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MORISOT'S WET NURSE

*The Construction of Work and Leisure in
Impressionist Painting*

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Tant de clairs tableaux irisés, ici, exacts, primesautiers. . . .—Stéphane Mallarmé¹

Berthe Morisot's *Wet Nurse and Julie* [1] of 1879 is an extraordinary painting.² Even in the context of an oeuvre in which formal daring is relatively unexceptional, this work is outstanding. "All that is solid melts into air"—Karl Marx's memorable phrase, made under rather different circumstances, could have been designed for the purpose of encapsulating Morisot's painting in a nutshell.³ Nothing is left of the conventions of pictorial construction: figure versus background, solid form versus atmosphere, detailed description versus sketchy suggestion, the usual complexities of composition or narration. All are abandoned for a composition almost disconcerting in its three-part simplicity; a facture so open, so dazzlingly unfettered as to constitute a challenge to readability; and a colorism so daring, so synoptic in its rejection of traditional strategies of modeling as to be almost Fauve before the fact.⁴

Morisot's *Wet Nurse* is equally innovative in its subject matter. For this is not the old motif of the Madonna and Child, updated and secularized, as

it is in a work like Renoir's *Aline Nursing* or in many of the mother-and-child paintings by the other prominent woman member of the Impressionist group, Mary Cassatt. It is, surprisingly enough, a work scene. The "mother" in the scene is not a real mother but a so-called *seconde mère*, or wet nurse, and she is feeding the child not out of "natural" nurturing instinct but for wages, as a member of a flourishing industry.⁵ And the artist painting her, whose gaze defines her, whose active brush articulates her form, is not, as is usually the case, a man, but a woman, the woman whose child is being nursed. Certainly, this painting embodies one of the most unusual circumstances in the history of art—perhaps a unique one: a woman painting another woman nursing her baby. Or, to put it another way, introducing what is not seen but what is known into what is visible, two working women confront each other here, across the body of "their" child and the boundaries of class, both with claims to motherhood and mothering, both, one assumes, engaged in pleasurable activity which, at the same time, may be considered production in the literal sense of the word. What might be considered a mere use value if the painting was produced by a mere amateur, the milk produced for the nourishment of one's own child,

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is now to be understood as an exchange value. In both cases—the milk, the painting—a product is being produced or created for a market, for profit.

Once we know this, when we look at the picture again we may find that the openness, the disembodiment, the reduction of the figures of nurse and nursing almost to caricature, to synoptic adumbration, may be the signs of erasure, of tension, of the conscious or unconscious occlusion of a painful and disturbing reality as well as the signs of daring and pleasure—or perhaps these signs, under the circumstances, may be identical, inseparable from each other. One might say that this representation of the classical topos of the maternal body poignantly inscribes Morisot's conflicted identity as devoted mother and as professional artist, two roles which, in nineteenth-century discourse, were defined as mutually exclusive. *The Wet Nurse*, then, turns out to be much more complicated than it seemed to be at first, and its stimulating ambiguities may have as much to do with the contradictions involved in contemporary mythologies of work and leisure, and the way that ideologies of gender intersect with these paired

notions, as they do with Morisot's personal feelings and attitudes.

Reading *The Wet Nurse* as a work scene inevitably leads me to locate it within the representation of the thematics of work in nineteenth-century painting, particularly that of the woman worker. It also raises the issue of the status of work as a motif in Impressionist painting—its presence or absence as a viable theme for the group of artists which counted Morisot as an active member. And I will also want to examine the particular profession of wet-nursing itself as it relates to the subject of Morisot's canvas.

