Everyday Life in Motion: The Art of Walking in Late-Nineteenth-Century Paris

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Ambulare, postea laborare.
—Edgar Degas to Bartholomé, [1883][1]

Always a city for walking, Paris became much more conspicuously so during the second half of the nineteenth century, as Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann's urban reconstruction program of the 1850s and 1860s opened up boulevards, bridges, squares, and other public spaces to traffic and to view.[2] With both its viability and its visibility improved by that spatial reordering, walking emerged as a significant pictorial theme in mid- to late-nineteenth-century Paris. In recording the altered look of the city, painters also aimed to depict the everyday practices through which human life renegotiated its relation to the city. Walking constituted one such practice. Its thematization in art focused not simply on the *flâneur*'s specialized stroll but on pedestrian activity as a wide-ranging modality of lived experience. That heightened attentiveness to walking reflects its centrality as a mode of encountering the world, especially an urban world shifting shape before its inhabitants' eyes.

Walter Benjamin claimed that Haussmann's transformation of the familiar environment into something new and strange meant that "Parisians. . . . no longer felt at home in it."[3] Yet depictions of walking in mid- to late-nineteenth-century Paris rarely evoke the profound sense of estrangement that Benjamin, along with Georg Simmel, Siegfried Kracauer, and others, considered a fundamental condition of modern urban life.[4] By their account, Paris's accelerated modernization engendered a physical and psychic disruption whose pictorial equivalent one might expect to resemble the acute malaise of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Berlin street scenes of the early twentieth century. Instead, paintings of Parisian urban life indicate that walking positively flourished and that estrangement, while undeniably present, was not the only experience available to the pedestrian. Perhaps another set of feelings is at stake in these images. The intrinsic process of walking, with its phenomenologically coherent intertwining of body, mind, and vision, can stimulate what Edmund Husserl would describe as a sense of the continuity of the self amid the flux of the world, and can thereby help define their relation to each other.[5] With the loss of the old Paris, that relation was in need of revising. The frequency of its depiction implies walking's fundamental role in orchestrating the nineteenth-century Parisian's experience of the evolving city and in helping to mediate the shifting relation between them.

Images of street scenes with pedestrians quite commonly occur in Parisian visual culture of the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly in avant-garde art, though also in academic art, in popular illustration, and in photography. Few of these images, however, truly *thematize* walking—that is, attempt to incorporate the lived experience of walking into the pictorial structure in any of a variety of ways that serve to register the traces of discursive movement through the depicted urban space. As it turns out, the pictorial examples that most compellingly convey that experience come from those artists whom Edmond Duranty, in 1876, identified as "the new painters."[6] What is more, these examples appear with greatest frequency from the late 1860s through the 1870s, as if the process of actually witnessing the impact of Paris's reconstruction on the texture of daily existence prompted in some painters—whom we have come to call modernist—a deeply felt response that fed into the new artistic impulse to depict everyday life. Those Impressionist painters, sometimes cast as *flâneurs,* often walked the city in search of motifs. Their attention, like that of the *flâneur,* has come to be understood as governed primarily by ocular concerns, yet many of the works discussed here incorporate in some degree an awareness of the body. My account, then, proposes to complicate or revise our traditional sense of the Impressionists as forging an "optical" practice. What emerges in these pictures is a sophisticated alertness to precisely the coherent intertwining of body, mind, and vision insisted on in the history of writing about walking. Indeed, the thematics of walking—and the exploitation of its triad of faculties—besides appearing in the handling of the pedestrians depicted within the scene, can also manifest itself pictorially in the traces inscribed on the canvas of the painter's own position in relation to the subject and in the structure of the composition's appeal to the beholder, who is sometimes figured as a pedestrian.

A common activity of daily life, walking merited inclusion in the repertoire of everyday subjects favored by French painters of the era, yet perhaps because of the tendency to take ordinary walking for granted, its imagery has remained largely unexplored. As a pictorial theme it tends to receive notice only when it features a *flâneur.* The *flâneur,* who practiced leisurely strolling as a form of entertainment, has figured importantly in recent scholarship as the mobilized observer of the modern city's emerging status as "a site of permanent anxiety as well as a source of magnetic attraction," a result of the effects of urbanization and capitalism.[7] My aim here is not to argue the details of the extensive *flâneur* literature but, rather, to expand the scope of thinking about the pictorial significance of walking beyond its limited recognition as the modality of the *flâneur.* Paintings of the period show people of every variety and intent on the move. To restore to those figures—not just the *flâneur* but his fellow pedestrians as well—a fuller sense of the meaning of the activity, I draw on the context of the history of writing about walking, with particular emphasis on the coalescence of eye, mind, and body as integral to the process. This approach involves revising the prevailing notion of the *flâneur,* whose significance has been largely assimilated to the logic of the

gaze and all its implications. That model is inadequate here, for it focuses primarily on the *flâneur*'s emblematically modern mobility of gaze, with little attention paid to the physical act of walking or to the individual interiority that might inflect his reputedly detached manner of observation.

Walking in the modernized city would remain an important topic in Parisian art until the end of the century, among painters inclined to pursue subjects of everyday life. As the newness of the experience waned, the motif lost some of its urgency and tended to be less potently expressed in the 1880s and 1890s than in the 1870s. Nevertheless, artists coming to maturity in those later decades continued to probe deep-rooted concerns associated with urban walking, particularly with regard to the relation between self and world—or what Charles Baudelaire referred to as the relation between *moi* and *non-moi* (I and non-I).[8]

As Paris underwent its transition to modernity, the impact of Haussmann's changes had to be absorbed by the body as well as the eye and mind. Ingrained corporeal impulses to follow accustomed pathways had to give way to new habits and patterns of movement. To depict walking was to thematize motion. To step forth into the streets of the city was to submit oneself, willingly or unwillingly, to the urgent tempo of a distinctly urban version of lived experience. As a motif in painting, the walk offered one way of expressing the quality of that immersion. A walk is ephemeral, but for its duration it enhances awareness of the spatial and temporal character of the world flowing past the moving body and thereby makes perceptible "the pure successiveness that governs human life."[9] The literature on walking calls attention to its social, cultural, and political in addition to its phenomenological implications, in ways that help yield insight into the historically constituted thematics of walking within the depicted space of late-nineteenth-century painting. In the sampling of peripatetic images considered here, no single focus will emerge as dominant, just as no two walks can ever be exactly the same; rather, the diverse issues and aspects of walking will come into play in different pictures in different ways.

Everyday Walking as a Spatial Practice

Michel de Certeau defines pedestrians as "ordinary practitioners of the city" and understands walking as a spatial practice, in which the moving body articulates the shape of the walk.[10] Walkers make use of cities; pedestrian activity figures as one of the factors that animates a place and turns it into a lived space. Elizabeth Grosz contends that bodies and cities interact in a deeply reciprocal relation, in which "bodies reinscribe and project themselves onto their sociocultural environment," and that environment, in turn, both produces and reflects the interests of the body.[11] Such theories hold that walking is a basic modality of everyday life and that its "ordinary practitioners" exercise a certain positive and interactive force. The emergence of walking as a repeated motif in mid- to late-nineteenth-century Parisian art suggests that the city's remodeling brought about a heightened awareness of the mutual power of bodies and cities to affect one another. A number of views of Paris present it as a place articulated by the discursive movement of ordinary pedestrians, not just *flâneurs*. Walking as a theme also appeared in the literature of the period: French Realist novelists often walked their characters through the named and still extant streets and boulevards of Paris. A vivid example occurs in Émile Zola's 1877 novel *L'assommoir,* set in the 1850s and 1860s. So accurately did Zola first pace out, as part of his research, then chart out in his text the comings and goings of his characters—working-class figures who in no way qualify as *flâneurs*—that some editions include a present-day map of Paris along which the reader can retrace their routes.[12] How that conception of walking as a mobile spatial practice expressed itself in art can be seen in Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *The Pont des Arts, Paris,* of about 1867–68, a presentation of pedestrian life in the remodeled city as a diverse population on the move (Fig. 1).

The Pont des Arts, Paris tends to be categorized as a panoramic vista or cityscape, whose ground-level viewpoint recalls the tradition of Camille Corot and whose content celebrates the "new" Paris.[13] The painting depicts a freshly remodeled segment of the city, offering a view of the Pont des Arts from a standpoint on the Quai Malaquais, just beneath the Pont du Carrousel. Recognizable structures in the distance juxtapose old and new Paris, with the twin roofs of the Châtelet theaters on the left, built five years earlier, contrasting with the historic presence of the large dome of the Institut de France on the right.[14] The loftiness of the cloud-spattered sky, the sparkling drift of the Seine on the left, and the crisp clarity of the light and shadow effects conjure up the palpable atmosphere of a fine day. The expansive feeling of openness strikingly acknowledges Haussmann's success in bringing light and air to the formerly dark and cramped area around the Seine. However, rather than reiterating Haussmann's much-discussed alterations to the site, I want to focus on the people, who do not merely function as subordinate *staffage.* The dense human activity that invigorates the scene treats walking in Paris without focusing on the *flâneur.* The extensive assortment of pedestrians forms "a representative selection of current society," including tourists, the well-to-do, working-class figures, and imperial guardsmen.[15] Thus, some of the walking is practical and some is for pleasure. As the pedestrians flow along the bridges or mill about on the quai, their paths and patterns of movement are largely dictated by the freshly imposed urban layout yet at the same time contribute to defining the evolving identity of the reconfigured city. The peripatetic practices of a city reveal an important dimension of the reciprocal relation between inhabitants and milieu. If Haussmann inflicted his government-approved urban vision on a largely unreceptive populace, they could at least to some degree temper their submissiveness to the plan by adapting it to their own purposes. The literature on walking contends that one of its powers is the capacity to integrate and reconcile inner self and outer world. The thriving pedestrian traffic in *The Pont des Arts* signals that even before the reconstruction reached its end, Parisians—whether consciously or not—rose to the challenge, enacting the process of mediation that walking can help accomplish. We know that Renoir was no great admirer of Haussmann's architecture.[16] To my mind, this painting depicts not a static view that celebrated the "new" Paris but, rather, the dynamic process whereby its people begin to settle in and develop new modes of interaction with the environment that will gradually reinvest the city with human meaning.[17]

The Pont des Arts benefits from a compositional and tempo-

1 Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *The Pont des Arts, Paris,* ca. 1867–68. Pasadena, The Norton Simon Foundation (artwork in the public domain)

ral structure more complex than most of Renoir's subsequent paintings. Initially, the vastness of the sky and the horizontal sweep of buildings in the distance draw the eye to the outer reaches of the pictorial space. Gradually, the eye tracks inward, working its way back toward the picture surface, noting along the way the Pont des Arts in the deep left, dotted with several dozen pedestrians, then the pleasure boat in the middle distance, alongside of which numerous figures embark, disembark, or just meander about on the open space of the quai. Finally, as the viewer's attention moves to the immediate foreground, the presence of yet another register of human figures asserts itself as one notices, along the bottom edge of the canvas, the cast shadows of people crossing the bridge overhead, the Pont du Carrousel, which lies outside the pictorial space. In the process of retracting one's gaze from background to foreground, the beholder's experience of the painting undergoes a shift. While the distant reaches of atmospheric space are rendered with the sort of optical emphasis traditionally associated with Impressionist painting, the kind of attention called for by the lower foreground of the composition elicits a sensation of one's visual faculty returning to its source, that is, to its embeddedness in the body. The physical movement implied in adjusting one's angle of vision from gazing skyward to looking downward at what lies before one's feet acts as a reminder of the embodiedness of the viewer as well as of the painter. Further contributing to that impression is a strong sense of the corporeal situatedness of the painter that stems from the awareness that he stands sandwiched between two parallel moving lines of human presence: the row of passing shadows at his feet and the unseen pedestrians who cast them from the bridge overhead. The inclusion of a corporeal with an ocular appeal to the viewer hints at Renoir's experiential sensation of his own bodily stillness in the midst of the ongoing circulation above, below, and beside him.[18] I stated above that this painting treats walking without reference to the *flâneur.* However, Renoir's evocation of the painter's presence just outside the pictorial space calls to mind the *flâneur* characterized by Baudelaire in "The Painter of Modern Life," who aims "to see the world, to be at the center of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world. . . ."[19] If indeed the painter's observational detachment here earns him the title of *flâneur,* he is a profoundly embodied one.

