of Frédéric Bazille, 1841–1870" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1989), chap. 2; my thanks to her for drawing my attention to Disdéri's text.

173. Sandblad 1954, pp. 72–77. By now the secondary literature on the influence of Japanese art on French painting and printmaking of the second half of the nineteenth century is considerable. Although it is almost twenty years old, the exhibition catalog, *Japonisme: Japanese Influence on French Art 1854–1910* (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, July 9–Aug. 31, 1975; New Brunswick: The Rutgers University Art Gallery, Oct. 4–Nov. 16, 1975; Baltimore: The Walters Art Gallery, Dec. 10, 1975–Jan. 26, 1976), with essays by Gabriel P. Weisberg, Phillip Dennis Cate, Gerald Needham, and Martin Eidelberg and William R. Johnston, remains a useful resource.

174. Sandblad 1954, esp. p. 82.

175. See Reff, "Manet's Portrait of Zola," p. 39. The woodblock is *The Wrestler Onaruto Nadaemon of Awa Province* by Utagawa Kuniaki II; the identification was first made by Ellen Phoebe Wiese, "Source Problems in Manet's Early Painting" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1959), p. 228.

176. See Stephen Melville and Bill Readings, "Feminism and the Exquisite Corpse of Realism," *Strategies*, no. 4/5 (1991): 254–56. Melville writes: "The term *ukiyo* is usually translated as 'floating world.' The term is Buddhist, and means to name what is illusory or fleeting about life; its value but not its meaning shifts in Tokugawa Edo, so that what the rising class will cherish and represent for itself is at once the transience of this world and their commitment to or engagement with it. This is why the world of this bourgeoisie is so very different from its European counterpart: daily life is being named not as what stands over and against theater but precisely as theater. Kabuki memorializes the inherent theatricality of daily movement and the most dramatic of the theatrical *ukiyo-e* recapture and exaggerate that memorialization."

Melville's discussion of Japanese woodblocks (and their utilization in a series of color prints by Mary Cassatt) is explicitly engaged with the argument of *Absorption and Theatricality* and *Courbet's Realism*. This becomes clear as he continues: "What may well be striking here is the continuing pertinence of 'theater' and 'theatrical' as critical terms across the two traditions. *Ukiyo-e* may devote themselves to everything Diderot condemns in painting, but in their devotion to those things they can seem exemplary of the path Western painting refuses—until it comes to the end of that refusing. And when it does, in Courbet's wake, in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paris, come to the end of refusing, it will find in these woodblocks deep possibilities and recognitions that cannot be described as simply formal" (p. 256).

177. The sense that Japanese art actively sought the viewer's gaze seems to have been part of the excited response to it in the 1860s and 1870s. So for example Théodore de Banville recalls the first albums of prints to arrive in Paris in the following terms: "How witty, entertaining, and poetic they are, those albums of Japanese drawings in which warriors, gods, amazons, peach blossoms as big as pagodas, canary yellow tigers, all engage and solicit the gaze to the same degree and in which everything has the same intensity of life emanating from the infinite and inexhaustible fantasy of the artist!" ("Salon de 1870," *Le National*, May 7, 1870). (Qu'ils sont spirituels, réjouissants et poétiques, ces albums de dessins japonais, où guerriers, dieux, amazones, fleurs de pêcher grosses comme des pagodes, tigres jaune-serin, toute occupe et sollicite au même degré le regard et où tout a la même intensité de vie, émané de l'infinie et inépuisable fantaisie de l'artiste!) Banville goes on to claim that Japan triumphed completely over painting, all the French artists having become Japanese according to their individual temperament (the first name he mentions is Manet). Apropos the phrase *intensité de vie*, it's interesting that Astruc the same year attributed the quality of *intensité de l'existence* both to Manet's personages and to the two women in Fantin's *La Lecture* ("Salon de 1870," *L'Écho des beaux-arts*, May 29 and June 5, 1870).

178. Cf. Melville: "The [Japanese] woodcut is not about the depth of the body but about its surface, about what is stamped into visibility. It is not about the possession of the body (or the impossibility of such possession)—the implied contrast here is with Courbet's art in my reading of it—"but about the body's prior possession by design, pattern, and visibility—its 'imageability.' The kimono is the print within the print, the paradigm of visibility; and in the erotic *shunga* genitals do not emerge from its interior but gain their visibility on the same floating surface. . . . Perspective, whatever its realist significance in the West, appears to figure for *ukiyo-e* not in the name of depth of vision, but of pattern and pure visibility; we do not move into such perspective, rather it opens at us" ("Feminism," pp. 261–62). It scarcely needs saying that Manet's "instantaneization" of the photograph via the Japanese woodblock amounts to an altogether different solution to the problem of the inherent theatricality of the still photograph from Disdéri's pursuit of *la pose caractéristique*, which as we have seen he equated with a distinctly non-momentary form of expression. Within the next few decades, of course, photography itself would conquer instantaneity; see Thierry de Duve's contrasting of the (still) "funerary portrait" photograph and the (instantaneous) "press photograph" in "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox," *October*, no. 5 (summer 1978): 113–25.

179. See Clark 1985, p. 137.

180. Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (enlarged edition; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1979), p. 21, glossing the long footnote on Manet in my *Three American Painters* (see introduction, n. 62).

181. See Melville and Readings, "Feminism," pp. 262–69; and Nancy Mowll

Mathews and Barbara Stern Shapiro, *Mary Cassatt: The Color Prints*, exhib. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, June 18–Aug. 27, 1989; Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Sept. 9–Nov. 5, 1989; Williamstown: Williams College Museum of Art, Nov. 25, 1989–Jan. 21, 1990).

182. The confluence of photography and Japanese prints as factors bearing on the art of painters such as Millet and Théodore Rousseau is stressed by Deborah Johnson in her essay, "Confluence and Influence: Photography and the Japanese Print in 1850," in Kermit S. Champa et al., *The Rise of Landscape Painting in France*, exhib. cat. (Manchester, N.H.: The Currier Gallery of Art, Jan. 29–Apr. 28, 1991; New York: IBM Gallery of Science and Art, July 30–Sept. 28, 1991; Atlanta: High Museum of Art, Jan. 28–Mar. 29, 1992), pp. 78–97. Johnson suggests that "it may have been Edmond de Goncourt in his book on Utamaro of 1891 who first noted that photography and the Japanese print offered certain mutually supportive pictorial systems" (p. 88).

183. Castagnary, "Salon de 1863," *Le Courrier de dimanche*, June 14, 1863. (Ai-je l'oeil malade, ai-je l'esprit faible? le système de coloration noir et blanc blesse mes yeux; ce dessin suspect, ce modelé insuffisant, troublent mon esprit.)

184. Théophile Gautier fils, "Salon de 1863," *Le Monde illustré* 13 (Aug. 8, 1863). (*Le Jeune Homme en costume de majo*, tout vêtu de noir avec sa cape bigarrée sur le bras, son teint olivâtre, sa face martelée et accidentée, est assurément traité par une main vigoureuse guidant un pinceau enragé de contrastes, mais qui oublie trop qu'il y a dans la nature autre chose que du noir et du blanc.)

185. Adrien Paul, "Salon de 1864," *Le Siècle*, May 29, 1864. (De la peinture solide, si vous voulez, mais des clairs et des obscurs qui se heurtent brutalement. . . . Les toiles espagnoles de M. Manet n'attirent pas l'attention, elles la prennent de force; on se sent arrêté comme au coin d'un bois, et l'on s'en revient dévalisé.)

186. Geronte [Louis Leroy?], "Le Salon en 1865," *La Gazette de France*, June 30, 1865. (Son coloris au verjus, aigre et acide, pénètre dans l'oeil comme la scie d'un chirurgien dans les chairs.) In 1869 Jean-Paul [Charles Alphonse Brot] wrote in only somewhat less violent terms: "[Manet's] color, at once livid and loud, produces on the eye the effect of the grating of a saw on the ear" ("Le Salon," *La Gazette de France*, May 18, 1869). (La coloration, à la fois blafarde et criarde, produit sur l'oeil l'effet du grincement de la scie par l'oreille.)

187. Félix Deriège, "Salon de 1865," *Le Siècle*, June 2, 1865. (Le blanc, le noir, le rouge, le vert font un vacarme affreux sur cette toile; la femme, la négresse, le bouquet, le chat, tout ce tohu-bohu de couleurs disparates, de formes impossibles, vous saisit le regard et vous stupéfie.)

188. Jean Ravenel [Alfred Sensier], "Salon de 1865." (Le bouc émissaire du Salon, la victime de la loi du Linch parisien. Chaque passant prend sa pierre et la lui jette à la face.) Ravenel's remarks on *Olympia* are quoted in full and analyzed in detail by Clark, who rightly considers them to be the most interesting by any critic of the Salon of 1865 (Clark 1985, pp. 139–44; I would qualify this only by insisting on the perhaps equal interest of the commentary by Gonzague Privat). But I find Clark's assessment of Sensier's final estimation of Manet and *Olympia* a little harsh. "This is an extraordinary piece of writing," Clark says of Sensier's observations. "It is the only salon entry in 1865 to say anything much—or anything reasonable—about form and content in *Olympia*, and the way one might possibly inflect the other. It seems to accept or produce a measure of complexity in its object, and the points of reference it proposes for Manet's picture are not only well chosen but really explored in the text. This does not mean that Ravenel approves of *Olympia*, or thinks its allusions coherent. Rather the contrary, in fact: the more points of refer-

ence he proposes, the more certain he seems that they are ill-assorted, and the better prepared is his final, crushing verdict on the whole thing” (p. 140). (Clark’s reference is to the sentences: “Perhaps this *olla podrida de toutes les Castilles* is not flattering for Manet, but all the same it is something. One does not make an *Olympia* simply by wanting to.” (Ce n’est peut-être pas flatteur pour M. Manet que cette *olla podrida de toutes les Castilles*, mais enfin c’est quelque chose. Ne fait pas une *Olympia* qui veut.) (The few sentences that follow, quoted in n. 120 above, apply to the *Christ Mocked*.) For me this verdict seems far from crushing, indeed it has a positive ring, especially in view of the scapegoating of *Olympia* at the time. Incidentally, Sensier’s tolerance for *Olympia* is all the more impressive given his lifelong commitment to absorptive painting such as Millet’s. On Sensier’s criticism generally see Christopher Parsons and Neil McWilliam, “‘Le Paysan de Paris’: Alfred Sensier and the Myth of Rural France,” *Oxford Art Journal* 6, no. 2 (1983): 38–58.

189. Zola, “Édouard Manet,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 142. “J’imagine que je suis en pleine rue et que je rencontre un attroupement de gamins qui accompagnent Édouard Manet à coups de pierres. Les critiques d’art—pardon, les sergents de ville—font mal leur office; ils accroissent le tumulte au lieu de le calmer, et même, Dieu me pardonne! il me semble que les sergents de ville ont d’énormes pavés dans leurs mains.”

190. Ravenel [Sensier], “Salon de 1865.” (Insurrection armée dans le camp des bourgeois: c’est un verre d’eau glacée que chaque visiteur reçoit au visage lorsqu’il voit épanouir la BELLE courtisane.) For his part, Zola in 1867 wrote that at first glance the viewer distinguished “only two tints [in *Olympia*], two violent tints, each contending with the other,” though he also stressed the need for the viewer to *look past* that effect and appreciate (for example) the exquisite finesse with which the painter had differentiated the pale tones of the linen on which *Olympia* reclined (“Édouard Manet,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 160). (Au premier regard, on ne distingue ainsi que deux teintes dans le tableau, deux teintes violentes, s’enlevant l’une sur l’autre. . . . Rien n’est d’une finesse plus exquise que les tons pâles des linges blancs différents sur lesquels *Olympia* est couché.)

191. Paul Mantz attributed those qualities to Manet’s characteristic method of suppressing half-tones while exaggerating the contrasts between light and dark, remarking of the Manet of those years (oddly, in the present tense): “He dreams of an exasperated and combative reality” (“Les Oeuvres de Manet,” *Le Temps*, Jan. 16, 1884). (Il rêve d’une réalité exaspérée et batailleuse.) He also remarked: “Manet wasn’t slow to perceive that he had struck too hard.” (Manet ne tarda pas à s’apercevoir qu’il avait frappé trop fort.)

192. Darragon stresses Manet’s predilection for exhibiting contrasting works in individual Salons (Darragon 1989, pp. 429–33). “Le caractère entier dont Manet se réclame [when he told Antonin Proust that he hoped his oeuvre would not be dispersed] s’est présenté non pas comme une somme, comme une accumulation de valeurs, mais davantage comme une suite de confrontations et de divisions” (p. 429). And: “En dehors de l’opposition des images, de leur répulsion réciproque, on ne peut saisir que l’insistance d’un art à établir toute sa puissance” (p. 430).

193. Paul Mantz, “Exposition au boulevard des Italiens,” *GBA*, 1st ser., 14 (Apr. 1, 1863): 383, emphasis added. (M. Manet est entré avec sa vaillance instinctive dans le domaine de l’impossible. Nous refusons absolument de l’y suivre. Toute forme se perd dans ses grands portraits de femmes, et notamment dans celui de la *Chanteuse*, où, par une singularité qui nous trouble profondément, les sourcils renoncent à leur position horizontale pour venir se placer verticalement le long du nez, comme deux virgules d’ombre; il n’y a plus là que la lutte criarde de tons plâtres avec des tons noir. L’effet est blafard, dur, sinistre. D’autres fois, quand M. Manet est de joyeuse humeur, il peint la *Musique aux*

Tuileries, le *Ballet espagnol* ou *Lola de Valence*, c’est-à-dire des tableaux qui révèlent en lui une sève abondante, mais qui, dans leur bariolage rouge, bleu, jaune et noir, sont la caricature de la couleur et non la couleur elle-même.)

Five years later Mantz hadn’t changed his views: “Since then [the *Boy with a Sword* and *Guitarrero*], Manet went far away from the healthy practices [that gave rise to those works]; as a colorist, he has less courage; in his execution, he is less original. He has acquired a singular taste for black tones, and his ideal consists in opposing them to chalky whites, so as to present on the canvas a series of more or less contrasting patches” (“Salon de 1868,” *L’Illustration*, June 6, 1868). (Depuis lors, M. Manet s’est fort éloigné de ces saines pratiques; coloriste, il a moins de courage; exécutant, il est moins original. Il a pris pour les tons noirs un goût singulier, et son idéal consiste à les opposer à des blancheurs crayeuses, de façon à présenter sur la toile une série de taches plus ou moins contrastées.) Significantly, Mantz in 1868 and 1869 also described Legros’s paintings of the early 1860s as full of black-white contrasts, but the result in those works was a strikingness of which he approved (*ibid.*, May 16, 1868, and “Salon de 1869,” *GBA*, 2d ser., 1 [June 1, 1869]: 500).