How was work positioned in the advanced art of the later nineteenth century, at the time when Morisot painted this picture? Generally in the art of this period, work, as Robert Herbert has noted,⁶ was represented by the rural laborer, usually the male peasant engaged in productive labor on the farm. This iconography reflected a certain statistical truth, since most of the working population of France at the time was, in fact, engaged in farm work. Although representations of the male farm worker predominated, this is not to say



2. Giovanni Segantini, *The Two Mothers*, detail, 1868. Milan, Galleria d'Arte Moderna.

that the female rural laborer was absent from French painting of the second half of the nineteenth century. Millet often represented peasant women at work at domestic tasks like spinning or churning, and Jules Breton specialized in scenes of idealized peasant women working in the fields. But it is nevertheless significant that in the quintessential representation of the labor of the female peasant, Millet's *Gleaners*, women are represented engaged not in productive labor—that is, working for profit, for the market—but rather for sheer personal survival—that is, for the nurturance of themselves and their children, picking up what is left over after the productive labor of the harvest is finished.⁷ The *glaneuses* are thus assimilated to the realm of the natural—rather like animals that forage to feed themselves and their young—rather than to that of the social, to the realm of productive labor. This assimilation of the peasant woman to the position of the natural and the nurturant is made startlingly clear in a painting like Giovanni Segantini's *Two Mothers* [2], which makes a visual analogy between cow and woman as instinctive nurturers of their young.

Work occupies an ambiguous position in the representational systems of Impressionism, the movement to which Morisot was irrevocably connected; or one might say that acknowledgment of the presence of work themes in Impressionism has until recently been repressed in favor of discourses stressing the movement's "engagement with themes of urban leisure."⁸ Meyer Schapiro, above all, in two important articles of the 1930s, laid down the basic notion of Impressionism as a representation of middle-class leisure, sociability, and recreation depicted from the viewpoint of the enlightened, sensually alert middle-class consumer.⁹ One could contravene this contention by pointing to a body of Impressionist works that do, in fact, continue the tradition of representing rural labor initiated in the previous generation by Courbet and Millet and popularized in more sentimental form by Breton and Bastien-Lepage. Pissarro, particularly, continued to develop the motif of the peasant, particularly the laboring or resting peasant woman, and that of the market woman in both Impressionist and Neo-Impressionist vocabularies,

right down through the 1880s. Berthe Morisot herself turned to the theme of rural labor several times: once in *The Haymaker*, a beautiful preparatory drawing for a larger decorative composition; again, in a little painting, *In the Wheat Field*, of 1875; and still another time (more ambiguously, because the rural "workers" in question, far from being peasants, are her daughter, Julie, and her niece Jeanne picking cherries) in *The Cherry Tree* of 1891–92.¹⁰ Certainly, one could point to a significant body of Impressionist work representing urban or suburban labor. Degas did a whole series of ironers;¹¹ Caillebotte depicted floor scrapers and house painters; and Morisot herself turned at least twice to the theme of the laundress: once in *Laundresses Hanging Out the Wash* [3] of 1875, a lyrical canvas of commercial laundresses plying their trade in the environs of the city, painted with a synoptic lightness that seems to belie the laboriousness of the theme; and another time in *Woman Hanging the Washing* [4], of 1881, a close-up view where the rectangularity of the linens seems wittily to reiterate the shape and texture of the canvas, the laundress to suggest the work of the woman artist herself. Clearly, then, the Impressionists by no means totally avoided the representation of work.

To speak more generally, however, interpreting Impressionism as a movement constituted primarily by the representation of leisure has to do as much with a particular characterization of labor as with the iconography of the Impressionist movement. In the ideological constructions of the French Third Republic, as I have already pointed out, work was epitomized by the notion of rural labor, in the time-honored, physically demanding, naturally ordained tasks of peasants on the land. The equally demanding physical effort of ballet dancing, represented by Degas, with its hours of practice, its strains, its endless repetition and sweat, was constructed as something else, something different: as art or entertainment. Of course this construction has something to do with the way entertainment represents itself: often the whole point of the work of dancing is to make it look as though it is not work, that it is spontaneous and easy.