Painted some five years later, in 1872, Renoir's *Pont Neuf, Paris* (Fig. 2) likewise features an eclectic array of pedestrian types moving to and fro, pursuing midday errands in a sun-drenched atmosphere. No single incident focuses the viewer's attention; it is a composition that thematizes movement. The implied trajectories of the various walkers articulate a network of spatial habits and practices that illustrate the recently developed rhythms of the modernized city. However, since the painting dates from 1872, the year following the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune, we might take the placid, sunny mood of ordinariness to reflect the relief Parisians must have felt, after those latest in a long series of violent upheavals, at resuming the uneventful and unre-

2 Renoir, *Pont Neuf, Paris,* 1872. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection (artwork in the public domain; photograph © 2004 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington)

stricted flow of everyday life.[20] In contrast to *The Pont des Arts, Pont Neuf* lacks the corporeal immediacy of the painter's presence, for here Renoir distanced himself by recording the scene from the raised vantage point of a second-story café window, signaling his progression toward a less embodied and more optical approach. Yet it is worth noting that a physical act of walking contributed to the making of the picture: the painter sent his brother Edmond out into the space being depicted, to stroll about and engage passersby in conversation on the pretense of asking directions or the time, in order to slow their progress so that Renoir could sketch them more fully.[21] Although that strategy is not apparent in the finished painting—except in the fact that his brother, identifiable by his straw hat and walking stick, appears twice in the scene—such vicarious bodily activation of the visual field, in addition to its practical aim, indicates Renoir's conception of it as a place articulated by discursive human movement.

Renoir's emphasis on the circulatory flow of walkers using the city manifests an understanding of the mutual relation of bodies and cities, and his incorporation of both optical and corporeal aspects of walking exemplifies the effort (typical, I would argue, of the "new painting") to convey the pulse of modern everyday life. Compare, by contrast, the work of Renoir with that of Jean Béraud, perhaps the best known of academic painters specializing in Parisian street subjects, who tends to present a moment that has an anecdotal focus. The figures in his compositions usually cluster about a recognizable site—a church, a theater, a restaurant, an architectural landmark—which provides a situational context that externally motivates their actions. For example, in his 1877 *The Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, Paris* (Fig. 3), people emerge from the church and linger socially on the sidewalk of the Rue du Faubourg-St-Honoré, a newly fashionable shopping street. Béraud's pictures bespeak a greater alertness to optical than to corporeal effects: pedestrians are present but walking is not foregrounded as a theme. He captures the contemporary look of the city and its stylish population, emphasizing surface appearances with a precision of detail that Renoir suppresses in favor of broad effects of light and shadow that

3 Jean Béraud, *The Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, Paris,* 1877. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William B. Jaffe, 1955, 55.35 (artwork in the public domain; photograph, all rights reserved, The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

help make palpable the atmospheric space the figures inhabit. Béraud's tendency to dwell on the latest fashions of dress and manner makes his figures seem preoccupied with social appearances, with seeing and being seen. Unlike Béraud, Renoir does not supply an external motivation for his figures' actions in *Pont Neuf.* Rather, his pedestrians traverse the urban milieu in an individually directed manner that expresses internal motivation. Thus, whereas Béraud individuates his figures through outward description, Renoir individuates his by implying their possession of an inner life of the mind.

That point of contrast—the suggestion of an interior life—completes, in Renoir's composition, the triad of faculties traditionally considered integral to walking. I am claiming that an alertness to the mental, as well as the optical and corporeal, dimensions of walking informs Renoir's presentation of urban pedestrians. By that measure, Renoir's painting brings into play the full-fledged activity of walking, while Béraud's does not. Walking's long-held association with the workings of the inner life of the mind is the least apparent of its accepted characteristics. To grasp its significance, we now turn to a brief distillation of the central ideas animating the history of writing about walking, which reveal how the intertwining of body, mind, and vision inherent in the ambulatory process can help enhance the sense of self in relation to the environment.

Walking and Thinking

Walking is first of all a physical action, which, owing to the upright posture of humans, consists of "a perpetual falling with a perpetual self-recovery."[22] Walking can serve practical or recreational purposes; it can be both a means to an end and an end in itself. Vision plays a crucial part in negotiating the body's progress through the environment, but the visual component of a walk, like the physical component, can be recreational as well as functional. Though we consider walking as primarily a bodily exercise, it can also exercise the mind. In fact, the history of writing about walking insists on a connection between walking and thinking, extending back, in the Western tradition, at least as far as the Peripatetic philosophers, who according to legend practiced a method of teaching while strolling about.[23] Philosophy sustained the connection, with the interdependency of walking and thinking acknowledged by such figures as Thomas Hobbes, Immanuel Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and perhaps most succinctly by Søren Kierkegaard, who in 1847 declared, "I have walked myself into my best thoughts. . . ."[24]

Writers, too, have repeatedly discerned an analogy between the two activities, proposing that the process and rhythms of walking promote the process and rhythms of thinking.[25] The Romantics in particular extolled walking, especially in the rural countryside, as a way of tapping into mental creativity. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau avowed in his *Confessions* of 1782–89, "There is something about walking that stimulates and enlivens my thoughts. When I stay in one place I can scarcely think; my body must be on the move to set my mind going."[26] Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, however, with the rapid growth and industrialization of large urban centers, the focus of the discourse shifted from countryside to city, as walkers in major cities increasingly began to articulate the nature of their experiences and found that the crowds and commotion of the street, though distracting, did not preclude introspection.[27] Paul Valéry, describing his mental processes on a stroll through Paris, made the essential point on which committed walkers concur: "walking often induces in me a quickened flow of ideas . . . there is a certain reciprocity between my pace and my thoughts. . . ."[28] For, no matter what the circumstances of the walk—whether in countryside or city, recreational or practical, shared or solitary—certain con-

victions regarding it persist throughout the centuries, namely: that its rhythms are conducive to contemplation; that the experience can render more vividly present the sense of self; and that the process helps integrate inner and outer worlds.

Expanding on those claims will help make apparent their relevance to the particular historical milieu of nineteenth-century Paris. Those compelled to analyze walking emphasize how, within the "lived perspective" (to use Maurice Merleau-Ponty's term)[29] of the walk, the faculties of body, mind, and vision coalesce to generate a more fully realized sense of self. That notion emerges as a consensus over the last few centuries, despite the fluctuating meaning of selfhood. Rousseau set the tone when he observed, "I have never . . . been so much myself . . . as in the journeys that I have made alone and on foot."[30] Walking, especially in nature, can enable one to leave behind the social or external self in order to recover the essential, interior self. Although urban pedestrians are less free than their rural counterparts to shed their social casings, the same claim of clearer access to the inner self is made for successful city walkers, of which the best known is the nineteenth-century type of the Parisian *flâneur.* As Victor Fournel pointed out in 1858, the *"flâneur* . . . is always in full possession of his individuality."[31] That intensified feeling of self-presence can in turn heighten awareness of one's relation to the surrounding world and can impel the walker to seek out habitually that mode of interaction. In 1863 Baudelaire, noting the *flâneur*'s alertness to and hunger for that interplay between self and world, described him as "an 'I' [*moi*] with an insatiable appetite for the 'non-I' [*non-moi*]."[32]

Walking's ability to integrate inner and outer worlds is a consistent theme in the literature on the subject, which holds the process to operate in this way: the physical motions of ambulation can activate the walker's inner, thinking self and thereby bring that self into contact with the external world, an encounter that gives rise to a reciprocal exchange or oscillating flow between inward and outward attention. That account of how walking actually works in experience emerged with increasing clarity during the nineteenth century.[33] Although the notion of mental oscillation between internal and external worlds might imply a simplistic model of an attentiveness sustainable at a constant level, the varied states of mind described by walkers run the gamut of possibilities, from intently focused conscious meditation to unfocused reverie or daydream—in other words, the full range of types encompassed by the historically specific concept of attention that developed over the course of the nineteenth century. According to Jonathan Crary, "Attention and distraction were not two essentially different states but existed on a single continuum, and thus attention was . . . a dynamic process, intensifying and diminishing, rising and falling, ebbing and flowing according to an indeterminate set of variables."[34] In believing that the corporeal activity of the walk helps stimulate that dynamic process, walkers acknowledge the body's role in mediating between consciousness and the world, as its motion continuously brings new elements into view. Walking's ongoing quality renders it conducive to what Henri Bergson, in the 1890s, termed the *durée,* the internal experience of duration that forms the basis of the "true self."[35]

The terms at stake in this dialogue between self and world can vary slightly. Though I stated them above as body, mind, and vision engaging with the external world, in earlier times most writers maintained that the energizing of body and mind through walking automatically activates *all* the senses: they speak of the fresh smell of country air or the noxious air of the city; the feel of the ground or pavement under one's feet; the sounds of nature or the traffic and voices of the city; and the sense of taste often stimulated by the exercise.[36] Vision received less emphasis as a term until the inception of modernity, when the rapid escalation of visual stimuli in the modern city increasingly privileged sight as the primary agent of perceptual intake. However, even modernist accounts of urban walking comment on noise, odors, and the jostling of the crowds.[37] That full-fledged engagement of the senses with the world can bind the self more integrally to the surrounding environment.

Because of its capacity to integrate interior and exterior worlds, walking is understood to have remarkable reconciliative powers.[38] A means to help mediate the disrupted relation between self and external milieu was exactly what nineteenth-century Parisians needed in the wake of the disorientation caused by the city's rapid modernization. Perhaps walking started to become more frequently depicted in art toward the late 1860s, as Haussmann's reconstruction project drew to a close, because it figured so fundamentally in that process of adjustment. To varying degrees, everyone confronted with the transformation, regardless of age, class, or gender, was at a disadvantage, but walking provided a manageable way to come to know the new environment—a necessary process for making an unfamiliar, or, in this case, defamiliarized, place start to feel like home.