194. Saint-Victor, “Société des Aqua-fortistes. Eaux-fortes modernes, publication d’oeuvres originales et inédites,” *La Presse*, Apr. 27, 1863, emphasis added. (Imaginez Goya passé au Mexique, devenu sauvage au milieu des *pampas*, et barbouillant des toiles avec de la cochenille écrasée, vous aurez M. Manet, le réaliste de la dernière heure. Ses tableaux de l’Exposition du boulevard des Italiens sont des charivaris de palette; jamais on n’a fait plus effroyablement grimacer les lignes et hurler les tons. Ses *Toreros* feraient peur aux vaches espagnoles; ses *Contrebandiers* n’auraient qu’à se montrer pour mettre en fuite les douaniers les plus intrépides; son *Concert aux Tuileries* écorche les yeux comme la musique des foires fait saigner l’oreille. Il y a pourtant un certain talent dans ces pochades indigestes, mais nous doutons que M. Manet s’applique jamais à le dégrossir.)

195. Cf. the last paragraph of Fried 1970: “One last point. In ‘Manet’s Sources’ I characterized Manet’s art, in particular the great paintings of the first half of the sixties, as essentially theatrical. By that I referred above all to the relationship—of confrontation, of mutual *facings*—which Manet seems to have found himself compelled to establish between each painting in its entirety (the painting itself, the painting as a painting) and the beholder. In this sense Manet’s paintings may be said to take account of the beholder; in any event, they refuse to accept the fiction that the beholder is not there, present before the painting, which Diderot a century before had insisted was crucial to the convincing representation of action. (Manet’s exploitation of Watteau, whom Diderot found theatrical, is a further index of that refusal.) Not that Manet’s paintings revert to a prior dramaturgy. For Manet, as for Courbet, ambitious painting no longer entailed the representation of action. [I modify this in *Courbet’s Realism* by claiming that Courbet’s Realist masterpieces find different ways of representing the action of *painting*.] Accordingly the theatricality of his great canvases of the early sixties is as it were *disengaged from* action or expression—though the complete opacity, the frozen (or *freezing*) blankness of both in these pictures ratifies that theatricality and makes it all the more perspicuous. Paul Mantz writing in 1863 found in Manet’s paintings ‘the caricature of color and not color itself’; while in the same year Paul de Saint-Victor complained that Manet ‘made his lines grimace.’ The theatricalization of action and expression ends in that of paint” (p. 46).

This is as good a place as any to make a related point concerning a partial analogy between Manet’s art and David’s. In almost all David’s late “Anacreonic” paintings the presence of the beholder is frankly acknowledged and the composition assumes an assertively theatrical character. This is true, for example, of the earliest of those paintings, the

Sappho, Phaon, and Love (1809), a work that has tended to make its commentators uneasy and indeed has been viewed as marking the breakdown of David's ability to deal effectively with classical subject matter (see Anita Brookner, *Jacques-Louis David* [New York, 1980], p. 163). The exact subject of the *Sappho* has been variously described, but there has been general agreement that Sappho has just been surprised by her lover, Phaon, that she has lost her grip on her lyre, and that Love or Eros has seized it before it could fall. What makes the picture enigmatic, however, is, first of all, Phaon's bodily stance, which far from implying movement (as if he had entered the scene a moment before) suggests on the contrary that he has been standing with his left leg bearing most of his weight, and second, the way in which both Phaon and Sappho appear to gaze directly out from the painting. It is as if the point of Phaon's gesture is to force Sappho to break off her playing and turn her face toward the beholder or indeed the painter (to enable the latter to get a better view of her features), while Phaon's stationary posture can be read as implying that he has been holding a more or less frontal pose for some time. The overall effect comes close to being "photographic," all the more so in that Phaon's features convey the sense of having been based on those of an actual model. (A recurrent criticism of the "Anacreonic" works concerns what has been seen as an intrusively prosaic realism). In a subsequent canvas, the *Cupid and Psyche* (1817), the arresting complexities of the *Sappho* have given way to an even more baldly theatrical mise-en-scène as an adolescent Cupid cheerfully but delicately disentangles himself from the sleeping Psyche, all the while looking directly out of the painting as if at a viewer standing before it. Again, we have the sense of an actual model more or less realistically depicted. And of course the point-blankness of the implied address to the viewer is inflected thematically by the myth according to which Psyche is never allowed to see her lover Cupid. Finally, the last of David's major canvases, *Mars Disarmed by Venus* (1824), restricts eye contact with the beholder to the figures of Cupid and the rightmost of the three Graces, but the picture as a whole is even more emphatically a piece of theater than the *Cupid and Psyche*.

All this suggests that starting around 1809 and gathering force after his move to Brussels in 1816, David began to cast about for a subject matter and a mode of presentation that would allow him to embrace the theatricality he somehow knew he could no longer overcome but that would also avoid encroaching upon the realm of heroic action, which, precisely for that reason, was now definitively closed to him. Understood in that light, the "Anacreonic" pictures are no simple failure: they are an attempt to make the best of a situation that threatened to disable David as an ambitious artist and that in any case drove him once and for all from the high ground of traditional history painting. Roughly half a century later, Manet (in my account) would also find it necessary to acknowledge the inescapableness of beholding in works that, for all their startling "modernity," perhaps have more in common with David's late canvases than has been recognized. (This argument was first advanced in Fried, "David et l'antithéâtralité," pp. 218–20).

196. See George Heard Hamilton, *Manet and His Critics* (New Haven, 1954), p. 66; Anne Coffin Hanson, *Manet and the Modern Tradition* (New Haven and London, 1977), pp. 109–10; and Manet 1983, pp. 228–29. Hamilton writes: "The Italianate composition, the somber Spanish coloring, the theatrical properties, and the contemporary personages are parts which fail to coalesce into a whole convincing either as design or expression. A popular model, Janvier, posed for the central figure; the three attendant soldiers were commonplace contemporary types, dressed in a curious mixture of modern clothing and theatrical costume. The soldier to the right of Christ wears trousers, an antique sword, and a fur jacket. . . . The attempt to create a 'modern' version of a traditional subject resembles in intention the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, although this time the character of

the shock effect differed" (p. 66). Or as Hanson says: "Manet's Christ is particular and immediate, recognized as a contemporary Parisian. His flesh is reddened where the sun has reached his neck above the collar, his hands even redder where the ropes have cut off the circulation. In contrast his body, set off against the red-brown cloak, is pale, naked and vulnerable" (p. 110). She attempts to redeem the internal inconsistencies of the *Christ Mocked* by suggesting that it was intended to be "a universal image for all time, any time, all people and all places which has to do with human feelings on a level shared by saints and heroes with the most ordinary of men" (p. 110). Cachin rightly finds this improbable (Manet 1983, p. 229).

197. Leroy wrote: "The feet of Christ, red and swollen, clearly indicate that the model wore boots that were too tight before his session of posing" (L. Leroy, "Salon de 1865," *Le Charivari*, May 11, 1865). ([L]es pieds du Christ, rouges et gonflés, indiquent clairement que le modèle portait des bottes trop justes avant de poser sa séance.)

198. See Denis Diderot, "Mes Pensées bizarres sur le dessin" (the first of his "Essais sur la peinture"), *Oeuvres esthétiques*, ed. Paul Vernière (Paris, 1959), pp. 669–73. On the role of the model in the French Academy see James Henry Rubin, *Eighteenth-Century French Life-Drawing: Selections from the Collection of Mathias Polakovits* (Princeton, 1977), and *idem*, "Concepts and Consequences in Eighteenth-Century French Life-Drawing" in Diana Dethloff, ed., *Drawing: Masters and Methods—Raphael to Redon*, Papers Presented to the Ian Woodner Master Drawings Symposium at the Royal Academy of Art (New York, 1992), pp. 7–18.

199. Manet himself was said by Proust to have criticized the professional models in Couture's studio for striking exaggerated poses that had nothing to do with ordinary actions (Proust 1897, p. 12). The proper use of the model is a major theme in Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran's *Éducation de la mémoire pittoresque* (2d ed. 1862; rpt. in *L'Éducation de la mémoire pittoresque et la formation de l'artiste* [Paris, 1913]). See also Thomas Couture, *Méthodes et entretiens d'atelier* (Paris, 1867), where he deplores the usual practice of clothing ordinary models in mock-ancient drapery and instead urges: "If you take models then take them, or, more precisely, surprise them; don't let them know that you are looking at them" (pp. 51–52). (Si vous prenez les modèles, prenez-les, ou, pour mieux dire, surprenez-les; qu'ils ignorent que vous les regardez.) (My thanks to Veerle Thielemans for these references, as well as for provoking me to further reflection on Manet's use of the model.) Finally, Chesneau in 1875 maintained that because Millet never worked from nature (i.e. from actual persons present before him and aware of being beheld), his work was devoid of theatricality, a claim also made on behalf of Degas by the Neo-Impressionist critic Félix Fénéon in 1886 (see Fried 1980, pp. 221–22, n. 144, and Fried 1990, pp. 302–3, nn. 47–48). At the latter moment, too, posing was explicitly thematized by Georges Seurat in *Les Poseuses* (begun 1886, exhibited 1888); on that painting see Ward, *Pissarro*.

200. One additional response to the *Homage* shows how a general awareness of photography could influence the reception of so facing a work. "The *Homage to Delacroix* by Fantin-Latour is, I ask pardon of the author's realism, a quintessentially symbolic work," C. de Sault wrote in 1864. "Before a portrait of Delacroix, but turning their back on him, are grouped some writers and artists of a good and noble confraternity bound together more closely, I like to think, than in this simultaneous and perfectly silent pose. No word, no action. They all seem under the blow of the fatidic 'Don't move' of the photographer; and yet the sun would have given us finesses of which we are here deprived" ([Mme de Charnace], "Salon de 1864," *Le Temps*, July 6, 1864). (*L'Homage à Delacroix*, par M. Fantin-Latour est, j'en demande pardon au réalisme de l'auteur, du symbolisme quintes-

individu, une fleur, une draperie, un meuble, il semble vouloir s'arrêter au relatif de l'esquisse. Je sais pourtant qu'il fait poser ses modèles plusieurs séances, plusieurs semaines, plusieurs mois même. Mais le résultat paraît quelquefois trop hâtif.

209. In a letter to her mother of March 1869, Berthe Morisot wrote: "Tomorrow we are going to see Manet's paintings. Antonin [Guillemet] says that he had him pose fifteen times for a poor result and that [the figure of] Mlle Claus is atrocious; but that both of them, exhausted from posing standing up, tell Manet, 'It's perfect, there's nothing more to do'" (Denis Rouart, ed., *Correspondance de Berthe Morisot* [Paris, 1950], p. 25). (Demain, nous allons voir les toiles de Manet. Antonin dit qu'il l'a bien fait poser quinze fois pour le manquer et que Mlle Claus est atroce; mais que tous deux exténués de poser debout disent: "C'est parfait, il n'y a rien à reprendre.")

210. Mallarmé, "Édouard Manet," *Oeuvres complètes*, p. 532. (Cet oeil . . . gardait naguères l'immédiate fraîcheur de la rencontre, aux griffes d'un rire du regard, à narguer, dans la pose, ensuite, les fatigues de vingtième séance.) See the epigraphs to this book for the whole of Mallarmé's short text.

211. Burty, "Salon de 1870." (Je ne reprendrai qu'un certain vide dans l'ensemble. Ces amis-là ont l'air un peu embarrassé. Chacun est tout à ses propres pensées, et une conversation générale ne vient point donner une raison à cette réunion presque fortuite. On sent trop que M. Fantin les a appelés, l'un après l'autre, à venir prendre place dans le tableau.)

212. For Fantin, the ideal was short-lived. By 1874 we find him writing to Scholderer to tell him of the success of Manet's *Chemin de fer* at the dealer Deschamps but also to complain that Manet now had imitators who were doing him no good. "Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, and others paint in so unfinished and exaggerated a manner that it's bad for those ideas. They make caricatures of him without his finesse and his naturalness . . ." (letter of Jan. 25, 1874, Brame and Lorraine archives). (N'est-ce pas que le tableau de Manet de chemin de fer chez Deschamps est charmant; ce sera, je crois, son tableau du Salon cette année. Il a ici un grand succès, il devient à la mode. Mais il a des imitateurs qui vont lui faire du tort. Monet, Pizarro [sic], Sizslai [sic] et d'autres font de la peinture si peu faite, si exagérée que c'est mauvais pour ces idées là. Ils font des charges de lui sans sa finesse et son naturel.) See also the discussion of Fantin's growing disaffection not just with Impressionism but with Manet's own Impressionist tendencies in Robin Spencer, "Whistler, Manet, and the Tradition of the Avant-Garde," *Studies in the History of Art* 19 (1987): 58–59.

213. Thus Roland Barthes: "I call 'photographic referent' not the *optionally* real thing to which an image or a sign refers but the *necessarily* real thing which has been placed before the lens, without which there would be no photograph. . . . [I]n Photography I can never deny that *the thing has been there*. . . . The name of Photography's *noeme* will therefore be: 'That-has-been,' or again: the Intractable" (*Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard [New York, 1981], pp. 76–77). And: "[S]omeone has seen the referent (even if it is a matter of objects) *in flesh and blood*, or again *in person*" (p. 79). Stanley Cavell inflects this somewhat differently. "Photography maintains the presentness of the world by accepting our absence from it," he writes. "The reality in a photograph is present to me while I am not present to it; and a world I know, and see, but to which I am nevertheless not present (through no fault of my subjectivity), is a world past" (*World Viewed*, p. 23). See also De Duve, "Time Exposure and Snapshot."

214. Or, following Cavell, they insist on the beholder's presence to the painting but not to the model, both of which are present to him. Manet's figures, we might say, seem to address the the beholder but not to acknowledge him.