3. Berthe Morisot, *Laundresses Hanging Out the Wash*, 1875. Washington, D.C., National Gallery, Mellon Collection.



But there is a still more interesting general point to be made about Impressionism and its reputed affinity with themes of leisure and pleasure. It is the tendency to conflate woman's work—whether it be her work in the service or entertainment industries or, above all, her work in the home—with the notion of leisure itself. As a result, our notion of the iconography of work, framed as it is by the stereotype of the peasant in the fields or the weaver at his loom, tends to exclude such subjects as the barmaid or the beer server from the category of the work scene and position them instead as representations of leisure. One might even say, looking at such paintings as Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* or his *Beer Server* from the vantage point of the new women's history, that middle- and upper-class men's leisure is sustained and enlivened by the labor of women: entertainment and service workers like those represented by Manet.¹² It is also clear that these representations position women workers—barmaid or beer server—in such a way that they seem to be there to be looked at—visually consumed, as it were—by a male viewer. In the *Beer Server* of

1878, for example, the busy waitress looks out alertly at the clientele, while the relaxed male in the foreground—ironically a worker himself, identifiable by his blue smock—stares placidly at the woman performer, half visible, doing her act on the stage. The work of café waitresses or performers, like those represented by Degas in his pastels of café concerts, is often connected to their sexuality or, more specifically, the sex industry of the time, whether marginally or centrally, full time or part time. What women, specifically lower-class women, had to sell in the city was mainly their bodies. A comparison of Manet's *Ball at the Opera*—denominated by the German critic Julius Meier-Graefe as a *Fleischbörse*, or flesh market—with Degas's *Cotton Market in New Orleans* makes it clear that work, rather than being an objective or logical category, is an evaluative or even a moral one. Men's leisure is produced and maintained by women's work, disguised to look like pleasure. The concept of work under the French Third Republic was constructed in terms of what that society or its leaders stipulated as good, productive activity, generally conceived of



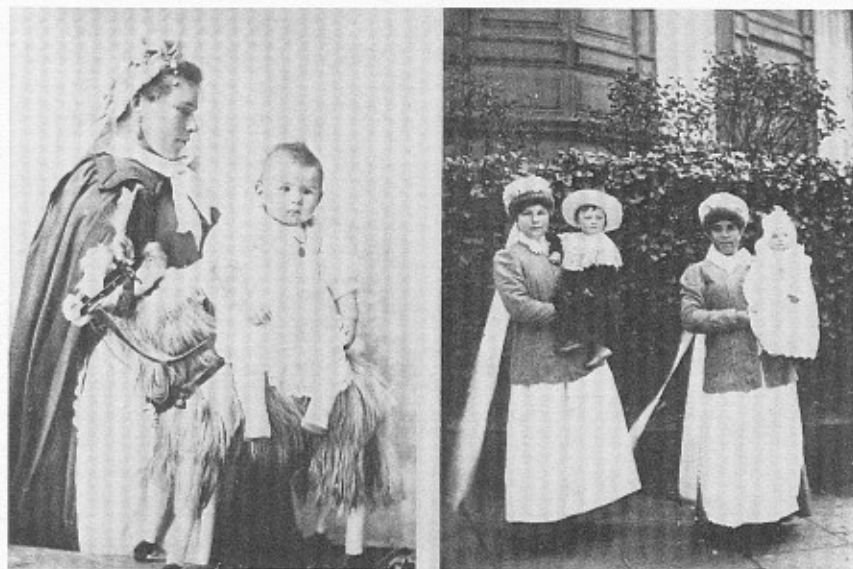
4. Berthe Morisot,
*Woman Hanging the
Washing*, 1881.
Copenhagen, Ny
Carlsberg Glyptotek.

