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A comparative study of Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary and Emile Zola's Therese-Raquin

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GUSTAVE FLAUBERT'S MADAME BOVARY
AND EMILE ZOLA'S THÉRÈSE-RACQUIN

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
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DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH

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The purpose of this study is to analyze Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary and Emile Zola's Thérèse-Raquin and to point out the similarities and differences between the two works. In order to make a comparison between these two works, a critical analysis will be made of each work, placing emphasis on the theme, style, and character development. Although Madame Bovary is a Realistic novel while Thérèse-Raquin is a Naturalistic novel, there still remains a great deal of similarity between the two literary works. Since Flaubert was the leader of the Realist school and Zola was the leader of the Naturalist school, it was felt that a comparative study of a representative work of each author would contribute to a better appreciation of these two phases of the nineteenth century novel.

This study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction and includes a biographical sketch of each author and vital details concerning their milieu. Chapter two consists of an analysis of Madame Bovary. In Chapter three will be presented an analysis of Thérèse-Raquin, and also the conclusions.

The writer would like to extend expressions of gratitude to Dr. Benjamin F. Hudson, Chairman of the Department of French, whose assistance, guidance, and inspiration, helped to make such a study possible. Special thanks go to Mrs. Adelyne M. Conley for the typing of this study. And, lastly, to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Allen D. Smith, Sr., she would like to extend words of love, devotion and appreciation for their encouragement and sacrifices during her stay here at Atlanta.
University.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century in France was marked by frequent and violent changes, changes which affected and influenced profoundly the lives and works of Gustave Flaubert and Emile Zola. It was a century of "Revolution," intellectual, political, industrial and social. From 1800 to 1852 France had five different rulers, all of whom endeavored to leave their personal imprint upon the country. Napoléon, whose reign opened the century and lasted until 1815, contributed greatly to the social, political and intellectual upheavals of the period. He imposed upon France new systems of laws, finances, education and even social classes. His efforts to establish a Bonaparte dynasty with his brothers or relatives occupying all of the major thrones of Europe, and his incessant wars lead to his downfall in 1815, and also to the humiliating defeat and financial ruin of France.

Napoléon's defeat and exile paved the way for the return of the Bourbon kings in the person of Louis XVIII. The new king was a highly intelligent man who desired to be a good ruler. He realized that he could not turn back the clock, and decided to retain many of the changes which had been wrought by the Revolution of 1789 and by Napoleon. He was too tolerant, however, of the old nobility who returned to France in his wake. He permitted them to indulge in the "White Terror" and to vent their hatred on the adherents to the principles of 1789. The king was caught therefore in a struggle between the rising bourgeois
and the new nobility (that created by Napoleon), and the old nobility which fought for the restoration of the ancien régime. When Louis XVIII died in 1824, his younger brother mounted the throne under the name of Charles X. The new king cast his lot with the reactionary old nobility. He was determined to restore all of the rights and privileges of this old aristocracy, and to wipe out all of the social and political gains which some of the French people had acquired since 1789. He openly encouraged the "White Terror" and the work of the Congrégation. His harsh laws and repressive measures finally caused the people to rise up against him, and in 1830 he was forced to abdicate and flee the country. This revolution of 1830 marks the close of a period which was characterized by wars, ideological struggles, class struggles, disillusionment and humiliation, and the final triumph of the emerging bourgeoisie.

During this period of turmoil, uncertainty and struggle, there were corresponding trends in literary and artistic endeavors. There were those who desired and worked toward the restoration of the principles of Classicism which had characterized and dominated all literary and artistic production in France until 1789. These individuals were usually the older writers and authors who remembered the glory and grandeur of pre-revolutionary French art, music and literature. On the other hand, there were those who rejected everything associated with the ancien régime, and who insisted upon new concepts of all artistic and literary forms which would be in keeping with the times. This second group consisted primarily of the young authors, artists and musicians who were born and reached maturity during the revolutionary
and napoleonic eras. These young rebels did not know in what direction
they wanted to go; they only knew that they wanted to turn their backs
on the standards and criteria of a past which was an anathema to them.
Their search for new paths was aided by some older writers who also
rejected Classicism.

First among these forerunners of Romanticism was Mme de Stael.
In her De la Littérature (1800) she endeavored to convince her contem-
poraries that literature should be nationalistic and based upon the
cultural and religious heritages of the country. She insisted that
authors should go back to medieval and christian sources for inspira-
tion, and reject greco-roman models which were alien to the French
"esprit." In her De l'Allemagne (1810) Mme de Stael introduced her
countrymen to the litterature of the north, particularly that of
Germany, pointing out its virtues, and aspects which the French writers
should emulate. In all of her writings she emphasized the importance
of enthusiasm, inspiration, and also individuality which she illus-
trated admirably in her two semi-autobiographical novels, Corinne and
Delphine, which served as models for the wave of romantic confessional
novels.

While Mme de Stael furnished to the young writers theories and
principles, it was Chateaubriand who gave them the examples and models.
His Génie du Christianism (1802), is of great importance because the
author illustrated brilliantly in this work the unlimited possibilities
of French prose. His exotic descriptions of nature, his personal
lyricism molded in a beautiful poetic style were inspiration and models
for romantic poets as well as for prose writers. This work is often
considered to have prepared the way for the return to Catholicism which had been banned by the Convention, and to have popularized the Christian religion as a source of literary inspiration.

Mme de Stael and Chateaubriand had indicated, therefore, the route which the new literary school must travel in order to achieve recognition, and to triumph over the reactionaries. Their efforts were augmented by the works and encouragement of such writers as Charles Nodier, Benjamin Constant and Etienne de Senancour. Nodier's novels in imitation of Goethe's Werther, particularly Jean Sobigar, and his Contes fantastiques profoundly influenced many of the young romantics who gathered at his home each Sunday to discuss literature and to court his daughter. Senancour's Obermann and Constant's Adolphe also contributed to the formation of the new school. It was not until the publication of Les Méditations poétiques of Lamartine in 1820, however, that we can say that the new school was established.

The following ten year period, 1820-1830, was one of extraordinary activity. It was characterized by the crystallization of all the ideas and attitudes and theories which gave to Romanticism its distinctive qualities. The success of Lamartine's first volume and the following Nouvelles méditations (1823) convinced Victor Hugo that this new lyricism was the wave of the future. He quickly adapted his genius to the new trend and endeavored to become its leader. He published three volumes of poetry during these ten years, Odes, (1823), Odes et ballades, (1826) and Les Orientales (1829). In addition to the poetic production of Lamartine and Hugo must be added that of Alfred de Vigny who published his Poèmes antiques et modernes in 1822. The works of
these three great poets firmly established the reign of romantic poetry. It was in the theater, however, that the decisive literary battle was to be waged.

During the decade of the 1820's the partisans of the classical theater were under severe attack by the young rebels. Chief among these was Stendhal whose *Racine et Shakespeare* sharply delineated between the old and new schools of thought. He expressed the mood, not only of the young writers but also of the theater-going public when he wrote:

> Le romantisme est l'art de présenter aux peuples les littéraires qui dans l'état actuel de leurs habitudes et de leurs croyances sont susceptibles de leur donner le plus grand plaisir possible.

> Le classicisme, au contraire, leur présente la littérature qui donnait le plus grand plaisir à leurs grands-pères.

In 1827 Hugo wrote a drama, *Cromwell* which was unplayable. The preface to this work, however, was considered as the manifesto of the new school. It proclaimed the death of the old literary traditions, and freedom from restraint for the new movement.

These works of Stendhal and Hugo paved the way for the triumphant success of the second tour of a group of English actors who presented a series of Shakespearean plays on the Parisian stage. The effects of Shakespeare on the young romantics can be seen in these words of Alexandre Dumas père:

> Supposons ... un aveuglé-né auquel on rend la vue, qui découvre un monde tout entier dont il n'avait aucune idée; supposez Adam s'éveillant après sa création et trouvant sous ses pieds la terre émaillée, sur sa tête le ciel flam-

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boyant, autour de lui les arbres à fruits d'or dans le lointain un fleuve, un beau et large fleuve d'argent, à ses côtes la femme jeune, chaste et nue, et vous aurez une idée de l'Eden enchanté dont cette représentation m'ouvrit la porte.

Oh! c'était donc cela que je cherchait, qui me manquait, qui devait me venir; c'étaient ces hommes de théâtre, oubliant qu'ils sont sur un théâtre; c'était cette vie factice, rentrant dans la vie positive à force d'art; c'était cette réalité de la parole et des gestes qui faisait des acteurs des créatures de Dieu, avec leurs vertus, leurs passions, leurs faiblesses, et non pas des héros guindés, impassibles, déclamateurs,...

Je lus, je dévorai le répertoire étranger et je reconnus que dans le monde théâtral, tout émanait de Shakespeare comme dans le monde réel tout émane du soleil, que nul ne pouvait lui être comparé, car il est aussi originel que Calvéron, aussi penseur que Goethe, aussi passionné que Shiller. Je reconnus que ses ouvrages, à lui seul renfermaient autant de types que les ouvrages, de tous le autres réunis. Je reconnus que c'était l'homme qui avait le plus crée après Dieu.¹

Thus inspired, Dumas wrote in 1829 the first successful romantic drama, Henri III et sa cour. The tremendous success of this play, which made Dumas famous over night, spurred the jealous Hugo to write Marion Delorme. When this play was repressed by the royal censor, Hugo wrote Hernani which was presented at La Comédie Française 25 February 1830. The controversy caused by this play and the resultant "bataille d'Hernani," with the triumph of the young literary revolutionaries, marked the unquestioned dominance of the new literary school. In this "new" literature can be seen reflections and illustrations of the ideological struggles of the political and social order, and 1830 marked a significant turning point in both politics and literature.

In politics, 1830 marked the beginning of the domination of the bourgeois whose new wealth and power had been assured by the industrial

revolution. This newly powerful class had succeeded in placing on the throne, after the revolution of 1830, a king who was dependent upon and favorable to them, Louis-Philippe. The government of Louis-Philippe was characterized by tolerance and permissiveness to the monied class. "Enrichissez-vous," was the supposedly motto of the new regime. As the bourgeois industrialists became richer and more powerful, the plight of the working classes became more and more miserable. The government and the ruling bourgeois were indifferent to the plight of the suffering masses. It was in such a situation that the humanitarian and socialist movement began to manifest itself. Henri de Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier had been, for some time, questioning and criticizing the existing social order but little attention had been paid to them. On the religious front Felicite de Lamennais tried in vain to persuade the Church to become involved in social problems, and to defend the poor working classes from the degrading exploitation of the bourgeois industrialist state.

After 1830 more attention was paid to the theories and programs of these pioneering socialists. Their greatest success came from persuading or convincing many of the prominent writers, scholars and philosophers to lend their talents to the alleviation of the abominable conditions of the working classes, and to become active in the flight for human dignity and freedom. Nearly all of the writers of the day contributed literary works to the defense of suffering humanity and against all social and political abuses. The writers were reacting not only against the social and political injustices but also against the ignorance, the crassness and the lack of culture of the rich
bourgeoisie. These "philistins" had no love for or appreciation of the arts. The writers and thinkers, stung by a lack of appreciation for their artistic and intellectual production, became the leaders in the socialistic and humanitarian movement which culminated in the revolution of 1848.

When Louis-Philippe was forced to abdicate, and the Second Republic was established, the intellectual and idealistic leaders of the revolution thought that the millennium had come. Now would be established the reign of social justice, political freedom and equality, and all of the panaceas which they had extolled in their writings and propaganda. But harsh reality is no respecter of dreams or of dreamers; the idealists, such as Larmartine, Arago, Leconte de Lisle, and countless others who had no practical political experience were doomed to failure in their efforts to establish an ideal state. They were doomed to this disappointing and disillusioning fate because they were unable to cope with the problems of realistic governmental procedures. Their ineptitude lead to a reaction against them by the very people whom they were endeavoring to serve, and to the eventual overthrow of the short-lived Second Republic. The coup d'état of Louis Napoleon in 1851 brought crashing down about them the dream world of the writers, scholars and thinkers. Embittered and disillusioned, they assailed not only the destroyers of dreams, but also the people for whom all of their efforts had been expended. They retreated into their ivory towers, renounced all utilitarian motives and began restricting their efforts to the creation of pure works of art. It was in this climate of bitterness, despair and disillusionment that the "l'art pour l'art" school
was born.

Although the new school came to life after the coup d'état of Louis-Napoleon, it had been in the embryonic stage since the early 1830's. As was stated above, 1830 marked the definitive triumph of Romanticism. The literature of the period, 1830-1850 contained in general all of the characteristics associated with the new school, extreme lyricism, religiosity, interest in medieval ruins, individualism, nationalism, love of nature, etc. To this must be added the humanitarian and utilitarian ideas and ideals of the mission of the poet as a prophet and leader of men. All of these characteristics were over-emphasized because of the exuberance, the enthusiasm of the romantics who were essentially very young men, and who were reacting against the conservatism, and the reactionary attitudes of their predecessors. The excesses of Romanticism lead to the reaction against it, and explains, perhaps, why its duration as a literary school was one of the shortest in French literary history. Theophile Gautier saw the dangers of the excessive zeal, and of the misguided efforts of his contemporaries. He reacted vehemently against the trend, as can be seen in his condemnation of utilitarian literature in his preface to Mlle de Maupin. (1832) Sainte-Beuve, one of the first proponents of Romanticism, saw the dangerous direction in which the movement was heading and tried to warn against it. Musset, often called "l'enfant terrible," of Romanticism, scoffed at the pompousness of his contemporaries and satirized them in his Lettres de Dupuis et Cotonet. In his acceptance speech at L'Academie Francaise he delivered a scathing denunciation of romanticism as a school. The warnings were there, but few of the writers heeded them.
It was not until their dream world had collapsed that they bitterly turned from their misguided paths to the road which lead to Realism and Parnassianism. One can easily see that the period between 1800 and 1852 was a period of turbulence and Revolution.

It was during this period of turbulence and revolution that Flaubert was born, grew up, was educated and reached maturity. Gustave Flaubert was born on the twelfth of December 1821, in the Rouen hospital which his father administered. Though of relatively humble origins, the Flauberts were a respected family in the city. However, it was only through the talent and hard work of Dr. Flaubert that the family achieved their solid middle-class position. Though too busy to give much time to his children, he was revered by them. "Flaubert greatly admired his father and one of the kindest portraits in *Madame Bovary* is the one he drew of him in the person of Dr. Lariviere."¹ Gustave was the fourth of six children, of whom three survived. The other two were Achille, the oldest, and Caroline, the youngest.

During his early boyhood, Gustave's constant companion was his sister. The family lived in an apartment adjoining the hospital, and frequently the two children climbed up to the window of the dissecting-room to stare at the cadavers. These and many other similar experiences helped Flaubert form an enduring fascination for the horrible.

Flaubert, however, regarded environment rather as Taine regarded it—a force operating on man in spite of himself—and when he recalled his youth he always spoke of the Hotel-Dieu as one of the factors conditioning his later outlook not that he admitted a mechanical connexion between fact and

opinion, for that would rob opinion of its objective validity. Rather, he considered the environmental influences of his youth as pointers to an ultimate disenchantment; but simply by maintaining that point of view and declaring disenchantment to be the only sensible conclusion, he implied that the influences were not haphazard.  