215. The secondary literature on the *Bar* is large and growing. The most important recent contribution is Clark 1985, chap. 4, "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère"; see also the earlier version of that chapter cited in n. 63 above. See also Novelene Ross, *Manet's "Bar at the Folies-Bergère" and the Myths of Popular Illustration* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1982). Clark's (and Herbert's) accounts of the *Bar* are discussed along with others by David Carrier, "Art History in the Mirror Stage: Interpreting *Un Bar aux Folies-Bergère*," *History and Theory* 29 (1990): 297–319. Recently Kermit Swiler Champa has devoted a highly original chapter to the *Bar* in his "*Masterpiece*" *Studies*, pp. 19–49. A collection of essays on the *Bar* is forthcoming (see n. 63); among those essays Steven Z. Levine's "Manet's Man Meets the Gleam of Her Gaze: A Psychoanalytic Novel," brings a Lacanian perspective to bear on the question of the nature and meaning of the barmaid's gaze. In that essay Levine suggests that "the frame-amputated trapezist's legs" at the upper left of the *Bar* "might already intimate the amputation of Manet's syphilitic and gangrenous leg in 1883," which is to say that Manet might be marginally (and partially) present in the painting after all. The same possibility is implied, as Levine remarks, by the barmaid's bracelet, which if it is the same as the one worn by Olympia actually contained a lock of Manet's baby hair (see Alain Clairret, "Le Bracelet de l'Olympia: Genèse et destinée d'un chef-d'oeuvre," *Oeil*, no. 333 [Apr. 1983]: 36–41). Clairret writes: "Nous avons retrouvé ce dernier bijou [un curieux bracelet à médaillon] qui fut transmis à son actuelle propriétaire, accompagné d'une notice de la main de Julie Manet: 'Bracelet d'Olympia. Le médaillon contient des cheveux d'Édouard Manet à 15 mois'" (pp. 37–38). See also Fried 1990, p. 338, n. 28.

216. On the *Execution* see esp. Sandblad 1954, pp. 109–61; Albert Boime, "New Light on Manet's *Execution of Maximilian*," *Art Quarterly* 36 (autumn 1973): 172–208; Brown University 1981; Wilson-Bareau 1986; Wilson-Bareau 1992; Manfred Fath and Stefan Germer, *Édouard Manet: Augenblicke der Geschichte*, exhib. cat. (Mannheim: Städtischen Kunsthalle, Oct. 18–Jan. 17, 1993); Oskar Bätschmann, *Édouard Manet: Der Tod des Maximilian* (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig, 1993); and *idem*, "L'Artiste exposé" (adapted from the preceding), *Traverses*, n.s., no. 3 (autumn 1992): 48–57.

217. The most detailed discussion is by Wilson-Bareau, "The Hidden Face of Manet," in Wilson-Bareau 1986, pp. 55–61.

218. Wilson-Bareau remarks that a photograph of the *Execution* made when the painting was exhibited in America in late 1879 shows the picture in its present state ("Manet and the Execution of Maximilian" in Wilson-Bareau 1992, p. 60).

219. See Darragon 1989, pp. 145–46. "La comparaison avec le tableau de Chardin sur le même thème, qui passa en vente en avril 1867, ne peut que renforcer l'idée d'une peinture qui revendique une tradition et une légitimité," he writes (p. 146), without saying anything more about what that might mean. His remarks conclude: "Le tableau joue un rôle esthétique et, en septembre 1867, son sujet représente également une pause étonnante quand on la rapporte à la fumée de l'exécution du 19 juin" (*ibid.*). But the pause appears less astonishing when the *Boy Blowing Bubbles* is seen as an expression of Manet's rethinking of his art in the wake of his retrospective exhibition.

220. Wilson-Bareau, "Manet and the Execution of Maximilian," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, p. 47.

221. Kathryn L. Brush, "Manet's *Execution* and the Tradition of the *Histoire*," in Brown University 1981, p. 45.

222. Actually she stresses the connection between the *Old Musician* and the Boston *Execution* ("Structure and Meaning in the *Execution* Series," in Brown University 1981,

p. 14), but goes on to associate the sombreroed figure of the emperor in the Mannheim version with the *Gilles* figure in the earlier picture (p. 21). (I make this point in chap. 1, n. 44). The *Gilles*-Maximilian connection is emphasized by Bättschmann, who goes on to cite Michelet's interpretation (in the volume on the Regency in his history of France [1863]) of Watteau's canvas as virtually an image of a doomed gladiator (*Der Tod des Maximilian*, pp. 69–70; "L'Artiste exposé," pp. 54–55). For Bättschmann the larger context is what he sees as a contemporary thematics of tragic confrontation between artists and public, which in the case of Manet involves not only the *Execution* but his religious paintings, especially the *Christ Mocked*, and the pictures of bullfights. I think Bättschmann's claims are too sweeping, but (as will emerge) our readings of the *Execution* have important points in common.

223. See Jones, "Structure and Meaning," in Brown University 1981, p. 14.

224. Bataille, *Manet*, p. 48. (Manet peignit la mort du condamné avec la même indifférence que s'il avait élu pour objet de son travail une fleur, ou un poisson.)

225. *Ibid.*; the last short sentence quotes Verlaine. (*A priori*, la mort, donné méthodiquement, froidement, par des soldats, est défavorable à l'indifférence: c'est un sujet chargé de sens, d'où se dégage un sentiment violent, mais Manet paraît l'avoir peint comme insensible; le spectateur le suit dans cette apathie profonde. Ce tableau rappelle étrangement l'insensibilisation d'une dent: il s'en dégage une impression d'engourdissement envahissant, comme si un habile praticien avait appliqué comme à l'habitude et consciencieusement ce précepte premier: "Prends l'éloquence et tords-lui le cou.")

226. *Ibid.*, pp. 73–76.

227. *Ibid.*, p. 62. (Dans l'un et l'autre cas, le texte est effacé par le tableau. *Et ce que le tableau signifie n'est pas le texte, mais l'effacement.*) An even more characteristic formulation evokes the notion of sacrifice: "The intention of a sliding in which the immediate sense [of the subject] is lost is not the neglect of the subject but something else: it is comparable to what goes on in sacrifice, which alters, which destroys the victim, which kills it, *without neglecting it*" (pp. 94–95). (L'intention d'un glissement où se perd le sens immédiat n'est pas la négligence du sujet, mais autre chose: il en va de même dans le sacrifice, qui altère, qui détruit la victime, qui la tue, *sans la négliger.*)

228. In fact, however, Maximilian had insisted that Miramón have the place of honor in the middle (Wilson-Bareau, "Manet and the Execution of Maximilian," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, p. 31).

229. Wilson-Bareau notes that the "active" position of the NCO's right hand differs from the "passive" position of the hand in the right-most London fragment and in fact reverts to the position the hand originally had in that fragment, as revealed by X rays (*ibid.*, p. 62). This suggests that Manet was specifically concerned with the question of just how strongly absorptive a motif would work best at this focal point in the composition. Note too the curious affinity between the two-handed action of the NCO and that of the seated violinist plucking a string on his instrument in the *Old Musician*.

230. See Fried 1980, pp. 45–51.

231. Cf. Stephen Bann, "The Odd Man Out: Historical Narrative and the Cinematic Image," *The Inventions of History: Essays on the Representation of the Past* (Manchester and New York, 1990), pp. 186–87. See also Bättschmann, *Der Tod des Maximilian*, pp. 96–110.

232. For Zola's remarks see n. 189 above. The Zola passage is quoted by Bättschmann in *Der Tod des Maximilian* (p. 73, in German translation) and in "L'Artiste exposé" (p. 51, in French) in connection with his claim that the *Execution* symbolizes Manet's relation to the public. Bättschmann underscores the already recognized affinity between

the *Execution* and Manet's pictures of bullfights, in particular the painting in the Chicago Art Institute (1865–66) in which, as in the *Execution*, "victimes et agresseurs s'exposent aux spectateurs dans un état de suprême concentration et la plus grande proximité" ("L'Artiste exposé," p. 54). And he goes on to relate the bullfight theme to Manet's decision to put on his own one-man exhibition in 1867: "Selon Manet, l'artiste n'a aucun choix: 'Montrer est la question vitale, le *sine qua non* pour l'artiste,' est-il écrit dans la préface du catalogue de 1867. . . . Peut-être pour la première fois, la monstration et la présentation devenaient une partie intégrante des conditions d'élaboration de l'art et de la conscience de l'artiste. . . . Mais, pour l'artiste, exposer signifie s'exposer aux agressions du public: l'artiste devient le taureau, les critiques sont les matadors et les toreros, et le public applaudit le vainqueur" (*ibid.*).

Other scholars too have found in the *Execution* something like an allegory of Manet's sense of victimage; see Sandblad 1954, p. 156, and, especially, Boime, "New Light on Manet's 'Execution of Maximilian,'" pp. 190–93, both of whom cite Zola's remarks. "Given Manet's state of mind [in 1867]," Boime writes, "we may assume that the figure of Maximilian is in some way an intimate projection of Manet's feelings about himself" (p. 191). Boime closes his article by noting that Manet signed the Mannheim canvas "Manet 19 juin 1867," the date of Maximilian's execution, which suggests a desire to memorialize the event, not merely to represent it (p. 193). Could Manet have been thinking too of David's dedication of the *Marat* to its murdered protagonist?

Another short text might just be relevant here. Among Manet's letters to Duret is a draft for a notice in the press, written by Manet himself and reading: "We have learned that Manet has been refused the authorization to print a lithograph that he has just made, representing the execution of Maximilian; we are astonished at this act of the authorities *striking with interdiction* an absolutely artistic work" (quoted by Sandblad 1954, pp. 154–55, emphasis added). (Nous apprenons qu'on a refusé à M. Manet l'autorisation de faire imprimer une lithographie qu'il vient de faire, représentant l'exécution de Maximilien; nous nous étonnons de cet acte de l'autorité frappant d'interdiction une oeuvre absolument artistique.)

233. Finally, the nearness of the firing squad to the victims may also be read as picture-painting distance, which would associate the act of painting with an act of violence *on the part of the painter* against the painting itself. The *Execution* may be compared in this regard with Caravaggio's last canvas, the *Martyrdom of St. Ursula* (1610), his most profound exploration of the uncontrollably labile consequences of the link between violence and representation. Cf. two other readings of the *Execution* with respect to the question of beholding, both of which make use of my work on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French painting: Elizabeth A. Reid, "Realism and Manet," in Brown University 1981, pp. 69–82; and Stefan Germer, "Le Répertoire des Souvenirs: Zum Reflexion des Historischen bei Manet," in *Manet: Augenblicke der Geschichte*, pp. 40–54.

234. Astruc, "Salon de 1870," *L'Écho des beaux-arts*, May 29, 1870. (Cf. the near-animism of Astruc's theorization of the portrait two years earlier.) (Avec toutes les qualités et les bizarreries de l'éclair, il jette un froid dans la salle frissonnante. Que pourrais-je dire d'un homme pareillement attaqué—battu par toutes les plumes, moins trois ou quatre, expiant son talent depuis une foule d'années, sevré de la moindre joie artistique, sinon de celle de bien faire, d'être un homme. Par une fatalité inconcevable, en dirait que ses dons ne peuvent se communiquer à la foule. Celle-ci observe, regarde, sourit, doute—et donne, vous en conviendrez, quelque embarras à l'artiste. On devient gauche quand on ne sent pas la sympathie autour de soi. On dirait que les tableaux de Manet ont une âme et qu'ils éprouvent en eux-même les effets de cette hostilité.)

The remainder of Astruc's remarks are also of interest, in part because they show how even to one of the few critics who believed in Manet's superiority, the latter's art presented itself as an altogether exceptional case, one that because of its combination of brilliance and unevenness virtually defied criticism and that seemed to be dependent for its success—for its very *look*—on the context in which it was encountered. For example, Astruc imagined artists who (unlike the public) grasped the merits of Manet's work saying of him: "Yes, there is a new feeling, an expression of rare and charming qualities; a spontaneous, curious alive artist—whom it's necessary to take in his entirety, with his faults, his *bizareries*—as with the sincerity of his instinct and the marvelous curiosity of his race. He isn't an ordinary man who can be classed with the usual mode of judgment; he's an exceptional artist—unequal, powerful—capable of lapses—but soaring to heights only attained by the most beautiful intelligences. He needs a milieu, he wants to be appreciated; in that case, one can say he is excellent; he charms, he astonishes by his caprice and by the strength of emotion that he provides. In a bland milieu he appears barbarous—preserving in essence, on the outside, that harshness that is his own and that is only the translation of an expression at once energetic and profound." In terms of the larger argument of this book, we might say that Impressionism was shortly to give rise to a milieu of the sort that Astruc claimed was required for Manet's remarkable qualities to be perceived—but at the cost of making the "harshness that is his own" all but invisible. ("Oui, c'est là un sentiment nouveau, expression de qualités rares et charmantes; un artiste spontané, curieux, vivant—qu'il faut prendre tout entier avec ses défauts, ses bizarreries—comme avec la sincérité de son instinct et la merveilleuse curiosité de sa race. Ce n'est pas un homme ordinaire pouvant être classé avec l'habituel jugement; c'est un artiste d'exception—inégal, puissant,—pouvant faiblir—mais s'élevant à ces hauteurs qu'atteignent seules les plus belles intelligences. Il a besoin d'un milieu, il veut être goûté; dans ce cas, on peut le dire excellent; il charme, il étonne par le caprice et la vigueur d'émotion qu'il donne. Dans un milieu fade, il apparaît barbare—conservant à la nature, à l'extérieur, cette crudité qui lui est propre et qui ne traduit qu'une expression à la fois énergique et profond.") Remarkably, Astruc had written as early as 1863 that Manet's "great intelligence . . . demands to function freely in a new sphere that he will bring to life" (*Le Salon*, no. 16 [May 20, 1863]). For the French see appendix 4.

Astruc's commentary ends with a prediction of further struggle: "I don't believe that he is definitively condemned to that hostile *parti pris* that seeks to make him submit to defeats. Yes, we will see a successful return. Because he must force one.—His soul is virile enough to convert the public to the work he is constructing. The artist must conquer. He has, to support him, a quantity of works that proudly sign his special name." (Je ne le crois point condamné définitivement à cette hostilité de parti pris qui ne cherche qu'à faire des échecs. Oui, nous verrons un heureux retour. Car il doit le forcer.—Son esprit est assez viril pour convertir le public à l'oeuvre qu'il édifie.—L'artiste doit vaincre. Il a pour le seconder une quantité d'ouvrages qui signent fièrement son nom spécial.) The reference to Manet's "special name" concerns its Latin meaning, "he (or it) lasts, endures."