The *Flâneur,* among Other Pedestrians

I invoke the context of the history of writing about walking in order to expand the scope of the art historical treatment of the theme, which, when touched on at all, has been too narrowly conceived. It needs broadening with regard to not just the range of issues but also the cast of characters involved. Renoir's *The Pont des Arts, Paris* (Fig. 1) and *Pont Neuf, Paris* (Fig. 2), together with other images shown here, make clear that depictions of pedestrians feature a diversity of types—rich and poor, young and old, male and female, firm and infirm. Midcentury Realist novels, even before Haussmannization, used distinctions in walking styles to help define the various sorts of persons observed in the city. Consider, for instance, Honoré de Balzac's description of a furtive street type written about 1839: "His right foot took no step without his right eye taking in the external circumstances with that unruffled speed peculiar to the thief and the spy. The left eye imitated the right. A step, a look! Curt, agile, ready for anything. . . ."[39] Balzac's account integrally associates the walker's mode of coordination of eye and body with the shrewdly calculating turn of mind motivating his actions, thus implying the body's role in mediating between consciousness and world. That many such characters contributed to the rich diversity of pedestrian life is scarcely acknowledged in recent scholarship relating to walking in nineteenth-century Paris, which has centered almost exclusively on the *flâneur.*

Despite the extensive research devoted to him, the *flâneur*

4 Edgar Degas, *Place de la Concorde (Viscount Lepic and His Daughters Crossing the Place de la Concorde),* 1875. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (artwork in the public domain)

resists stable definition. The prevailing notion of his significance has been largely assimilated to the logic of the gaze, a notion I earlier termed too narrow. Attention tends to focus on the *flâneur*'s prototypically modern form of mobile spectatorship, with little emphasis on the embodiedness of his vision. A few ancillary questions have been debated, such as whether there existed a female counterpart, or *flâneuse,* and whether the rise of shopping-oriented strolling helped liberate women from the domestic sphere.[40] Shopping's rise is also considered a factor in eventually transforming the *flâneur,* credited with keen, detectivelike observational skills and an ability to absorb all that he saw as a stimulus to creativity, into a mere *badaud,* a lesser type who gawked emptily at the sights and sounds of the city.[41] To put this in terms of the contextual model described above of walking's relation to thinking, the implication is that the *flâneur*'s peripatetic activity reflects an active inner life of the mind, whereas the *badaud*'s mindless gaping exhibits the demise of mental creativity, a demise that, following Karl Marx, has often been associated with the growth of capitalist consumerism and its appeal to ownership.[42] However, it is not the *flâneur*'s mental action nor his physical motion that is primarily at stake in those discussions but his visual activity—the fact that as he walked, his roving gaze hungrily took in all the sights of the metropolis. The *flâneur,* it is said, wanted to see and be seen, and the modernization of Paris turned it into an incomparable spectacle. Not everyone could master the visual challenge; as Baudelaire declared, "Few men are gifted with the capacity of seeing. . . ."[43] The *flâneur*'s mobility of gaze, according to recent scholars, illuminated crucial aspects of modernity, especially in the way it epitomized the modern consumer's eye, mimicked the action of the camera's gaze, and anticipated the cinematic viewer's visual practices.[44]

Reflecting such concerns, the trajectory of the *flâneur*'s gaze has taken on a life of its own. That trajectory, it is important to note, though rooted in, was far from identical to the trajectory of his forward path of bodily movement. Whereas the analysis of the *flâneur* presumes the meaningful essence of the experience, as well as any stimulus to creativity it might possess, to derive primarily from the visual component, the long-standing model of the interdependency of walking and thinking finds it in the coherent intertwining of body, mind, and all the senses insisted on by writers on walking throughout history. Those writers stress its value as a process that condenses "the full range of thought, feeling, and perception found in ordinary experience. . . ."[45] Hence, one of my aims here is to draw attention to the ordinary as well as the extraordinary practitioners of walking. The *flâneur* self-consciously made use of strolling as a means to encounter urban modernity, but any ordinary Parisian on the move, whatever the ostensible purpose of the outing, could at the same time explore the city as a lived space.

Walking Painters and Painting Walkers

Because strolling through the city as a watchful observer constituted a typical practice for nineteenth-century French painters, a number of them have been designated *flâneurs.* Édouard Manet is regarded as a quintessential example, though he rarely represented the *flâneur* in his art. Edgar Degas took as a motto "Ambulare, postea laborare," indicating that a regular routine of walking and observing preceded his aesthetic activity.[46] Certain of Degas's street scenes do include such *flâneur* figures and further intensify the focus on the walking experience by evoking the artist's own strolling viewpoint in such a way as to figure the spectator in the role of pedestrian as well. For example, in his 1875 *Place de la Concorde (Viscount Lepic and His Daughters Crossing the Place de la Concorde)* (Fig. 4), Viscount Lepic, well dressed and secure in his social standing, has been identified as a *flâneur,*[47] notwithstanding the presence of his two daughters, whose company, along with their dog, on a family promenade of the sort known as "Sunday *flânerie*" might hamper his freedom of movement and gaze.[48]

The Lepic family members pause rather unceremoniously

in their progression across the Place de la Concorde. Though the bottom edge of the canvas cuts off our view of their legs, we assume they have stopped walking because the current orientations of their bodies would propel them in very different directions if they were still in motion. The nearly deserted square behind them contrasts with the impression that traffic fills the space before them—that is, the space in front of the picture plane—for, as no other motivation for stopping can be discerned, it may be presumed that they stand on a traffic island awaiting an opportunity to cross the street. For a family group, they display a curious disjointedness. Just as the orientations of their bodies and their gazes radiate out at disparate angles, so, too, their minds seem to be idling in different directions, largely inattentive to each other and to the onlooker at the left, a partially visible man whose presence balances the human weight and the vertical rhythm of the composition.[49] The family's relation to their surroundings, like their relation to one another, implies not connection but disengagement, in part because of the broad stretch of open space that separates them from the backdrop of buildings and trees. Moreover, their radical proximity to the picture surface suggests that they are not *in* the depicted space so much as they are testing its frontal membrane—as if, when the traffic clears, they will resume walking and exit the pictorial space.

Does *Place de la Concorde* illuminate the *flâneur*'s visual, physical, and mental activity? He is out strolling, but in this held moment his movement is arrested, and we cannot be certain what he or his daughters look at, only that they are the object of the bystander's glance. The trajectory of the *flâneur*'s gaze and of his corporeal path have no more intrinsic weight than those of his daughters. The three figures, arrayed in a shallow plane, do not interact or intersect, except where the father's umbrella visually stabs the hat of the girl at the right. It is difficult to tell whether their preoccupation has an inward or outward focus, or no focus at all. The viewer, like the onlooker at the left, encounters this fragmented family dynamic as would a passerby, randomly observing such a group on a city sidewalk, yet the proximity of the figures to the surface permits no impression of physical access into the pictorial space.

Place de la Concorde is rare among paintings of the period that feature walking in Paris in that, owing to its air of disconnection, it incorporates a feeling often described as alienation. Linda Nochlin, for example, argues that Degas's decentered composition inscribes "in visual terms the fragmentation and haphazardness of experience characteristic of the great modern city. . . ."[50] Admittedly, Degas does not present the Place de la Concorde—a site with its own political resonance—as particularly inviting: the drab colors, the emptied-out center, and the steep angle of spatial recession all sustain a certain bleakness of mood.[51] However, considering that Degas also infused a number of his paintings of indoor scenes with a similar atmosphere of anomie, perhaps it is not the geographic location so much as the psychic territory his figures inhabit that primarily governs the mood. The dense but enigmatic psychology of the individuals and the lack of cohesiveness among them emphasize the distance that separates rather than the closeness that binds human relationships. Adding to the vague unease of *Place de la Concorde* is the impression that the figures pass through but do not quite *belong* in their space—as if they withhold themselves from their environment as well as from one another. Walking's powers of integration are not in evidence here.

5 Degas, *Portraits at the Stock Exchange: Ernest May, Financier and Collector,* 1878–79. Paris, Musée d'Orsay (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY)

In another street scene, *Portraits at the Stock Exchange: Ernest May, Financier and Collector* of 1878–79 (Fig. 5), Degas again positions the beholder in the role of pedestrian by inscribing into the compositional structure traces of his own perceptual viewpoint as he strolled the city gathering motifs. In comparison with the Lepic family, the businessmen who occupy the sidewalk in *Portraits at the Stock Exchange* look relatively at ease with one other and with their milieu. Closeness rather than separation dominates the relationships in this composition, but the atmosphere exudes professional complicity rather than emotional attachment. The figures touch and overlap in the cramped space defined by the building of the Bourse, or Stock Exchange, behind them and the picture plane in front of them. These men have come to a standstill, having arrived at their destination, yet the act of walking feels implicitly structured into the experience of viewing the picture. The beholder witnesses the figures at extremely close range as if stepping by them on the same shared sidewalk and absorbing the scene with a mobility of perception that helps account for the blurring of the clump of figures at the right, who quickly recede into peripheral vision as one's gaze is drawn past them to a more arresting point of activity: the confidential gesture of a man whispering information into another's ear, a pairing

6 Édouard Vuillard, *Young Girls Walking,* ca. 1891. Paris, Collection Josefowitz (artwork © ARS, NY; photograph by Erich Lessing, provided by Art Resource, NY)

echoed by the two men in the left background, behind the column.

The human interaction in *Portraits at the Stock Exchange* is more intimate and legible than any to be found in *Place de la Concorde,* which is only to say that it better hints at the inner life in progress. Both compositions offer up the sort of stray vignettes of human behavior randomly glimpsed while strolling about a city, yet Degas's rigorous control over composition and provocative insertion of identifiable portraits into both scenes belies their casualness and complicates their readings. Despite the openness with which he grants the beholder access to the perceptual immediacy of his observations, his compositions withhold any easy resolution of meaning, in much the same way that he coaxes us into a pedestrian viewpoint but denies us imaginary entry into the picture space. Degas's cryptic pictorial syntax exploits the interwovenness of eye, mind, and body movement: the effort to decipher it costs the viewer a similarly focused application of that integrated triad of resources.

A different sort of intimacy is called up by the pair of girls who walk arm in arm in Édouard Vuillard's painting *Young Girls Walking* of about 1891 (Fig. 6). This image illustrates, in contrast to the individual isolation and guarded mental life conveyed by the Lepic family members in Degas's *Place de la Concorde* (Fig. 4), how, to use Stephen Toulmin's words, "Inner lives can perfectly well be shared."[52] Here, Vuillard, adept at depicting intimate situations but usually setting them indoors, recognizes that an outdoor walk, in the partial shelter of one of Paris's public gardens, offers an opportunity for private communication.[53] Though the mood of their exchange is imprecise, the girls' poses and gestures give pictorial expression to the idea of strolling and perhaps commiserating together as a shared physical and mental activity. In this conjoining of internal and external worlds, the large scale of the figures in relation to their environment emphasizes their inward rather than outward focus, as does their orientation away from the beholder. Later-nineteenth-century images of walking tended to be less attentive to walking as a spatial practice than those of the 1870s; though the girls' moving legs carry them into the picture, the composition allows them little room to navigate. The metaphorical depth of their inwardness helps counteract the figural and spatial shallowness: that is, the intimation of an inner life rescues the figures from being merely decorative. This example of a walking motif from the 1890s, typifying as it does the decorative aesthetic of its era, lacks the corporeal vigorousness of expression that infuses many of the pictures of walking created in the 1870s. That vigorousness is perhaps nowhere better imparted than in the work of Gustave Caillebotte.

Caillebotte's 1876 *The Pont de l'Europe, Paris* (Fig. 7) includes a *flâneur* who, in contrast to the suspended animation of Degas's Viscount Lepic (Fig. 4), exudes a focused energy of body, mind, and vision. If, as Valéry remarked, a reciprocity exists between one's pace and one's thoughts, the gentleman's brisk stride expresses lively habits of mind. This *flâneur* does not walk the streets alone. His figure achieves its distinction in part through juxtaposition with other types of gaits: the woman adjacent to him takes small, delicate steps, the workman to the right ambles slowly along, and the man in the right foreground pauses to lean on the bridge railing. A small figure marching leftward in the distance traces a lateral path of movement perpendicular to that of the central figures, and in the foreground, a dog eagerly trots into the picture space. The assorted gaits and tempos establish a network of rhythmic motion.