Flaubert became an omnivorous reader of the standard French classics and the popular romantic fiction of the day. He organized a company of friends to perform plays that he composed. Even these childhood works were filled with murderers and corpses, moonlight and apparitions.

It was not personal experiences alone that shaped his imagination. The constant political and literary upheavals of the nineteenth century had a tremendous effect on his life.

Flaubert always remembered with excitement the Revolution of July 1830, when he saw the white flag of the Bourbons being hauled down and the tricolour being hoisted in its stead, for he was democrat already at the age of eight.

The excitement of the peak Romantic years first gave Flaubert a sense of his literary vocation.

Flaubert entered the College Royal de Rouen in 1831, at the age of nine. He detested the new environment in which he was placed. At school, Gustave soon discovered that while many of the boys seemed superficially like him, most were what he later referred to as "false romantics" mere followers of a fashion.

Although Flaubert's first close friend was, Ernest Chevalier, his closest friend was the melancholy and sceptical Alfred Le Poittevin,

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2 Starkie, op. cit., p. 10.
who later encouraged him to write *Mémoirs d'un Fou* and *Novembre*. *Mémoirs d'un Fou* was begun in the autumn of 1838 and finished by Christmas. It was dedicated to Alfred Le Poittevin and given to him as a New Year's gift on January 1, 1839.

In obedience to his father's wishes, in 1841, Flaubert enrolled as a law student in Paris. It was not a career he would have chosen himself. When speaking about his future and the choice of a profession Flaubert said:

> The future is the worst thing in the present, 'he said to Chevalier', that question flung at a man 'what are you going to be', is a yawning chasm in front of him, and which approaches nearer and nearer as he advances... 'Don't imagine that I'm undecided about the choice of a profession, I've decided never to take up any, as I've too great a contempt for men to wish to do them either good or harm.' Later he became resigned and accepted his family's plan that he should embark on the study of law.¹

Flaubert found law school intolerably dull, and began writing a third book, *L'Education Sentimental*, dealing with the growing up and gradual estrangement of two friends, one a true romantic, one a false. As a consequence of such extra-curricular activities, he failed his examination. While still in Paris Flaubert made, in 1843, the third close friendship of his life. Maxime Du Camp, who became during his student days, his dearest and closest friend. Flaubert later spent a summer touring in Brittany and two years in the Near East with Maxime.

Although Flaubert did not like law school, he had planned to take the examination again. However, after a series of attacks in 1844 diagnosed as epilepsy, his family decided that he would be unable to continue law school. Thus at the age of twenty-three Flaubert "retired"

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to the family villa at Croisset, a town on the Seine near Rouen, where he was to spend most of the remainder of his life.

Caroline, Flaubert's sister, married on March 3, 1845 and went to live with her husband in Paris, leaving Flaubert, her mother and father as the only regular occupants of the estate. Periodically Flaubert was visited by Le Poittevin and Du Camp. Dr. Flaubert became very ill the same year that Caroline left. On January 15, 1845 Flaubert's father died. During Dr. Flaubert's illness, Caroline and her husband, Hamard, had returned to Croisset and six days after Dr. Flaubert's death, Caroline gave birth to a daughter. Flaubert went to Paris to wind up his father's business, leaving Achille and Mme Flaubert to look after Caroline. Flaubert had to return to Croisset when he received news that Caroline was very ill. She died shortly after his return.

After the death of Dr. Flaubert, Achille Flaubert succeeded his father as superintendent of the Rouen Hospital and moved into the living quarters next door to the hospital. Flaubert remained at Croisset with his mother and niece. He was now the master of the house, with virtually no interference from his mother.

She treated him as a delicate child who must be spoilt and humoured; ... The shadow of paternal disapproval had vanished and a career as an author was no longer a furtive and rather indecent prospect to which he owned with a blush, but a legitimate possibility made easier by the annuity that he received under his father's will. In sheltered ease of Croisset he could explore and experiment with his talent.1

When Flaubert's mother died in 1872, it was not until then that he

1 Spencer, op. cit., p. 75.
realized that she was the human being whom, in his whole life, he had
loved most. When she was alive he was far too busy to really appre-
ciate her. His real life was his work, to which he gave a priest-like
devotion, spending days to hammer out a perfect sentence, untempted by
fashion or ambition for fame.

He wrote neither for a living, like Balzac, nor for
pleasure, like Stendhal; he was too hard-working to be
an amateur and too high minded to be a professional; he
was, in short, a perfectionist. Now the will to achieve
perfection, though not so rare as it sounds, is all too
rarely abetted by leisure and crowned with results.¹

Only once did a book come "easily" to him, his fourth work, La Tenta-
tion de Saint Antoine.

For Flaubert, La Tentation de saint Antoine marked the end of
youth, and even as he emerged from his former self, the pattern of the
future slowly grew apparent. This book was a kind of extravagant
self-portrait of the "hermit" of Croisset. However, when Flaubert read
it to Maxine du Camp and Louis Bouilhet in 1849 his two friends criti-
cized it mercilessly. Although, Flaubert was a hard-worker, he did
make brief excursions to Paris. Whenever he could tear himself away
from his work and his mother. It was during one of these trips in
1846 that he began the only major love affair of his life.

Flaubert had gone to Paris to order a relic of Caroline. "In the
studio, where twenty years before Victor Hugo had met Juliette Drouet,
there was a handsome woman with ash-blonde hair--the poetess Louise
Colet."² Louise Colet was thirteen years older than Flaubert, separated

¹ Harry Levin, The Gates of Horn (New York: Oxford University

² Spencer, op. cit., p. 77.
from her husband, and mother of a little girl by Victor Cousin, the statesman and philosopher. She was a romantic poetess, of mediocre talent, though twice winner of the French Academy's poetry prize. The difficulty of the affair between Flaubert and Louise Colet lay first in Flaubert's obstinate refusal to leave Croisset, his work and his mother, and settle in Paris. Later he grew disenchanted with Louise's character, her possessiveness, jealousy, violence, affection, and her bad taste. He decided to remain at Croisset with his mother and his work.

While still at Croisset in 1851, Flaubert began working on Madame Bovary. It was not completed until 1856. In 1857, shortly after the publication of Madame Bovary which had acclaimed him as the master of the realistic novel, he reached the summit of his career as a writer. After Madame Bovary, Flaubert wrote Salammbô, 1862. Seven years later he published a final version of L'Education Sentimental, and in 1872 a third version of La Tentation de Saint Antoine. In 1874, after the unsuccessful production of his one play, Le Candidate, Flaubert began his last novel, Bouvard et Pécuchet, which was never completed. On May 8, 1880, he died at Croisset as a result of a stroke. Bouvard et Pécuchet was published posthumously in 1881.

The literary movements which evolved between 1821 and 1852 greatly influenced Flaubert's life and works. He offers in his method the concentrated essence of Realism, and in his life a concentrated devotion to literature. Although he is acclaimed as the master of the realistic novel, he was by temperament a Romantic. His originality was to combine the tendencies of the two currents, Romantic and Realist, and to create
through his cult for Art and Beauty, a poetic prose, evocative, harmonious and precise.

The literary career of Flaubert began during the first years of the reign of Louis-Napoleon who, by means of his coup d'état, established the Second Empire and declared himself emperor. Since he controlled both branches of the legislative body and all of the officials of government, he ruled with absolute power. One of the many by-products of absolute power is strict censorship, which was imposed and enforced by the imperial government. This censorship affected not only news but every form of literary activity. Good "moral" literature was officially praised by the government while "immoral" literature was condemned and the authors of such works were prosecuted or threatened with prosecution. The trials of Flaubert and of Baudelaire are illustrative of the literary censorship of the Second Empire.

Because of the strict censorship and the limited area of "acceptable literary activities," there developed a rapprochement between the men of letters and the men of science whose association had been urged by Saint-Simon, and echoed in the works of Auguste Comte. Although Comte began his lectures on positive philosophy in 1830, and had codified his doctrines by mid-century, his ideas were not completely accepted until they were refined, modified, explained and defended by such men as Emile Littre, Ernest Renan and especially Hippolyte Taine. The "marriage" of science and literature, and the rise of positivism as the dominant force in French thought is succinctly described by Paul Bourget,

...Il semble qu'il faille reporter aux environs de 1850 le moment où il s'est posé devant les meilleurs esprits.
Jusqu'à cette époque, lorsqu'on prononçait le mot de Science, on ne l'appliquait guère qu'à l'ensemble des sciences positives tels que les Mathématiques, la Physique, la Chimie, la Physiologie. La Science s'opposait communément à l'art et à la Littérature. On n'entendait pas en faire un procédé de l'intelligence, capable de s'adapter à tous les objets, et de renouveler le domaine entier de la connaissance, autant que celui de l'activité. Après les merveilleuses découvertes accomplies par cette succession de grands ouvriers qui sont appelés Laplace et Cauchy, Cuvier et Geoffroy Saint-Hillaire, Fresnel et Faraday, Ampère et Arago, Magendie et Flourens, —combien d'autres encore!— une idée commença de germer et de croître, dont les premiers essais de M. Renan et de Taine donnent l'expression la plus brillante, sinon la plus complète. Cette idée, Auguste Comte en avait été le précurseur méconnu. Elle pourrait se schématiser ainsi: n'est-il pas lisible d'employer pour des besognes réservées auparavant à d'autres facultés les méthodes auxquelles les sciences doivent leurs rapides et indiscutables progrès? On oppose sans cesse la Littérature et la Science. Pourquoi ne pas les unir? Et l'auteur de l'Histoire de la littérature anglaise entreprend de trouver la loi fixe qui domine toute la production des œuvres d'art d'un pays. Renan se propose de déterminer les conditions exactes qui régissent la naissance, l'efflorescence et la décadence des phénomènes religieux. ... Les sociologues et le politiciens de la même époque prétendent, eux aussi mettre au service de leurs théories les méthodes de cette science expérimentale. ...1

During the second empire a wealth of literary, philosophical, and scientific works were published which indicate the extent to which Positivism or scientism was becoming the dominant trend in all phases of intellectual activity. One may cite as specific examples the French translation of the works of Charles Darwin in 1863, Renan's Vie de Jesus (1863) Taine's Histoire de la littérature anglaise (1864), Nouveaux essais de critique et d'histoire (1865) Claude Bernard's Introduction à la médecine expérimentale (1865) and Littre's Dictionnaire de la langue française (1863-1873) and his La Science au point

de vue philosophique (1873). Thus it can be seen that the third quarter of the nineteenth century was characterized by emphasis upon and faith in the preminence of science and scientific thinking. It was during this period, and in this climate of opinion that the founder of "scientific literature (naturalism) was reared, educated, and reached maturity. This writer who was nurtured on and profoundly influenced by positivism was Emile Zola.

Emile Edouard Charles Antoine Zola was born in Paris on April 2, 1840. He was the only child of Francesco Zola and Emilie Aubert. His father was an Italian who came of a family of churchmen and soldiers. Francesco Zola himself was trained for a military career at the Royal Academy of Pavia. He was commissioned at the age of Seventeen in the Italian artillery, and fought for Napoleon under Prince Eugene. After the fall of Napoleon, he continued his studies for several years in the hope of becoming an officer in the engineers. The time came, however when he could stand the repressive Austrian regime no longer. He emigrated to France where he eventually went into practice as a civil engineer.

Zola was an engineer; and what is equally important, he was an exuberant, ambitious man, full of ideas, and endowed with enormous energy. He had developed schemes for the fortification of Paris and was seeking to have them adopted. He also had plans for a water system for which Aix-en-Provence had dire need. So, when his ideas on the defense of Paris were not adopted, he turned to the other. Taking his young wife, and infant son to Aix, he was able in 1843 to make a temporary agreement with the municipality; and the following year he succeeded in obtaining a royal declaration of the public utility of his project.1

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Francesco Zola caught cold working in the hills and died of pneumonia on March 27, 1847. He left little money and the years that followed his death were a difficult time for the family.

While Mme Zola struggled during the next few years with financial problems, Emile began his education. He was first sent as a day pupil to a little private school, the Pension Notre-Dame. He formed some of his earliest life long friendships there. His principal comrades were Philippe Solari and Marius Roux. In 1852 Zola entered the College of Aix-en-Provence. His training at Pension Notre-Dame had been very poor and he found himself behind the other students by a full year or two. He worked unusually hard and won several awards in this "college."

During this period he made the acquaintance of Paul Cezanne and Baptistin Baille. Cezanne, who was a year older, earned Zola's gratitude and friendship by protecting him from the torments of other students who mocked him because of his accent which was less Southern than theirs and because of his speech defect.

Zola, Baille, and Cezanne became known as the three truly inseparables because of their passionate interest in literature and art. Although Romanticism had begun to decline in Paris at this date, it was still potent in the provinces. The three, Zola, Baille, and Cezanne became devotees of the great Romantic poets.

In 1857 Zola was forced to leave his friends. Existence was rapidly becoming impossible in Aix and Zola's mother left to find assistance in Paris. In the middle of the school year Zola left for Paris, where his mother had found lodgings. A prominent lawyer by the name of Labot, a friend of the family, obtained a scholarship at the
Lycee Saint-Louis for Zola. On March 1, 1858, he entered this school.

Zola preferred Aix to Paris. He felt out of place and found it difficult to concentrate on his work. He returned to Aix for a visit during the summer vacation. On his return to Paris, he became ill and was forced to stay at home for the first two months of the school year. In August of 1859, he sat for the baccalaureate. Although he did well on the written examination, he failed on the oral. Nevertheless, he remained optimistic until in November, his second attempt at the "bachot" ended more disastrously than the first. The second time he sat for the "bachot" he failed the written examination.

The problem of everyday existence now pressed heavily upon him. His schooling was ended, his financial position desperate, his mood, for the moment, pessimistic. He obviously needed a job, and for a short time, during the second quarter of 1860, he had one. M. Labot, his father's friend, helped out again and found him a clerkship in the office of the Paris docks. But the wages were derisory and the work was indescribably dull. Zola endured it for a couple of months, but the day came when he failed to appear at his desk.¹

He spent the next two years in a vain search for suitable employment. It is probable that some of the stories such as the account of the future novelist lying on his bed all day wrapped in an eiderdown because he had pawned his trousers, or living on sparrows which he caught outside his attic window and roasted, have been exaggerated. However, it was a grim period and he experienced real poverty and real hunger. At the same time, Zola gained a first-hand knowledge of the way in which the poor of Paris lived which was of considerable value when he came to write his novels.

¹ Ibid., p. 20.
Zola, in spite of his material circumstances, was filled with ambition. He once said: "If I take up definitely a literary career, my watchword will be: All or nothing!." His fortunes took a turn for the better in March 1862 when a clerical post was found for him in the sales department of Hachette's. He later rose to be head of its publicity department at a salary of two hundred francs a month. In this position, he had first hand knowledge of many of the works published by Hachette. This position also enabled him to keep abreast of the various types of literature which were written and published during this period.

Zola, by this time, had not only started to write, but to find a market for his work. By 1865 he was earning another two hundred francs from literary journalism. He wrote many articles for Le Petit Journal and Le Courrier du monde. His literary criticisms also appeared in Le Salut public of Lyons. The close of 1865 found him faced with a new problem. Although the contacts his position gave him were extremely valuable, he was working a ten-hour day at Hachette's and had little time for his literary labors. Zola left Hachette's on January 31, 1866 in order to devote himself entirely to literature.