235. Cf. my discussion of surrogates for the painter not only in *Courbet's Realism* but also, apropos Eakins's *The Gross Clinic* (1875), in *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration*, pp. 1–89. The NCO has been associated by Boime with the figure of a veteran examining the lock of his musket in Alexandre Protais's *Morning before the Attack*, first exhibited in the Salon of 1863 and later in the Exposition Universelle of 1867 ("New Light on Manet's *Execution of Maximilian*," pp. 188–89 and fig. 18). In her essay in the Brown University catalogue Jones draws attention to the resemblance between the facial features of the NCO in the London fragment and those of Napoleon III, commenting, rightly, that if the

resemblance was intended "the political statement would have been amazingly strong" ("Structure and Meaning," p. 17; Jones credits Kermit Champa with this suggestion). The observation is repeated and developed by Bättschmann, *Der Tod des Maximilien*, pp. 32–36. (Sandblad previously had remarked that the NCO wears "a little pointed beard of exactly the type made fashionable by Napoleon III himself" [Sandblad 1954, p. 137].)

236. Both reasons seem tenuous to me. See Wilson-Bareau, "Manet and the Execution of Maximilian," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, p. 60. For his part, Sandblad believes that "once the wall had been straightened out and moved forward" (in comparison with its location in the Copenhagen sketch) there simply "was no place" for the officer (Sandblad 1954, p. 146).

237. Jones, "Structure and Meaning," in Brown University 1981, p. 21.

238. Bataille, *Manet*, p. 92. Bataille is comparing Manet's art with that of Delacroix, Courbet, and Corot. (La manière, moins sûre d'elle, de Manet, procède d'un élan plus agressif, plus malade aussi. Manet dérange et ne veut pas satisfaire: il cherche même à décevoir. Il conteste la possibilité que la toile lui donne: il a tient sous sa brosse, mais sous la brosse elle se retire.)

239. See n. 215 above.

240. Chap. 5 in Bataille's *Manet* is called, simply, "Le Secret." On p. 115 he writes: "I wanted to show in Manet one of the most secret painters, the most difficult to penetrate." (J'ai voulu montrer en Manet l'un des peintres les plus secrets, les plus malaisément pénétrables.)

241. Wilson-Bareau describes "the Mexican people on the wall" as expressing "horror and dismay like the victims in the *Third of May*," which seems too strong ("Manet and the Execution of Maximilian," in Wilson-Bareau 1992, p. 62). But she is right to say that they are "the only overtly emotional note in the picture" (*ibid.*).

242. Paul Mantz, "Salon de 1868," *L'Illustration*, May 16, 1868. (Les deux tableaux que nous venons de citer sont, d'ailleurs, fort remarquables; la figure de l'évêque, dans l'*Amende honorable*, a beaucoup de finesse et de distinction. M. Legros devrait faire un pas de plus en avant et accentuer d'un trait plus profond les physionomies de ses modèles.) Note, by the way, the assumption that Legros, a realist, would have based his figures on models.

243. Marc de Montifaud [Marie-Amélie Chatroule de Montifaud], "Salon de 1868," *L'Artiste*, June 1, 1868, p. 399. (Il y a une sobriété de teinte, une sévérité, une concision de touche qui fait croire que M. Legros a voulu réveiller l'idée d'une création monastique. C'est bien le cachet raide et gourmé de la morgue épiscopale en ses époques de haute inquisition. Les costumes sont traités avec un soin scrupuleux; quoique un peu froide, cette conception est vivante et fortement caractérisée; on a un reflet du temps dans toute son impérative regueur.)

244. J. Grangedor, "Salon de 1868," *GBA*, 1st ser., 25 (July 1, 1868): 22. (M. Legros, après Zurbaran et Lesueur, cherche à retrouver les visages, impassibles et durs comme la discipline monacale, des prêtres devenus juges dans un tribunal ecclésiastique. Le soin même avec lequel sont accentués les moindres traits de ces hommes qui représentent une autorité sans contrôle retire à l'ensemble de la scène l'unité, la profondeur et le mystère qui en complèteraient l'expression sérieusement poursuivie par l'auteur.)

245. Mantz, "Salon de 1868," *L'Illustration*, June 6, 1868 (la nature l'intéresse peu; les spectacles de la vie ne l'émeuvent pas. Cette indifférence sera son châtiment. M. Manet nous paraît avoir moins d'enthousiasme que de dilettantisme. S'il avait tant soit peu de passion, il passionnerait quelqu'un, car nous sommes encore une vingtaine en France qui avons le goût des nouveautés et des hardiesses. Mais M. Manet ne fait pas même emploi

des modestes ressources de sa palette. Avec le peu qu'il possède, il pourrait dire quelque chose,—et il ne dit rien.)

246. Chesneau, "Salon de 1868," *Le Constitutionnel*, June 12, 1868. (L'intention de cette belle page est très curieuse à étudier; l'artiste n'a manifesté dans cette oeuvre aucune préférence, aucune partialité, soit pour le condamné, soit pour le tribunal; conception grande, simple et dramatique, précisément par l'absence de toute intention dramatique.)

247. Two other accounts of the *Amende honorable* are worth citing. The first is by Astruc, who saw the two monks against the rear wall as deeply absorbed (profondément absorbés) and praised the drawing of the figures as "sustained, clear, and of an *excessive* research" ("Salon de 1868," *L'Etendard*, May 29, 1868, emphasis added). (Le dessin est soutenu, net, et d'une excessive recherche.) The second is by Léonce Bénédict, writing in 1900, who drew attention to the contrast between the gravity of the subject as well as of various "formal" and expressive features of the *Amende honorable* and what was then apparently the brilliance of at least certain of its colors—still another version, by no means the least interesting, of what I have been calling a double or divided structure ("Alphonse Legros," *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* [1900], p. 336). (Le contraste entre la gravité de ce sujet, le caractère religieux des personnages, la tension des physionomies, la sobriété presque nu du décor, les grands partis pris de tons largement localisés et, d'autre part, l'éclat argentin et brillant des couleurs, la fraîcheur des roses et des blancs, la valeur lumineuse des chairs jouant entre le vert sombre du tapis et la pourpre vibrante du dais, ce mélange de splendeur et d'austérité qui semble l'expression sensible de la majesté sereine et inflexible de l'Église, cette opposition, comme paradoxale, donne à cette toile un accent étrange et inoubliable.)

5. Between Realisms

1. Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind*, p. 53.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

7. The term "quasi-transcendental" occurs more than once in *Memoirs of the Blind*, and in fact has been used with some frequency by Derrida at least since *Glas*. On the status of that notion in his writing see Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London, 1993), pp. 267–84.

8. This is not to say that we have indisputable "external" evidence of his right-handedness, though it is conceivable that such evidence (e.g. a photograph or even a portrait by another painter of Fantin in the act of painting) might turn up. It is to say that commentators on early Fantin self-portraits in which the sitter holds a brush in his left hand have never doubted that they were made with the help of a mirror. "Here, as in all his self-portraits, Fantin typically did not bother to invert the image he saw in the mirror, with the result that the paintbrush appears in the left hand," Michel Hoog writes of Fantin's *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush* (1859; fig. 173) in Grenoble (Fantin-Latour 1982–83, p. 77, cat. no. 3). One might wish to object that the mirror itself is not represented in those paintings (e.g. we are not shown its borders and no effort has been made to suggest its shiny surface), and that the case for mirror reversal remains conjectural. But the evidence could hardly be more powerful, and one detail in particular, the right-over-left

(or "feminine") buttoning of the sitter's jacket as in the second drawing (fig. 167), is decisive. My thanks to James G. Ravin of Toledo, Ohio, for calling that detail to my attention.

9. Zirka Zaremba Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550–1700* (Princeton, 1987), p. 202. Actually the situation is not quite so clear-cut. There exists at least one important full-blown exception, Annibale Carracci's *Self-Portrait* with other figures of 1585 in the Brera (in conversation with Filipczak it emerged that she was aware of this). There is also Luca Cambiaso's *Portrait of the Artist Painting His Father* (ca. 1580) in the Uffizi, in which the artist has portrayed himself wielding a brush with his left hand and apparently straining to see himself in a mirror outside the picture field to the left; what further distinguishes Cambiaso's canvas, however, is that the figure of the painter is shown painting a portrait not of himself but of his father, whom we are invited to imagine taking the place of the mirror. (For a brilliant reading of this little-known work see Daniel Arasse, *Le Détail: Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture* [Paris, 1992], pp. 221–22.) In addition, Sophonisba Anguissola's *Self-Portrait* (ca. 1554–56) in the Uffizi depicts the painter holding *two* brushes in her left hand, which moreover is not shown in the act of painting. But she seems to have put down her palette (and three other brushes) in order to grasp a scroll of paper with her right hand, which suggests that in a general way the image may have been meant to be seen as mirror-reversed. (My thanks to Megan Holmes for bringing this picture to my attention.) See also the self-portraits by Cornelis Saftleven (1629) in the Louvre and by an anonymous artist (perhaps Isaac van Ostade), whereabouts unknown, illustrated in Hans-Joachim Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1984), figs. 139 and 188 (I owe this reference to Filipczak). Finally, I have recently developed an account of various paintings by Caravaggio that views them as disguised or displaced mirror-reversed self-portraits (in "Some Thoughts on Caravaggio," a lecture given first at a colloquium in memory of Louis Marin held at The Johns Hopkins University, Nov. 12–13, 1993, and subsequently as one of two Una Lectures at the University of California, Berkeley, Mar. 1995). It's likely too that other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century paintings will turn out to contain elements of mirror reversal; for example, Salvator Rosa's *Self-Portrait* of around 1650 in the Detroit Institute of Arts depicts the sitter gesturing off-canvas with his left arm in a manner that suggests he may be painting; and there may even be some rare sixteenth-century works, such as Jacopo da Pontormo's *Self-Portrait* drawing in the British Museum, that lend themselves to such a reading.

Within the modern French tradition, Jacques-Louis David's *Self-Portrait* of 1794, made during his imprisonment after the fall of Robespierre, is mirror reversed, but we are not shown the canvas on which the sitter presumably is working; the canvas is shown, however, in Camille Corot's *Portrait of the Artist* (1825?) and Théodore Chassériau's *Portrait of the Artist Holding His Palette* (1838), both in the Louvre. Another seemingly mirror-reversed self-portrait of roughly the same period is Victor Emil Janssen's *Self-Portrait at the Easel* (1828) in Hamburg, in which the artist has depicted himself apparently drawing (not painting) with his left hand on a canvas or sheet of paper almost wholly off-canvas to the right. But these and no doubt other examples to the contrary, Filipczak is plainly correct that mirror reversal became truly current starting in the 1860s.

A few more remarks about David's *Self-Portrait* are in order. It not only reverses his ordinary appearance, it also amounts to a reversal of the *Self-Portrait's* hitherto unrecognized prototype, the *Death of Marat* of the year before: the quill pen in Marat's right hand has become the brush in the painted David's left hand, the letter from Charlotte Corday in Marat's left hand has become the palette in the painted David's right hand, indeed the dominant left-to-right orientation of the earlier work has been turned around in the later

one. David evidently intended the *Self-Portrait* as a barely disguised act of identification with the fallen Marat, perhaps in anticipation of his own likely death by guillotine. (The disguise lay in the “mirroring” more than anything else, which suggests that it may have been the desire at once to testify to his allegiance to Jacobin ideals and to render that testimony unreadable by his captors that led him to reinvent the mirror-reversed self-portrait prematurely, so to speak.) Put slightly differently, the *Self-Portrait* “mirrors” the *Marat* in a way that would surely have cost him his life had it been recognized. In this connection see T. J. Clark’s marvelous discussion of the flesh-and-blood-like lapel of the sitter’s coat in the *Self-Portrait* as well as his suggestion that the palette in that painting “has almost the look of an anamorphosis, or of a face discolored and turned on its side. There is something like a mouth in evidence, or a nostril, or an eye socket” (“Gross David with the Swoln Cheek,” in *Rediscovering History: Culture, Politics, and the Psyche*, ed. Michael S. Roth (Stanford, 1994), pp. 291–93, 300–301).

See also the brief discussion of the role of mirror reversal in John Pope-Hennessy, *The Portrait in the Renaissance*, The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts (Princeton, 1966), pp. 124–30 (on Dürer); Louis Marin, *Détruire la peinture* (Paris, 1977), pp. 154–60 (emphasizing the role of convex mirrors in preparation for a reading of Carravaggio’s *Medusa*); *idem*, “Variations sur un portrait absent: Les Autoportraits de Poussin, 1649–1650,” *Corps écrit*, no. 5 (1983): 87–107 (remarking that the artist in the Pointel *Self-Portrait* holds a pencil in his left hand and suggesting that the crossing of that figure’s hands at the wrist alludes to the mirror reversal of left and right); Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), p. 146 (on mirror reversal generally), pp. 157–58 (on Parmigianino’s *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*), and 159–61 (on Norman Rockwell’s *Triple Self-Portrait*); Arasse in *Le Détail*, pp. 218–22 (on Poussin’s self-portraits and Cambiaso’s *Portrait of the Artist Painting His Father*); and Joseph Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago and London, 1993), pp. 3–5, 28, 139–42 (again on Dürer).

It might be noted that Umberto Eco, in a chapter on “Mirrors” in his *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington, Ind., 1984), insists that mirrors as such do not invert. “A mirror reflects the right side exactly where the right side is, and the same with the left side. It is the observer (so ingenuous even when he is a scientist) who by self-identification imagines he is the man inside the mirror and, looking at himself, realizes he is wearing his watch on his right wrist. But it would be so only if he, the observer I mean, were the one who is inside the mirror (*Je est un autre!*). On the contrary, those who avoid behaving like Alice, and getting into the mirror, do not so deceive themselves. . . . It is only when we anthropomorphize the virtual image that we are puzzled by right and left—that is, only at this point do we start wondering what right and left would be if the virtual image were the real object” (pp. 205–6). We might say that what in this chapter I call the mirror-reversed self-portrait performs that feat of anthropomorphization precisely by treating the virtual image as a real object (which is why I don’t hesitate to speak of the image itself as “reversed,” which technically it isn’t). I’m grateful to David Wellbery for alerting me to Eco’s text, and to James Elkins for calling my attention to two other interesting articles: N. J. Block, “Why Do Mirrors Reverse Right/Left but Not Up/Down?,” *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (May 16, 1974): 259–76; and Nicholas Denyer, “Why Do Mirrors Reverse Left/Right and Not Up/Down?,” *Philosophy* 69 (1994): 205–10.

10. Louis Leroy, “Salon de 1861,” *Le Charivari*, June 7, 1861. A fictive exchange between “Barbeau” and “Houspin” has the former say: “Wow! There is an artist with a really hairy face!” To which the other replies: “And he’s a lefty.” (*Barbeau*. —Mâtin! voilà un artiste qui a une mine joliment hérissée [1860, de M. Fantin la Tour]. *Houspin*. —Et

puis il est gaucher.) The humor of the second quip depends on recognizing the sitter’s left-handedness to be the product of mirror reversal, which in turn supports the claim that commentators have never doubted that Fantin in fact was right-handed.

11. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London, 1962), p. 91.

12. Or indeed from lower left to upper right: what I mean to stress is the *slant* of the hatching more than the direction in which the strokes in question were actually made. (I shall continue to refer to that slant as upper right to lower left throughout this chapter.) Considerably after the present chapter was written I was led by a reference in Svetlana Alpers and Michael Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* (New Haven and London, 1994), p. 55, to an interesting book on the actual processes of drawing and mark making by Peter Van Sommers, *Drawing and Cognition: Descriptive and Experimental Studies of Graphic Production Processes* (Cambridge and London, 1984), which speaks to these matters (see esp. chap. 1).

13. See Fried 1990, chap. 2.

14. The term “allégorie réelle” is taken from the title of Courbet’s painting, *L’Atelier du peintre: Allégorie réelle déterminant une phase de sept années de ma vie artistique* (1855), on which see Fried 1990, chap. 5.

15. There is, however, one exception in Courbet’s oeuvre to his otherwise consistent efforts to undo mirror reversal. In the highly finished charcoal drawing in the Fogg Art Museum, *Painter at His Easel* (1847), Courbet has depicted himself painting with his left hand. (It’s just possible that the implement the sitter is using is a pencil or charcoal holder, but he is at work on a canvas and his action seems that of a painter rather than a draftsman). The sitter holds no palette in his right hand, but what seems to be an oversized cuff of his coat surrounding that hand is palette shaped; and what makes all this even more odd is that because it is a drawing, not a painting, *Painter at His Easel* can’t be imagined to represent an actual reflection in a mirror (assuming, of course, that the sitter is painting, not drawing)! See the brief discussion of this work in Fried 1990, p. 95 and fig. 45.

16. Cf. Fantin’s letter to Whistler of June 26, 1859: “Oh nature, what a beautiful thing. I return from the Louvre, I dine, and between 5 and 8 in the evening I place myself before my mirror and in a tête-à-tête with nature we tell each other things that are a thousand times more valuable than everything the most charming woman can say” (Fantin-Whistler correspondence, Glasgow University Library). (Oh la nature quelle belle chose. Je rentre du Louvre et je dine et de 5h à 8h du soir je me mets devant ma glace et en tête à tête avec la nature nous nous disons des choses qui valent mille fois tout ce que la plus charmante femme peut dire.)

17. On Derrida’s notion of the “supplement” see Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London, 1976), pp. 141–64.

18. Blindness has been a major topos in my writings on the French antitheatrical tradition. Specifically, I have argued that whereas painters in that tradition before Courbet sought to make paintings that would in effect be blind to the presence before them of the beholder (which is why a certain thematics of blindness, keyed to classical prototypes such as Homer and Belisarius, was important to an artist like David), Courbet’s Realist works evoke the blindness of the *painter-beholder*, or if this seems too strong, they evoke the eclipse of vision that physically merging with the painting before him would have entailed (which is why various figures in Courbet’s paintings, including self-portraits like the *Wounded Man*, have their eyes closed). Both blindnesses thus belong to the enterprise of painting, as distinct from the blindness of drawing on which Derrida insists.

19. Cf. Carol Armstrong’s reading of two early self-portraits by Edgar Degas, *Self-*

Portrait with a Crayon-Holder (1854–55) in the Musée d'Orsay and *Self-Portrait* (1857–58) in the Clark Collection in Williamstown, Mass., in “ocular” (as opposed to “corporeal”) terms (*Odd Man Out: Readings in the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* [Chicago and London, 1991], pp. 227–35). Of the Musée d'Orsay picture she writes: “The elusive ability of the image to conjure up the body’s differences in substance and solidity resides nowhere but in the play between shade and highlight, and so it is of an optical nature, as is its more durable capacity to remind us of the reflecting surface of the mirror. Indeed the pleasure of this self-portrait lies precisely in that subtle oscillation between the opticality of the image surface itself and the optically suggested corporeal life of the artist’s depicted body” (p. 229). More radically, in the Williamstown painting “it is . . . as if the site of the painter’s craft is in the eye and not in the hand, as if his painter’s clothes are now the sign of his job of looking, rather than his manual, material activity” (p. 233). One implication of the present chapter is that in this respect as in others, Degas is not the altogether exceptional figure Armstrong takes him to be. Cf. also Degas’s *Portrait de l’artiste en blouse d’atelier* (1860–62), an oil sketch on gray cardboard in the Gezira Museum, Egypt, that strongly suggests that the artist has depicted himself mirror reversed in the act of painting (see *Les Oubliés de Caïre: Chefs-d’oeuvre de musées de Caïre*, exhib. cat. [Paris: Musée d’Orsay, Oct. 5, 1994–Jan. 8, 1995], p. 132, cat. no. 82).

20. Another early painted self-portrait has a bearing on this issue. In his *Self-Portrait, Seated at Easel* (1858; fig. 198), a work of evident ambition, Fantin portrayed himself seated on a chair before a large canvas; we see only part of the edge and back of the canvas, most of which, it is suggested, lies beyond the right-hand edge of the painting; the chair faces the canvas but the sitter, with legs crossed, has turned his body so as to face the viewer; and of course the sitter holds his palette in his right hand, thereby declaring the mirror-reversed status of the painted image as a whole (which further suggests that the artist-model must have turned *his* body so as to face his image in a large mirror, set up more or less at right angles to the actual painting on which he was working). All this may be taken as fairly obvious, once the basic premise of mirror reversal is granted. But what is less obvious, what indeed is easy to miss (especially in reproduction), is that the sitter also holds a brush in his left hand: while looking directly out of the painting—i.e. not at the depicted canvas—he nevertheless seems to be adding a brushstroke to the lower right-hand corner of that canvas, which is more or less exactly where, *on the actual picture surface*, the depicted brushstroke is to be found. Put slightly differently, it is as though the depicted brushstroke asks to be understood as the record of an actual brushstroke that was made near the lower right-hand corner of the actual painting; the implied (also elided) point of contact between the two brushstrokes may thus be thought of as another switch point between the “worlds” of artist-model and sitter—between the two modes of realism we have been considering—comparable to the inkwell in the third of the self-portrait drawings discussed earlier in this chapter. But of course everything I have just said depends on *not* thinking of the image of the canvas as *itself* mirror reversed, in which event the brushstroke being added to that canvas by the left-handed sitter would imply a location near the lower *left*, not lower right, corner of the actual canvas. In other words, for the *Self-Portrait, Seated at Easel* to function as a facing off of the two modes of realism, as I claim it does, a certain parasitism on the mirror-reversed image is again required. On that painting see Fantin-Latour 1982–83, pp. 74–77, cat. no. 2; on the *Self-Portrait, Standing Holding a Paintbrush*, see *ibid.*, p. 77, cat. no. 3.

21. On Whistler as an etcher see Katharine A. Lochnan, *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven and London, 1984).

22. For a discussion of anthropomorphism in Courbet’s art see Fried 1990, pp. 238–54.



Figure 198. Henri Fantin-Latour, *Self-Portrait, Seated at Easel*, 1858.

23. Lochnan rightly associates *La Vieille aux loques* with Millet's etching of 1855, *La Cardeuse* (*Etchings of Whistler*, p. 50).

24. See *ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

25. No doubt coincidentally, it was in 1860 that a British colonial administrator, Sir William Herschel, first thought of adapting the Bengalese practice of imprinting letters and documents with a fingertip dipped in ink or tar for the purpose of identifying individuals (see Carlo Ginzburg, "Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method," trans. Anna Davin, *History Workshop* 9 [spring 1980]: 26–27). Herschel published an article explaining his method in 1880, and Francis Galton's *Finger Prints*, which acknowledged Herschel but went far beyond him, appeared in 1892 (*ibid.*).

26. The relationship between will and automatism is basic to my reading of Courbet's Realism (also of photography; see Fried 1990, pp. 278–80 and *passim*). Also, the association between ocular realism and the will that the present analysis of Whistler's etchings implies could lead us to consider another important French text on drawing, Paul Valéry's *Degas Danse Dessin* (Paris, 1938); the English translation as "Degas Dance Drawing" appears in *Degas Manet Morisot*, trans. David Paul, vol. 12 of the Collected Works of Paul Valéry (New York, 1960), pp. 1–102. Briefly, Valéry understands Degas's practice of drawing as crucially a matter of willing: "A sustained act of will is essential to drawing [by which Valéry means tracing precisely what one sees], for drawing demands the collaboration of separate means whose one instinct is to resume their own independent automatism. By nature, the eye tends to wander, the hands curl up, move at a tangent. To ensure the freedom of drawing, so that the draftsman can carry out his will, he must suppress those local autonomies" ("Degas Dance Drawing," p. 37; for the original French see *Degas Danse Dessin*, p. 55). The whole short chapter, "Seeing and Copying"—in French, "Voir et tracer"—is pertinent to the notion of ocular realism developed in this chapter. The last paragraph reads: "The artist approaches, withdraws, leans over, screws his eyes up, his whole body behaving like an instrument of his eye, becoming entirely a means for aiming, pointing, controlling, reducing to focus" ("Degas Dance Drawing," p. 38; *Degas Danse Dessin*, p. 57). Cf. Carol Armstrong's discussion of Valéry on Degas in *Odd Man Out*, pp. 216–26.

27. In fact six of the twelve prints in the French Set also depict figures looking more or less directly at the viewer; what distinguishes the Thames Set figures is the contrast between their nearness to the viewer and the representation of distance elsewhere in the image. Other French Set prints such as *The Kitchen* (the most powerful evocation of an absorptive-somatic space in the whole series) and *The Title to the French Set* (in which Whistler sits drawing while surrounded by a crowd of children) also bear on my argument.

28. Lochnan suggests that the Thames Set etchings represent an attempt by Whistler to find an equivalent for the eye's inability to focus with equal sharpness and at the same time on objects at different distances (*Etchings of Whistler*, pp. 95–100). She writes: "If one looks closely at *Black Lion Wharf*, *Eagle Wharf*, *The Pool* and *Longshoremen*, it is immediately apparent that while some areas are 'in focus,' others are 'out of focus,' and that some fall beyond the range of peripheral vision" (p. 95). I disagree: the cardinal feature of the first three etchings, it seems to me, is the extremely sharp focus of all the spatial zones, which is to say that the etchings seek to evoke an impossibly clear, precise, and spatially comprehensive act of seeing. (*Longshoremen* scarcely seems to belong to this discussion.)

29. On that painting see Andrew McLaren Young, Margaret MacDonald, Robin Spencer, with Hamish Miles, *The Paintings of James McNeill Whistler*, 2 vols. (New Ha-

ven and London, 1980), 1:36–37, cat. no. 63. Together with a nearly identical picture in Dublin (cat. no. 62), *The Artist in His Studio* is thought to have been preliminary to a much larger picture—a group portrait with Albert Moore, a British artist Whistler admired, and Fantin-Latour—which Whistler intended to paint for the Salon of 1866 (pp. 36–37).

30. There is also a fine mirror-reversed self-portrait drawing by Whistler, *Portrait of the Artist* (ca. 1860s), in the Freer Gallery of Art, which seems particularly close to Fantin's drawings of around 1860 (see David Park Curry, *James McNeill Whistler at the Freer Gallery of Art* [New York and London, 1984], p. 237, pl. 204). And certain other painted self-portraits, such as the *Arrangement in Green: Portrait of the Painter* (probably 1872) in Detroit and *Self-Portrait* (ca. 1896–98) in the Hunterian in Glasgow in which the sitter wears a monocle in his left eye (whereas Whistler actually wore it in his right eye), are also to the point.

31. Another painter in the Impressionist orbit whose work has been described in terms of the implied presence of the body is Paul Cézanne; see Maurice Merleau-Ponty's classic (if problematic) essay, "Cézanne's Doubt," *Sense and Non-Sense*, trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston, Ill., 1964), pp. 9–25. More recently, see Norman Bryson, "Intertextuality and Visual Poetics," *Critical Texts* 4, no. 2 (1987): 1–6 (equally problematic, though on other grounds); and Stephen Bann, *The True Vine: On Visual Representation and Western Tradition* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 90–91. Significantly, the one *Self-Portrait* by Cézanne to show him actually at work on a canvas is mirror-reversed (1885–87, in the Bührle Collection, Zurich), while the orientation of his head and upper body in numerous other self-portraits that don't depict his arms and hands strongly suggests mirror reversal. One other fact about Cézanne's practice is worth noting. In his oil paintings, which from the 1880s on contain extensive areas of hatching, the hatching runs *both* from upper left to lower right *and* from upper right to lower left (though in general the first "direction" predominates). In view of Cézanne's attempt in his paintings to differentiate spatially and otherwise between the multiple contiguous planes indicated by the individual units of hatching, this is hardly surprising. But in his looser-textured and less systematically organized drawings Cézanne almost invariably hatched from upper right to lower left, in keeping with the right-handed draftsmanly norm (see the illustrations in Adrien Chappuis, *The Drawings of Paul Cézanne*, 2 vols. [Greenwich, Conn., 1973], vol. 2).

