

# French art: an ideal mother

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Developments in French Art changed the older attitudes regarding the happy mother and the ideals of the family. During the eighteenth century, the enlightenment figures began to develop new ideals on the happy mother and family. Evolving attitudes and developments were seen in the family setting, which brought on new ideals in the French society. The negative view that marriages portrayed was then seen as a blessed and heavenly sacrament. New ideals regarding children were also developed, as they were cared for by the mother and cared for by a loving family.

As in Carol Duncan essay shows motherhood, in Angelica Kauffmann 's artwork shows motherhood too. The first point is status of women and changing relationship of the women with the family and structure and women with the children and husband. Women's role as a mother changed. As mother raises their children not by a nurse. The second point is process and concept of marriage has changed, now marrying for love. People get married for love not for money. People used to get married for money and family status. Family statue has changed and she loves her children and husband and money is not her first priority.

The third point is role of money: why people got married because of dowry. The status of children changing as they are referenced to as treasure. The fourth point is the artist and the family. It is not posed. It is more intimacy is seen within the family members. It shows composition of children close to mother and playful feeling. The last point is the influence of the Enlightenment thinkers. In this essay, Carol Duncan explores the changing ideals in French Art, as it became more family focused with the development

of Enlightenment ideals. Happy mother became the central focus as new family ideals were adopted.

This essay primarily focuses on the cultural and social aspects of French Art. A difference in social and cultural opinions was seen regarding family and the mother role within the family. French Art moved toward a more child-centered culture and moved towards displaying happy mothers and family. Although images of mothers and fathers with children were barely new to secular art, when French artists first introduced the theme of happy mothers and good fathers, the public was still new to these characters. In the eighteenth century, motherhood was primarily associated with sexual satisfaction.

This is seen in, “ The delights of Motherhood ”. In this painting, a husband and wife are situated underneath a statue of Venus and Cupid and the mother figure is seen as erotic. However, these images did not reflect the social reality of the eighteenth century, but the newly developed concept of family, which has challenged ideals from long ago. This new concept of family challenged attitudes, which have been established from years ago. In addition, painters began to develop new attitudes about the concept of what motherhood and family is centered around.

In both the 17th and 18th century, marriage was viewed as negative and rarely appealed to the emotion of happiness. Women were viewed as creative while men were seen as a joke to others. Often parents were involved in arranged marriages for their children, for the benefit of the families interests without any regard to the emotions of their children and

their own needs or wants. Moreover, this new ideal of family also fought against previous notions of children. Older opinions regarding children, characterized them as greedy individuals and families would not care for their children.

It was common for French families to hire wet nurses to care for their children and children would grow up barely knowing much about their parents. Families were not focused around caring for their children instead an essay solution was to hire someone to care their children instead. With new developments made from the enlightenment thinkers, the aristocracy developed a new ideal of the family. They saw marriage as a joyful and happy bond between two individuals and they condemned many older customs, which include disregarding their own children.

Giving children away to be cared for by wet nurses were seen as immoral and unjust. Now, French painters focused their portraiture on the idea of conjugal love and happy families. The family was now seen as a caring unit that was loved by both parents. There was also a sense of intimacy present. The opinion of a happy mother had also changed, to a fulfilling motherly role. The good wife seen in older paintings was replaced by a happy mother who was good to her children. The new ideals of the French society were developed and incorporated the concept of conjugal family and was also child-centered.

To support her analysis, much of her explanations are clearly supported by a variety of examples, which are used to effectively demonstrate to the reader her own analysis. Carol Duncan makes a good reference to the development

of new ideals in French Art regarding the mother figure and family ideals. Carol Duncan is successful in effectively approaching the study of art as she addresses the changing attitudes developed throughout the years. This essay demonstrated the new ideals in French Art regarding the mother figure and conjugal family.

Much of her explanations are clearly supported by a variety of examples, which are used to effectively demonstrate to the reader her own analysis. The beginning of the essay clearly outlines the older ideals of French Art and Duncan continues to explain throughout the essay the newly developed attitudes by using paintings to support her findings. She makes reference to Etienne Aubry's painting, "Farewell to the Nurse" in comparison to Fragonard's, "The Joys of Motherhood" to depict the changing attitudes of motherhood in French Art. I agree that French Art has developed in a different way due to changing ideals of this theme.

I agree with Carol Duncan in her analysis of changing ideals in French Art. In French Art, it is evident that portraiture regarding motherhood and family has altered, as it becomes more focused on the good mother instead of the negative connections related to family. Angelica Kauffmann depicts the theme of motherhood in her painting, "Cornelia Pointing to Her Children as Her Treasure". This painting illustrates new attitudes developed about family and the good mother. Due to the introduction of enlightenment thinkers, society ideals changed from older attitudes.

In particular, Angelica Kauffmann is trying to depict a scene of motherhood and children. Angelica Kauffmann is placed in the middle and her children

stand beside her. Which is represented that mother is centered position. Mother takes cares of their children. Also, in this painting, the sitting down lady asks to the lady who is standing that I have this beautiful jewelry but what do you have. And the lady who is standing up, she points her children and said they are my beautiful jewelry. It shows the children being her treasure, which shows motherhood. It shows her loving affection towards her children.

This painting resembles the new ideals in French Art surrounding the major them of a happy mother and children developed by enlightenment thinkers. These new ideals changed the attitudes towards children and motherhood. Now mothers would care for their children instead of handling them over to a wet nurse to be cared for. Mothers would be able to get to know their children, as they spent quality time with them. Marriage and family was also viewed differently. Families were seen as a group of individuals that shared intimacy and love between one another. This painting resembles these new ideals of motherhood and family.

The mother is holding one of her child. There is no nurse in the background, ready to take care of the children. Instead, the mother has taken on the role of a good mother in caring for her own children. Therefore, this essay shows; changing relationship of the women with the family and also women with the children and husband, they get married for love not for money, the role of money changes, role of artist changed, and lastly influence of the enlightenment thinkers. . Overall, new ideals regarding children were developed, as they were cared for by the mother and cared for by a loving family.

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