as wage-earning or capital production. Women's selling of their bodies for wages did not fall under the moral rubric of work; it was constructed as something else: as vice or recreation. Prostitutes (ironically, referred to colloquially as "working girls" today), a subject often represented by Degas, like the businessmen represented in his *Members of the Stock Exchange*, are of course engaging in a type of commercial activity. But nobody has ever thought to call the prints from Degas's monotype series of brothel representations "work scenes," despite the fact that prostitutes, like wet nurses and barmaids and laundresses, were an important part of the work force of the great modern city in the nineteenth century, and in Paris, at this time, a highly regulated, government-supervised form of labor.¹³

If prostitution was excluded from the realm of honest work because it involved women selling their bodies, motherhood and the domestic labor of child care were excluded from the realm of work precisely because they were unpaid. Woman's nurturing role was seen as part of her natural function, not as labor. The wet nurse [5],

then, is something of an anomaly in the nineteenth-century scheme of feminine labor. She is like the prostitute in that she sells her body, or its product, for profit and her client's satisfaction; but, unlike the prostitute, she sells her body for a virtuous cause. She is at once a mother—*seconde mère, remplaçant*—and an employee. She is performing one of woman's "natural" functions, but she is performing it as work, for pay, in a way that is eminently not natural but overtly social in its construction.

To understand Morisot's *Wet Nurse and Julie*, one has to locate the profession of wet-nursing within the context of nineteenth-century social and cultural history. Wet-nursing constituted a large-scale industry in France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century, members of the urban artisan and shopkeeping classes usually sent their children out to be nursed by women in the country so that wives would be free to work. So large was the *industrie nourricière* and so patent the violations of sanitation, so high the mortality rate and so unsteady the financial arrangements involved that the gov-



5. Anonymous photograph, wet nurses in a public park about 1900.

ernment stepped in to regulate the industry in 1874 with the so-called Loi Roussel, which supervised wet nurses and their clients on a nationwide basis.¹⁴ Members of the aristocracy or upper bourgeoisie such as Berthe Morisot, however, did not have to resort to this “regulated” industry. They usually hired a *nourrice sur lieu*, or live-in wet nurse, who accompanied the infant, took it to the park, and comforted it—but was there mainly to provide the baby with nourishment.¹⁵ The omnipresence of the wet nurse in the more fashionable purlieu of Parisian society is indicated in Degas’s *Carriage at the Races* [6], where the Valpinçons, husband and wife, are accompanied by their dog, by their son and heir, Henri, and by the veritable star of the piece, the wet nurse, depicted in the act of feeding the baby.¹⁶ A foreign painter like the Finnish Albert Edelfelt, when depicting the charms of Parisian upper-class life, quite naturally included the wet nurse in his *Luxembourg Gardens*, a painting of 1887 now in the Antell Collection in Helsinki; and Georges Seurat incorporated the figure, severely geometrized, into the cross section of French society he represented in *A Sunday on the Island of La Grande-Jatte*.

The wet nurse was, on the one hand, considered the most “spoiled” servant in the house and, at

the same time, the most closely watched and supervised. She was in some ways considered more like a highly prized milch cow than a human being. Although she was relatively highly paid for her services, often bringing home 1,200 to 1,800 francs per campaign—her salary ranked just under that of the *cordon bleu* chef¹⁷—and was often presented with clothing and other valuable gifts, her diet, though plentiful and choice, was carefully monitored and her sex life was brought to a halt; and of course, she had to leave her own baby at home in the care of her own mother or another family member.¹⁸

The wet nurse was always a country woman, and generally from a specific region of the country: the Morvan, for instance, was considered prime wet-nurse territory.¹⁹ Wet-nursing was the way poor country women with few valuable skills could make a relatively large sum of money: selling their services to well-off urban families. The analogy with today’s surrogate mothers makes itself felt immediately, except that the wet nurse was not really the subject of any moral discourse about exploitation; on the contrary: although some doctors and child-care specialists complained about the fact that natural mothers refused to take nature’s way and breast-feed their children them-