A few months before leaving Hachette's Zola met Gabrielle Eleonore Alexandrine Meley. Alexandrine was a year older than Zola and seems to have been the illegitimate daughter of small trades-people. A year after he met her they set up house together, and it was not until May 31, 1870 that they were married.

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1 Grant, op. cit., p. 23.
After several unsuccessful attempts to write poems, Zola tried his hand at prose. His *La Confession de Claude* appeared late in 1865. In 1866, he began to write his first notable novel *Thérèse-Raquin*. He devoted much of the new year, 1867, to the writing of *Thérèse-Raquin*, which represents a tremendous advance over his previous literary efforts. His next novel *Madeleine Ferat*, which was not as successful as *Thérèse-Raquin*, was his first attempt to apply science to the novel.

For Emile Zola, full of passion and energy, determined to make his way to the top, the winter of 1866-69 was a period, not only of journalistic activity, but of reflection and decision. Instead of continuing to produce isolated novels, he paused to take stock.¹

The idea of the *Rougon-Macquart* came to him during this period. Zola drew up a detailed plan and submitted it to his publisher Albert Lacroix. He proposed to write two novels a year so that the series could be completed in five. His publisher was impressed and agreed to advance Zola five hundred francs a month for a trial period of two years. As Zola began work on his newly planned series, he continued his journalistic labors during the last two years of the Second Empire. He wrote for such papers as *Le Gaulois*, *La Tribune*, *Le Rappel*, and *La Cloche*.

Meanwhile, difficulties between France and Prussia led to war, which was declared on July 19, 1870. Both this declaration and after, Zola's newspaper articles left no doubt as to his attitude. He was clearly hostile to the policies of Napoleon III, and as war came closer, he expressed his views with increasing violence. Zola found it necessary to leave Paris, for security sake, after a publication of one of his articles "Vive la France," published in *La Cloche*.

He decided to take the two women, his mother and Alexandrine, to the South where they would be in greater security. On September 7, the three left for Marseilles where he hoped to find employment if he were unable to return to the capital. He was exempt from military service because of the dependency of his wife and mother. When he returned to Paris after the war he settled down in earnest to his life work.

The first six volumes of the *Rougon-Macquart*, which appeared at the rate of one a year from 1871 to 1876, were good without being sensational.

It was with *L'Assommoir* (1878), the seventh volume of the series, that Zola achieved the first of the great "succès de scandale" that were to make him the most discussed and one of the wealthiest novelists of his time.¹

The remaining volumes of the cycle were published between 1878 and 1893. With two exceptions, they were all commercial successes and three of them, *Nana*, *La Terre* and *La Débacle*, outsold *L'Assommoir*.

Zola's childlessness had long been a source of unhappiness. The death of his mother in 1880 greatly upset him because he found the prospect of eternal separation from his loved ones intolerable. In addition, he felt that the purpose of sexual activity was to produce children, otherwise to him it was immoral. Perhaps it was this attitude that he had concerning sex and the fact that he had been married for twenty-nine years and still had no children, which led to his liaison with Jeanne Rozerot. Jeanne Rozerot, a seamstress, who was nearly

thirty years his junior gave birth to a daughter in 1889, and a son in 1891. Madame Zola, who at first did not approve of her husband's actions, later not only seemed to give her consent, but allowed the two children to assume her husband's name after his death.

Zola's intervention in the Dreyfus case was a famous incident in his life.

Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a member of a wealthy Jewish family, charged with having betrayed his country by selling military secrets to Germany, was convicted by a court-martial on December 22, 1894, degraded in a public ceremony on January 5, and sent shortly after to penal servitude on Devil's Island off the Guiana coast. His family believed his protestations of innocence, and before many months passed others began to have misgivings about his guilt. Evidence was finally uncovered that the real culprit was Major Walsin-Esterhazy rather than Dreyfus. The army authorities foolishly persisted in refusing the latter a new trial.1

Zola was approached by the defenders of Dreyfus. He wrote an article "J'Accuse" charging the government with hiding the truth, or lying intentionally, or yielding weakly to others. This article caused Zola to be sentenced to imprisonment and he found it necessary to seek temporary refuge in England.

The Zolas used to spend the summer months at Medan. They returned to their Paris house in October 1902. They slept with the windows closed. A fire had been lighted in their bedroom, and during the night they were overcome by carbon monoxide fumes; perhaps the result of a blocked chimney. Zola was dead by the time help arrived. His widow was taken to the hospital and recovered after a few days.

The news of Zola's death in 1902 was a sensation.

1 Ibid., p. 172.
People now saw in him more than a great novelist; they clearly beheld the man of action, the defender of Dreyfus, the champion of the innocent, and the upholder of justice.¹

Zola's casket was borne through streets lined with mourning people. Antole France delivered the principal oration at the cemetery. June 4, 1908, six years later, Zola's mortal remains were transferred with impressive ceremony to the Pantheon where they were put beside Voltaire, Rousseau, and Victor Hugo.

The works of Emile Zola can be divided into three groups: the early works, the **Rougon-Macquart** series (1871-93) and the later works. His influence was very great. He created the proletarian novel. "He is largely responsible for George Moore and Arnold Bennett in England, Frank Norris and Dreiser in America, Heinrich Mann in Germany, Jules Romain in France.²

The increasing importance of the novel in relation to other literary genres is a feature of the nineteenth century and this development was chiefly due to Romanticism. Personal literature found an ideal outlet in the psychological novel, partially auto-biographical. The desire to depict real life led to the realistic novel. Naturalism went a step further in trying to bring a closer relationship between science and literature.

From the evidence presented above one may safely conclude that Flaubert and Zola were influenced by the philosophical and literary

¹ **Ibid.**, p. 108.

currents of their times. The analysis of the novels of these two writers in the following chapters will reinforce this conclusion.
CHAPTER II

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MADAME BOVARY

Madame Bovary, one of the most famous of Flaubert's works, has been one of the most discussed books in the history of world literature ever since its publication. The popularity of this novel has increased rather than diminished with time. For the sake of those who may not be familiar with the novel, the writer will begin her analysis with a brief summary of the novel.

Charles Bovary, a mediocre country doctor, after a previous marriage, marries the daughter of a farmer, Emma. Emma is a beautiful young girl who has been educated in a convent. Having received educational instructions far above that received by most girls of her class, she has developed an appreciation for the finer things in life. Thus, when she goes to Tostes, to her new home, she soon becomes disgusted with her new environment, with her husband and the dull life of the province. Although her life on the farm with her father was empty and dull, she had always dreamed of marrying someone who was rich and famous. She now sees, for the first time, the type of man she has married.

Emma's monotony and boredom is temporarily interrupted, when she and Charles receive an invitation to attend the annual ball given by Le Comte de Vaubyessard. Emma, who has dreamed of this aristocratic atmosphere which exists at La Vaubyessard's chateau, enjoys herself.

Once back at their home in Tostes, Emma becomes even more disturbed,
and leads a completely idle life. She gives up reading, playing the piano, drawing and she even ceases to bother with the appearance of the house. Charles, in an effort to relieve his wife's condition decides to give up his practice at Tostes and move to Yonville.

In Yonville, Madame Bovary, who was pregnant when she left Tostes, gives birth to a baby girl, whom they call Berthe. Nevertheless, her situation in Yonville is basically the same. Although she has a young daughter she is still bored and unable to adjust to her new environment. Although she struggles at first to prevent it, her distress and boredom finds temporary relief in adultery. At first she is attracted to Leon Duplis, a young lawyer of Yonville. However, it is not until after Leon leaves Yonville that she becomes involved with Rodolphe Boulanger, the gentleman proprietor of La Huchette, an estate near Yonville. Even though Emma spent a lot of time with Leon before he moved to Rouen, Rodolphe is her first lover. After a series of secret meetings with Rodolphe, Emma becomes very possessive and dreams of running away with him. At first Rodolphe agrees to run away with Emma and he also agrees to allow her to carry her young daughter, Berthe with them. Later he becomes terrified with the idea of so much responsibility and discontinues their affair. Emma was heart-broken over the termination of her affair with Rodolphe. She became seriously ill and almost died. Her convalescence was long and boring for her. Charles, in an attempt to relieve his wife's condition, does as Homais suggests and carries her to Rouen to attend an opera. While in Rouen, the Bovary's meet Leon Duplis. Emma, still bored and unable to adjust to the type of life that the people of Yonville lead, sees a new opportunity to
relieve her boredom. She becomes involved with Léon, who has established himself quite well in Rouen. She makes frequent trips to Rouen to see him under false pretense of taking piano lessons. Her frequent trips to Rouen in addition to her personal whims cause her to become deeper and deeper in debt. As time goes on, Emma financially ruins her husband, who at this point is still unaware of his wife's actions. She continues to increase her debts by signing more notes. Finally it becomes necessary for her to sell the furniture, piece by piece, in an attempt to pay previously signed notes. Finally, M. Lheureux, the draper and money-lender in Yonville, places a "For Sale" sign on the house. Emma realizes that if she does not pay her bills she will be forced to tell Charles everything. Emma feels that she has no one else to turn to, so, she asks her lover, Leon, to help her. After Léon abandons her, she goes to see Rodolphe who refuses to help her. When she is abandoned by her lover, by everyone, she commits suicide.

Charles, who is very upset over Emma's death, later learns of her escapades and dies of grief shortly after his wife.

Although Emma is the principal character, the story focuses initially on Charles rather than Emma. Charles must be delineated fully because he is the primary element in Emma's dissatisfaction and rebellion. In addition, since the final chapter also deals exclusively with Charles, this treatment lends a certain symmetry to the novel.

Charles, a provincial health-officer is rather ridiculous, stolid, unambitious, ordinary, naive and unemotional. He is introduced to us in the opening chapter of the novel.

Resté dans l'angle, derrière la porte, si bien qu'on l'apercevait à peine, le nouveau était un gars de la
campagne, d'une quinzaine d'années environ, et plus haut de taille qu'aucun de nous tous. Il avait les cheveux coupés droit sur le front, comme un chantre de village, l'air raisonnable et fort embarrassé. Quoiqu'il ne fût pas large des épaules, son habit-veste de drap vert à boutons noirs devait le gener aux entournures et lais-sait voir, par la fente des parements, des poignets rouges habitués à être nus. Ses jambes, en bas bleus, sortaient d'un pantalon jaunatre très tiré par les bretelles. Il était chaussé de souliers forts, mal cirés, garnis de clous.¹

His clumsiness, ludicrous attire almost automatically provoke the hilarity of the other students. Flaubert stresses Charles' pathetic inelegance, his timidity, his ineffectual good will and his resignation. The author uses the physical details of the scene to point out Charles' stupidity. The first impression of Charles is a lasting one. From his first entrance into the novel until his death Charles is mediocre. After his third year in school, Charles enrolls in the medical college at Rouen. The difficulty of the work is too much for him and he fails his examinations.

Il n'y comprit rien; il avait beau écouter, il ne saisissait pas. Il travaillait pourtant, il avait des cahiers reliés. Il suivait tous les cours, il ne perdait pas une seule visite. Il accomplissait sa petit tâche quotidienne à la manière du cheval de manège, qui tourne en place les yeux bandés, ignorant de la besogne qu'il groie.²

Although Charles is successful in his second attempt to complete medical school, he is not qualified as a physician but as a health-officer.

Some of Charles's basic traits were formed early in his life by


²Ibid., p. 23.
his parents, particularly his timidity and general passivity. Above all he is used to being dominated by a woman, to shaping his life to please a woman. Upon his completion of medical school it is his mother who finds him a wife and a job.

Où irait-il exercer son art? A Tostes. Il n'y avait là qu'un vieux médecin. Depuis longtemps, Mme Bovary guettait sa mort, et le bonhomme n'avait point encore plié bagage, que Charles était installé en face comme son successeur.

Mais ce n'était pas tout que d'avoir élevé son fils, de lui avoir fait apprendre la médecine et découvert Tostes pour l'exercer: il lui fallait une femme. Elle lui en trouva une: la veuve d'un huissier de Dieppe qui avait quarante-cinq ans et douze cents livres de rente.¹

Even after his marriage to Madame Dubuc Flaubert states:

Mais sa femme fut le maître; il devait devant le monde dire ceci, ne pas dire cela, faire maigre tous les vendredis, s'habiller comme elle l'entendait, harceler par son ordre les clients qui ne payaient pas.²

Poor Charles finds himself the servant of a capricious, hypochondriacal old woman who reads his mail, spies on his consultations, and complains perpetually of his coldness and neglect. It is not until after her death that he is free to go and come at will.

After the death of his first wife, Charles marries Emma. Even then Flaubert takes advantage of this opportunity to continue his demonstrations of Charles' stupidity and passiveness. In showing how stupid Charles is, Flaubert describes a scene at the dinner table:

Il retirait sa redingote pour dîner plus à son aise. Il disait les uns après les autres tous les gens qu'il

¹ Ibid., p. 25.

² Ibid., p. 25.
avait rencontrés, les villages où il avait été, les ordonnances qu'il avait écrites et, satisfait de lui-même, il mangeait le reste du miéron, épluchait son fromage, croquait une pomme, vidait sa carafe, puis s'allait mettre au lit, se couchait sur le dos et ronflait.1

In addition to being stupid he has no hobbies; no intellectual curiosity; he could neither swim nor dance, and worse still, he had no ambition to achieve.

La conversation de Charles était plate comme un trottoir de rue, et les idées de tout le monde y défilaient, dans leur costume ordinaire, sans exciter d'émotion, de rire ou de reverie. Il n'avait jamais été curieux, disait-il, pendant qu'il habitait Rouen, d'aller voir au théâtre les acteurs de Paris. Il ne savait ni nager, ni faire des armes, ni tirer le pistolet, et il ne put, un jour, lui expliquer un terme d'équitation qu'elle avait rencontré dans un roman.2

Even if one could overlook Charles' stupidity, his passiveness, perhaps it would be even more difficult to overlook his ignorance.

After his marriage to Emma he is so naive, so much so that, he is completely unable to recognize the true cause of her sufferings.

Un homme, au contraire, ne devait-il pas tout connaître, exceller en des activités multiples, vous initier aux énergies de la passion, aux raffinements de la vie, à tous les mystères? Mais il n'enseignait rien, celui-la ne savait rien, ne souhaitait rien. Il la croyait heureuse.3

At the same time, one can see that he does love Emma and that he is willing to give up a well-established reputation in Tostes as a doctor and move to Yonville. He believes that a change of environment will

1 Ibid., p. 61.
2 Ibid., p. 59
3 Ibid., p. 59.
help her. One might say that Charles' best characteristic seems to be his love for his wife and daughter. One can see from his affection for them, that basically, he is a good, kind, and gentle man.

Charles, who is also easily persuaded, allows himself to be persuaded by Emma and Homais, to perform an operation, even though he is uncertain of his skill. The operation on Hippolyte's club foot is a failure, and results in the amputation of his leg. Charles, who was never liked, admired, nor respected by his wife, has now "earned" her hatred of him. It is true that she and Homais were indirectly responsible for the loss of Hippolyte's leg, but that does not completely free Charles from responsibility. If he had been strong enough to refuse, then perhaps the results would have been less disastrous. The failure of the operation on Hippolyte's foot causes Charles to lose forever any vestige of his wife's respect and affection.