Two other painters associated with the Impressionist generation whose work reveals distinctly bodily valences are Frédéric Bazille and Gustave Caillebotte. The first was close to Monet and Renoir during the 1860s but was killed in the Franco-Prussian War before the emergence of Impressionism proper (Bazille is the tall figure standing in profile toward the right of Fantin's *Atelier in the Batignolles*). His art, like that of all the Impressionists, lies outside the scope of this book, but toward the end of the 1860s he painted a *Self-Portrait with Palette* (1869–70?; fig. 199) that belongs with the works we have been examining. (For that painting see *Frédéric Bazille: Prophet of Impressionism*, exhib. cat. [Montpellier: Musée Fabre, July 9–Oct. 4, 1992; Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, Nov. 13, 1992–Jan. 24, 1993; Memphis: The Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Feb. 14–Apr. 25, 1993], pp. 136–37, cat. no. 42. The painting is undated; the catalogue suggests that the proposed date of 1867 may be too early, and I am following Dianne Pitman's suggestion that a date of 1869–70 is plausible.) Once again the sitter has been represented mirror-reversed, with a brush in his left hand and a palette in his right. But Bazille's picture is full of a sense of physical strain that suggests by contrast just how unusual Fantin's self-portraits are in facing off the two modes of realism as they do. That is, the *Self-Portrait*

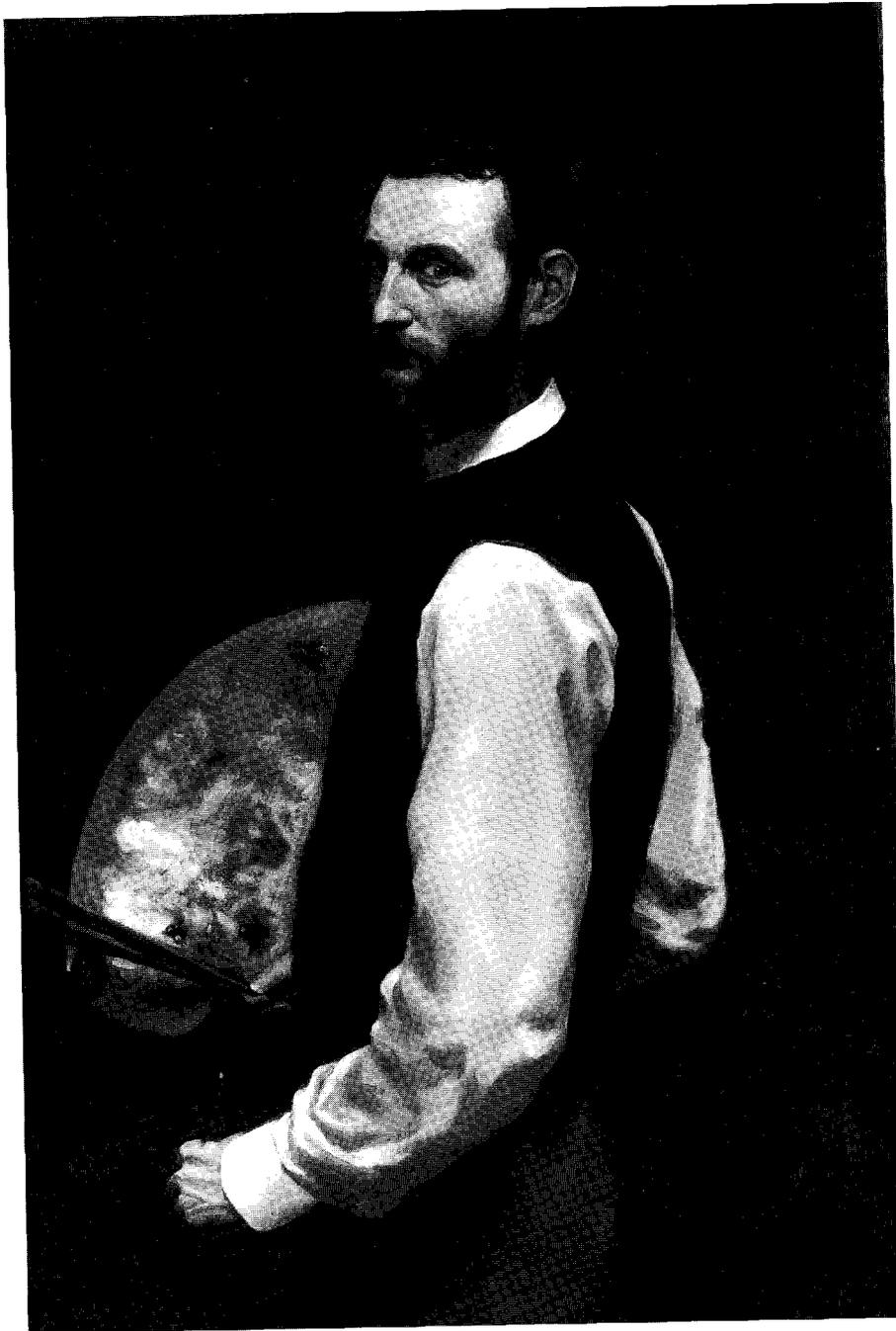


Figure 199. Frédéric Bazille, *Self-Portrait with Palette*, 1869–70?

with Palette implies that the canvas on which the sitter is working is just out of view to the left (cf. Fantin's *Self-Portrait, Seated at Easel* and Whistler's *Artist in His Studio*, in both of which the implied or, in the Fantin, partly depicted canvas is to the right); he is standing directly before it and has turned his head so as to study his image in a mirror that presumably originally occupied our (the beholder's) position before the depicted scene (again, as in the case of the Fantin and the Whistler). At the same time, the sitter's upper body is turned somewhat in the opposite direction, and the result of that is to make us feel that with just a bit more effort—a slightly further clockwise turn of the upper body—his right arm (the one holding the palette) could in fact be aligned with the artist-model's right arm, which perhaps means that despite the mirror reversal of left and right the image as a whole feels more corporeal realist than ocular realist in orientation. (The unresolved tension this implies is perhaps reflected in the sitter's facial expression.) Such a reading is strengthened by the treatment of the large palette charged with paints, which virtually facing us as it does invites being seen as a figure for the picture itself: although we see that the palette is held by the sitter's right hand, we feel that that hand could or even should be wielding a brush, in accord with the congruence-logic of corporeal realism (and of course it *holds* several brushes). It's well known that the future Impressionists, Monet especially, were close to Courbet in the mid-1860s, but Bazille's *Self-Portrait with Palette* provides new evidence for their imaginative proximity to his art even as it adds its testimony to the prevalence of a dynamics of mirror reversal in "advanced" painting of the 1860s. See the extended discussion of Bazille's engagement with issues of absorption, theatricality, posing, etc. in Dianne Williams Pitman, "The Art of Frédéric Bazille: 1841–1870" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1989).

As for Caillebotte, a somewhat younger figure who began to exhibit with the Impressionists in 1876, he too is the painter of a mirror-reversed *Self-Portrait* (1879) and even more than Pissarro, Cézanne, or Bazille he may be seen as deliberately striving to combine the resolutely ocular vision of Impressionism with a return to both a thematics of intense absorption and a Courbet-like evocation of effects of lived corporeality (as in *Le Déjeuner*). The result is an art of immense interest, verging on self-contradiction. On Caillebotte see e.g. the recent exhibition catalog by Anne Distel, Douglas W. Druick et al., *Gustave Caillebotte, 1848–1894* (Paris: Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Sept. 12, 1994–Jan. 9, 1995; Chicago: The Art Institute, Feb. 15–May 28, 1995).

More broadly, Jonathan Crary in *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990) has argued that starting in the early nineteenth century an epistemic shift came increasingly to locate vision "within the unstable physiology and temporality of the human body" (p. 70). Impressionist painting does not stand apart from that development; rather its commitment, at least at the outset, to what I have been calling an ocular realism marks a particular stage in painting's investigation of the nature of human vision, an investigation that perhaps reaches its apogee of refinement in the modern French tradition in Georges Seurat's Neo-Impressionist canvases of the second half of the 1880s (see Crary, "Seurat's Modernity," in Ellen Wardwell Lee et al., *Seurat at Gravelines: The Last Landscapes* [Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, Oct. 14–Nov. 25, 1990], pp. 61–65, as well as the pages on Seurat in Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of the Avant-Garde* [Chicago and London, 1995]). Cf. also Crary's article, "Unbinding Vision," *October*, no. 68 (spring 1994): 21–44, in which Manet's late *In the Conservatory* (1879) is read in relation to the contemporary psycho-physiological problematic of "attention."

32. Mallarmé, "Édouard Manet," *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry (Paris, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1945), pp. 532–33. For the full text, see the epigraphs to this book.



33. One final point. At approximately the same moment, Manet painted his only other work in this genre, the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap* (1878; fig. 200), which bears a complex structural relation to its companion with respect to the issues in question. For example: (1) In the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap* Manet has not portrayed himself in the act of painting—the sitter holds neither brush nor palette and his hands are the least-finished portions of the picture—with the result that there is no sign within the picture that the image is mirror reversed. (2) Also in that work the sitter, shown full-length, stands considerably further back in the picture space than in the *Self-Portrait with a Palette*. The two works taken together therefore associate both the portrayal of the act of painting and the *dispositif* of mirror reversal with apparent nearness to the picture surface or indeed with the actual, arm’s-length encounter between artist-model and painting. (3) The distancing of the sitter in the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap* is correlated with the action he appears to be performing, namely looking hard at something roughly the same distance in front of him. Within the hypothetical logic of the works we have been considering, that can only be his image in a mirror. But the peculiarly intense, focused, above all *critical* character of the sitter’s gaze suggests that he is looking at the *ébauche*-like painting itself, which if true would mean that the second self-portrait imagines not just displacing the presumptive mirror by the painting (the structural basis of the mirror-reversed self-portrait generally) but so to speak eclipsing or negating the former by the latter. Put slightly differently, it’s as if Manet in the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap* sought to represent an act of looking that belonged essentially to the enterprise of painting as distinct from the artist-model’s concentration on his own image in a mirror, an image, as we have seen, that his generation invested with exemplary significance and that he himself memorialized in the *Self-Portrait with a Palette*. And it’s as if he discovered that that could only be done by avoiding representing the act of painting itself and instead evoking the relatively distanced, impersonally judgmental gaze by which he as artist (as distinct from artist-model) sought continually to assess his work in progress—a gaze, it should be stressed, no mirror could have disclosed to him. (We don’t know for certain which of the two canvases was painted before the other; in my reading the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap* presumes the existence if not of the *Self-Portrait with a Palette* itself at any rate of the recent convention of the mirror-reversed self-portrait. Incidentally, the manifestly unfinished state of the “later” painting underscores the theme of a critical gaze by implying that the task of representation is not yet completed.) (4) The deep structural opposition between the two works is further marked by the difference in headgear between the stylish black bowler in the *Self-Portrait with a Palette* and the unexpected skullcap in the *Self-Portrait with a Skullcap*. In the latter work Manet is clearly *chez lui*, in the privacy of his studio, in contrast with the evident worldliness of his portrayal in the former one. And this too helps thematize an act of looking that had its place precisely there.

Coda: Manet’s Modernism

1. See Ernest Chesneau’s remarks about the way French painting of different periods depicted figures “simply facing the spectator, . . . looking without seeing,” in “Le Réalisme et l’esprit français dans l’art,” in *L’Art et les artistes modernes en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, 1864), pp. 14–15, quoted and discussed in chap. 1.

2. See e.g. Félix Fénéon’s strictures against the theatricality of Impressionist painting, as discussed by Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of the Avant-Garde* (Chicago and London, 1995), chap. 2.

3. See Fried, “Art and Objecthood” (originally published in *Artforum* in 1967), in

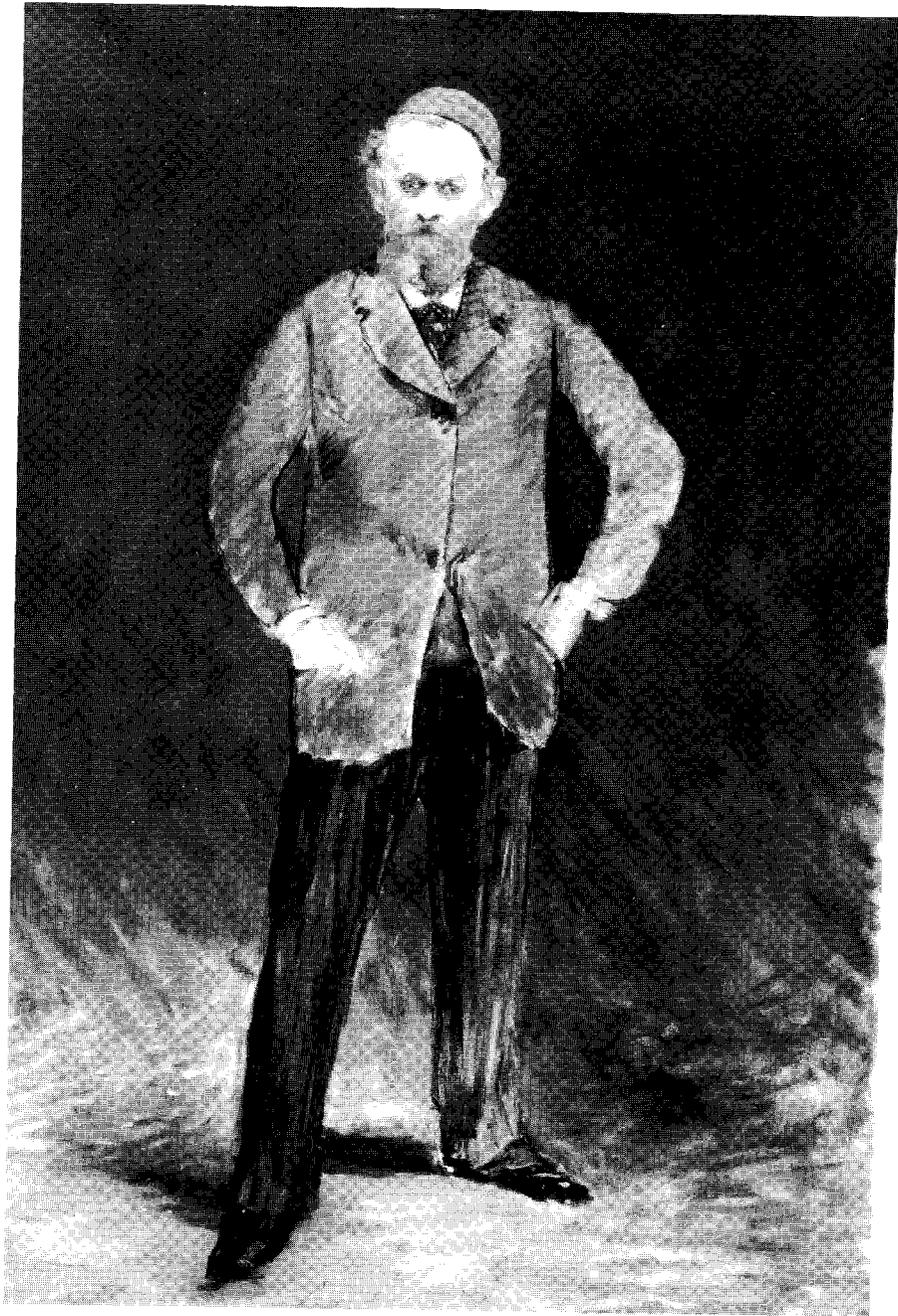


Figure 200. Édouard Manet, *Self-Portrait with a Skull Cap*, 1878.