selves, in general they preferred a healthy wet nurse to a nervous new mother. Few upper-class women in the later nineteenth century would have dreamed of breast-feeding their own children; and only a limited proportion of women of the artisan class, who had to work themselves or who lived in crowded quarters, had the chance to do so. If Renoir proudly represented his wife nursing their son Jean, it was not because it was so "natural" for her to do so, but perhaps because, on the contrary, it was not. Renoir's wife, in any case, was not of the same social class as Berthe Morisot; she was of working-class origin. Berthe Morisot, then, was being perfectly "natural" within the perimeters of her class in hiring a wet nurse. It would not be considered neglectful and certainly would not have to be excused by the fact that she was a serious professional painter: it was simply what people of her social station did.

The wet nurse, in various aspects of her career, was frequently represented in popular visual culture, and her image appeared often in the press or in genre paintings dealing with the typical trades

or professions of the capital. A forgotten painter of the later nineteenth century, José de Frappa, in his *Bureau de Nourrice* [7] depicted the medical examination of potential wet nurses in an employment bureau. Husband, mother-in-law, and doctor evidently participated in the choice of a candidate. Wet-nursing was frequently the subject of humorous caricatures right down to the beginning of the twentieth century, when sterilization and pasteurization enabled mothers to substitute the newly hygienic bottle for the human breast—and thereby gave rise to cartoons dealing with the wet nurse attempting to compete with her replacement.²⁰ With her ruffled, beribboned cap and jacket or cape, she was frequently depicted in illustrations of fashionable parks, where she aired her charges, or in those of upper-class households. Her characteristic form could even serve to illustrate the letter *N*—for *nourrice*—in a children's alphabet. Degas, like Seurat, was evidently struck by the typical back view of this familiar figure and sketched it in one of his notebooks.

Morisot is not, of course, in her paintings of her



6. Edgar Degas, *Carriage at the Races*, 1869. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.



7. José de Frappa, *Bureau de Nourrice*.

daughter and her wet nurse²¹ creating a sociological document of a particular kind of work or even a genre scene of some engaging incident involved in wet-nursing. Both Julie and her wet nurse serve as motifs in highly original Impressionist paintings, and their specificity as documents of social practice is hardly of conscious interest to the creator of the paintings, who is intent on creating an equivalent for her perceptions through visual qualities of color, brushwork, light, shape—or the deconstruction of shape—and atmosphere. Nor do we think of Morisot as primarily a painter of work scenes; she was, indeed, one of those artists of the later nineteenth century—like Whistler and Manet, among others—who helped construct a specific iconography of leisure, figured by young and attractive women, whose role was simply to be there, for the painter, as a languid and self-absorbed object of aesthetic contemplation—a kind of human still life. Her *Portrait of Mme Marie Hubbard* of 1874 and *Young Girl Reclining* of 1893 are notable examples of this genre. Morisot

is associated, quite naturally, not with work scenes, however ambiguous, but rather with the representation of domestic life, mothers, or, more rarely, fathers—specifically her husband, Eugène Manet—and daughters engaged in recreation [8]. This father-and-daughter motif is, like the theme of the wet nurse, an unusual one in the annals of Impressionist painting, and one with its own kinds of demands. Male Impressionists who, like Morisot, turned to the domestic world around them for subject matter, painted their wives and children as a matter of course. Here is a case where being a woman artist makes an overt difference: Morisot, in turning to her closest relatives, paints a father and child. She depicts her husband and daughter doing something concrete—playing with a boat and sketching or playing with toy houses—and with a vaguely masculine air.

Despite the fact that scenes of leisure, languor, and recreation are prominent in Morisot's oeuvre, there is another way we might think of work in relation to her production. The notion of the work

of painting itself is never disconnected from her art and is perhaps allegorized in various toilette scenes in which women's self-preparation and adornment stand for the art of painting or subtly refer to it.²² A simultaneous process of looking and creating are prime elements of a woman's toilette as well as picture-making, and sensual pleasure as well as considerable effort is involved in both. One could even go further and assert that in both—maquillage and painting—a private creation is being prepared for public approbation.