It is not until after Emma's death that we see a change in Charles' character. In his grief, his actions become similar to those of the romantic heroes of Emma's idealized world. He begins to struggle against separation from his wife, and insists, blaspheming against God, that they bury her like a bride. We also find that he is stubborn when his refusal to alter the funeral plans persists, in spite of his mother's objections. For once, we see a man who is no longer passive, but one who once was easily persuaded by others, especially his mother, finally making a decision on his own. In the end too, it is Charles, the boy with the ridiculous cap at Rouen, the bourgeois clod, the hard working mediocre doctor in Tostes, the easily persuaded, impassive, unintelligent, sentimental lad, who dies the romantic death. He dies
a broken-hearted victim of "Fate" with a lock of hair of his beloved in his hand.

Perhaps Flaubert began and ended the novel with Charles in order to impress upon his readers the mediocrity and the stupidity of the class which Charles represented. Although the novel begins and ends with Charles, it is Emma's frustrated search of ecstatic love, glory and refinement in a dull provincial environment, which provides the basic interest of the novel.

Our first introduction to Emma gives us valuable clues as to her character, and as to the refined image which she wishes to present to the world. Flaubert describes her:

une jeune femme, en robe de mérinos bleu garnie de trois volants, vint sur le seuil de la maison pour recevoir M. Bovary, qu'elle fit entrer dans la cuisine,...

later in the same chapter he says of her:

Charles fut supris de la blancheur de ses ongles. Ils étaient brillants, fins du bout, plus nettoyés que les ivoires de Dieppe et tailles en amande. Sa main pourtant n'était pas belle, point assez pâle, peut-être, et un peu sèche aux phalanges; elle était trop longue aussi et sans molles inflexions de lignes sur les contours. Ce qu'elle avait de beau, c'étaient les yeux: quoiqu'ils fussent bruns, ils semblaient noirs à cause des cils, et son regard arrivait franchement à vous avec une hardiesse candide.

Even on the farm she dresses in flounces and carries a parasol. In her first conversation with Charles she reveals how boring she finds life in the country. To her, marriage to Charles meant an escape from the monotony of farm life into the excitement of love.

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1 Ibid., p. 28.

2 Ibid., p. 29.
...Il lui semblait que certains lieux sur la terre devaient produire du bonheur, comme une plante particulière au sol et qui pousse mal tout autre part. Que ne pouvait-elle s'accouder sur le balcon des chalets suisses ou enfermer sa tristesse dans un cottage écossais, avec un mari vêtu d'un habit de velour noir à longues basques, et qui porte des bottes molles, un chapeau pointu et des manchettes?¹

Emma, having married Charles in order to relieve her boredom, finds that life with him has no resemblance to that which she has read about and dreamed of. In the following passage Flaubert describes her Romantic melancholy:

Cependant, d'après des théories qu'elle croyait bonnes, elle voulut se donner de l'amour. Au clair de lune, dans le jardin, elle récitait tout ce qu'elle savait par cœur de rimes passionnées et lui chantait en soupirant des adagios mélancoliques; mais elle se trouvait ensuite aussi calme qu'auparavant, et Charles n'en paraissait ni plus amoureux, ni plus remué. Quand elle eut ainsi un peu battu le briquet sur son cœur sans en faire jaillir une étincelle, incapable, du reste, de comprendre ce qu'elle n'appréhendait pas, comme de croire à tout ce qui ne se manifestait point par des formes convenues, elle se persuada sans peine que la passion de Charles n'avait plus rien d'exorbitant. Ses expansions étaient devenues régulières; il l'embrassait à de certaines heures. C'était une habitude parmi les autres, et comme un dessert prévu d'avance, après la monotonie du dîner.²

Even though she spends the first few days of her married life redecorating the small, tastelessly furnished, and rather dilapidated house she soon becomes disgusted and disillusioned with her new environment, and with her husband.

"Pourquoi, mon Dieu, me suis-je mariée?" Elle se demandait s'il n'y aurait pas eu moyen, par d'autres combinaisons du hasard, de rencontrer un autre homme;

¹ Ibid., p. 59.
² Ibid., p. 62.
et elle cherchait à imaginer quels eussent été ces événements non survenus, cette vie différente, ce mari qu'elle ne connaissait pas. ... Mais elle, sa vie était froide comme un grenier dont la lucarne est au nord, et l'ennui, araignée silencieuse, filait sa toile dans l'ombre à tous les coins de son cœur.¹

In spite of her efforts to prevent it, Emma is now the victim of the romantic malady, ennui. The only thing which provided interest in the worn monotony of the days was her greyhound Djali. Her boredom is temporarily interrupted when she and Charles receive an invitation to a ball and the neighboring chateau of La Vaubyessard. Emma's visit to La Vaubyessard is an important turning point in her life. This is the first time that her dream world became real, that she actually "lived," for a brief moment this idealized and desired existence. To return from this dream world to the type of life, which she despises so much, with its shabbiness and boredom, is too much for her. For Emma, returning to Tostes was the beginning of unmitigated misery.

Son voyage à la Vaubyessard avait fait un trou dans sa vie, à la manière de ces grandes crevasses qu'un orage, en une seule nuit, creuse quelquefois dans les montagnes. Elle se resigna pourtant: elle serra pieusement dans la commode sa belle toilette et jusqu'à ses souliers de satin, dont la semelle s'était jaunie à la cire glissante du parquet. Son coeur était comme eux: au frottement de la richesse, il s'était placé dessus quelque chose qui ne s'effacerait pas.²

Flaubert also says of Emma:

Ce fut donc une occupation pour Emma que le souvenir de ce bal. Toutes les fois que revenait le mercredi, elle se disait en s'éveillant: "Ah! il y a huit jours... il y a quinze jours... il y a trois semaines, j'y étais!" Et peu à peu, les physionomies se confondirent dans sa mémoire; elle oublia l'air des contredanses; elle ne vit

¹ Ibid., pp. 63-64.

² Ibid., p. 77.
Emma, stimulated by memories of the ball, allows herself to withdraw more and more into a dream world. Flaubert describes with great psychological perception Emma's boredom. Later in the same chapter he says:

"Au fond de son âme, cependant, elle attendait un événement. Comme les marins en détresse, elle promenait sur la solitude de sa vie des yeux désespérés, cherchant au loin quelque voile blanche dans les brumes de l'horizon."

Emma leads a completely idle life. She gives up playing the piano. She is the type of person who values things only as they reflect upon her the glory of an imagined world. So, she reasons, why play the piano if she will never play in a concert? One thing is certain if Emma cannot make herself happy, she can, and does, make herself completely miserable and even ill.

"Emma devenait difficile capricieuse. Elle se commandait des plats pour elle, n'y touchait point, un jour ne buvait que du lait pur, et, le lendemain, des tasses de thé à la douzaine."

She grows pale, thin, coughs, and has palpitations of the heart. Because of her poor health, her husband feeling that she needs a change of air, decides to move to Yonville. Emma leaves Tostes anticipating a new life in Yonville. She is certain that a change of residence would have pleasant results. She was not disappointed, for it was on

1 Ibid., p. 77.
2 Ibid., p. 84.
3 Ibid., p. 88.
her first night at the Golden Lion that she met Leon Duplis. Here was a man that was everything that Charles was not. Emma and Léon, ignoring Charles, completely, talked of Paris, its plays, and novels.

In Yonville, a second diversion for Emma was a visit from Charles' father. The occasion was the birth of her child. At first Emma, like Charles is excited and curious about becoming a parent, but she is disappointed when she cannot indulge in an elegant layette. She dreams of having a boy:

Elle souhaitait un fils; il serait fort et brun, et s'appellerait Georges; et cette idée d'avoir pour enfant un male était comme la revanche en espoir de toutes ses impuissances passée. Un homme, au moins, est libre; il peut parcourir les passions et les pays, traverser les obstacles, mordre aux bonheurs les plus lointains.

but the child is a girl. Flaubert describes Emma's disappointment, when she learns that the baby is a girl, in one sentence. He says:

Elle tourna la tête et s'évanouit.

After the birth of her daughter, Emma and Léon, who have so much in common, become very good friends. As Emma studies the appearance of her husband and that of Leon she notes the contrast between them. Emma soon realizes that Leon must be in love with her. So, when Leon comes to visit she makes a great show of being a loving and virtuous wife and mother. She praises her husband, takes a great interest in domestic duties, attends church regularly, and whenever there are guests, displays a rapturous pride in her little girl.

Léon, who is unaware of Emma's true feelings, is discouraged, and his love becomes refined of fleshly desires, grows pure, and platonic.

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Ibid., p. 113.
He becomes bored with life in Yonville and decides to move to Rouen. Meanwhile, Emma, pale, quiet, enigmatic, gives the impression of a saint, while her heart is in turmoil. The more she is in love with Leon, the more she tries to suppress it. Soon her longing for love, her craving for money, and her domestic discontent combine into one general feeling of misery and rage.

In public she continues to smile, while alone in her room she has fits of hysterical weeping. Drawn by an impulse to dissolve her being and troubles in worship, she finds herself hurrying to the church. Father Bournisien, the cure of Yonville, is so unimaginative and ignorant that he cannot recognize her spiritual needs and problems. So Emma gives up the idea of talking to the priest and returns home. Back at home, when Berthe tries to play with her, she pushes the child away, accidentally cutting its' check. At first she feels guilt and anxiety, then—after Charles assures her that the injury is minor—congratulates herself on her display of maternal concern.

The period following Léon's departure, for Emma, is one of desolation and vain regrets.

Le lendemain fut, pour Emma, une journée funèbre. Tout lui parut enveloppé par une atmosphère noire qui flottait confusionnément sur l'extérieur des choses, et le chagrin s'engouffrait dans son âme avec des hurlements doux, comme fait le vent d'hiver dans les châteaux abandonnés. C'était cette rêverie que l'on a sur ce qui vous prend après chaque fait accompli, cette douleur, enfin, que vous apportent l'interruption de tout mouvement accoutumé, la cessation brusque d'une vibration prolongée.1

She regrets her virtuous silence and lost opportunity, and even thinks

1 Ibid., p. 152.
of running after him to declare her love.

....Et elle se maudit de n'avoir pas aimé Léon; elle eut soif de ses lèvres. L'envie la prit de courir le rejoindre, de se jeter dans ses bras, de lui dire: "C'est moi, je suis à toi!" Mais Emma s'embarassa d'avance aux difficultés de l'entreprise, et ses désirs, s'augmentant d'un regret, n'en devenaient que plus actifs.¹

Little by little, however, the fire of her passion dies. Emma, in order to compensate for her "sacrifice," indulges herself in luxuries of dress and cosmetics; changes her hair style; and undertakes the study of Italian, history and philosophy. All her projects are soon dropped, however, and she grows more capricious, fretful, and pale. Charles' mother, called into consultation by her worried son, suggests hard work as a cure and tries to cut off Emma's supply of "wicked" novels. There is constant conflict between the two:

Les adieux de la belle-mère et de la bru furent secs. Pendant trois semaines qu'elles étaient restées ensemble, elles n'avaient pas échangé quatre paroles, à part les informations et les compliments, quand elles se rencontraient à table, et le soir avant de se mettre au lit.²

If one examines the rapport between the two women, Emma and her mother in-law, one can clearly see that Madame Bovary's visit did not help Emma's present emotional state at all. If anything, it may have had some negative effects on Emma. Emma's boredom with her husband and the dull life of the province continues until she meets Rodolphe Boulanger.

When Emma meets Rodolphe she is a radically different individual. She is not the same Emma that we met in Part I of the novel. Flaubert


has prepared the reader for what is to follow by carefully describing his heroine's sufferings, her longings, her boredom, her every thought. Emma meets Rodolphe Boulanger, for the first time, when he comes to the Bovary's with his servant who had to be bled. During the operation Justin, who has been assisting Charles faints, and Emma has to assist her husband. Rodolphe, who is struck by Emma's gracefulness and beauty, admires her and decides that he is going to have her as his mistress. Although Emma struggles at first to prevent it, Rudolphe, who has none of Leon's timidity, finally wins her over. Emma, on returning home from a horseback ride with Rodolphe, is dizzy with delight: "J'ai un amant, un amant!" she said. Rodolphe was the cavalier she had dreamed of in the convent. She found her repressed feelings, now released and she was deliriously happy:

Elle entrait dans quelque chose de merveilleux où tout serait passion, extase, délire; un immensité bleuâtre l'entourait, les sommets du sentiment étincelaient sous sa pensée, l'existence ordinaire n'apparaissait qu'au loin, tout en bas, dans l'ombre, entre les intervalles de ces hauteurs.\(^1\)

In the early mornings, she would often slip away and arrive at Rodolphe's house looking her best. As Emma becomes more involved in her affair with Rodolphe, she grows obsessed with the thought of difficulties arising, particularly discovery. To be safe, Emma and Rudolphe arrange a more discreet meeting place.

During the winter, three or four times a week, Rudolphe comes to Emma's garden in the dead of night. When Charles is asleep Emma slips out, trembling, half-undressed. Once Rodolphe is sure of Emma's love,

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 198.
his attitude toward her grows careless and indifferent. Emma is astonished to find the grand passion dying. She feels humiliated, then bitter. Desperately, she redoubles her tenderness towards Rodolphe.

At the end of the winter M. Rouault sends his annual turkey and with it a loving letter that makes Emma very sad. Her sadness inspires a rush of tenderness for little Berthe, and a sudden coldness toward Rodolphe, who ignores this change of attitude. Then, Emma, repentant, wonders whether she could not try to love Charles, to do something for him. It is not until Homais suggests that Charles perform an operation on Hippolyte's club foot that she is provided with an opportunity. Perhaps Emma thinks, her husband may be a good surgeon and a cure will bring them fame and fortune. She and Homais persuade Charles to undertake the treatment. The operation is a failure and results in a high amputation of Hippolyte's leg by a more competent surgeon.

After the operation, Emma is even more disappointed with Charles:

Tout en lui l'irritait maintenant, sa figure, son costume, ce qu'il ne disait pas, sa personne entière, son existence enfin. Elle se repentait comme d'un crime, de sa vertu passée, et ce qui en restait encore s'écroulait sous les coups furieux de son orgueil.\(^1\)

Vengefully she returns to thoughts of her lover, and adultery. Her love for Rodolphe, nourished by her loathing of Charles, becomes more passionate. To enhance her attractiveness to her lover she spends lavishly on gifts, comestics, jewelry and clothing. As for Rodolphe, Emma's gifts embarrass him, her romantic whims confuse him, her adoration baffles him, and her frequent proposals of elopement strike him as irrational and inconvenient.

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 224.
Emma's affair with Rodolphe caused a change in her which was easily discerned by the public. Her extravagance puts her deeply into debt to Lheureux, the draper and money-lender in Yonville. She is able to extricate herself, temporarily however, by collecting one of Charles' fees from one of his patients. A crisis arises during a visit of Charles' mother, who is shocked by the new "tone" of the Bovary household and becomes suspicious of her daughter-in-law's virtue. A bitter quarrel breaks out between the two women, and in the end Emma, persuaded by Charles, resentfully apologizes. Emma feeling that she has had enough of Charles, his mother, and the little old dull town, decides to run away with Rodolphe.