Minimal Art, ed. Gregory Battcock (New York, 1968), pp. 116–47. A large literature takes issue with or otherwise comments on my reading of Minimalism. See e.g. Hal Foster, “The Crux of Minimalism,” in *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945–1986*, ed. Howard Singerman (New York, 1986), pp. 162–83; Stephen Melville, “Notes on the Reemergence of Allegory, the Forgetting of Modernism, the Necessity of Rhetoric, and the Conditions of Publicity in Art and Criticism,” *October*, no. 19 (winter 1981): 55–92; Rosalind Krauss, “Theories of Art after Minimalism and Pop,” in *Discussions in Contemporary Culture*, ed. Hal Foster, (Seattle, 1987), pp. 59–64; Thierry de Duve, “Performance Here and Now: Minimal Art, a Plea for a New Genre of Theatre,” *Open Letter* 5–6 (summer-fall 1983): 234–60; *idem*, “The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas,” in *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal 1945–1964*, ed. Serge Guilbaut (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1990), pp. 244–310; Charles Harrison, *Essays on Art & Language* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1991), chap. 2, “Conceptual Art and the Suppression of the Beholder”; and Georges Didi-Huberman, *Ce que nous voyons, ce qui nous regarde* (Paris, 1992). My discussion of Manet’s relation to the Diderotian tradition is indebted to Stephen Melville, *Philosophy beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism*, Theory and History of Literature, vol. 27 (Minneapolis, 1986), chap. 1, “On Modernism.” When I speak of painting not thereafter being indifferent to issues of beholding, I have in mind a wide range of manifestations of that lack of indifference, including (for example) the nonabsorptive but also nontheatrical relation to the viewer that Yve-Alain Bois has described in connection with Matisse under the Benjaminian rubric “distraction” (“On Matisse: The Blinding,” *October*, no. 68 [spring 1994]: 81–82 and passim) and the interest of the “Art-Language” theorists Michael Baldwin, Charles Harrison, and Mel Ramsden in various strategies for making paintings “not to be seen” (“On Conceptual Art and Painting and Speaking and Seeing: Three Corrected Transcripts,” *Art-Language*, n.s., no. 1 [June 1994]: 30–69). What is more problematic is the relation of the question of theatricality as I have developed it to the Duchampian project as analyzed brilliantly by Thierry de Duve in various writings, most recently “Critique of Pure Modernism,” *October*, no. 70 (fall 1994): 61–97.

4. See the early reviews of Impressionist exhibitions by Burty, Chesneau, and Armand Silvestre. “If one seeks the definition [of the new painting], one would find that it is above all *decorative*,” Silvestre wrote in 1874. “It’s an effect of the *impression* that it pursues exclusively, leaving the search for *expression* to those passionate about line [i.e. drawing]. It’s the combination of those two results that constitutes complete works of art, and this first point suffices to show the limitations of this interesting but narrowly conceived attempt.” He continued: “By what means now is the impression sought? Therein lies the true merit of these artists, that by which they will have infinitely served contemporary art. By completely elementary and accessible means” (“Chronique des Beaux-Arts,” *L’Opinion nationale*, Apr. 22, 1874). (Si l’on en cherchait la définition, on trouverait qu’elle est surtout *décorative*. C’est un effet d’*impression* qu’elle poursuit uniquement, laissant la recherche de l’*expression* aux passionnés de la ligne. C’est l’ensemble de ces deux résultats qui constitue les oeuvres d’art complètes, et ce premier point suffit à remettre à son rang cette tentative intéressante mais étroitement conçue. Par quels moyens maintenant l’impression est-elle cherchée? Là est le vrai mérite de ces artistes et en quoi ils auront infiniment servi à l’art contemporain. Par des moyens tout à fait élémentaires et accessibles.) In the same review Silvestre also wrote: “One must have, in effect, special eyes to be sensitive to that accuracy in the relations of tones that is their honor and merit” (quoted in the introduction). (Il faut, en effet, des yeux spéciaux pour être sensibles à cette justesse dans les relations des tons qui fait leur honneur et leur mérite.)

Burty too remarked the same year that being “based on the swiftest possible rendering of physical sensation, [Impressionism] considerably narrows the domain of painting. It scarcely leaves room for any but decorative motives; it forbids itself the stirring representation of those complex situations in which the mind collects its forces, and takes possession by analysis of places, situations, sentiments. It is as a band of artists floating down a rapid river, drinking in the intoxicating effects of the sun, the shade, the verdure, the freshness, the perfumes that wander over the water and the banks, and never casting anchor or bringing their bark to land.” But despite these limitations, Burty concedes, “there remains . . . a singular illusion of light and freshness; the masterly harmonising of ground and verdure with the blue sky and white clouds; shadows or reflections exquisitely fleeting” (“The Paris Exhibitions: *Les Impressionnistes—Chintreuil*,” *The Academy*, May 30, 1874).

For his part, Chesneau in 1874 considered that “never has the ungraspableness, the fleetingness, the instantaneousness of movement been seized and fixed in its prodigious fluidity as in that extraordinary, that marvelous *ébauche* that Manet [sic: Monet] has catalogued under the title *Boulevard des Capucines*.” Such painting was not, Chesneau felt, the last word in art nor even in the new painting. “It’s necessary that it comes to transform the *esquisse* into an *oeuvre faite*. But what a trumpet blast for those who have a subtle ear and how far it carries into the future!” (“À côté du Salon: II Le Plein Air. Exposition du boulevard des Capucines,” *Paris-Journal*, May 7, 1874) (jamais l’insaisissable, le fugitif, l’instantané du mouvement n’a été saisi et fixé dans sa prodigieuse fluidité, comme il l’est dans cette extraordinaire, dans cette merveilleuse ébauche que M. Manet a cataloguée sous le titre de *Boulevard des Capucines*. . . . Evidemment, ce n’est pas là le dernier mot de l’art, ni de cet art lui-même. Il faut qu’il en arrive à transformer l’esquisse en oeuvre faite. Mais quel coup de clairon pour ceux qui ont l’oreille subtile et comme il porte loin dans l’avenir!).

All three critics, in other words, expressed reservations about what they regarded as the ultimate narrowness or “incompleteness” of the Impressionist project. But far more important historically is that they were not at all confused by the new art; on the contrary, they instantly understood and were able to describe the artists’ intentions. As Paul Tucker remarks of the critical response in 1874, “the Impressionists clearly were not misunderstood nor unappreciated” (“The First Impressionist Exhibition in Context,” in Charles S. Moffett et al., *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886*, exhib. cat. [Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Jan. 17–Apr. 6, 1986; San Francisco: M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, Apr. 19–July 6, 1986], p. 108). Or as Richard R. Brettell comments in an essay on the Impressionist exhibition of 1877 in the same catalogue, “Whether the critic hated the painters or was in profound sympathy with their aims, he tended to understand just what the movement was about” (“The ‘First’ Exhibition of Impressionist Painters,” p. 200). But neither Tucker nor Brettell emphasizes just how extraordinary a fact this is, especially when contrasted with the critical response to Manet. See also Steven Z. Levine, “Décor/Decorative/Decoration in Claude Monet’s Art,” *Arts Magazine* 51 (Feb. 1977): 136–39; *idem*, “The ‘Instant’ of Criticism and Monet’s Critical Instant,” *Arts Magazine* 55 (Mar. 1981): 114–21; and *idem*, *Monet and His Critics*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York and London, 1976). The complexities and ambiguities of the concept of “impression” have been analyzed by Richard Shiff in *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism* (Chicago and London, 1984).

Another interesting early text is Silvestre’s preface to the collection of etchings of modern paintings published by Durand-Ruel in 1873 (a year before the first Impressionist exhibition), where he remarked of recent work by Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley: “What

strikes, first of all, in looking at it is the immediate caress that the eye receives from it;—it is harmonious before all” (*Galerie Durand-Ruel: Recueil d’estampes gravées à l’eau-forte* [Paris, 1873], 2 vols., 1:21). (Ce qui frappe, tout d’abord, en la regardant, c’est la caresse immédiate qui l’oeil en recueille;—elle est harmonieuse avant tout.) It’s as if the quoted sentence captures the moment of transition from a problematic of strikingness to one of harmony.

5. Some of those differences were noted in 1874 by Marc de Montifaud, who contrasted Manet’s art with that of the younger painter Claude Monet. “[Monet’s] oppositions perhaps aren’t as striking, but the tone is sounded with the same accuracy. Less abrupt in contact than Manet’s, his notes sing out against a bright and luminous background. Without pursuing the need of shocking the public in order to succeed in the future, he won’t, I think, make any concessions to it. If one of them doesn’t worry much about whether or not he is a plagiarist [a reference to Manet’s use of previous art], if he mocks composition, the other will know to meld disparate elements and to find the secret of joining them in a sort of harmonious relation; the one always conserves a great roughness of touch that is the excess of force, for which he is perhaps not to be blamed; but the other will incline toward a certain naïveté that will place him on a path where he will encounter what Manet will never bump into: grace” ([Marie-Amélie Chatroule de Montifaud], “Le Salon de 1874,” *L’Artiste*, May 1, 1874, p. 308; quoted by Darragon 1989, pp. 236–37). (Ses oppositions ne sont peut-être pas aussi frappantes, mais le son est plaqué avec la même justesse. Moins âpres de contact que Manet, ses notes chantent dans un fond clair et lumineux. Sans poursuivre la nécessité d’effaroucher le public pour réussir le lendemain, je ne crois pas qu’il lui fasse de concession. Si l’un s’inquiète peu d’être ou non un plagiaire, s’il se moque de la composition, l’autre saura fondre entre eux des éléments disparates, et trouver le secret de les rallier par une sorte de lien harmonieux; l’un conserve toujours une grande rudesse de touche qui est l’excès dans la force, ce dont il ne faut peut-être pas le blâmer; mais l’autre inclinera vers une certaine naïveté qui pourra lui faire rencontrer sur son chemin ce que Manet n’y coudoiera jamais: la grâce.)

6. Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting,” in *The New Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (1966; rev. ed., New York, 1973), pp. 68–69. Another, very different writer who makes interesting reading in this connection is the painter and art critic Jacques-Émile Blanche, who in his elegant and subtle text of 1924 sought to minimize the importance of Manet’s “impressionist” adventure. Manet’s touch and procedures, Blanche wrote, remained the same throughout his career (*Manet*, p. 41). And whereas Impressionism was at bottom “decorative” in orientation (p. 18), Manet’s art was not that at all (Chez Manet, rien de *décoratif* [p. 10]). For Blanche, reacting against the Impressionist reading of Manet’s achievement, the latter’s greatest works were his “museum” paintings of the 1860s, the *Déjeuner* and *Olympia* foremost among them. But encountering *Olympia* in the Louvre he nevertheless was struck precisely by the “decorative” dimension of Manet’s realism, which gave the work a forward-looking quality that far exceeded the painter’s intentions—a claim that shows how difficult even Blanche found it to keep Manet and Impressionism apart (p. 34): “Quand on aperçoit de loin, dans la salle des États, au Louvre, l’*Olympia*, parmi des ouvrages qui forment une tribuna de la peinture moderne, cette toile s’isole des autres. La sincérité ingénue de Manet, son réalisme est plus *décoratif* que les compositions de Delacroix. Cette toile classique et d’un romantisme fou, ne résume-t-elle pas d’avance la plupart des recherches modernes? Son auteur a fait ce qu’il ne savait point qu’il fit, ce qu’il n’aurait peut-être pas voulu faire; état d’esprit devenu bien rare, peut-être celui des plus authentiques génies?”

7. See Fried 1990, pp. 265–70. Cf. Greenberg’s early (1940) account of the respective

contributions of Courbet (“The first real avant-garde painter”), Manet, and the Impressionists to the emergence of what he would later call Modernist painting in “Towards a Newer Laocoon” (Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 1, *Perceptions and Judgments*, 1939–1944, ed. John O’Brian [Chicago and London, 1986], pp. 29–30).

8. See Fried 1980, pp. 44–61, 66–70.

9. See Fried 1990, p. 111.

10. See *ibid.*, p. 227.

11. See e.g. the articles on the Impressionist exhibition of 1874 as well as Levine’s article “Décor/Decorative/Decoration in Claude Monet’s Art” and his *Monet and His Critics* (above, n. 4).

12. Not that the notion of the *morceau* disappeared from criticism; but it no longer invariably carried the same privative connotations as it did before. So for example Albert Wolff could write in 1874 of a still life by Antoine Vollon: “All that one can say is that in no other époque has anyone painted a *morceau* of a more complete harmony and with a more stunning mastery” (“Salon de 1874,” *Le Gaulois*, May 3, 1874). (Tout ce qu’on peut dire, c’est qu’à nulle autre époque on n’a peint un *morceau* dans une plus complète harmonie et avec une maestra plus étourdissante.) And a year later Armand Silvestre could write of a similar work by the same painter: “This *morceau* of painting is perhaps the most complete in the Salon and is admirable in all respects” (“Salon de 1875,” *L’Opinion nationale*, June 14, 1875). (Ce *morceau* de peinture est peut-être le plus complet du Salon et de tous points admirable.) It’s impossible to imagine the term *morceau* invested with similar attributes of harmony and completeness a decade earlier, and it may well have been the enormous contrast between the Impressionist picture with its “ocular” bias, bright, close-valued color, and pursuit of “decorative” unity and Vollon’s strongly chiaroscuro and spectacularly “tactile” realist still lifes that largely conferred upon the latter their unwonted authority. Indeed Wolff’s appeal to “harmony” is itself a sign of the discursive shift I associate with Impressionism.

13. See Levine (as cited in n. 4) and *idem*, “Monet’s Pairs,” *Arts Magazine* 49 (June 1975): 72–75. On Monet’s series see also Grace Seiberling, *Monet’s Series*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York, 1981); Paul Hayes Tucker, *Monet in the ’90s: The Series Paintings* (New Haven and London, 1989); and Steven Z. Levine, *Monet, Narcissus, and Self-Reflection: The Modernist Myth of the Self* (Chicago and London, 1994). On Pissarro’s efforts in the 1880s and 1890s to find equivalents for the “completeness” of the traditional *tableau* see Ward, *Pissarro*.

14. The new conditions of display and their significance are discussed by Ward in *Pissarro* and, in greater detail, in her article “Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions,” *Art Bulletin* 73 (Dec. 1991): 599–622. Writing in 1876, Burty remarked on how the rooms at Durand-Ruel in which the second Impressionist exhibition was being held were spacious and well lighted, which he considered important “for the kind of painting now exhibited there, which is characterised by a kind of decorative freedom, and demands blank spaces between the respective frames” (“The Exhibition of the ‘Intransigeants’,” *The Academy*, Apr. 15, 1876). Two years before Burty had written that the paintings in the first Impressionist exhibition “depend upon elements of interest strictly esthetic, and not social or human—lightness of colouring, boldness of masses, blunt naturalness of expression” (“The Paris Exhibitions”). The notion of the “strictly esthetic” is without precedent in the art criticism of the 1860s, and reflects an altogether different set of pictorial priorities from those I have associated with the generation of 1863.