Painting was work of the utmost seriousness for Morisot. She was, as the recent exhibition catalogue of her work reveals to us,²³ unsparing of herself, perpetually dissatisfied, often destroying works or groups of works that did not satisfy her high standards. Her mother observed that when-

ever she worked, she had an "anxious, unhappy, almost fierce look," adding, "This existence of hers is like the ordeal of a convict in chains."²⁴

There is another sense in which Morisot's oeuvre may be associated with the work of painting: the way in which the paintings reveal the act of working which creates them, are sparkling, invigorating, and totally uneffortful-looking registers of the process of painting itself. In the best of them, color and brushstroke are the deliberately revealed point of the picture: they are, so to speak, works about work, in which the work of looking and registering the process of looking in paint on canvas or pastel on paper assumes an importance almost unparalleled in the annals of painting. One might almost say that the work of painting is not so strongly revealed until the time of the late



8. Berthe Morisot, *Eugène Manet and His Daughter, Julie, in the Garden*, 1883. Private collection.



Monet or even that of Abstract Expressionism, although for the latter, of course, looking and registering were not the issue.²⁵

Even when Morisot looked at herself, as in her 1885 *Self-Portrait with Julie*, boldly, on unprimed canvas, or in her pastel *Self-Portrait* [9] of the same year, the work of painting or marking was primary. These are in no sense flattering or even conventionally penetrating self-portraits: they are, especially the pastel version, working records of an appearance, deliberate in their telling asymmetries, their revelation of brushwork or marking, unusual above all for their omissions, their selective recording of a motif that happens to be the author's face. The pastel *Self-Portrait* is almost painfully moving. It is no wonder that critics sometimes found her work too sketchy, unfinished, bold to the point of indecipherability. Referring to two of her pastels, for example, Charles Ephrussi declared: "One step further and it will be



9. Berthe Morisot, *Self-Portrait*, 1885. Art Institute of Chicago.

10. Berthe Morisot, *Girl with a Greyhound (Julie Manet)*, 1893. Paris, Musée Marmottan.

impossible to distinguish or understand anything at all."²⁶

In her late *Girl with a Greyhound* [10], a portrait of Julie with a dog and an empty chair, painted in 1893, Morisot dissolves the chair into a vision of evanescent lightness: a work of omission, of almost nothingness. Compared with it, Van Gogh's famous *Gauguin's Chair* looks heavy, solid, and a little overwrought. Yet Morisot's chair is moving, too. Its ghostliness and disembodiment remind us that it was painted shortly after her husband's death, perhaps as an emblem of his absent presence within the space of his daughter's portrait. And perhaps for us, who know that she painted this at the end of her life, it may constitute a moving yet self-effacing prophecy of her own impending death, an almost unconscious means of establishing—lightly, only in terms of the work itself—her presence within an image representing, for the last time, her beloved only child.

In insisting on the importance of work, specifically the traces of manual activity, in Morisot's production, I am not suggesting that Morisot's work was the same as the onerous physical labor involved in farm work or the routine mechanical efforts of the factory hand—nor that it was identical with the relatively mindless and constricted duties of the wet nurse. We can, however, see certain connections: in a consideration of both the work of the wet nurse and that of the woman artist the element of gender asserts itself. Most critics both then and now have emphasized Morisot's gender; her femininity was constructed from an essentialist viewpoint as delicacy, instinctiveness, naturalness, playfulness—a construction implying certain natural gendered lacks or failures: lack of depth, of substance, professionalism or leadership, for instance. Why else has Morisot always been considered as somehow a secondary Impressionist, despite her exemplary fidelity to the movement and its aims? Why has her very flouting of the traditional "laws" of painting been seen as a weakness rather than a strength, a failure or lack of knowledge and ability rather than a daring transgression? Why should the disintegration of form characteristic of her best work not be considered

a vital questioning of Impressionism from within, a "making strange" of its more conventional practices? And if we consider that erosion of form to be a complexly mediated inscription of internalized conflict—motherhood versus profession—then surely this should be taken as seriously as the more highly acclaimed psychic dramas of male artists of the period: Van Gogh's struggle with his madness; Cézanne's with a turbulent sexuality; Gauguin's with the countering urgencies of sophistication and primitivism.