Rodolphe abandons her, leaving her disappointed and heart-broken. She becomes very ill. Charles nurses her faithfully. Later, she seeks consolation in religion, the reading of novels and daydreaming. When she is taken to Rouen to see an opera, she meets Leon, and again her boredom is temporarily relieved by the beginning of a love affair with him. Leon is as timid, inexperienced, and passive as Rodolphe is aggressive, domineering and experienced. Unlike Rodolphe, Leon is a conventional bourgeois.

Emma's new affair with Leon changes her profoundly. She has little time for her little daughter upon returning from her trips. Because she is living an adulterous life, she finds it necessary to lie incessantly. In addition to lying she has to think up means of holding Leon's affections. Eventually, her visits did not give her as much pleasure as she thought they should. Still she continues her weekly trips to Rouen, in spite of her lassitude and boredom. At the same
time, her financial situation is becoming worse and worse. When she has completely exhausted all possibilities, including Leon and Rodolphe, of acquiring money for her bills, she commits suicide.

In a description of Emma's youth, Flaubert lays the foundation for the character of his heroine. He expresses very clearly her love of solitude, her excessive day dreaming, and her extreme melancholy at her mother's death. Her whole youth was a succession of disappointments: in her home, in the convent, in her wedding and in her honeymoon. Her only means of escape from dull reality was in the life of fantasy produced by the novels she read and the masses and confessionals she attended. She is the type Flaubert classified as the "false" romantic: emotional but not warm-hearted; sentimental rather than artistic; sensual rather than spiritual. To some extent her illusions and affectations, as well as her more serious faults, deceit and selfishness, are due to external influences such as the prevailing romantic decadence in art, and the bad luck of marrying an insensitive, earth bound bourgeois, of loving men who cannot understand her, and living in unattractive, deadening small towns. Ultimately, she is as much the victim of a grossly materialistic society as of her own deluded romantic notions.

Flaubert assumes a somewhat sympathetic attitude toward his heroine. Whenever she is seen in purely sensuous terms, he speaks of her with a delicate, almost religious feeling. He relinquishes his cold and detached tone and shifts to a lyrical voice, thus giving the impression that he is using the character as a substitute for himself. Flaubert presents all these changes which Emma goes through logically and
gradually. When we first see her, she is a dissatisfied young girl, then we see her as a disillusioned wife, later, a disappointed mother, a defiant daughter-in-law, a faithless wife, and finally as a libertine. She is throughout the opposite of Homais of whom Flaubert shows not the least bit of sympathy.

Homais, Charles' counterpart, is the pharmacist of Yonville. He is typical of the ignorant, self-confident, know-it-all bourgeois of Flaubert's day. Like Charles, he represents everything that the author despises. The author uses Charles to represent the stupidity and mediocrity of his class, whereas, he uses Homais to represent the educated. Homais is indeed a true representative of the lower-middle class moving upwards, after the Revolution of 1830. Homais is a self-confident, vain, ambitious, selfish, and egotistic man. Flaubert depicts him as:

Un homme en pantoufles de peau verte, quelque peu marqué de petite vêrole et coiffé d'un bonnet de velours à gland d'or, se chauffait le dos contre la cheminée. Sa figure n'exprimait rien que la satisfaction de soi-même, et il avait l'air aussi calme dans la vie que le chardonneret suspendu au-deçus de sa tête, dans une cage d'osier: c'était le pharmacien.  

Homais could never resist using his grandiloquent vocabulary. He would choose the most inopportune occasions to display his superior knowledge. For example when Dr. Lariviere has been called in, at the last moment in a vain attempt to save Emma who is dying; Flaubert describes Homais actions:

Il jugea bon, après les premiers morceaux, de fournir quelques détails sur la catastrophe:

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 96.}\]
--Nous avons eu d'abord un sentiment de siccité au pharynx, puis des douleurs intolérables à l'épigastre, suppuration, coma.
--Comment s'est-elle donc empoisonnée?
--Je l'ignore docteur, et même je ne sais pas trop où elle a pu se procurer cet acide arsenieux...
--J'ai voulu, docteur, tenter une analyse, et primo, j'ai délicatement introduit dans un tube...
--Il aurait mieux valu, dit le chirurgien, lui introduire vos doigts dans la gorge....

Homais s'épanouissait dans son orgueil d'amphitryon, et l'affligeante idée de Bovary contribuait, vaguement à son plaisir, par un retour égoïste qu'il faisait sur lui-même. Puis la présence du docteur le transportait. Il étalait son érudition, il citait pèle-mêle les cantharides, l'upas, le mancenillier, la vipère.1

Another example of his love of flowery language is seen in the article that he published in the local paper called: Le Fanal de Rouen, describing the agricultural show:

Pourquoi ces festons, ces fleurs, ces guirlandes? Où courait cette foule, comme les flots d'un mer en furir, sous les torrents d'un soleil tropical qui repandait sa chaleur sur nos guerets?2

All of his activities are solely motivated by a hunger for self-advancement and a ridiculous vanity. After having read of a new treatment for clubfeet, he is eager to try the operation on Hippolyte. Even here, his reasons are selfish, for he has little genuine concern for the poor clubfoot.

"Car, disait-il à, Emma, que risque-t-on?"3

One can easily see that his concern is for himself.

Later when Charles undertakes the operation and fails, Homais

1 Ibid., p. 379.
2 Ibid., p. 187.
3 Ibid., p. 211.
makes no attempt to defend or console Charles, and assuming his share of responsibility is the farthest thing from his mind. When another doctor is called in to correct the situation, which he is indirectly responsible for, we find him right there assisting him. Homais does not show the slightest bit of grief or sorrow for the poor man whose leg he sacrificed in his attempt to achieve fame. Homais eventually succeeds in making himself the most important or, should we say, talked of, Citizen in Yonville. As he manages to increase his importance and power, he becomes snobbish. After the deaths of Emma and Charles he refused to allow his children to play with Berthe Bovary, because of the difference in their present social condition.

He was so egotistic and ambitious, he even brought his qualifications to the attention of the authorities, hoping that he would eventually be decorated. He felt that if there was anyone in the district who should be elevated, certainly he should be the one. For, he was the best known citizen and the one who worked the hardest to move forward. His vanity and self-confidence caused him to search the papers daily for news of his award. So everyday he looked, but in vain:

\[\text{Enfin, n'y tenant plus, il fit dessiner dans son jardin un gazon figurant l'étol}\ell\text{le de l'honneur, avec deux petits tordillons d'herbe qui partaient du sommet pour imiter le ruban. Il se promenait autour, les bras croisés, en méditant sur l'inéptie du gouvernement et l'ingratitude des hommes.}\]

According to the last line of the novel his efforts were finally rewarded, he was decorated:

\[\text{Ibid., p. 407.}\]
Il vient de recevoir la croix d'honneur.\footnote{Ibid., p. 410.}

Perhaps one can say that, here, Flaubert is saying that in a bourgeois philistin society, ignorance and stupidity are rewarded. If the above quote is indeed symbolic, then one may conclude that Flaubert is telling us that one does not have to have very much in order to achieve fame or recognition.

The characters in Madame Bovary are of several kinds and the author's method of characterization is different for each one. In Emma he has painted, not just a provincial adulteress of the 1840's but a woman of all ages. By his treatment of Charles, Homais, Bournisien and Lheureux, one can see that they were the epitome of all the bourgeois characteristics which he detested. All of the characters, both major and minor have been developed logically and gradually. Perhaps much of the credit for the author's logical and gradual development of the novel is due to the structure of the novel.

Madame Bovary is divided into three uneven parts. The first ninety-four pages introduce the characters. It shows them in the present and the past, and established their position at the beginning of the story. This section focuses primarily on the two main characters, Charles and Emma. It ends when Emma burns her wedding bouquet, after fully realizing her disillusionment with her present condition. She sees this act as symbolical of all she has lost.

In the second part we find two hundred and twenty-four pages which deal with the life of Charles and Emma in their new environment, Yonville. Also included in this part of the novel is Emma's affair
with Rodolphe Boulanger, and all of her vain efforts at giving meaning to her life. Part two ends with the meeting of Emma and Leon at the opera, and Emma's hope of a rebirth in her affair with him. It is in this section that the reader learns about the two chief characters and everything is set for the final tragedy.

The third part consists of one hundred and sixty-five pages, which balance the first part. It describes Emma's final love affair with Leon; it brings everything to a close and finishes the story. Now, all of the characters are accounted for and the reader knows what has happened to everyone. A narrator, identified only as a former classmate of Charles begins the story. By the middle of the chapter he disappears from the novel, and the narration is turned over to Charles Bovary. It is through Charles' eyes that we first see Emma. This dramatic technique of the delayed emergence of the principal character that Flaubert uses is very effective.

Flaubert like many of his contemporaries made extensive use of documentation. Unlike his contemporaries he did not rely exclusively on this documentation to create his illusion of reality. He always transformed his initial material and wrote descriptions for his novels which had no more than a starting point in nature. His landscape descriptions in Madame Bovary are sparingly used and are always subordinated to the character who is viewing them. They exist only to give the characters a setting which brings them out more fully, either by the details depicted or the tone used. One might say that the function of his landscape descriptions is psychological rather than decorative. One finds that even the long account of Yonville is carefully confined
to the demands of character development. Flaubert clearly states that Emma was incapable of enjoying a landscape:

Habituée aux aspects calmes, elle se tournait au contraire vers les accidentés. Elle n'aimait la mer qu'à cause de ses tempêtes, et la verdure seulement lorsqu'elle était clairsemée parmi les ruines. Il fallait qu'elle pût retirer des choses une sorte de profit personnel; et elle rejetait comme inutile tout ce qui ne contribuait pas à la consommation immédiate de son coeur, — étant de tempérament plus sentimentale qu'artiste, cherchant des émotions et non des paysages.¹

The fact that Emma, as well as many of the other characters, were incapable of enjoying a landscape, posed the essential problem of describing landscapes for the author. He had to establish the melancholy monotony of the Norman countryside as a guide to those traits of character which Emma was to find distasteful:

La plate campagne s'étalait à perte de vue, et les bouquets d'arbres autour des fermes faisaient, à intervalles éloignés, des taches d'un violet noir sur cette grande surface grise qui se perdait à l'horizon dans le ton morne du ciel.²

Nevertheless, Flaubert did have the opportunity to make use of his long practice in describing cloud scenes for, symbolically, a storm brewing. The two romantics in the novel, Emma and Leon, could not fail to notice sunsets. For example when Leon was leaving Yonville, Emma noticed the sunset:

Mme Bovary avait ouvert sa fenêtre sur le jardin, et elle regardait les nuages.
Ils s'amincissaient au couchant, du côté de Rouen, et roulaient vite leurs volutes noires, d'où dépassaient par-delà les grandes lignes du soleil, comme les flèches d'or d'un trophée suspendu, tandis que le

¹ Ibid., p. 54.
² Ibid., p. 27.
reste du ciel vide avait la blancheur d'une porcelaine. 1

In this description Flaubert used familiar techniques: the sense of rapid, dramatic motion, the feeling for depth, the studied use of imagery, the careful indication of color by association with objects.

On the other hand, when he described Yonville, it was necessary to give a detailed account of the town because of its influence on Emma. The two paragraphs he uses to describe the valley render a complex landscape in clear and distinct fashion. In order to give a frame of reference and facilitate visualizing the scene, he subdivides the panorama in the opening sentences:

La rivière qui la traverse en fait comme deux régions de physionomie distincte: tout ce qui est à gauche est en herbage, tout ce qui est à droite est en labour. La prairie s'allonge sous un bourrelet de collines basses pour se rattacher par-delà aux pâturages du pays de Bray, tandis que, du côté de l'est, la plaine, montant doucement, va s'élargissant et étalant à perte de vue ses blondes pièces de ble. 2

Flaubert uses a further sentence in an attempt to fix the panorama in a single image:

L'eau qui court au bord de l'herbe sépare d'une raie blanche la couleur des prés et celle des sillons, et la campagne ainsi ressemble à un grand manteau déplié qui a un collet de velours borde d'un galon d'argent. 3

In his description of Rouen, the imagery is more highly developed than in his description of Yonville. Nevertheless, the images flow more readily and are fully integrated with their physical counterparts.

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1 Ibid., p. 149.
2 Ibid., p. 91.
3 Ibid., p. 91.
Les cheminées des usines poussaient d'immenses panaches bruns qui s'envolaient par le bout. On entendait le ronfllement des fonderies avec le carillon clair des églises qui se dressaient dans la brume. Les arbres des boulevards, sans feuilles, faisaient des broussailles violettées au milieu des maisons, et les toits, tout réfléchis de pluie, miroitaient inégalement, selon la hauteur des quatrièmes.

Parfois un coup de vent emportait les nauges vers la côte Sainte-Cathérine, comme des flots aériens qui se brisaient en silence contre une falaise.¹

Due in part to Flaubert's technical skill, the above quote is perhaps one of his most successful descriptions. The closing lines show his skill in transitions from large to small details. It shows his ability to determine the broad tonality and also to select those minute elements which serve, almost unnoticed, to give accents to a landscape.

In the novel, one finds occasionally, more poetic descriptions. Mood and moment conspire in his heroine to permit this type of descriptions. For example, when Emma went horseback riding with Rodolphe, she was in the right frame of mind to appreciate the misty scene she saw.

On était aux premiers jours d'octobre. Il y avait du brouillard sur la campagne. Des vapeurs s'allongeaient à l'horizon, entre le contour des collines; et d'autres, se déchirant, montaient, se perdaient. Quelquefois, dans un écartement des nuées, sous un rayon de soleil, on apercevait au loin les toits d'Yonville, avec les jardins au bord de l'eau, les cours, les murs, et le clocher de l'église.²

Momentarily Emma felt the effects of this mist. It separated her even more from her home and helped her to see it in diminished perspective. Thus, when Flaubert resumes the description it is more

¹ Ibid., p. 193.
² Ibid., p. 193.
effective because its unreality is seen through Emma's eyes:

Emma fermaît à demi les paupières pour reconnaitre sa maison, et jamais ce pauvre village où elle vivait ne lui avait semblé si petit. De la hauteur où ils étaient, toute la vallée paraissait un immense lac pâle, s'évaporant à l'air. Les massifs d'arbres, de place en place, saillaient comme des rochers noirs; et les hautes lignes des peupliers, qui dépassaient la brume, figuraient des greves que le vent remuait.¹

Flaubert found it necessary in this novel to integrate his descriptive techniques with the demand of the narrative. He also learned to blend the two so that his setting could successfully contribute to the development of characters and plot and at the same time retain their value and beauty.

All of his descriptions, be it a landscape, a character, an object or an incident, are so clearly described, until it is almost impossible to confuse it with any other. Perhaps the key to the success of his literary style lies in his beautiful usage of metaphones, images, and comparisons. For Flaubert every word, every sentence, every paragraph and every object must be correct. Even more successful, however, in his typical form, where he states a notion analytically and then adds the image to give amplitude and suggestiveness. His use of the image allowed him to remain impassive and impersonal. Because the image finds its natural place within the character portrayed, the author appears to have had no part in what has been said.