15. No doubt the shift in question bore a close relation to the rise of what has come to

be called the “dealer-critic” system of the later nineteenth century (see Harrison C. and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World* (New York, 1965), a system that involved, as Ward remarks in *Pissarro*, “the enterprise of attributing value through criticism.” But the new, “esthetic” criticism was not simply market inspired and market driven; rather, the uncanny accuracy of the earliest commentaries on Impressionism suggests that their authors responded in the first instance to crucial features of the new painting, whose interactions with the market would themselves be far from simple (Ward is excellent on these).

16. Théodore Duret, “Édouard Manet,” in *Critique d’avant-garde* (Paris, 1885), pp. 125–26. (A leurs yeux, la qualité intrinsèque de la peinture en soi domine tout, dans l’oeuvre d’un peintre, et le sujet, qui décidait à peu près seul des préférences des autres, n’est plus qu’un accessoire. Les connaisseurs sont généralement sans parti pris sur le style des artistes et des écoles. Ils sont fort éclectiques. Tout ce qu’ils demandent à un tableau, c’est d’être *peint*, en prenant le mot dans toute son acception. Mais sur ce point ils sont sans pitié. À tout l’Olympe, à tous les héros d’Homère et de Virgile, traités de la façon dont procède la moyenne des élèves de l’école de Rome, ils préféreront, sans hésiter, n’importe quel chaudron dû au pinceau d’un Chardin.)

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 126–28. (Les connaisseurs, les hommes que leur goût, leurs fonctions ou leur état conduisent à s’occuper spécialement de tableaux, ne jugeront un peintre qu’à la suite d’un commerce prolongé avec ses oeuvres. Pour qu’un artiste soit définitivement accepté comme *peintre* parmi les connaisseurs, il faut que ses toiles, placées à côté de celles des grands, parmi ses devanciers, aient pu soutenir la comparaison. Il faut que, dans les collections, dans les musées, elles *tiennent* à côté de celles de maîtres. Or, les tableaux de Manet *tiennent* à côté de ceux de n’importe quel peintre. Aucune peinture n’est d’une facture plus ferme et de tons plus justes que la sienne, aucune peinture n’est plus lumineuse, plus transparente, ne possède plus d’air, dans les fonds, n’accuse plus de vie dans les yeux et sur la physionomie. Mettez un Manet au milieu de Delacroix, de Corots, de Courbets et vous l’y laisserez, comme à sa place naturelle, entre ses congénères. Dans toute collection, dans toute musée où l’on voudra posséder des spécimens de tous les maîtres français et représenter l’école moderne dans son entier développement, Manet aura forcément sa place marquée, car il a été, autant que qui que ce soit, original et personnel, et il a donné, avec un éclat qui ne sera jamais dépassé, une note spéciale de la peinture, celle des tons clairs, du plein air, de la pleine lumière.)

Cf. La Font de Saint-Yenne’s praise, more than a century earlier, of the way in which a small painting by Carle Van Loo held its own against other choice works in the collection of a leading connoisseur: “I don’t know anything more perfect by Van Loo than this painting which is one of the principal ornaments of that beautiful cabinet, as refined as it is abundant, assembled by one of the best connoisseurs of this sort of work. Van Loo’s painting stands up vigorously face to face with those masterpieces by our greatest artists assembled there” (*Sentimens sur quelques ouvrages de peinture, sculpture et gravure, écrits à un particulier en Province* [1754; rpt. Geneva, 1970], p. 29). (Je ne connois rien de plus parfait du Sr. Vanloo que ce tableau qui fait un des principaux ornemens de ce beau cabinet aussi épuré qu’abondant & formé par un des plus excellens connoisseurs en ce genre. Il se soutient avec vigueur vis-à-vis des chef-d’oeuvres de nos plus grands maîtres qui y sont rassemblés.)

18. On the basis of the same criterion Duret two years earlier argued for the Japanese artist Hokusai’s greatness as a draftsman. “In these conditions,” he wrote, “we will find that he is able to stand up to any European artist. His works, to use an expression of the studio, *hold up* alongside those of the greatest masters” (“L’Art japonais: Les livres

illustrés—Les albums imprimés—Hokousai,” *GBA*, 2d ser., 26 [Aug. 1, 1882]: 130). (Dans ces conditions, nous trouverons qu’il peut aller de pair avec n’importe quel artiste européen. Ses oeuvres, pour me servir d’une expression d’atelier, *tiennent* à côté des plus grands maîtres.) Cf. Matisse: “[The *Dead Torero*] is one of Manet’s most beautiful paintings. I saw it in Philadelphia in the Widener collection, in the midst of a magnificent collection of works from all periods, among the Rembrandts and the Rubenses, and I marveled at the magisterial way in which it equaled its neighbors” (“Édouard Manet vu par Henri Matisse,” interview with E. T[ériade], *L’Intransigeant*, Jan. 25, 1932). (Ce tableau est l’un des plus beaux de Manet. Je l’ai vu à Philadelphie dans la collection Widener, au milieu d’une magnifique collection d’oeuvres de toutes époques, entre des Rembrandt et des Rubens, et il m’a émerveillé par la façon magistrale avec laquelle il égalait ses voisins.)

For Greenberg, of course, Modernism is not a break with the past but rather “a ‘dialectical’ turn that works to maintain or restore continuity: a most essential continuity: continuity with the highest esthetic standards of the past. It’s not particular past styles, manners, or modes that are to be maintained or restored, but standards, levels of quality. And these levels are to be preserved in the same way in which they were achieved in the first place: by constant renewal and innovation” (“Necessity of Formalism,” *New Literary History* 3 [autumn 1971]: 172).

Significantly, Zola claimed in 1867 that when the viewer embraced in a single gaze all the works in Manet’s one-man exhibition, “‘you find that those diverse works hold together, that they complete one another, that they represent an enormous sum of analysis and vigor’” (“Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 155). (The “you” in question is a “skeptic” to whom Zola’s remarks are ostensibly addressed.) (Quand vous embrassez d’un regard toutes les toiles à la fois, vous trouvez que ces oeuvres diverses se tiennent, se complètent, qu’elles représentent une somme énorme d’analyse et de vigueur.) A year earlier he had written: “I believe a masterly work is a whole that holds together, an expression of one heart and one flesh” (“Mon Salon,” *Écrits sur l’art*, p. 134). (Je crois qu’une oeuvre de maître est un tout qui se tient, une expression d’un coeur et d’une chair.) Cf. Champfleury’s remarks about Manet’s one-man exhibition in a letter to Zola of June 7, 1867: “I was struck most of all by the *holding power* of works conceived at different times. From the first canvas to the last there was absolute cohesion, which [even] for skeptics disproves all notion of [Manet’s faces being merely] *masks*, about which so much has been said” (cited in Émile Zola, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mitterrand, 15 vols. [Paris, 1966–69], 12 [1969]: 1057–58). (J’ai été frappé surtout par la *tenue* des oeuvres conçues à diverses époques. De la première toile à la dernière, il y a cohésion absolue, ce qui pour les sceptiques éloigne toute idée de *masque* dont on a beaucoup parlé.)

For his part, Mallarmé in 1874 defended Manet’s *Hirondelles* against the charge of being not being sufficiently finished by saying: “What is a work ‘not sufficiently finished’ when there exists among all its elements an accord by virtue of which it holds together and possesses a charm easily broken by an added touch?” (“Le Jury de peinture pour 1874 et M. Manet,” *Oeuvres complètes*, p. 698)—a formulation in line with contemporary discussions of the Impressionist’s pursuit of “decorative unity.” (Qu’est-ce qu’une oeuvre “pas assez poussée” alors qu’il y a entre tous ses éléments un accord par quoi elle se tient et possède un charme facile à rompre par une touch ajoutée?)

19. The entire passage reads: “To understand Manet’s genius, the nineteenth century would have required ten years more than usual, for in Manet there is nothing but good painting, and there is nothing that the nineteenth century dislikes as much as good painting. In Whistler there is an exquisite and inveigling sense of beauty; in Degas there is an extraordinary acute criticism of life, and so the least brutal section of the public ended by

pardoning Whistler his brush-work, and Degas his beautiful drawing. But in Manet there is nothing but good painting, and it is therefore possible that he might have lived till he was eighty without obtaining recognition. Death alone could accomplish the miracle of opening the public's eyes to his merits. During his life the excuse given for the constant persecution waged against him by the 'authorities' was his excessive originality. But this was mere subterfuge; what was really hated—what made him so unpopular—was the extraordinary beauty of his handling. Whatever he painted became beautiful—his hand was dowered with the gift of quality, and there his art began and ended. His painting of still life never has been exceeded, and never will be. I remember a pear that used to hang in his studio. Hals would have taken his hat off to it" (*Modern Painting* [London and New York, 1898], pp. 29–30).

As a young man Moore had gone to Paris to study painting; there he met Manet (who painted his portrait) and other advanced artists and writers, before returning to London to begin his career as a writer. See his *Confessions of a Young Man*, ed. Susan Dick (1889; Montreal and London, 1972), esp. pp. 104–5.

20. *Modern Painting*, p. 33. Cf. Walter Darby Bannard on the contemporary abstract painter Jules Olitski: "I think Olitski puts us to the test more than other painters. I say this based on the modernist premise that excellence in art exists apart from style, depiction or any quality which can be put into words. . . . A painting is a good painting by virtue of *how* not *what*. It is a good painting because of the way the artist painted it. This is as true for Olitski as it was for Vermeer. The reason either painting is a good painting arises entirely from how it was painted. . . . Olitski is an extreme modernist, perhaps the most highly evolved modernist we have, because his paintings so completely exemplify the modernist concept that one can do anything at all with paint as long as the result is a good painting" ("Jules Olitski at the New Gallery," exhib. cat. [Miami, Fla.: The New Gallery, University of Miami, Feb. 25–Mar. 25, 1994], n.p.).

21. The best pages ever written on Manet's (later) technique are by Blanche in his *Manet* (pp. 10–12, 15–16, and passim). For Blanche too Manet was "nothing but a painter" (p. 27). (Rien que peintre, Manet était un homme trop simple, trop peu concerté; nous croyons même qu'il était inconscient de sa propre étrangeté.) "Manet, who only redid well-known old paintings," he wrote in the context of a comparison with Degas, "then developed in his own manner the researches of the Impressionists, wanting to please everyone, and without higher ambitions, an ordinary intelligence, if you wish (like the simple Corot?), Manet dominated his epoch" (p. 56). Even allowing for a certain rhetorical excess, this doesn't seem to fit the inventor of the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, *Execution of Maximilian*, and *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*.

22. Cf. my statement in chapter 1: "Whatever conventions of painting had changed, however the essence of painting may have changed over the centuries . . . the success or failure as art of a new work ultimately depended (as it ultimately depends) on the ability of that work to stand comparison with the art of the Old Masters." My reference to the essence of painting having changed over time is meant to escape the "reductionist" essentialism of Greenberg's views as I had come to understand them (see Fried, "Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings" [originally published in *Artforum* in 1966], in *New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940–1970*, ed. Henry Geldzahler (New York, 1969), p. 422, n. 11; and *idem*, "Art and Objecthood," pp. 123–24, n. 4). The latter note includes the statement: "Moreover, seeing something as a painting in the sense that one sees [a blank] tacked-up canvas as a painting, and being convinced that a particular work can stand comparison with the painting of the past whose quality is not in doubt, are altogether different experiences: it is, I want to say, as though unless something compels conviction

as to its quality it is no more than trivially or nominally a painting." (Again, the context involved distinguishing my views from Greenberg's.) In other words, by 1966–67 I had repudiated the notion of the "intrinsically pictorial" while insisting on the primacy of "esthetic" judgment in distinguishing between merely nominal paintings and paintings that (to adapt a formulation in the same note) truly deserve the name. (In contrast, see my reference to "problems intrinsic to painting" in the long footnote on Manet from *Three American Painters* [1965], cited here in the introduction, n. 62.)

The issues in question are reconsidered by Thierry de Duve in "The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas," a critique of Greenberg (whose writings he treats with exemplary care) and of "Art and Objecthood." This is not the place for even a cursory discussion of de Duve's analysis. But it is noteworthy that he accepts what he calls the Formalist criterion of discovering via "esthetic" judgment whether a given work "stands up to a comparison with the art of the past" even as he attempts to show that that criterion is satisfied by Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, a work both Greenberg and I would tend to see as subverting the insistence upon "quality" whose historical origins I have been trying to specify. Incidentally, de Duve believes that with the Salon des Refusés "the aesthetic judgment was structurally cast into the binary form 'either/or,' substituting for the continuous scale of 'taste'" and that "the ubiquity of the paradigm of refusal (together with the very existence of public salons) [were] largely responsible for the fact that the phenomenon of the avant-garde was born in France" (p. 310, n. 97). My reading of the pertinent texts suggests, however, that a criticism based on "the continuous scale of 'taste'" came into being only in the wake of Impressionism, which is not to say that de Duve is wrong to associate the rise of the avant-garde at least partly with a critical binarism that was strongly in evidence throughout Manet's career. But Greenberg, for example, has insisted on continuousness in statements such as the following: "Aesthetic evaluating means, much more often than not, making distinctions of extent or degree, of more or less. Relatively seldom does it mean a flat either-or, a yes or no, a guilty or not guilty. Aesthetic judging tends to mean shading and grading, even measuring—though not with quantitative precision, but rather in the sense of comparing (and there's no refining of aesthetic sensibility without exercises in comparing)" ("Seminar One," *Arts Magazine* 48 [Nov. 1973]: 45). Moreover, it's important to recognize that the binary (or *agonistic*) form of esthetic judgment was a staple of the antitheatrical tradition from the outset, for the simple reason that the question of a given work's or artist's relation to the issue of antitheatricality tended not to produce subtly qualified responses (cf. the antithetical evaluations of Millet surveyed in chapter 3). Indeed it was precisely the fact that the issue of antitheatricality conduced to an intensely agonistic stance on the part of critics and painters toward much of the painting both of the recent past and of their own time that largely accounts for the extraordinary efficacy of that issue as the tradition's hidden "motor" (see e.g. Alfred Sensier's account of the young Millet's repugnance toward the "theatrical" paintings of his first teacher, Paul Delaroche, and of the modern French art then on view in the Luxembourg [*La Vie et l'oeuvre de J.-F. Millet* (Paris, 1881)], pp. 53–54). The tradition itself, its development or evolution, was to that extent the sum total of countless acts, not exactly of negation, but of opposition to other art, in the name of an ideal that seemed to be exactly what that art traduced.