The Pont de l'Europe portrays the freshness of pedestrian experience in the newly remodeled Paris. Caillebotte frequently showed people in the act of walking, both in the city and in the countryside. The traditional connection of walking with thinking aligns it with what Michael Fried has pointed out as Caillebotte's interest in absorptive themes in general.[54] *The Pont de l'Europe* presents walking as the full-fledged physical, mental, and visual activity that writers on walking have always held it to be. The interplay between the bodily trajectories of the pedestrians and the trajectories of their gazes both orchestrates the beholder's exploration of the composition and compels a curiosity as to the nature of the interaction taking place, which remains ambiguous. The atmosphere immediately surrounding the figures thickens with "copresence," for unlike the figures in Degas's *Place de la Concorde,* who seem to inhabit primarily their own psychic space, Caillebotte's individuals operate in social space, with its potential for interaction.[55] Whereas the examples by Degas and Vuillard (Figs. 4–6) focus on people acquainted with one another, Caillebotte gathers together strangers. The varied styles of walking, together with differences in dress and manner, communicate social distinctions; as a result, inter-

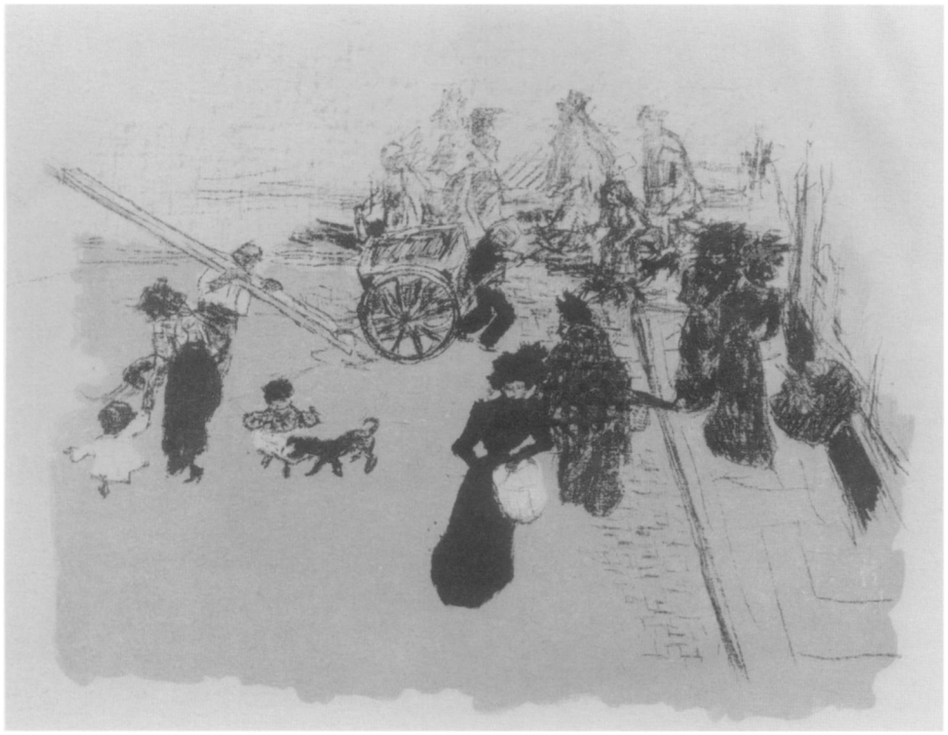
7 Gustave Caillebotte, *The Pont de l'Europe, Paris,* 1876. Geneva, Petit Palais, Musée d'Art Moderne (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Erich Lessing, provided by Art Resource, NY)

pretations of the painting tend to revolve around issues of class, gender, and politics.[56] Those individual subtleties of pace and demeanor, however, also imply an attunement to an inner life: the figures convey "the feeling of being present within their actual bodies."[57] They evince that fluid oscillation between inward and outward attention characteristic of the walker's state of mind, with the manner and intensity of their looking indicative of the degree and quality of their attentiveness to the exterior milieu.

Caillebotte's image evokes the repleteness of walking as an experience, for he manages to engage not only its social and political but also its psychological and phenomenological dimensions. Moreover, pedestrian access seems built into the beholder's involvement with the composition as well. It is as if, urged on by the dog's forward surge into the picture space, the viewer may imagine entering it as an incoming pedestrian. In fact, Kirk Varnedoe argued that two disparate focal points compete for attention in this painting: one is the top-hatted man and the other is the foremost workman, whose head is positioned at the X-beams of the bridge.[58] Those two viewpoints could be said to accommodate both trajectories of the beholder-as-pedestrian—his corporeal path, which follows the dog along the sidewalk toward the central couple, and his visual trajectory, which, on scanning ahead and being intercepted by the central figures, would naturally follow the implied sight lines of first, perhaps, the woman's glance toward the gentleman, and then the *flâneur*'s intent gaze in the direction of that second focal point of the workman. Thus, Caillebotte incorporates the corporeal and ocular aspects of walking into both the internal and the external, or beholding, structure of his composition.

Pedestrians from All Walks of Life

The diverse pedestrian types that coexist in Caillebotte's *The Pont de l'Europe* raise issues of social difference and social interaction. Walking possesses a certain democratic dimension, in its availability to everyone, and it is practiced on a daily basis by nearly everyone, regardless of age, gender, class, or profession. Those same factors, of course, impose certain restrictions as to where, when, how, and how much one walks. Certainly, walking reveals clues about the social, political, and economic status of its practitioners, for it is a spatial and behavioral practice that has an "implicit cultural politics."[59] The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has posited that it is through everyday uses of the body such as walking (and other routine actions, for example, sitting, eating, and gesturing) that human beings come to understand and embody the nuances and hierarchies of social relationships and cultural structures.[60] These daily acts, saturated with cultural and class-specific meaning, form what Bourdieu terms the *habitus,*



8 Pierre Bonnard, *Street Corner,* ca. 1897, color lithograph, from *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris,* Paris, 1899. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928, 28.50.4(3) (photograph, all rights reserved, The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

which both develops out of and is manifested in those practices. Cultural structures, however, gradually but steadily evolve and shift, presenting new types of situations entailing behavioral uncertainties, and there emerge new procedures to deal with them.

Though fewer women than men frequented the streets of Paris in the 1860s—as scholars have shown, crucial to the gender imbalance was the fact that respectable women could not loiter or they might be taken to be streetwalkers—their numbers increased rapidly with each passing decade, as new motivations and attractions drew them outdoors.[61] If images from the 1870s, such as Caillebotte's 1876 *The Pont de l'Europe,* show a larger percentage of males populating the boulevards, street scenes from the 1890s, for example, Pierre Bonnard's lithograph *Street Corner* of about 1897 (Fig. 8), filled with mostly female strollers and shoppers, indicate how that balance shifted. As more and more Parisian women began to appear on the street, and as the growing availability of mass-produced garments began to occlude some of the visible distinctions among types, it became increasingly difficult to determine whether or not a woman out walking was a prostitute; Charles Blanc remarked in 1877 that "an honest woman could no longer be recognized by her style of dress."[62] Certain of Béraud's street scenes raise that question of respectability, such as *L'attente: Rue de Chateaubriand, Paris* (Fig. 9), in which a stylish young woman—the *parisienne* type frequently depicted in the late nineteenth century—walks out alone, perhaps to meet the gentleman in the distance. To add to the confusion, the late-nineteenth-century police crackdown on streetwalkers, or *filles publiques,* motivated them to camouflage their presence to avoid detection.[63]

Claire Olivia Parsons has pointed out that precisely in order to neutralize or "de-eroticize" the public sphere, books

9 Béraud, *L'attente: Rue de Chateaubriand, Paris,* 1888. Paris, Musée d'Orsay (artwork © ARS, NY; photograph by Erich Lessing, provided by Art Resource, NY)

10 Caillebotte, *Paris Street: Rainy Day,* 1877. Chicago, Art Institute (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Erich Lessing, provided by Art Resource, NY)

of etiquette for both women and men developed new rules for dress and behavior in the street. Such books instructed a respectable woman, or *femme honnête,* to wear stylish yet anonymous clothing, to refrain from looking idle, to greet acquaintances with reserve, and never to approach an unknown man—in short, through modest comportment to avoid attracting unwanted attention. Rules for gentlemen advised them to keep a courteous distance from bourgeois women and not to presume to proposition or to follow them.[64] The new codes of street conduct, intended to ensure a neutral, polite atmosphere among strangers, permitted the emergence of the female stroller in ever-increasing numbers. By imposing a certain uniformity and predictability on public behavior, such rules also attempted to retain, to some degree at least, the legibility of dress, bearing, and conduct as indicators of social meaning, for various forces in the modernized city conspired to threaten established codes of legibility.[65] Even the strictest regulations, however, cannot achieve complete conformity. In addition to disclosing socioeconomic distinctions, walking remains individual, and as such can reveal personality and mood.[66]

The new codes of street conduct, in aiming for a polite atmosphere among copresent strangers, recognized that public space is socialized space, in which the walker, owing to the oscillation of attention between inner and outer worlds, has at least an intermittent awareness of the other beings sharing the environment. That particular urban experience of private lives quietly coexisting in public space finds expression in Caillebotte's 1877 painting *Paris Street: Rainy Day* (Fig. 10), which features a number of individuals and couples walking in the rain. Commentators often note that the starburst intersection of streets and the monotonous uniformity of the new buildings exemplify Haussmann's imprint on the city and its estranging effect. My claim is that these pedestrians, rather than exhibiting the alienation imputed to Parisians reacting to the altered environment, behave in accordance with the newly updated codes of street etiquette. Their social conduct does not make legible their states of mind, but the muted atmosphere and the steady, pensive rhythms of walking seem to create an ongoing balance between interiority and outward attention.[67] The public context of the urban walk does not preclude introspection, for an individual's inner life continuously unfolds. As Eugène Minkowski explains:

> I go into the street and meet a number of people, but each of them, while forming part of a whole, follows his own path and his own thoughts; we go in opposite directions, and yet we remain related to one another without "touching" in the strict sense of the word. . . . space thus contributes in making us into a society, but there is always free space between us, lived distance . . . which allows each one of us to live his own life within this space.[68]

The walkers in *Paris Street: Rainy Day* pursue their separate, inwardly experienced lives even as they participate in the city's larger social network. The intervening space between oneself and other people has great social significance; sometimes one wishes to preserve that distance, and sometimes one wants to eliminate it.[69] Indeed, the mood of Caillebotte's painting suggests the tacit agreement of distance being maintained. The contingency of rain discourages pausing for the social or commercial distractions of the street and renders the walking more purposeful and the turn of mind more inward. The umbrellas help preserve that distance, as they hold pedestrians farther apart than usual: the beholder, positioned as a potential insider, recognizes the impulse of the

11 Claude Monet, *Boulevard des Capucines,* 1873. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Scala / Art Resource, NY)

incoming man at the lower right to tilt his umbrella to the side in order to squeeze past the approaching couple.

In contrast to Caillebotte's close-up evocation of internal lives integrated into a public setting, Claude Monet's 1873 *Boulevard des Capucines* (Fig. 11) records an outsider's distant glimpse of numerous pedestrians who register not as thoughtful individuals but as an anonymous crowd of figures whose external surfaces coruscate and dissolve in the ambient light particles that form their atmosphere. While Caillebotte presents a view *from* the street, Monet offers a view *of* the street that typifies what we have come to think of as the Impressionist attention to opticality, both in its lack of emphasis on the embodiedness of the viewpoint occupied and in its focus on the flickering movement of the crowd rather than on the act of walking. Bodies here function less as vessels protecting an inner life than as reflective surfaces whose integrity is compromised by penetrating atmospheric vibrations. The Impressionist painters, with whom Caillebotte exhibited, aimed, as Monet said, to depict that "which lives between me and the object."[70] Caillebotte, however, in *Paris Street: Rainy Day* did not fill the space surrounding his pedestrians with the optical shimmer of visible raindrops—which perplexed his critics—but infused it instead with the felt atmospheric quality of "lived distance." Monet, in early city views such as *Boulevard des Capucines,* brought to bear an ocular intensity that tends to dominate assessments of the Impressionist enterprise. Curiously, as he migrated away from Paris to live in a series of suburbs, he began to admit some corporeal traces into his compositions, as if he felt more physically at home in the countryside. A number of his landscapes, for example, *The Seine at Argenteuil* of 1875 and *Monet's Garden at Vétheuil* of 1881, feature a path or a road that extends from the depth of the pictorial space to the picture surface, spilling outward to coincide with the bottom framing edge of the canvas in a kind of physical overture to the viewer and implying Monet's own stance as he composed a view *from* the road.[71]

Monet never shared Caillebotte's concern with depicting the nuances of human interaction. *Boulevard des Capucines* illustrates his interest in optical rhythms of movement, while Caillebotte's *Paris Street: Rainy Day* emphasizes corporeal rhythms of human life. Caillebotte's attention to the experiential wholeness of the act of walking enables him to access both the external and internal dimensions of its everyday practice, to represent how individuals negotiate the social aspect of the urban streets and at the same time remain attuned to their own interiority. By contrast, the images we have seen by Béraud—*The Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule* (Fig. 3) and *L'attente* (Fig. 9)—focus primarily on pedestrian types that cared deeply about outer, social appearances, though prostitutes and socialites had very different motivations for dressing fashionably when they went out walking. Other class-specific types, such as workmen on the bridge in Caillebotte's *Pont de l'Europe,* were afoot for still other reasons and are depicted sometimes in social circumstances and sometimes alone.