In this novel, the author set out to prove that a work of art could be produced from an essentially banal or common place subject. He felt that style, above all, was the most important thing. This he

succeeded in doing very well even though it took him five years. According to Benjamin F. Bart,

The proper means of achieving style, the depiction of truth through beauty, must be found by an individual person, the author, and yet his personalism is always irrelevant to the search: hence the prominence in Flaubert's esthetics of the negative caution, impersonalism. He had to explore, develop, or invent a host of techniques to present his material in this Fashion.¹

As for the moral, if there is one, perhaps one could say that one should not engage in the reading of too many romantic novels and excessive day dreaming. As Emma Bovary has proven, the reading of too many romantic novels and engaging in excessive daydreaming can be very dangerous. In fact, the real tragedy of the novel was the fact that Emma did not know what her possibilities were nor what she was capable of achieving. In other words, one should not attempt to see oneself other than he is. It can be clearly seen, by a careful analyses of all of Flaubert's characters in this novel, major and minor, were victims of this failing. They were unable to attain happiness because their view of themselves and their ambitions were beyond their capabilities.

It is true that the main interest in Madame Bovary is the psychology but it is not the only interest. Flaubert created characters and situation which would exemplify his reflections on life and its problem and on human nature. His view of life was of a somewhat pessimistic nature by the time he reached maturity. Nevertheless, much of the appeal of the work lies in the sympathetic vibrations of the

passion, the pathos, that were transmitted by his style and that were, perhaps in spite of his laborious efforts, successful in giving life and truth to fictitious characters.

As stated above, Flaubert wrote Madame Bovary primarily to prove to his friends that a work of art could be created or a banal and commonplace incident or theme. Emile Zola wrote Thérèse-Raquin, not for the same purpose, but in order to illustrate the positivist theories which were prevalent at that time. An analysis of this "scientific" novel will be studied in the following chapter.
CHAPTER III

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THÉRÈSE-RAUQUIN

Thérèse-Raquín, though far from being Zola's most popular novel, is the first important novel by the great naturalist French writer. He wrote Thérèse-Raquín before he had completely formulated his theory of Naturalism. In this novel he resolved to study not the causes, but the effects of passion on his characters. It is a study in crime, adultery and retribution.

Thérèse-Raquín is the story of a woman, Thérèse, who despises the lethargy and convention of bourgeois life, and her struggle to rise above her condition. Thérèse's father left her with her aunt, Madame Raquin, when she was very young. Madame Raquin raised Thérèse along with her only son, Camille. When the two were old enough, Madame Raquin decides that they should be married. Camille marries Thérèse and they move from their present home in Vernon to Paris. Madame Raquin, having conducted a haberdashery in Vernon for twenty-five years, was reluctant, at first, to move to Paris. Thérèse and Madame Raquin run a dull, dirty haberdasher shop in Paris, while Camille works in a business office of the Orleans railway. Except for the Thursday night gatherings, the Raquin household is relatively uneventful. Thérèse lives a dull and idle life until she meets Laurent.

Laurent, Camille's friend, works at the same place as Camille. One day, after work, Camille brings Laurent home and introduces him to Thérèse and Madame Raquin. Now, Laurent joins the others as a regular
Thursday night guest. Laurent and Thérèse eventually become very good friends and later lovers. They meet each other in the upstairs apartment over the shop. When they become tired of having to conceal their affair, they decide to do away with Camille. One day, on their usual Sunday outing, they go for a boat ride and Laurent throws Camille overboard. Camille, who has never learned to swim, drowns. One year after Camille's death Laurent and Thérèse are married. After their marriage, Laurent and Thérèse fight and argue incessantly. The main issue is who was responsible for Camille's death. Their arguments and fights become so intense, until each one, Thérèse and Laurent, decides to kill the other. Laurent decides to stab Thérèse to death and Thérèse, in turn, has decided to poison Laurent. When they discover that they had the same idea, they both drink the poisoned milk that Thérèse had prepared for Laurent, while Madame Raquin looks on.

From the time Thérèse is first introduced to us until she becomes involved with Laurent, she is a quiet, obedient, passive and indifferent young girl.

Thérèse grandit, couchée dans le même lit que Camille, sous les tièdes tendresses de sa tante. Elle était d'une santé de fer, et elle fut soignée comme une enfant chétive, partageant les médicaments que prenait son cousin, tenue dans l'air chaud de la chambre occupée par le petit malade. Pendant des heures, elle restait accroupie devant le feu, pensive, regardant les flammes en face, sans baisser les paupières. Cette vie forcée de convalescente la replia sur elle-même, elle prit l'habitude de parler à voix basse, de marcher sans faire de bruit, de rester muette et immobile sur une chaise, les yeux ouverts et vides de regards. Et lorsqu'elle levait un bras, lorsqu'elle avançait un pied, on sentait en elle des souplesses felines, des muscles courts et puissants, toute une énergie, toute une passion qui dormaient dans sa chair assoupie.\(^1\)

She was constantly reprimanded as a child for making too much noise:

Sa tante lui avait répété si souvent: "Ne fais pas de bruit, reste tranquille," qu'elle tenait soigneusement cachées, au fond d'elle, toutes les fouges de sa nature. Elle possédait un sang-froid suprême, un apparente tranquillité qui cachait des emportements terribles.¹

As a result, she had learned to suppress her true feelings and her emotions at a very early age. She had always done exactly what she was told, when she was told, and the way she was told to do it. She even married Camille, not because she loved him, but because her aunt said marry him.

Perhaps the best description of Thérèse's lack of concern is seen in this passage:

La jeune fille, elle aussi, semblait rester froide et indifférente. Elle arrêtait parfois ses grands yeux sur Camille et le regardait pendant plusieurs minutes avec une fixité d'un calme souverain. Ses lèvres seules avaient alors de petits mouvements imperceptibles. On ne pouvait rien lire sur ce visage fermé qu'une volonté implacable tenait toujours doux et attentif. Quand on parlait de son mariage, Thérèse devenait grave, se contentait d'approver de la tête tout ce que disait Mme Raquin. ... Les mois, les années s'écoulèrent. Le jour fixe pour le mariage arriva. Mme Raquin prit Thérèse à part, lui parla de son père et de sa mère, lui conta l'histoire de sa naissance. La jeune fille écouta sa tante, puis l'embrassa sans répondre un mot.²

Thérèse makes no comment, asks no questions about her parents. Her reaction is almost unbelievable. Even after her marriage to Camille, before she meets Laurent, her disposition remains unaltered:

Et le lendemain, lorsque les jeunes époux descendirent, Camille avait encore sa langueur maladive, sa sainte tranquillité d'égoïste, Thérèse gardait toujours son indifférence

¹ Ibid., p. 12.

² Ibid., pp. 13-14.
douce, son visage contenu, effrayant de calme.¹

Therese had nothing to do with any decisions that were made. Zola says:

Thérèse ne fut pas consultée; elle avait toujours montré une telle obéissance passive que sa tante et son mari ne prenaient plus la peine de lui demander son opinion. Elle allait où ils allaient, elle faisait ce qu'ils faisaient, sans une plainte, sans un reproche, sans même paraître savoir qu'elle changeait de place.²

Thérèse has adjusted so well to living a passive, almost emotionless life, until even when she is disappointed she is unable to react emotionally. She is completely complacent. She has no desire to improve the existing conditions around her. In addition, she has no desire for luxuries. When Madame Raquin suggests a repair, a bit of decoration, Thérèse's reply is:

--A quoi bon? répondait tranquillement sa nièce.
Nous sommes très bien, nous n'avons pas besoin de luxe.³

She has no interest in books, and prefers to remain completely idle. She waits on the customers who come into the store automatically, using the same words with each one and an artificial smile.

From her childhood until three years after her marriage to Camille, Thérèse's physical and mental condition is relatively the same. Even the Thursday night distractions, that is, the domino games with the usual crowd, Michaud, Olivier and Grivet, fail to improve her condition. Little by little she begins to detest the Thursday night gatherings:

¹ Ibid., p. 14.

² Ibid., p. 16.

³ Ibid., p. 18.
Les soirées du jeudi étaient un supplice pour elle; souvent elle se plaignait d'un malaise, d'une forte migraine, afin de ne pas jouer, de rester là oisive, à moitié endormie. Un coude sur la table, la joue appuyée sur la paume de la main, elle regardait les invités de sa tante et de son mari, elle les voyait à travers une sorte de brouillard jaune et fumeux qui sortait de la lampe. ... Elle allait de l'une à l'autre avec des dégâts profonds, des irritations sourdes.¹

Here the author is clearly describing the change that is taking place within Therese. He has set the stage, by beginning with her childhood, and depicting the qualities she possessed as a child. Then, he gradually develops her, carefully describing the events and circumstances which involved her character and personality. Bo so doing he has prepared the reader for Therese's later involvement with Laurent.

Therese manages to retain her indifferent air until she sees Laurent for the first time. When Camille brings his friend, Laurent, home one evening and introduces him to his mother and wife, the author says:

Thérèse, qui n'avait pas encore prononcé une parole, regardait le nouveau venu. Elle n'avait jamais vu un homme ... Elle contemplait avec une sorte d'admiration son front bas, planté d'une rude chevelure noire, ses joues pleines, ses lèvres arrêta un instant ses regards sur son cou.²

For the first time we see Thérèse reacting, even Laurent's gaze seemed to affect her:

Sous ce regard droit, qui semblait pénétrer en elle, la jeune femme éprouva une sorte de malaise. Elle eut un sourire forcé, et échangea quelques mots avec Laurent et son mari; puis elle se hâta d'aller rejoindre sa tante.

¹ Ibid., p. 23.
Elle souffrait.  

At the dinner table she continues to stare at Laurent although she says nothing. That evening when Laurent remains to play dominos with the others, she finds no excuses to leave. She makes none of her usual trips into the shop to wait on customers. Now, we see Thérèse's calmness gradually being overcome with anxiety. Laurent's frequent visits to the Raquin household arouses Thérèse's latent emotions. When he decides to paint a picture of Camille, Thérèse is always in the bedroom, which had become a studio, watching him. When the painting was completed and everyone had viewed it and left, Thérèse finds herself alone with Laurent:

Puis, d'un mouvement violent, Laurent se baissa et prit la jeune femme contre sa poitrine. Il lui renversa la tête, lui écrasant les lèvres sous les siennes. Elle eut un mouvement de révolte, sauvage, emportée, et, tout d'un coup, elle s'abandonna, glissant par terre sur le carreau.  

Thérèse was completely at ease in her new relationship with Laurent. Her actions aroused in her no sense of shame or guilt. We now see a woman who was once satisfied with having decisions made for her, making her own. Her entire personality undergoes a subtle change. She becomes a forceful person who imposes her will on others. When a decision must be made concerning a rendez-vous, it is she, Thérèse, who conceives and insists upon the execution of the daring plan. Thus from Thérèse's first experience with Laurent we began to notice this remarkable change in her. She is filled with passion, desire, and all

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the attendant anxieties. All of her surpressed emotions, her long
years of dissatisfaction, her passiveness and her calm air, have been
dissolved in her new relationship. For the first time we see her re-
vealing how she truly feels. She tells Laurent about her past life:

Oh! si tu savais, disait-elle, combien j'ai
souffert! J'ai été élevée dans l'humidité tiède de la
chambre d'un malade. Je couchais avec Camille; la nuit,
je m'éloignais de lui, écoeurée par l'odeur fade qui
sortait de son corps. Il était méchant et entête; il
ne voulait pas prendre les médicaments que je refusais
de partager avec lui; pour plaire à ma tante, je devais
boire de toutes les drogues. Je ne sais comment je ne
suis pas morte... Ils m'ont rendu laide, mon pauvre
ami, ils m'ont volé tout ce que j'avais, et tu ne peux
m'aimer comme je t'aime....Je ne leur souhaite pas de
mal. Ils m'ont élevée, ils m'ont recueilli et défendue
contre la misère.... Mais j'aurais préféré l'abandon à
leur hospitalité.1

The Thérèse we see now is the Thérèse who later plants the idea of
killing her husband in Laurent's mind. This woman, who has suppressed
her emotions, who has refused to reveal her true feelings, who has re-
mained passive and calm in spite of her disgust and disappointment,
has suddenly evolved into another personality. Zola says of her:

La jeune femme semblait se plaire à l'audace et à
l'impudence. Elle n'avait pas une hésitation, pas une
peur. Elle se jetait dans l'adultère avec une sorte de
franchise énergique, bravant le péril, mettant une sorte
de vanité à le braver.2

For fear of revealing their true feelings, the couple, Laurent
and Thérèse found it necessary to pretend that they were not too fond
of each other when in the company of others. Although Thérèse was
nervous and sensitive, she was able to play the part perfectly. After

1 Ibid., pp. 36-38.

2 Ibid., p. 40.
all, she had been pretending most of her life. She was no longer bored and idle; her happiness was reflected in her disposition. She sang, she bought pots of flowers to decorate her bedroom. She had the room repaired. For the first time we see her interested in luxuries such as: carpets, curtains and rosewood furniture.

Then the time comes when Therese and Laurent can no longer see each other. Laurent's chief clerk tells him that if he takes anymore time off the company would dismiss him. When he explains the situation to Thérèse, she becomes angry and is unable to accept the fact that her pleasures must end. She spends a sleepless night thinking up fantastic plans for future meetings. When her plans fail, she decides to go to Laurent's apartment. Thérèse leaves the shop on a pretense of collecting a fee from one of the customers. It is during this visit that she plants the idea of killing Camille in Laurent's mind. When Laurent suggested sending Camille on a journey Thérèse answered:

Il n'y a qu'un voyage dont on ne revient pas...¹

After Camille's death Thérèse becomes seriously ill. Later, when her physical condition has improved, she is depressed. She even has hallucinations. In an attempt to free her mind, she reads novels and daydreams. She even assumes a virtuous almost repentant attitude. She tries to free herself of all responsibility for her husband's death by telling herself that she really loved him. She remembers how good and kind he was. The relationship between Laurent and Thérèse is not the same after Camille's death. Each time they attempt to touch

¹Ibid., p. 52.
each other, visions of Camille flash before them.

Even after they are married they are unable to revive the passion that they once had. Nevertheless, five months after her marriage to Laurent Thérèse realizes that she is pregnant. At the same time, she and Laurent continue to fight and argue more and more. The root of the arguments and fights is always, who was responsible for Camille's death. Although she could not explain why, she was frightened at the idea of having a child for Laurent. The very next time that she and Laurent have a fight she deliberately places herself in a position for Laurent to hit her in the stomach. Laurent, who is unaware of his wife's condition, kicks her in the stomach and she has a miscarriage.

Thérèse's depression and confusion and her guilty conscience eventually cause her to become a street woman. She gets a friend of hers, Suzanne, to run the store while she goes on her daily rounds. In the end we see that her mental anguish causes her to prostrate herself daily in front of Madame Raquin and ask forgiveness.

The author presents Thérèse's boredom, her idleness, then her joys and fears, in such a manner that one sometimes feels sympathetic towards her. At the same time however, the author does not make any attempt to justify Thérèse's actions. Nevertheless, he clearly describes Camille's weakness, his dependency upon his mother and his constant sickness. From a child up until his death, Camille remains a sickly spoiled little boy.