I would like to end as I began, with Karl Marx's memorable phrase: "All that is solid melts into air." But now I would like to consider the whole passage, from the *Communist Manifesto*, from which I (and Marshall Berman, author of a book titled by that passage) extracted it. Here is the whole passage: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify: All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face . . . the real conditions of their lives and their relations with their fellow men."²⁷

I am not in any sense suggesting that Morisot was a political or even a social revolutionary—far from it. But I am saying that her strange, fluid, unclassifiable, and contradiction-laden image *Wet Nurse and Julie* inscribes many of those characteristic features of modernism and modernity that Marx is of course referring to in his celebrated passage—above all, modernism's profoundly deconstructive project. Sweeping away "all fixed and frozen relations with their accompanying prejudices and opinions"—this is certainly Morisot's project as well. And in some way too, she is in this picture, being forced to face, at the same time that it is impossible for her fully to face, the real condition of her life and her relations with a fellow woman. Thinking of Marx's words, looking at Morisot's painting, I sense these real conditions hovering on the surface of the canvas, a surface as yet not fully explored, untested but still potentially threatening to "ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions"—about the nature of work, about gender, and about painting itself.

NOTES

1. Preface to the catalogue of the posthumous exhibition of Berthe Morisot's paintings, Durand-Ruel Gallery, Paris, March 5-23, 1896.
2. The painting was exhibited under the title *Nourrice et bébé* (Wet Nurse and Baby) at the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition of 1880. It is also known under the title *La Nourrice Angèle allaitant Julie Manet* (The Wet Nurse Angèle Feeding Julie Manet) and *Nursing*. See the exhibition catalogue *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1986, No. 110, p. 366, and Charles F. Stuckey and William P. Scott, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Kimball Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 1987-88, Fig. 41, p. 89 and p. 88.
3. Karl Marx's statement may be found in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: Norton, 1978), p. 476.
4. The critic Gustave Geffroy responded to the *Wet Nurse's* unique qualities when he reviewed Morisot's work from the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition in *La Justice* of April 21, 1881, by waxing lyrical: "The forms are always vague in Berthe Morisot's paintings, but a strange life animates them. The artist has found the means to fix the play of colors, the quivering between things and the air that envelops them. . . . Pink, pale green, faintly gilded light sings with an inexpressible harmony." Cited in *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886*, p. 366.
5. Indeed, one might suspect that the unusual sketchiness and rapidity of the brushwork may have had something to do with Morisot's haste to complete her painting within the course of a single nursing session. Nevertheless, she obviously did not consider the painting a mere preparatory study, since she exhibited it in public as a finished work.
6. Robert Herbert, "City vs. Country: The Rural Image in French Painting from Millet to Gauguin," *Artforum* 8 (February 1970): 44-55.
7. See Jean-Claude Chamboredon, "Peintures des rapports sociaux et invention de l'éternel paysan: Les deux manières de Jean-François Millet," *Actes de la recherche et sciences sociales*, Nos. 17-18 (November 1977): 6-28.
8. Thomas Crow, "Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts," in *Modernism and Modernity: The Vancouver Conference Papers*, ed. Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, Serge Guilbaut, and David Solkin, Nova Scotia, The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983, p. 226.
9. See Meyer Schapiro, "The Social Bases of Art," in *Proceedings of the First Artists' Congress against War and Fascism*, New York, 1936, pp. 31-37, and "The Nature of Abstract Art," *The Marxist Quarterly* I (January 1937): 77-98, reprinted in Schapiro, *Modern Art: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: George Braziller), especially pp. 192-93.