Félix Vallotton's 1895 *Laundress* (Fig. 12) takes as its subject a typical working woman: laundresses hauling their heavy bundles were a common sight on the streets of Paris in the nineteenth century, recorded by artists from Honoré Daumier onward.[72] The inelegant but efficient stride of Vallotton's *Laundress* confirms that she walks for practical purposes, not for entertainment, and certainly not for display, in contrast to, for example, the dainty female in Béraud's 1888 *L'attente,* who barely exerts muscular energy. As in the earlier example by Béraud (Fig. 3), this painting cannot be said to thematize walking. The stylish dress and demeanor of Béraud's *parisienne* transmit a greater concern with projecting an attractive exterior than with communing with her inner mental processes. By comparison, Vallotton's *Laundress,* un-

fettered by the need to cultivate her social casing, appears not to glance outward but to retreat to her own inward preoccupations: Who is to say that she does not enjoy the relative freedom of her walk and the brief opportunity, during a hectic working day, to be alone with her thoughts? The notion that a common working woman might possess an inner life similarly takes shape in Zola's 1877 novel *L'assommoir,* which tracks both the internal and the external activity of a laundress named Gervaise as she trudges about the city on her daily rounds. In paintings of mid- to late-nineteenth-century Paris, representatives from all levels of society perambulate the boulevards, bridges, and squares. In any large urban setting, the variety and density of the population bring into play a specific set of social and cultural issues, which inflect the ongoing themes about walking that persist through the centuries.

Walking's Discursive and Political Power

The social points elucidated above concern what walking can reveal about an individual to—and relative to—the other people present within a specific public context. How a pedestrian figure can be read from the outside, however, constitutes a different issue from what walking can do *for* an individual. Let us now consider how human beings employ walking as a kind of discursive tool to map out their peregrinations through an environment, an aspect that has prompted comparison with the use of language. The most explicit of those analyses comes from de Certeau, who described urban walkers as "ordinary practitioners of the city." A city is a language, and, he explained, "The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language. . . ." Selecting and enunciating words to formulate sentences whose syntax can vary widely depending on the choices made is a process analogous to deciding among the many options and variations offered during the course of a walk. Moreover, walking involves "a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian" in the same way that speech acts appropriate language[73]—a point that reinforces my earlier claim that Renoir's *The Pont des Arts* (Fig. 1) depicts Parisians in the process of reappropriating their remodeled city. A related, though less precise, notion is offered by the poet A. R. Ammons. Remarking on the large number of poems that chronicle some sort of literal or metaphorical walk, he proposed an analogy between walking and poetry. He pointed out that "every walk is unreproducible, as is every poem. Even if you walk exactly the same route each time, the events along the route and the thoughts are not the same."[74] These theories emphasize the walker's freedom of choice and creative output and refer primarily to the corporeal trajectory of the walker: the moving body composes the shape of a walk the way a speaker strings out words into the shape of sentences or poems. Other analogies, however, stress the level of visible linguistic input received during a walk and thus track its visual rather than its bodily trajectory. Early accounts of the urban pedestrian experience sometimes likened walking to reading. Edmondo de Amicis, in his 1878 guidebook to Paris, wrote, "In walking for half an hour you read, without wishing to do so, half a volume,"[75] owing to the proliferation of advertisements, newspaper headlines, shop signs, and posters throughout the city. Franz Hessel, speaking from the viewpoint of early-twentieth-century Berlin, also compared the city stroller to a reader, but one who actively exercises his perceptual and interpretative skills. "*Flânerie,*" he stated, "is a way of reading the street in which people's faces, displays, shop windows, café terraces, cars, tracks, trees turn into an entire series of equivalent letters, which together form words, sentences, and pages of a book that is always new."[76] His meaning, of course, is less literal than de Amicis'.

12 Félix Vallotton, *Laundress,* 1895. Private collection (artwork in the public domain)

John O'Neill, in his introduction to Merleau-Ponty's *The Prose of the World,* observed, "As a tool, language seems to use us as much as we use it."[77] We might say the same about walking, because of its potential to reveal much about an individual even as the individual employs it for his or her own purposes. If we think of walking as a tool, another aspect of its use that merits attention is its political potential. The impulse to employ it for political purposes can manifest itself in peaceful as well as violent terms, as demonstrated by figures as differently intentioned as Guy DeBord and Martin Luther King. The nineteenth-century Parisian populace recognized

13 Édouard Manet, *The Rue Mosnier with Flags,* 1878. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum (artwork in the public domain; photograph © The J. Paul Getty Museum)

its potency, resisting the status quo during various phases of civil unrest in earlier decades not through walking per se but by taking to the streets and gathering at the barricades. It was no coincidence that Haussmann's new boulevards obscured many of those sites, which had gained a political dimension, as if expunging the scene of the action might help suppress the accompanying memories and forestall future such action as well. Rebuilding, of course, does not simply erase but creates an overlay of past and present evocations; the proliferation of street imagery following the midcentury transformation of Paris made use of that insight.[78] One way in which places become meaningful is by accruing associations, both personal and national, which imbue them with the power to trigger recollection. In a similar vein, writers on walking note its memory-inducing capabilities, particularly when the walker retraces familiar pathways. In late-nineteenth-century French thought, an increasing alertness to the crucial importance of memory acknowledged the body's role in retrieving it. Bergson, in his 1896 *Matter and Memory,* developed his idea of the body as the ground of all our perceptions, observing that while not all memory resides in the body, nevertheless, without the body, memories could not emerge into consciousness.[79] In addition to its potential to stimulate both personal and national recollection, the act of strolling can also function politically in the sense that it resists the pace, and the mechanization, of modern urban life.

A street scene with pedestrians by Manet, his 1878 *The Rue Mosnier with Flags* (Fig. 13), has been interpreted as a comment on such political issues. The painting features a street hung with flags to celebrate the Fête de la Paix of June 30, 1878, but some art historians argue that the painting offers confusing political and social signals. Whereas on one side of the street several well-dressed pedestrians stroll on a sidewalk lined with new buildings, on the other side a shabby, one-legged man on crutches, presumably a veteran of past conflicts, hobbles not on a sidewalk but in the street, alongside a fence at a construction site.[80] That juxtaposition of two contrasting types of pedestrians, I believe, signifies more than

just a social division. A temporal division relevant to the operation of memory is effected here: if the one-legged man represents the past and the well-dressed figures indicate the future, the logic of the composition has them moving in opposite directions, with the veteran heading toward the shadows in the depth of the picture space. The construction site beside him echoes the notion that the old must give way to the new. Yet the veteran's bulky corporeality and our empathetic sense of the acute physical effort he must expend to accomplish, with only one leg, the act of walking give him a far more embodied presence than the wispily painted fashionable figures—perhaps to imply that, for the present moment at least, the future is not nearly as palpable as the past. In fact, it seems likely that the sight of the veteran would have activated in a contemporary viewer the memory of the recent national past. The painting makes visible the uneasy mingling of old and new that must have been a vivid feature of Parisian life in those years of transition; however, it does not typify Manet's compositional strategies. In his *Olympia* or *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe,* both of 1863, the suggestion of temporal instantaneousness is reinforced by the spatial shallowness and by the figures' stillness and frontal orientation toward the viewer.[81] By contrast, the uncharacteristically deep spatial construction of *The Rue Mosnier with Flags* accommodates an impression of greater temporal duration, as if to allot the slow-moving veteran time enough to complete his ragged progress along the length of the street. The ladder emerging into view at the bottom edge of the canvas reinforces that notion of steady movement through the depicted spatial field.

The political dimension of walking came into play earlier, though less explicitly, when I proposed that the flourishing pedestrian activity depicted in Renoir's *The Pont des Arts* of about 1867–68 suggests that the population, whether consciously or not, utilized walking as a means of gradually reappropriating the city in the years following Haussmann's reconstruction project. That use of walking raises issues involving attachment to national and local identity. Home is not just the dwelling place but in a wider sense includes the community, the neighborhood, and the city in which one lives, and it serves as the point of departure from which one takes possession of the world.[82] To be "inside" a place is to belong to it and to identify with it. In this sense, Haussmann's defamiliarization of the city turned Parisians into outsiders in their own community; as Benjamin claimed, they "no longer felt at home in it."[83] Whether or not they disapproved of the transformation, they needed to come to terms with it to regain their sense of belonging. Motivated by a determination probably more practical than political, but at the same time not apolitical in spirit, the population undertook, through daily usage, to relearn and to reclaim possession of the streets and spaces of the metropolis. That air of resolve may help account for the positive ambience that infuses many Parisian images of walking.

The Visible Challenges of Urban Street Life

Does that claim of a largely positive ambience hold for later portrayals of walking? The emphasis of the theme changed over time: in later-nineteenth-century images, the attention to the Haussmannized cityscape diminished, for the new generation of artists maturing in the 1880s and 1890s did not live through the vivid experience of the restructuring project as had their immediate predecessors. As seen in the examples we have noted from the 1890s—for instance, Vuillard's *Young Girls Walking* of about 1891 and Bonnard's *Street Corner* of about 1897 (Figs. 6, 8)—walking tends to be less vigorously or less fully thematized in the work of that next generation, perhaps because they took their environment for granted. Nonetheless, among painters inclined to pursue subjects of everyday life, the walk remained an important motif, just as it sustained its fundamental role in daily Parisian life. The ambience of its later depiction, however, turns out to be mixed, conveying both positive and negative responses to the urban environment. For a variety of factors, some regarded as negative, could, of course, complicate the issue of whether an individual felt "at home" out on the streets. Paris's rapid modernization had heightened the contrast between public and private spheres. More than ever before, the domestic interior was understood as conducive to cultivating the inner self, while the exterior urban realm, with its crowds and its intrusive barrage of sensory input, was considered invasive to the psyche and abrasive to the sense of self.[84]

In the expanded sense of home described above, however, the streets represented a place where public life and private life intersected—a concept that likewise subtends the notion of walking's ability to integrate inner and outer worlds. In fact, with respect to both the home interior and the inner self, the distinction between interior and exterior is never as secure as it is often posited, or hoped, to be.[85] The discourse regarding the sensory overstimulation of the urban streets recognized the permeability of such boundaries. Meyer Schapiro claimed that a heightened sensitivity to that issue was a preoccupation of the era:

> This feeling that the self has been wholly dissolved by the world or the world has been absorbed into oneself, so that the boundary between self and world has been erased or blurred in sensation, is an experience often described in the literature of the nineteenth century. It has its positive and negative aspects, according to the place of this feeling in the larger field of an individual's goals and activities.[86]

Schapiro's point that dissolving boundaries could produce either a positive or a negative experience is relevant here. Urban crowds, for instance, constituted one of the most visible challenges of street life, for being immersed in a crowd could pose a threat to one's identity, could make one feel, as Schapiro said, "wholly dissolved by the world." Paintings that focus on the crowd illustrate how greatly it can vary in character, and many of them manage to convey both its negative and positive aspects. Unfocused swarms of pedestrians, as in Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines* (Fig. 11), register the anonymity but also the vivacity of the crowd. Camille Pissarro's bustling street scenes, such as his 1897 *Boulevard des Italiens, Morning, Sunlight* (Fig. 14), evoke the relentless pace of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, but the articulated patterns of movement feel more orderly and processional than in Monet's view. In Vallotton's crowd scenes, the lurking potential for disorder occasionally erupts: his 1893 *The Demonstration* (Fig. 15) displays the volatility of group behavior, as the intimation of trouble prompts the walkers to break into a

14 Camille Pissarro, *Boulevard des Italiens, Morning, Sunlight,* 1897. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Chester Dale Collection (photograph © 2004 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington)

15 Vallotton, *The Demonstration,* 1893. The Baltimore Museum of Art, Gift of Blanche Adler, BMA 1930.3.13.1 (artwork in the public domain)

run. However, his individuation of figures into recognizable types resists anonymity, and his caricatural humor mitigates the uneasiness.