Camille, grandi, sauvé de la mort, demeura tout frissonnant des secousses répétées qui avaient endolori sa chair. Arrêté dans sa croissance, il resta petit et malingre. Ses membres grêles eurent des mouvements lents et fatigués. Sa mère l'aimait davantage pour cette faiblesse qui le plait. Elle regardait sa pauvre petite
Camille was irritated by his mother's coddling care. Although he rebelled he was unable to free himself from her. Like Thérèse he entered into the marriage because his mother wanted him to. It was not until after his marriage that we see a change in him. Although he is still weak, sickly, ignorant and allows his mother to dominate him, he does make a decision on his own.

...Camille déclara nettement à sa mère qu'il entendait quitter Vernon et aller vivre à Paris.\(^2\)

For once he stands on his own two feet and makes a decision. When his mother protests he, like Therese, finally reveals how he feels:

\begin{quote}
--Je ne t'ai jamais contrariée dans tes projets, lui dit-il; j'ai épousé ma cousine, j'ai pris toutes les drogues que tu m'as données. C'est bien le moins, aujourd'hui, que j'aie une volonté, et que tu sois de mon avis... Nous partirons à la fin du mois.\(^3\)
\end{quote}

After the family moves to Paris, Camille is pleased with the old, dull, dark, delapidated shop, only because he does not have to spend very much time there. The truth is, he was counting on spending all day in a warm office, and when he returned home, he would go to bed early.

Camille spends a month looking for work. Eventually he takes a job in a business office. From this point on Camille is complacent, and happy. He lives free of boredom, and is unaware of his wife's true feelings. Because of his naivete he never suspects anything

\(^{1}\) Ibid., p. 10.

\(^{2}\) Ibid., p. 15.

\(^{3}\) Ibid., p. 15.
other than friendship between his wife and his best friend. Even when Laurent is about to throw him into the water he says:

--Ah! non, tu me chatouilles, dit-il, pas de ces plaisanteries-là... Voyons, finis: tu vas me faire tomber.  

It is not until he sees the expression on Laurent's face that he realizes that his friend is serious. Although he knows that Laurent is serious the author informs us: "Il ne comprit pas; une épouvante vague le saisit." Even here one is aware of the fact that Camille was completely unaware of his wife's involvement with Laurent. He lived and died ignorant, vain, naive and a weakling.

Laurent, however, contrasts with Camille, both mentally and physically. The author describes Laurent as:

...un vrai fils de paysan, d'allure un peu lourdes le dos bombé, les mouvements lents et précis, l'air tranquille et entêté. On sentait sous ses vêtements des muscles ronds et développés, tout un corps d'une chair épaisse et ferme.

Laurent is prudent and egotistic. Unlike Camille, he is not easily satisfied. After having made several unsuccessful attempts to become an artist, he is still dissatisfied with his job at the office. When he meets Therese for the first time he almost ignores her completely. After several visits to the Raquin household, he began to hold long conversations with himself. He was debating whether he should or should not become Thérèse's lover.

Voila une petite femme, se disait-il, qui sera ma maîtresse quand je le voudrai. Elle est toujours là, sur mon dos, à m'examiner, à me mesurer, à me peser... Elle tremble, elle a une figure toute drôle, muette et

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1 Ibid., p. 69.

passionnée. A coup sur, elle a besoin d'un amant; cela se voit dans ses yeux... Il faut dire que Camille est un pauvre sire.¹

For him Thérèse was ugly and he did not love her. Nevertheless, he decided that he would make her his mistress. One can see also, that he was not a true friend to Camille. The very first chance he gets, he seduces her. Unlike Camille, Laurent is brutal and violent. He has none of Camille's tenderness and timidity. After he becomes involved with Therese, he no longer finds her ugly. Although he did not completely accept her at first, he was dominated by her.

The Laurent we see before Camille's death is a brave, fearless, egotistic and fairly intelligent young man. However, after he kills Camille, he becomes frightened, he has nightmares and hallucinations and is unable to sleep. He even becomes afraid of the dark:

D'ordinaire, il traversait gaillardement ces ténèbres. Ce soir-là, il n'osait sonner, il se disait qu'il y avait peut-être, dans un certain renfoncement formé par l'entrée de la cave, des assassins qui lui sauteraient brusquement à la gorge quand il passerait. Enfin, il sonna, il alluma une allumette et se décida à s'engager dans l'allée. L'allumette s'éteignit. Il resta immobile, haletant, n'osant s'enfuir, frottant les allumettes sur le mur humide avec une anxiété qui faisait trembler sa main. Il lui semblait entendre des voix, des bruits de pas devant lui. Les allumettes se brisaient entre ses doigts. Il réussit à en allumer une. Le soufre se mit à bouillir, à enflammer le bois avec une lenteur qui redoubla les angoisses de Laurent; dans la clarté pâle et bleutée de soufre, dans les lueurs vacillantes qui couraient, il crut distinguer des formes monstrueuses. Puis l'allumette pétila, la lumière devint blanche et claire. Laurent, soulagé, s'avança avec précaution, en ayant soin de ne pas manquer de lumière.²

¹ Ibid., p. 32.
² Ibid., p. 104.
His frequent visits to the morgue to learn whether Camille's body had been found did not help Laurent's mental state. Nevertheless, every day he would stop by the morgue on his way to work and stare at the dead bodies. Even after Camille's body was found, Laurent did not cease to have these horrible hallucinations. The hallucinations continued even after his marriage to Therese. In an attempt to relieve his constant state of frustration, Laurent quit his job and opened an art studio. When he attempted to paint, the picture always came out the same, Camille's swollen face.

Laurent realized, only to late, that he and Therese had made a terrible mistake. Killing Camille was the worst thing they could have done. Even after his death, the memory of Camille managed to come between them. In addition to Laurent's mental agonies, he had a terrible scar on his neck, which served as a constant reminder of what he had done. The scar on his neck was the result of Camille's bite, just before he was thrown overboard. Not only did they have to live with Camille's murder on their conscience but also with the fear of being discovered by the police. In one of their arguments, Laurent and Therese carelessly tell the whole story of what had happened right in front of Madame Raquin. Although Madame Raquin, by this time, is paralyzed and unable to talk, they live with the fear that one day she will possibly be able to tell someone. We see Laurent in the beginning as a strong, self-confident, brave and egotistic man. By the time he commits suicide, he is weak, fearful, nervous and completely dominated by Therese.

On the other hand Madame Raquin unlike any of the other characters
is a domineering, over-protective woman. She loves her son dearly, but because of his poor health she spoils him. She is always reminding him to be careful. On the day he was killed, she had warned him to be very careful. She loved him so much that his death was a little more than she could bear.

Although she was domineering, she had good intentions. Her one and only desire was that her children be happy and live a comfortable life.

The author clearly depicts her sufferings and agonies after the death of her son. When she was unaware of the fact that Laurent and Thérèse had anything to do with her son's death, her concern was for Thérèse's welfare. She decides that Thérèse and Laurent should be married. Shortly after this marriage, Madame Raquin has a stroke and is completely paralyzed. As time passed, she lost the ability to talk. The couple take good care of Madame Raquin because her presence keeps them from destroying each other. She loves them, and is grateful for their concern until she finds out the truth. Zola vividly depicts Madame Raquin's mental anguish after having learned the truth:

Une éffrayante contraction passa sur son visage, et elle éprouva une telle secousse, que Thérèse crut qu'elle allait bondir et crier. Puis elle retomba dans une rigidité de fer. Cette espèce de choc fut d'autant plus épouvantable qu'il sembla galvaniser un cadavre. La sensibilité, un instant rappelée, disparut; l'impotente

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 75.
demeura plus écrasée, plus blafarde. Ses yeux, si doux
d'ordinaire, étaient devenus noirs et durs, pareils à des
morceaux de métal.¹

After learning the truth, she waits and hopes for the moment when she
will be able to make a sign, a sound, possibly a gesture, that will
enable her to tell what really happened.

Her chance comes the Thursday after she has learned the truth.
The usual crowd comes for the Thursday gathering. This woman, who is
unable to walk, to speak, to move even her little finger, is so full
of hatred and grief that she summoned her last energies to denounce
the guilty couple. Realizing that her tongue was completely dead, she
attempted a different language:

Par une puissance de volonté étonnante, elle parvint
à galvaniser en quelque sorte sa main droit, à la soulever
légerement de son genou où elle était toujours étendue,
inerte; elle la fit ensuite ramper peu à peu le long d'un
pieds de la table, qui se trouvait devant elle, et parvint
à la poser sur la toile cirée. Là, elle agita faiblement
les doigts comme pour attirer l'attention.²

The domino players were surprised because Madame Raquin had not moved
her hands since the attack. The two murderers waited, breathless. The
old woman managed to write by tracing her little finger on the oilcloth
table cloth, the names: Thérèse and Laurent, then her strength failed.
The hand returned to its previous paralytic condition. Grivet, one
of the weekly domino players, who always insisted that he could under-
stand what the old woman wanted, finished the sentence by saying:
"Thérèse and Laurent are taking very good care of me."

¹ Ibid., p. 178.
² Ibid., pp. 184-185.
Meanwhile, Mme Raquin realizing that she had been misunderstood as usual, is terribly upset. She felt that her hand had betrayed her. It was heavy as lead and she knew she could never raise it again. Mme Raquin, feeling that heaven did not wish her son to be avenged, decides that she can escape from her suffering by letting herself starve to death. Her courage is soon exhausted; she is forced to remain there in the presence of these murderers and her anguish becomes keener each day. She has to endure Thérèse's kiss, and Laurent's touch when he picks her up in his arms and carries her like a child. Although she is unable to speak, to make a gesture, her hatred is revealed through her eyes. When the situation between the couple becomes unbearable, Mme Raquin realizes that the end is very near for Thérèse and Laurent.

One day when Mme Raquin is sitting in her usual place, with her eyes keenly fixed on Thérèse and Laurent, she watches them destroy each other. In the last paragraph of the novel the author depicts the scene after Thérèse and Laurent have committed suicide:

Les cadavres resterent toute la nuit sur le carreau de la salle à manger, tordus, vautres, éclaires de lueurs jaunatre par les clartes de la lampe que l'abat-jour jetait sur eux. Et, pendant près de douze heures, jusqu'au lendemain vers midi, Mme Raquin, roide et muette, les contempla à ses pieds, ne pouvant se rassasier les yeux, les écrasant de regards lourds.¹

Alas, the murderers are dead, her son has been avenged. Whether she lives a little longer or dies immediately does not matter to Mme Raquin. The most important thing to her, is that she has lived long

¹Ibid., p. 230.
enough to see the murderers dead.

All of the events in the novel are carefully planned. Zola establishes his settings with extreme care. The thirty-two chapters may be grouped into three parts; about ten chapters each. The first part, "The Crime," introduces the characters; Laurent becomes a part of the weekly Thursday night gatherings; the affair between Thérèse and Laurent is begun; Laurent kills Camille. Chapters eleven to twenty "The Interval" contains a series of goings and comings between Laurent's room and the Raquin shop. The last part, Chapters twenty-one to thirty-two "The Marriage" represents Laurent's re-entry into the shop-home, and once again the chief scene of action is the shop-home.

In Thérèse-Raquin the author has employed very few characters. He focuses our attention on Mme Raquin, a widow with a son, Camille, a colorless and frail young man, and Mme Raquin's niece, Thérèse. He deliberately places together two incompatible temperaments, that is Camille who is weak and ill most of the time, and Thérèse who is robust. Later our attention is focused on Therese and Laurent, and the rest of the novel is devoted to a study of the effect that the murder has on the couple.

As the author said in his second edition of his preface written in April 1868, he tried to study temperaments and not characters. This is, in essence, what he does throughout the novel. He chose persons dominated by their passions, nerves and instincts, and deprived of free choices or free will. Above all his aim was "scientific." He sought to note the sensations and acts of a powerful man and an unsatisfied woman by placing them into a violent drama. While presenting
the facts and the situations, he attempts to provide his reader with reasons why the characters act the way they do. For example Therese is not abruptly thrown into adultery. Her boredom, her despair is described by the author little by little, so that when she finally commits adultery, the reader is almost ready to sympathize with her.

Zola carefully prepares each setting so that it will coincide with the mood of his character. He uses light and dark to create the desired atmosphere. For example the dim daylight in the passage du Pont-Neuf and the shadowy effects there at night under the gaslights create an atmosphere of gloom and horror. His description of the morgue scenes were successful in creating the mood of terror and dread. He describes vividly, objects or animals by using a series of metaphores and descriptive adjectives, and sometimes both. A typical example is his description of the cat, Francois,

Le chat tigre, François, était assis sur son derrière, au beau milieu de la chambre. Grave, immobile, il regardait de ses yeux ronds les deux amants. Il semblait les examiner avec soin, sans cligner les paupières, perdu dans une sorte d'extase diabolique.¹

We first see the cat as a witness of the liaison, between Laurent and Thérèse and then as an observer of the murderers sleepless nights. It seems that the cat, François, represents Laurent's conscience, because after Laurent marries Thérèse, he kills François in an attempt to relieve himself of this constant reminder of what he has done.

Zola devotes the first chapter to the description of the dry-goods shop in which the Raquin family, Camille, his mother and his

¹ Ibid., p. 41.
wife live, and to the Passage du Pont-neuf, where the shop is located. His description is long and detailed. After clearly describing the surroundings in which the shop is located, the reader's attention is focused on the shop which will provide the chief setting of the story. Many of his descriptive passages are of genuine beauty,

En face, se dressait le grand massif rougeatre des îles. Les deux rives, d'un brun sombre tâche de gris, étaient comme deux larges bandes qui allaient se rejoindre à l'horizon. L'eau et le ciel semblaient coupés dans la même étoffe blanchâtre. Rien n'est plus douloureusement calme qu'un crépuscule d'automne. Les rayons pâlissent dans l'air frissonnant, les arbres vieillis jettent leurs feuilles, la campagne brûlée par les rayons ardents de l'été, sent la mort venir avec les premiers vents froids.¹

He was successful in creating the desired mood for his heroine as well as his other characters. For an example his description of Thérèse and Laurent after they are married:

Pendant une semaine, les nouveaux époux passèrent ainsi les nuits entières. Ils s'assoupiassaient, ils se reposaient un peu dans la journée. Thérèse derrière le comptoir de la boutique, Laurent à son bureau. La nuit, ils appartenaient à la douleur et à la crainte. Et le fait le plus étrange était encore l'attitude qu'ils gardaient vis-à-vis l'un de l'autre. Ils ne prononnaient pas un mot d'amour, ils feignaient d'avoir oublié le passé; ils semblaient s'accepter, se tolérer, comme des malades éprouvant une pitié secrète pour leurs souffrances communes. Tous les deux avaient l'espérance de cacher leurs dégouts et leurs peurs, et aucun des deux ne paraissait songer à l'étrangeret des nuits qu'ils passaient, et qui devaient les éclairer mutuellement sur l'état véritable de leur être. Lorsqu'ils restaient debout jusqu'au matin, se parlant à peine, pâlissant au moindre bruit, ils avaient l'air de croire que tous les nouveaux époux se consuient ainsi, les premiers jours de leur mariage. C'était l'hypocrisie maladroite de deux fous.²

¹ Ibid., p. 68.
² Ibid., p. 149.
The above passage shows the author's ability to incorporate within his descriptions the psychological development of his characters. He was very successful in depicting his characters' emotions, be it love, joy, boredom, anxiety or fear. Notice his description of the guilty pair's reaction when Mme Raquin makes an attempt to reveal the truth to the Thursday night guests:

Thérèse faillit crier d'angoisse. Elle regardait les doigts de sa tante glisser sur la toile cirée, et il lui semblait que ces doigts tracèrent son nom et l'aveu de son crime en caractères de feu. Laurent s'était levé violemment, se demandant s'il n'allait pas se précipiter sur la paralytique et lui briser le bras. Il crut que tout était perdu, il sentit sur son être la pesanteur et le froid du châtiment, en voyant cette main revivre pour révéler l'assassinat de Camille. ...Les meurtriers, pris d'une terreur folle, furent sur le point d'achever la phrase tout haut. Ils contemplent la main vengeresse avec des yeux fixes et troubles, lorsque, tout d'un coup, cette main fut prise d'une convulsion et s'aplatit sur la table; ... Thérèse et Laurent goutaient une joie si acré, qu'ils se sentaient défaillir sous le flux brusque du sang qui battait dans leur poitrine.¹

In essence he integrated his description with the demand of the narrative. He often placed pairs of adjectives separated by commas near the beginning of the sentence. A typical example is:

Grave toujours, oppressé, plus pâle et plus muette, elle s'asseyait et suivait le travail des pinceaux.²

Occasionally he repeated the same adjective or phrase. Nevertheless, whenever he introduced or presented a new setting he described it in minute detail. Although he was not, for some, a great writer he was a writer of enormous talent. As some of the quoted passages indicate he was capable of clearly describing a landscape, a character, an

¹ Ibid., p. 186.
² Ibid., p. 32.
object or an incident by employing the correct metaphor, image or comparison. Throughout all of his descriptions, whether beautiful or violent he maintained a literary style all his own.