10. For an illustration of *The Haymaker*, see *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, colorplate 93, p. 159; for *In the Wheatfield*, Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987), Fig. 89; and *The Cherry Tree*, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, colorplate 89, p. 153.
11. For a detailed discussion of Degas's ironers and laundresses, see Eunice Lipton, *Looking into Degas: Uneasy Images of Women and Modern Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 116-50.
12. For the role of the barmaid in French nineteenth-century society and iconography, see T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 205-58, and Novalene Ross, *Manet's "Bar at the Folies-Bergère" and the Myths of Popular Illustration* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982).
13. For information about government regulation of prostitution, see Alain Corbin, *Les Filles de noce: Misère sexuelle et prostitution aux 19e et 20e siècles* (Paris, 1978); for the representation of prostitution in the art of the later nineteenth century, see Hollis Clayson, "Avant-Garde and Pompier Images of 19th Century French Prostitution: The Matter of Modernism, Modernity and Social Ideology," in *Modernism and Modernity*, pp. 43-64. Meier-Graefe uses the term "Fleischbörse" in *Édouard Manet* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1912), p. 216.
14. For the Roussel Law of December 23, 1874, see George D. Sussman, *Selling Mothers' Milk: The Wet-Nursing Business in France: 1715-1914* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), pp. 128-29 and 166-67.
15. For an excellent examination of the role of the wet nurse in the nineteenth century, focusing on the *nourrice sur lieu* and including an analysis of the medical discourse surrounding the issue of maternal breast-feeding, see Fanny Faÿ-Sallois, *Les Nourrices à Paris au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Payot, 1980).
16. I am grateful to Paul Tucker for pointing out the presence of the wet nurse in this painting.
17. Faÿ-Sallois, *Les Nourrices à Paris au XIXe siècle*, p. 201.
18. For the figures of the wages cited, see Sussman, *Selling Mothers' Milk: The Wet-Nursing Business in France: 1715-1914*, p. 155, and for the salary of the live-in wet nurse and her treatment generally, see Faÿ-Sallois, *Les Nourrices à Paris au XIXe siècle*, pp. 200-39.
19. Sussman, *Selling Mothers' Milk: The Wet-Nursing*

Business in France: 1715–1914, pp. 152–54.

20. See, particularly, the vicious cartoon depicting a wet nurse attempting to boil her breast in emulation of bottle sterilization, published by Fay-Salloy, *Les Nourrices à Paris au XIXe siècle*, p. 247. Other interesting cartoons featuring wet-nursing and the practices associated with it appear on pp. 172–73, p. 188, and p. 249 of this work, which is amply illustrated.

21. There are at least two other works by Morisot representing her daughter, Julie, and her wet nurse: an oil painting, *Julie with Her Nurse*, 1880, now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, reproduced as Fig. 68 in Adler and Garb, *Berthe Morisot*; and a watercolor entitled *Luncheon in the Country* of 1879, in which the wet nurse and baby are seated at a table with a young boy, probably Morisot's nephew Marcel Gobillard, reproduced as Colorplate 32, p. 77, in Stuckey and Scott, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*.

22. See, for example, *Woman at Her Toilette*, ca. 1879,

in the Art Institute of Chicago or *Young Woman Powdering Her Face* of 1877, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

23. Charles Stuckey and William Scott, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 1987–88.

24. Stuckey and Scott, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, p. 187.

25. See, for example, Charles Stuckey's assertion that, in the case of *Wet Nurse and Julie*, "it is difficult to think of a comparably active paint surface by any painter before the advent of Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s." *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, p. 88.

26. Cited in Stuckey and Scott, *Berthe Morisot: Impressionist*, p. 88.

27. Cited by Marshall Berman in *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982), p. 21.