City crowds, despite their problematic nature, exerted a positive force of attraction on some individual pedestrians. Edgar Allan Poe's 1840 story "The Man of the Crowd" epitomized that idea, with its eponymous figure who prowls the city seeking the energy and anonymity afforded by the crowd.[87] And Baudelaire, in 1863, noted the *flâneur*'s exhilaration when moving with the crowd: for him, "it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude. . . ."[88] Benjamin echoed Baudelaire's terminology of habitation, saying, "The street becomes a dwelling for the *flâneur*; he is as much at home among the façades of houses as a citizen in his four walls."[89] The use of domestic analogies to characterize the street experience undermines the opposition between interior and exterior spheres.

For the *flâneur,* as for any committed walker, the activity of ambulation helped concentrate the sense of selfhood. Modern psychology makes a distinction between "strong-barrier" and "weak-barrier" individuals, speculating that strong-barrier persons have a firmer sense of self, which enables them to experience the environment more vividly than weak-barrier persons.[90] That very dichotomy is personified in the nineteenth-century types of the *flâneur* and the *badaud*: whereas the *flâneur* has a clear sense of himself, an ontological confidence, the *badaud*'s boundaries are described as weak and porous. As Fournel explained in 1858, "The simple *flâneur* . . . is always in full possession of his individuality, whereas the individuality of the *badaud* disappears. It is absorbed by the outside world, which intoxicates him to the point where he forgets himself."[91] Thus, the *badaud* exemplifies the condition Schapiro described as the self being "wholly dissolved by the world." By contrast, the *flâneur,* because he felt at home in his outdoor territory, could pursue his interior life even amid the crowds. In any case, the *flâneur*'s presence on the boulevards diminished toward the end of the century; as noted earlier, the rise of consumer culture is said to have helped turn him into a *badaud.*

Night Strolling

Another environmental factor acknowledged as a potential threat to the stability of personal boundaries is darkness. Night transforms the city, as Balzac explained: "Passing that way in the daytime, nobody could imagine what all those

streets became at night. . . ."[92] The risks of walking involve more than the unsavory or criminal element that emerges after sundown. Those who have written about the spatial phenomenology of darkness assert that whereas daylight enforces the separation of figure and ground, night's ability to diminish the distinction between figure and environment can undermine the sense of self.[93] Although Impressionism's sunstruck vaporization of form had already challenged daylight's hold on clarity of outline, unsettling some of its viewers, night has an even greater claim on the power to infiltrate and obscure form.

Yet the dark, like the crowd, offers both negative and positive possibilities. Two images of walking in nighttime Paris, one by Georges Seurat, one by Bonnard, illustrate those options. Seurat, in the 1880s, took up the theme of walking figures in a series of drawings.[94] In his 1887–88 *Night Stroll* (Fig. 16), a woman in profile glides through the gaslit evening streets of Paris. Like the woman in Béraud's 1888 *L'attente* (Fig. 9), her unescorted figure takes the form of a dark silhouette and raises the issue of respectability, though the title places the emphasis on the walk. However, while Béraud's attention to fashionable details of dress and manner implies concern with the outward presentation of the self to others, Seurat communicates inwardness by suppressing surface details and textures of clothing, skin, and hair and distilling the figure to its essential shape. If, as Valéry claimed, there is a reciprocity between one's pace and one's thoughts, her fluidity of movement serves as a bodily analogue to the flow of inner consciousness. Her milieu is not so much the sights of the city, whose details are also muffled, as the ambient twilight atmosphere, whose muted embrace seems to wrap her in her thoughts. The atmosphere feels filled rather than empty, with a palpability both meteorological and psychological. The figure's softly blurred outlines seem to mimic the dissolving of boundaries between self and world, but the effect is not threatening. Rather, it connotes a sense of belonging, as if the woman's integration into the environment strengthens her hold on inwardness and reinforces her air of self-possession, in much the same way that the *flâneur*'s immersion in a crowd seems to fortify his individuality.

Bonnard offered a very different experience of night. An avid walker, Bonnard often depicted the streets of Paris filled with pedestrians in both daytime and evening. Instead of the hushed fluidity of Seurat's night stroller, Bonnard's color lithograph *The Square at Evening* of about 1897–98 (Fig. 17) features a woman sharply outlined against a pool of light who picks her way carefully through the night streets. Harsh contrasts of light and shadow and disorienting reflections make it difficult to distinguish among the jumble of figures crowding the left-hand side of the composition. One of night's weapons is its potential to thwart perception, to give rise to precisely the aura of murky confusion Bonnard evokes in this work. Although in the latter part of the century fewer compositions position the spectator as pedestrian, here the proximity and cropping of the figures at the left approximate the close-up viewpoint of a passerby. The indistinctness of everything except the focal figure, whose clarity isolates her from—and suggests her own awareness of her separateness from—her surroundings, creates a dissonant atmosphere. The sense of the physical and psychic exertion required to negotiate the sensory commotion of the night streets has a diminishing effect on the figure of the woman, who despite her firm outline seems less self-possessed than Seurat's figure.

16 Georges Seurat, *Night Stroll*, 1887–88. Location unknown (artwork in the public domain)

Everyday Life in Motion

One last aspect of walking not yet fully considered is how its bodily motion calls attention to its immersion in a spatiotemporal matrix. The perceptual experience of the walk unfolds temporally as the body proceeds through space. To depict walking was to evoke movement. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Paris became a city irrevocably on the move. Blanc, in his 1877 book *Art in Ornament and Dress*, observed that even current women's fashions seemed predicated on the idea of rapid movement: the silhouettes of dresses and hairstyles looked "as though they were always to be seen in profile" as the wearer hastened past.[95] The female figure illustrated in Blanc's text (Fig. 18) in fact bears a passing resemblance both to Béraud's *parisienne* (Fig. 9) and to Seurat's night stroller (Fig. 16): all three are shown moving in profile. Mocking and at the same time underlining the new pictorial concern with presenting effects of movement is Bridet's rendering of a booted foot in the act of energetic walking, titled *Essai de peinture mouvementiste* (*Attempt at Movementist Painting*) (Fig. 19), from an 1884 catalogue of the

17 Bonnard, *The Square at Evening,* ca. 1897–98. Washington, D.C., The Phillips Collection

Incohérents, a humorous group whose work often satirized current trends. The ordinariness of the boot itself stresses the ordinariness of the activity; the late-nineteenth-century urge to portray the body in motion derived not from the traditional artistic doctrine that the human body in action amounted to the best picture of the human soul but, rather, from the interest in presenting the flow of everyday life.

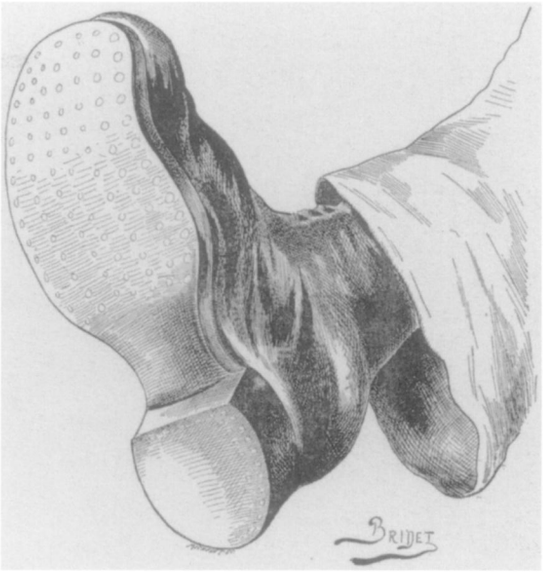
Interest in the analysis of physical movement grew rapidly during the nineteenth century, encouraged and aided by the new medium of photography. Though, initially, lengthy exposure times meant that moving objects were precisely what photography left out, within a few short years the documentation of movement became one of its most impressive accomplishments.[96] By the 1850s and 1860s, pedestrian street scenes such as Hippolyte Jouvin's *The Pont Neuf, Paris* of about 1860–65 (Fig. 20) had begun to disclose new knowledge, not visible to the naked eye, about ordinary actions such as walking.[97] Photography's visual revelations profoundly influenced the look of the painting of the era, as is well known.

The photographic quest to analyze movement took its own direction, when Eadweard Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey turned their attention to the study of human and animal locomotion. All the contexts of walking as a fertile dimension of human experience with sociocultural, phenomenological, and psychological resonance developed in the mid- to late-nineteenth-century paintings considered here Muybridge and Marey carefully eliminated from their photographic studies in the 1870s as they narrowed their focus to the physical dynamics of movement. To reduce the walking figure to a diagrammatic sequence, Marey situated his model against a black backdrop and clothed him in a black outfit marked with white stripes to delineate limbs and joints, which effectively eclipsed signs of personality and social class and diminished the weight and shape of the body itself (Fig. 21). Such studies suppressed both walking's outward contexts and its inward density, leaving out the accompanying mental, visual, and perceptual processes that make walking a quintessential human undertaking and that interconnect the individual with the surrounding environment. What the paintings surveyed here communicate, by contrast, is the sense of walking as a familiar and mundane but nonetheless fundamental and meaningful activity.

Walking constitutes such a basic modality of experiencing the world that it often escapes notice, in art as well as in life. The pedestrian activity that animates many painted cityscapes of the "new" Paris has aroused far less commentary than the Haussmannized architectural environment and its estranging force. Bodies and cities, however, interact in a deeply reciprocal relation. Walking—traditionally credited with the power to integrate and reconcile inner and outer worlds—figures as one of the everyday practices through which human life negotiates its relation with the milieu. In this essay, I have drawn attention to walking's emergence as a frequent pictorial theme in Parisian art of the second half of the nineteenth century. Images by certain modernist painters, who themselves strolled the city in the manner associated with the *flâneur,* reflect an intuitive awareness of the heightened role walking played in mediating the relation between self and world, in the wake of Haussmann's disruption of the familiar environment. Urban modernity could certainly, as early social theorists claimed, beget estrangement, but that was not the only condition, or set of feelings, available to the pedestrian. The paintings explored here impart a variety of experiences that express the positive as well as the negative dimension of urban street life. Walking's mediative power offers a means through which the pedestrian, whether consciously or not, can "use" the city. Moreover, walking's traditionally understood ability to enhance the sense of the continuity of the self amid the flux of the world endows it with an intrinsically positive potential.