Although the affiliation between Thérèse-Raquin and Madame Bovary may already be apparent to the reader of this study, the writer will proceed with her comparative analysis of the two novels.
CONCLUSION

From the evidence and analyses presented above, certain conclusions now seem justifiable. A comparison of the technique of character development, and of the characters themselves of the two novels reveal striking similarities.

One finds in both Flaubert and Zola detailed descriptions of the setting. For Flaubert it was Tostes and later Yonville, whereas for Zola, it was Vernon and then Paris. Flaubert describes Yonville:

Yonville-L'Abbaye est un bourg à huit lieues de Rouen, entre la route d'Abbeville et celle de Beauvais, au fond d'une vallée qu'arrose la Rieule, petite rivière qui se jette dans l'Andelle, après avoir fait tourner trois moulins vers son embouchure, et où il y a quelques truites, que les garçons, le dimanche, s'amusent à pêcher à la ligne.1

Note Zola's description of Paris:

Au bout de la rue Guénégaud, lorsqu'on vient quais, on trouve le passage du Pont-Neuf, une sorte de corridor étroit et sombre qui va de la rue Mazarin à la rue de Seine. Ce passage a trente pas de long et deux de large, au plus; il est pavé de dalles jaunâtres, usées, desséchées, suant toujours une humidité acre; le vitrage qui le couvre, coupé à angle droit, est noir de crasse.

Par les beaux jours d'été, quand un lourd soleil brule les rues, une clarté blanchâtre tombe vitres sales et trénaire misérablement dans le passage. Par les vilains jours jettent que de la nuit sur les dalles gluantes, de la nuit salie et ignoble.2

Both authors give a minute description of the place where the action of the novel is to take place. At the same time, Zola like Flaubert

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1 Flaubert, op. cit., p. 91.
2 Zola, op. cit., p. 1.
in his description of Yonville, presents his scene, Paris, as being subordinate to the characters. In fact, one might conclude that the function of the descriptions found in the two novels is psychological rather than decorative. In both novels the long and detailed descriptions are confined to the demands of character development.

Although the two authors used similar techniques in their descriptions, their style is different. Flaubert's work contains more imagery and his descriptions are more exact. For example when he describes Emma's boredom, one finds several beautiful almost poetic descriptions:

Les jours qu'il faisait beau, elle descendait dans le jardin. La rosée avait laissé sur les choux des guipures d'argent avec de longs fils clairs qui s'étendaient de l'un à l'autre. On n'entendait pas d'oiseaux, tout semblait dormir, l'espalier couvert de paille et la vigne comme un grand serpent malade sous le chaperon du mur, où l'on voyait, en s'approchant, se trainer des cloportes à pattes nombreuses. ...Dans l'assoupissement de sa conscience, elle prit même les repugnances du mari pour des aspirations vers l'amant, les brulures de la haine pour des rechauffements de la tendresse; mais, comme l'ouragan soufflait toujours, et que la passion se consuma jusqu'aux cendres, et qu'aucun secours ne vint, qu'aucun soleil ne parut, il fut de tous côtés nuit complète, et elle demeura perdue dans un froid qui la traversait.\(^1\)

Whereas, Zola's descriptions, though they contain beautiful images are not quite as poetic as those of Flaubert:

Le lendemain, Laurent s'eveilla frais et dispos, il avait bien dormi. L'air froid qui entrait par la fenêtre fouettait son sang alourdi. Il se rappelait a peine les scènes de la veille; sans la cuisson ardente qui le brûlait au cou, il aurait pu croire qu'il s'était couché a dix heures, après une soirée calme. La morsure de Camille était comme un fer rouge pose sur sa peau; lorsque sa pensée se fut arrêtée sur la douleur que lui causait cette entaille, il en souffrit cruellement. Il lui semblait qu'une douzaine

\(^1\) Flaubert, op. cit., pp. 86, 154.
However, in spite of the differences which exist in the authors ability to describe a setting, a character, or an object, Zola like Flaubert was successful in establishing the necessary mood.

As far as the plot of these two novels is concerned, one finds a great deal of similarity. It is true that adultery causes a lot of trouble in both novels, however, in *Madame Bovary* it does not lead to crime. Flaubert was concerned primarily with creating a work of art, whereas Zola was interested in performing a "scientific" experiment on two living beings. Perhaps the most striking parallels in these two works are those found in the characters. These parallels are seen between Emma and Thérèse, Charles and Camille, Rodolphe and Laurent (before Camille's murder), Leon and Laurent (after Camille's murder) and Mme Bovary and Mme Raquin. Although these similarities exist, Zola seems to concentrate more on the violent and morbid aspects of the characters and of the conflicts created in the works.

Both Thérèse and Emma despised the type of life they were forced to lead. Neither Emma nor Therese had a great deal of admiration for their husbands and the bourgeois way of life. Emma did not marry Charles because she loved him just as Thérèse did not marry Camille out of love. Both women were bored and idle after their marriage. Flaubert says of Emma:

\[\text{Zola, op. cit., p. 80.}\]
Zola says of Thérèse:

Parfois, le dimanche, lorsqu'il faisait beau, Camille forçait Thérèse à sortir avec lui, à faire un bout de promenade aux Champs-Elysées. La jeune femme aurait préféré rester dans l'ombre humide de la boutique; elle se fatiguait, elle s'ennuyait au bras de son mari qui la trainait sur les trottoirs, en s'arrêtant aux boutiques avec des étonnements, des réflexions, des silences d'imbéciles.

Emma and Thérèse had similar reactions after they had committed adultery. Flaubert describes Emma's reaction:

Mais en s'apercevant dans la glace, elle s'étonna de son visage, Jamais elle n'avait eu les yeux si grands, si noirs, ni d'une telle profondeur. Quelque chose de subtil épandu sur sa personne la transfigurait. Elle se répétait: "J'ai un amant un amant!" se délectant à cette idée comme à celle d'une autre puberté qui lui serait survenue. Elle allait donc posséder enfin ces joies de l'amour, cette fièvre du bonheur dont elle avait désespéré. Elle entrait dans quelque chose de merveilleux ou tout serait passion, extase, délire; une immensité bleue l'entourait, les sommets du sentiment étincelaient sous sa pensée, l'extase ordinaire...

Thérèse's reactions according to Zola were:

Thérèse, souple et forte, le serrait, renversant la tête en arrière, et, sur son visage, couraient des lumières ardentes, des sourires passionnés. Cette face d'amante s'était comme transfigurée, elle avait un air fou et caressant; les lèvres humides, les yeux luisants, elle rayonnait.

\[1\]
Flaubert, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

\[2\]
Zola, op. cit., p. 61.

\[3\]
Flaubert, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

\[4\]
Zola, op. cit., p. 36.
In sum, both women had endured about as much as they could, living with ineffectual husbands and when their emotions were finally released, their boredom relieved, their whole mental outlook on life changed. Both women were daring and adventurous. Just as Emma would meet Rodolphe in her garden, Thérèse had her liaison with Laurent in her bedroom. At the same time we see that these two women, Emma and Thérèse, experienced similar reactions upon the termination of their love affairs. After Emma's affair with Rodolphe ended, she was depressed, and became very ill. When Laurent decided that he and Thérèse should remain apart for a year after Camille's death, Thérèse also became ill and was depressed most of the time. Perhaps the most striking difference between the two women is the fact that Emma was not as violent as Thérèse in the final analysis, nevertheless, both women committed suicide.

The husbands of these two women possess striking similarities. Camille Raquin like Charles Bovary is ineffectual, complacent, ignorant, and easily dominated. Neither Charles nor Camille was aware of his wife's adulterous actions. At least Flaubert does allow Charles to find out the truth before he dies, but poor Camille is completely ignorant until his death. It appears that in both cases, the two men were unfortunate enough to marry the wrong woman.

Although both Charles and Camille were dominated by their mothers, Camille insists on having his way once and a while, whereas, Charles is completely dominated by his mother. It is not until after Emma's death that Charles takes a definite stand and makes a decision on his own. Charles is present in the novel from beginning to end, and his
character is developed gradually. On the other hand, Camille is present only in the first half of the novel, that is until he is killed, and Zola's development of Camille's character ends with his death. Nevertheless, both authors provide the reader with a clear and complete description of these two characters. Both Zola and Flaubert clearly point out the fact that the husbands were indirectly responsible for their wives sufferings or misfortunes.

Laurent, Thérèse's lover reminds us of Emma's first lover, Rodolphe. Laurent contemplates and plans his seduction of Thérèse in a similar manner that Rodolphe plans his seduction of Emma. Rodolphe's reaction upon seeing Emma for the first time was:

"Oh! je l'aurai!" s'écria-t-il en écrasant, d'un coup de baton, une motte de terre devant lui. Et, aussitôt, il examina la partie politique de l'entreprise. Il se demandait: "Ou se rencontrer? par quel moyen? On aura continuellement le marmot sur les épaules, et la bonne, les voisins, le mari, toute sorte de tracasseries considérables. ..."Il n'y a plus qu'a chercher les occasions."

Zola describes Laurent's reaction upon seeing Thérèse for the first time:

"—Voilà une petite femme, se disait-il, qui sera ma maîtresse quand je le voudrai. Elle est toujours là, ... A coup sûr, elle a besoin d'un amant; cela se voit dans ses yeux..."

Both Rodolphe and Laurent are egotistic and aggressive. After Laurent has killed Camille he becomes weak and fearful, and allows himself to be dominated by Thérèse in somewhat the same manner that Emma dominated Léon.


2. Zola, op. cit., p. 32.
Madame Raquin like Madame Bovary had only one son, whom she spoiled. Charles was dominated by Madame Bovary, whereas, Camille was dominated by Madame Raquin. Both mothers were concerned with the welfare of their sons. Madame Raquin selects a wife for her son in an attempt to make him happy, whereas, Madame Bovary's selection of a wife for Charles was primarily for financial reasons. Madame Bovary, unlike Madame Raquin (before she learns the truth about her son's death), did not get along with her daughter-in-law. Madame Bovary is a dominating woman who attempted to run her son's life. In this particular aspect, she contrasts greatly with Madame Raquin, who was more concerned with her son's happiness, than with having things her way. Madame Bovary is presented as a self-centered egotist, jealous of her son's love for his wife, and envious of her daughter-in-law. She evokes no sympathy in the reader. Madame Raquin, on the other hand, can be admired in spite of her over protective attitude, for she did have the interest of her two "children" at heart. Zola's treatment of her sufferings, mental and physical, in the second half of the novel creates a lasting impression and arouses the sympathy and compassion of the reader.

Homais, the pharmacists of Yonville in Madame Bovary, has no counterpart in Thérèse-Raquin. Perhaps one of the reasons could be that Flaubert has an abundance of characters whereas, Zola's whole story or chain of events evolve around only four characters; after Camille's death, three. The other five are of very little significance. At the same time, however, Zola's characters, like Flaubert's, operate within their given framework and become a part of it. They seem real and
both Zola and Flaubert have succeeded in infusing life into them, in arousing interest in their fate, and in holding the reader's attention until the end.

Although one finds numerous similarities and differences in these two novels, the lives of the two authors are very different. Flaubert wrote more or less for pleasure, whereas, for Zola, it was a necessity. Flaubert was not exposed to the same type of life as Zola. Zola was poor and found it necessary to earn a living by his pen. Zola was as determined to make his way to the top as Flaubert was to create a work of art. It was while Zola was working for La Hachette that he read and studied Flaubert's Madame Bovary. Perhaps these two works are similar because Zola was profoundly influenced by Flaubert. Their association dated from Zola's position at Hachette. Zola later became a member of the group which dined regularly at Flaubert's home. The influence of Flaubert on Zola is more evident in Thérèse-Raquin than in the novels of the Rougon-Macquart series.

In spite of Flaubert's influence on Zola, Zola does not seem to despise the bourgeois as much as Flaubert. Flaubert's hatred and disgust for the bourgeois is very apparent in his treatment of his characters, especially in that of Charles, Homais, Lheureux, and Father Bournisien. Flaubert has taken a typical bourgeois town and clearly depicted the plainness of the landscape and the stupidity, the mediocrity and cruelleness of the bourgeois. On the other hand, Zola is not concerned with a particular class. He has one goal in mind, which is to show the effect of crime on two human beings. Zola, unlike Flaubert, was very successful in remaining objective. Flaubert, unlike Zola,
It is true however, that these two works were written with two different purposes in mind. Flaubert is satirizing Romanticism whereas Zola is not concerned with any particular movement. One may conclude that Flaubert may have felt that the reading of too many Romantic novels can have disastrous results. Whereas, Zola was only trying to show how crime can completely change individuals. This can be clearly seen by contrasting the actions of his main characters, Therese and Laurent, before the murder as opposed to their actions after the murder.

After having analyzed these two works the writer is somewhat partial to Thérèse-Raquin. This is by no means an attempt to place Zola on the same level with Flaubert, for Flaubert's place as one of France's greatest novelists is unassailable. Madame Bovary is an example of artistic perfection but with the exception of the sympathetic treatment of Emma, most of the characters are repulsive, even though true to life. On the other hand, while the actions of Zola's characters are more violent and even criminal, they seem to have the power to evoke the sympathy and compassion of the reader. Something which is lacking in the creations of Flaubert. Too, Flaubert seems determined to force his readers to accept his scorn and hatred of the "vile bourgeois." One gets the feeling that this treatment of the bourgeois is biased and incomplete. In view of this treatment, which, in our opinion, distorts French bourgeois life, the writer prefers the limited but more impartial and objective world created by Zola in Thérèse-Raquin.
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