Walking's usefulness as a tool for coming to terms with

18 Illustration from Charles Blanc, *Art in Ornament and Dress,* London, 1877, 273 (artwork in the public domain)

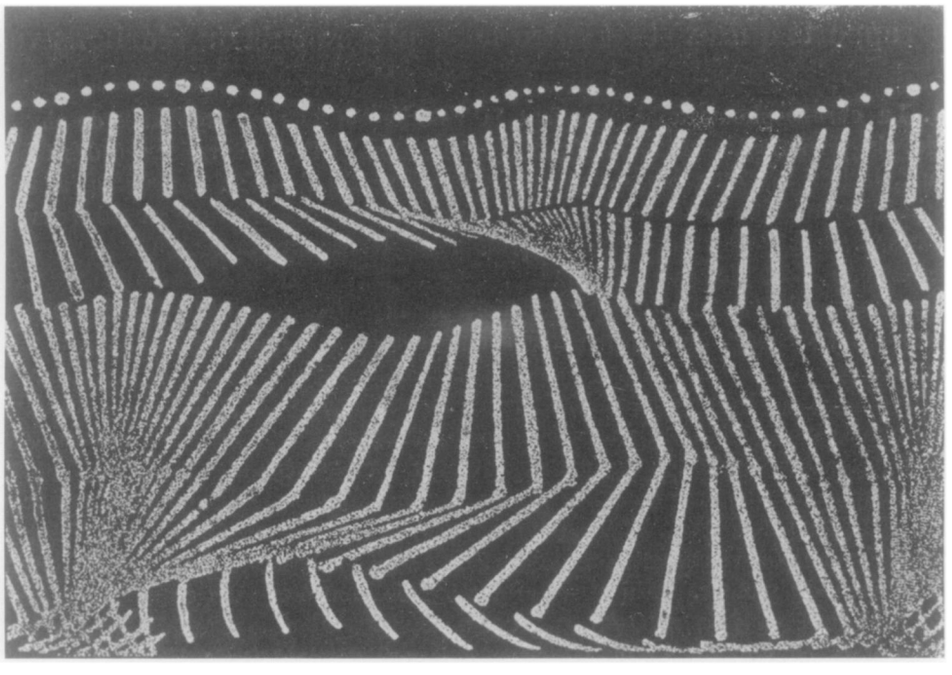


19 Bridet, *Essai de peinture mouvementiste (Attempt at Movementist Painting),* 1884. New Brunswick, N.J., Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Acquired with the Herbert D. and Ruth Schimmel Museum Library Fund (photograph by Jack Abraham, provided by the Zimmerli Art Museum)

urban modernity was recognized and exploited by the *flâneur.* Yet the paintings in question feature a wide range of pedestrian types, whose variety compels us to expand the scope of the art historical treatment of the walk beyond its previously limited recognition as the modality of the *flâneur.* Thus, I have attempted to restore to those other, "ordinary practitioners of the city" a fuller sense of the meaning of walking by drawing on the context of the history of writing about the subject. That history alerts us to walking's social, cultural, and political implications and stresses its phenomenological fullness as an activity that coherently intertwines body, mind, and vision. Analyzing the paintings within that context, as we have seen, yields insight into the complexity of their attention to the eye/mind/body triad inherent in the activity of ambulation. That attention, unsurprisingly, is not uniform, for no two walks are the same, and no two artists have identical visions. It manifests itself in a variety of ways: in the handling of the depicted pedestrians, to invest them with both an interior and an exterior life; in the traces inscribed on the canvas of not just the operations of the painter's eye and mind but also his own embodiedness in relation to the observed subject; and in the structure of the painting's optical and corporeal appeal to the beholder, through compositional strategies whose perceptual complexity stimulates the viewer's own integrated triad of faculties.

Walking remained a common motif in art throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, but in the 1880s and 1890s the theme diminished in urgency and in corporeal vigorousness. Indeed, the phenomenological acuity that characterizes the best of the images of walking, dating from the 1870s, necessitates complicating or revising our traditional sense of the Impressionists as forging an "optical" practice. Those painters strolled the city, recording their observations of, and, at the same time, their own sensation of bodily immersion in, the urban milieu. Walking is, of course, just one of the myriad motifs in Impressionist painting, yet exploring its pictorial depths reminds us of the tendency of art to resist our efforts to categorize it. These painters, for the most part, are considered *flâneurs.* But the prevailing notion of the *flâneur* assimilates his significance to the logic of the gaze, a model that is likewise inadequate: the reputedly detached, impersonal, disembodied manner of observation epitomized by the *flâneur*'s gaze cannot account for the experiential repleteness evoked in the paintings of walking examined here. Besides expressing embodiedness, these images also convey the individually inflected interior sensibility of the artist. Like other confirmed walkers throughout history, the artists seem to understand the body's role in mediating between consciousness and the world. In fact, their practice of strolling to stimulate creativity—summed up in Degas's motto, "Ambulare, postea laborare"—echoes the long tradition of philosophers and writers who habitually walked to promote thinking. The usefulness of that approach is affirmed by its thematization in their art. Perhaps that pictorial evocation of walking possesses its own mediating

20 Hippolyte Jouvin, *The Pont Neuf, Paris,* ca. 1860–65. New York, The Museum of Modern Art (artwork in the public domain; digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY)



21 Étienne-Jules Marey, path of the different joints while walking, from *Développement de la méthode graphique par l'emploi de la photographie,* Paris, n.d., 48, fig. 34 (artwork in the public domain)

force, reminding viewers of the fundamental power of everyday practices at the same time that it allows them some measure of access into the particular nature of that experience for late-nineteenth-century Parisians.

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Notes

I am indebted to Marc Gotlieb and to *The Art Bulletin*'s anonymous readers for their insightful suggestions, and to Michael Fried for his perceptive reading of the first version.

1. Edgar Degas, *Lettres de Degas,* ed. M. Guerin (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1931), 52.
2. See David Macauley, "Walking the City: An Essay on Peripatetic Practices and Politics," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 11, no. 4 (December 2000): 5–6, on the concept of a "walking city," which he characterizes as one whose design facilitates walking and whose congestion warrants it. Before its remodeling, Paris's cramped, dirty, convoluted streets compelled a different pedestrian experience, described by Maxime Du Camp, *Paris, ses organes, ses fonctions et sa vie dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1879), vol. 6, 253.
3. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism,* trans. Harry Zohn (London: NLB 1973), 174.
4. The concept of estrangement and anxiety as effects resulting from the modern city's rapid growth emerged most influentially in the early-twentieth-century writings of Walter Benjamin, Georg Simmel, and Siegfried Kracauer, with debts to Karl Marx. For a succinct summary of those ideas, see, for example, Anthony Vidler, "Psychopathologies of Modern Space: Metropolitan Fear from Agoraphobia to Estrangement," in *Rediscovering History: Culture, Politics, and the Psyche,* ed. Michael S. Roth (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 11–29.
5. Edmund Husserl, "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism" (1931), in *Husserl: Shorter Works,* ed. Peter McCormick and Frederick A. Elliston (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 238–50. My phrasing here is partially indebted to Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Viking, 2000), 27.
6. Louis-Émile-Edmond Duranty, *La nouvelle peinture: À propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les Galeries Durand-Ruel* (1876), 2nd ed. (Paris: Fleury, 1946); translated as "The New Painting: Concerning the Group of Artists Exhibiting at the Durand-Ruel Galleries," in *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886,* exh. cat., Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986, 44–45. In a relevant vein, Duranty argued that the Impressionists, as part of their effort to convey the immersion of modern man in the spaces and habits of his daily milieu, both indoors and outside in the city streets, "tried to render the walk, movement, and hustle and bustle of passers-by. . . ."
7. Christopher Prendergast, *Paris and the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992), 13. For a sampling of the extensive literature on the *flâneur,* see, for example, Keith Tester, *The* Flâneur (London: Routledge, 1994).
8. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays,* trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1965), 9; originally published as "Le peintre de la vie moderne," in *Curiosités esthétiques: L'art romantique et autres oeuvres critiques de Baudelaire,* ed. H. Lemaitre (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962), 453–502.
9. Roger Gilbert, *Walks in the World: Representation and Experience in Modern American Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 9. See also Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (1896; New York: Zone Books, 1988), 46: "As my body moves in space, all the other images vary, while . . . my body, remains invariable. I must, therefore, make it a center, to which I refer all the other images."
10. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 93, 96.
11. Elizabeth Grosz, "Bodies-Cities," in *Sexuality and Space,* ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 242.
12. Émile Zola, *L'assommoir (The Dram Shop),* trans. Robin Buss (1877; London: Penguin, 2000), ix.
13. See, for example, Anthea Callen, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Technique and the Making of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 120; Belinda Thomson, *Impressionism: Origins, Practice, Reception* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2000), 28; Julia Sagraves, "The Street," in *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist,* by Anne Distel et al., exh. cat., Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Art Institute of Chicago (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995), 91, who refers to it as a modern *veduta;* and Kermit Swiler Champa, *Studies in Early Impressionism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 15, who notes that this tradition "saw the city as a picturesque arrangement of architectural and topographical elements . . . which were viewed in a softly diagonal fashion from ground level." On the painting as celebrating the "new" Paris, see, for example, Sagraves, 91.
14. Robert Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 7.
15. Ibid., 7.
16. For Renoir's critical views on Haussmann's project, see Robert L. Herbert, *Nature's Workshop: Renoir's Writings on the Decorative Arts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
17. On walking as a process that helps invest a city with human meaning, see Macauley, "Walking the City," 32.
18. That tendency in Renoir's early work may reflect his admiration of and association with Édouard Manet and his circle; on the inclusion of both corporeal and optical appeals to the beholder in the work of Manet and his colleagues, see Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism, or The Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). As John House, *Pierre-Auguste Renoir: La Promenade* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum Studies on Art, 1997), 69, points out, Renoir's presence in Henri Fantin-Latour's 1870 painting *A Studio in the Batignolles* identified him clearly as one of Manet's followers.
19. Victor I. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow,* trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 106, makes this comparison and quotes Baudelaire, 9.
20. On the impact of those events—the Prussian siege of Paris in the fall and winter of 1870–71 and the popular uprising in Paris, known as the Commune, which led to the city's siege and retaking by government forces, followed by the execution of thousands of citizens—on artists and art making as well as on the structures of everyday life, see Hollis Clayson, *Paris in Despair: Art and Everyday Life under Siege (1870–71)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
21. Renoir's brother described the circumstances of that painting; see John Rewald, "Auguste Renoir and His Brother," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* 6th ser., 27 (March 1945): 181.
22. Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Human Wheel, Its Spokes and Felloes," *Atlantic Monthly* 11 (1863): 571. On the significance of the upright posture of humans, see Erwin W. Straus, "The Upright Posture," in *Essays in Phenomenology,* ed. Maurice Natanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 164–92.
23. Solnit, *Wanderlust,* 14–16, explains that the Peripatetics took their name from the covered colonnade, or *peripatos,* of Aristotle's school in Athens, where teachers and students supposedly wandered to and fro during instruction (a notion now regarded as uncertain), thereby establishing the link between walking and philosophizing.
24. Søren Kierkegaard, "Letter on Walking" (1847); the letter, together with an analysis of the significance of walking to Kierkegaard's life and thought, can be found in Roger Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 172–73. On the centrality of walking to the creative processes of philosophers in general, see, for example, Solnit, *Wanderlust,* 14–26; and Gilbert, *Walks in the World,* 11–16.
25. That theme appears consistently in essays about walking, from the outset of their popularity: see William Hazlitt, "On Going a Journey" (1821), in *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt,* ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Nonesuch Press; New York: Random House, 1970), 71–83, thought to be the first essay specifically devoted to the pleasures of walking. For a sampling of such essays, see, for example, Edwin Mitchell, ed., *The Pleasures of Walking* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1979).
26. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les confessions* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1980), 183, bk. 4 (1731–32). See also his 1782 *Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1978). On walking as a Romantic concept, see Jeffrey C. Robinson, *The Walk: Notes on a Romantic Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 5; Robin Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); and Celeste Langan, *Romantic Vagrancy: Wordsworth and the Simulation of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
27. On the contrast between city and country life, see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); and Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel,* trans. Kurt H. Wolff (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1950), 410, who states: "The metropolis exacts from man as a discriminating creature a different amount of consciousness than does rural life." On the proliferation of the theme among urban writers and poets, see Phillip Lopate, "The Pen on Foot: The Literature of Walking Around," *Parnassus* 18, no. 2 and 19, no. 1 (1993): 176–212.
28. Paul Valéry, "Poésie et pensée abstraite," in *Oeuvres,* ed. Jean Hytier (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), 1323, translated by Denise Folliot as "Poetry and Abstract Thought," in Valéry, *The Art of Poetry* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), 62.
29. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Cézanne's Doubt," in *Sense and Non-Sense,* trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 14.
30. Rousseau, *Confessions,* 183.
31. Victor Fournel, *Ce qu'on voit dans les rues de Paris* (Paris: Delahays,

1858), 263. Patrice Higonnet, *Paris: Capital of the World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 218, points out that Fournel's definition reproduces almost word for word that of Ferdinand Gall, *Les Parisiens* (Paris, 1845).

32. Baudelaire, *Painter of Modern Life,* 9. Though not published until 1863, the essay was written in 1859–60.

33. Anne D. Wallace, *Walking, Literature, and English Culture: The Origins and Uses of Peripatetic in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 13, contends that as the nineteenth century progressed, essayists established the basic tenets of " 'peripatetic theory,' which attempts an explicit and coherent account of how walking actually works in experience."

34. Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), 47.

35. Gilbert, *Walks in the World,* 16–18, discusses the body's mediating role. On the *durée* and the "true self," see Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness,* trans. F. L. Pogson (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 128–29.

36. For a sampling of essays including such observations, see n. 25 above. See also Gilbert, *Walks in the World,* 19.

37. See, for example, Edmondo de Amicis, "The First Day in Paris," in *Studies of Paris,* trans. W. W. Cady (London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1879), 10–36, in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., *Art in Theory, 1815–1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998), 887.

38. See Wallace, *Walking, Literature, and English Culture,* 9; and John Elder, *Imagining the Earth: Poetry and the Vision of Nature* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 5.

39. Honoré de Balzac, *A Harlot High and Low* (1839–47), trans. Rayner Heppenstell (London: Penguin, 1970), 137–38.

40. On the question of the *flâneuse*'s existence and the impact of the rise of shopping on the role of women at home and in the street, see Janet Wolff, "The Invisible *Flâneuse*: Women and the Literature of Modernity," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 2, no. 3 (1985): 37–46; Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 50–90; Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989); Anne Friedberg, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Anke Gleber, *The Art of Taking a Walk: Flanerie, Literature, and Film in Weimar Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Rachel Bowlby, "Walking, Women and Writing: Virginia Woolf as *Flâneuse,*" *Still Crazy after All These Years: Women, Writing and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1992), 1–33.

41. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 119. See also Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 69; and Fournel, *Ce qu'on voit,* 263.

42. See Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* trans. Martin Milligan (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), 94: "Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided. . . . In place of *all* physical and mental senses there has therefore come the sheer estrangement of *all* these senses, the sense of *having*" (emphasis in the original).

43. Baudelaire, *Painter of Modern Life,* 12. On Paris as spectacle, see, for example, Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 114; and Rémy G. Saisselin, *The Bourgeois and the Bibelot* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 19–30. The assault on the eyes could be overwhelming at times: as Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 151, observed, "That the eye of the city dweller is overburdened with protective functions is obvious."

44. On these points, see especially Gleber, *Art of Taking a Walk,* 137, who relates *flânerie* to the realm of photography and film; Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Cinematic Spectatorship before the Apparatus: The Public Taste for Reality in *Fin-de-Siècle* Paris," in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life,* ed. Leo Charney and Schwartz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 297–319; and Friedberg, *Window Shopping.* See also Fournel, *Ce qu'on voit,* 261, who referred to the *flâneur* as a "walking daguerreotype."

45. Gilbert, *Walks in the World,* 31.

46. See n. 1 above.

47. See, for example, Herbert, *Impressionism,* 35; and Anthea Callen, *The Spectacular Body: Science, Method and Meaning in the Work of Degas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 175.

48. This outing exemplifies what Louis Huart's popular text *Le flâneur* (Paris: Aubert, 1850) categorized as "Sunday *flânerie*" with the family. Huart stressed the advisability of the *flâneur*'s proceeding alone on weekdays, so as to give free rein to his wandering attention and to be able to pursue—"with the eye, not with the foot"—any woman who attracts his gaze. Huart, chap. 6, quoted in Bowlby, "Walking, Women and Writing," 6, 7.

49. Albert Kostenevich, *Hidden Treasures Revealed: Impressionist Masterpieces and Other Important French Paintings Preserved by the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), 71, proposes that the man at the left represents Degas's friend Ludovic Halévy.

50. Linda Nochlin, "A House Is Not a Home: Degas and the Subversion of the Family," in *Dealing with Degas: Representations of Women and the Politics of Vision,* ed. Richard Kendall and Griselda Pollock (London: Pandora, 1992), 48.

51. For a summary of the various readings of the political significance of the Place de la Concorde in reference to Degas's painting, as well as a fresh assessment, see Clayson, *Paris in Despair,* 329–42.

52. Stephen Toulmin, "The Inwardness of Mental Life," *Critical Inquiry* 6, no. 1 (Autumn 1979): 11.

53. Guy Cogeval, *Vuillard,* exh. cat., Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2003, 86, identifies the setting as the small park known as the Square Berlioz. On parks as gendered spaces, see Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Feminity," 50–90; and Prendergast, *Paris and the Nineteenth Century,* 164–88.

54. On the consistently absorptive thematics of Caillebotte's painting and on his incorporation of both ocular and corporeal modes, see Michael Fried, "Caillebotte's Impressionism," *Representations* 99 (Spring 1999): 1–51. See also Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 16–17. Caillebotte's depiction of walking in the countryside includes, for example, his 1881 *Rising Road,* 1884 *Man in a Smock* (also known as *Father Magloire on the Road between Saint-Clair and Étretat*), and 1884 *Portrait of M. Richard Gallo,* all reproduced in Distel et al., *Gustave Caillebotte,* 259, 263, 281.

55. On the notion of "copresence" and its role in the modern world, see, for example, Deirdre Boden and Harvey L. Molotch, "The Compulsion of Proximity," in *NowHere: Space, Time and Modernity,* ed. Roger Friedland and Boden (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 257–86.

56. On the social implications of bodily comportment, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), 218. For interpretations that assess the sociopolitical implications of the painting, see, for example, Sagraves, "The Street," 97–98; and Fried, "Caillebotte's Impressionism," 21–24.

57. The phrase comes from Jean Starobinski, "The Natural and Literary History of Bodily Sensation," in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body, Part Two,* ed. Michel Feher (New York: Zone, 1989), 356.

58. Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte,* 73–74.

59. Macauley, "Walking the City," 4.

60. Bourdieu, *Distinction,* chap. 3.

61. On that issue, see n. 40 above; see also Hollis Clayson, *Painted Love: Prostitution in French Art of the Impressionist Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 56; and T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

62. Charles Blanc, *Art in Ornament and Dress* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1877), 273.

63. Claire Olivia Parsons, "Reputation and Public Appearance: The Deeroticization of the Urban Street," in *Voices in the Street: Explorations in Gender, Media, and Public Space,* ed. Susan J. Drucker and Gary Gumpert (Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton Press, 1997), 59–70. See also Clark, *Painting of Modern Life,* chap. 2.

64. Parsons, "Reputation and Public Appearance," 59–70.

65. On this point, see Clark, *Painting of Modern Life,* 47–49.

66. See Straus, "Upright Posture," 175, who observes, "Confidence and timidity, elation and depression, stability and insecurity—all are expressed in gait." See also Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body" (1934), in *Incorporations,* ed. Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter (New York: Zone, 1992), 469, who sees styles of walking as "simultaneously a matter of race, of individual mentality and of collective mentality."

67. Here my reading aligns with that of Fried, "Caillebotte's Impressionism," 26–27, who points out the dominant impression of temporal duration and sees in the umbrella-bearing figures a "mobile mode of absorptive closure . . . that also allows for the sharing or merging of individual lifeworlds."

68. Eugène Minkowski, "Toward a Psychopathology of Lived Space," in *Lived Time: Phenomenological and Psychopathological Studies,* trans. Nancy Metzel (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 406–7. See also Meyer Schapiro, "The Social Bases of Art," in *Art in Theory, 1900–2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003), 515, who remarks, "A prom-

enade . . . would be impossible without a particular growth of urban life and secular forms of recreation. The necessary means—the streets and the roads—are also social and economic in origin, beyond or prior to any individual; yet each man enjoys his walk by himself without any sense of constraint or institutional purpose."

69. Straus, "Upright Posture," 179–80.

70. Claude Monet, quoted in Christof Asendorf, *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity,* trans. Don Reneau (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 94.

71. Reproductions of those paintings can be found in *The New Painting,* 179; and in John House, *Monet: Nature into Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 154.

72. Eunice Lipton, *Looking into Degas: Uneasy Images of Women and Modern Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 128.

73. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life,* 93, 97 (emphasis in the original).

74. A. R. Ammons, "A Poem Is a Walk," *Epoch* 18, no. 1 (1968): 117. In a similar vein, Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 98, compares Baudelaire's prosody to "the map of a big city" whose linguistic effects are calculated "step by step."

75. De Amicis, "First Day in Paris," 885.

76. Franz Hessel, *Spazieren in Berlin* (1929), quoted in Gleber, *Art of Taking a Walk,* 66.

77. John O'Neill, introduction to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Prose of the World,* ed. Claude Lefort, trans. O'Neill (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), xxxiii.

78. Sagraves, "The Street," 90–91, makes this point. Friedberg, *Window Shopping,* 73, notes that for both Benjamin and Hessel, "city streets served as a mnemonic system, bringing images of the past into the present. . . ."

79. Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* 152–53. See also Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 193.

80. Theodore Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris,* exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1982, 236, 240, states that the Fête de la Paix (together with the 1878 Exposition Universelle that opened two months earlier) was understood as an affirmation of the country's complete recovery after the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune and describes the one-legged man both as "an insignificant genre . . . figure" and as "a reminder of the horrors of the recent war and of the civil war that followed it." Asendorf, *Batteries of Life,* 78, contends that the painting offers confusing signs of failure: the street here, with its contrasting types of pedestrians, appears "not as a site of circulation but as a no-man's-land dividing two social spheres," and Manet in this way "creates memory through pictorial structure."

81. Regarding these characteristics of Manet, see Fried, *Manet's Modernism,* 294–97.

82. Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976), 40.

83. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 174.

84. Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 410, described that input as "the intensification of nervous stimulation which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli." See also Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 80–83, who notes that contemporary medical psychologists blamed that overstimulation for the rise in nervous ailments suffered by the population.

85. On this point, see, for example, Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space,* trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 217–18: "Outside and inside . . . are always ready to be reversed, to exchange their hostility"; Relph, *Place and Placelessness,* 39; Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* 55; and Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 419.

86. Meyer Schapiro, *Impressionism: Reflections and Perceptions* (New York: George Braziller, 1997), 38.

87. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man of the Crowd" (1840), in *Great Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1951). Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 128, states that although Baudelaire equated the man of the crowd with the *flâneur,* the man exhibits manic behavior, counter to the composure of the *flâneur.*

88. Baudelaire, *Painter of Modern Life,* 9. To indicate the *flâneur*'s comfort level in the streets, he continued the domestic analogy: "To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home. . . ."

89. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire,* 37.

90. Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 38.

91. Fournel, *Ce qu'on voit,* 263.

92. Balzac, *A Harlot High and Low,* 34. His description was written before Paris's remodeling, but even Haussmannization could not suppress—though it could relocate—the night culture of the city.

93. See Minkowski, "Psychopathology of Lived Space," 427–29, who asserts that darkness "touches the individual directly, envelops him, penetrates him, and even passes through him"; hence, the ego "becomes one with it." See also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), 283; and Roger Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," trans. John Shepley, *October,* no. 31 (Winter 1984): 30.

94. Michael F. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of His Time,* trans. Patricia Compton (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1991), 128–32, reproduces a number of those drawings. *Night Stroll* was reproduced in *Minotaure* 3, no. 11 (1938): 8.

95. Blanc, *Art in Ornament and Dress,* 273–74.

96. Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982), 16, cites as an example Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre's 1838 *View of the Boulevard du Temple,* which, because it could record only the presence of stationary figures, offered a deceptively empty view of a boulevard "constantly filled with the moving throng of pedestrians and carriages."

97. Holmes, "Human Wheel," 571, noted that the camera made visible positions so unexpected that he ventured, "No artist would have dared to draw a walking figure in attitudes like some of these."