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Realism, heroines, Flaubert

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REALISM; HEROINES; FLAUBERT

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Modern Languages
University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

George Gouldin

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INTRODUCTION

Since Flaubert has been called "le chef de l'école réaliste",¹ an attempt will be made in this thesis to show how he used realism in the treatment of heroines in his novels. The first chapters will be dedicated to realism itself, showing first how the movement began in France in the mid-nineteenth century before Flaubert and Balzac were considered realists, followed by a modern definition and characteristics such as: truth, materialism, scientific approach, documentary method, tediousness, mediocrity, sympathy with ordinary life and sociological features.

The other four chapters will be dedicated to Flaubert's main heroines. Each chapter will have as its title the name of one of Flaubert's novels and will deal with the main heroine of that particular novel. Chapter II will deal with Madame Bovary, Flaubert's best known and most widely read novel. Because Madame Bovary is so famous and, in the writer's opinion, Flaubert's best novel, Emma Bovary will receive most attention in this thesis. For more than a hundred years readers have attempted to explain just who

¹Pierre Martino, Le Roman Réaliste sous le Second Empire (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1913, p. 154.

Emma Bovary was in real life. Soon after the first publication of Madame Bovary readers felt certain that Emma was Adeline Couturier, wife of a country doctor, Delamare, in Ry which is not far from Flaubert's hometown, Croisset. Adeline's life had been very similar to Emma's. She too had married a colorless country doctor and after finding that life with him was not as she had been led to believe it should be from reading too many romantic novels, she sought real love with other men of Ry and soon was in financial despair. She then committed suicide.

A study of the life of Louise Colet, a lover of Flaubert, revealed that her love life with Flaubert almost paralleled that of Emma with her lovers, Léon and Rodolph. Readers were convinced then that this was the real Emma Bovary.

About twenty years ago, with the discovery of important Flaubert papers in Rouen, it was found that Flaubert had another lover, Louise Pradier, whose life was also similar to Emma's and who is now thought to have played a large role in Flaubert's creation of the poor, unhappy Emma.

An attempt will be made to present the full story of each of these women who probably form a

composite of Emma Bovary, remembering also Flaubert's statement: "Madame Bovary, c'est moi."²

Chapter III will deal with Elisa Schlésinger, Flaubert's first and only real love. In L'Education sentimentale Flaubert described vividly his real life romance, calling himself Frédéric, and Mme Schlésinger Madame Arnoux. "L'Education est une histoire vraie, et c'est la propre histoire de Flaubert, l'histoire du plus grand amour de sa vie."³

No attempt will be made to identify any of the other many characters in this book in which Flaubert gave so many living portraits that his friend, Maxime du Camp, mentioned: "Il n'est pas un des acteurs de L'Education Sentimentale que je ne puisse nommer, car je les ai tous connus ou côtoyés."⁴

The fourth chapter will study the heroine of Flaubert's historical novel Salammbô. He placed Salammbô in ancient Carthage of 300 B. C. Like so many of the characters in Flaubert's novels, Salammbô can be identified as several people that

²Emile Henriot, Réalistes et naturalistes (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1954), p. 17.

³Ibid., p. 32.

⁴Ibid., pp. 38-39.

Flaubert knew and as the author himself as well.

The last chapter is a brief study of the old maid whom Flaubert treated very tenderly in one of his last novels before he died, Un coeur simple. The maid, Félicité, can be identified in real life as the Flaubert family maid at Croisset and also as the maid of Flaubert's relatives at Trouville, whom Flaubert and his sister Caroline visited often when they were children.

As is pointed out on page 7 of this thesis, a realist must discover people he already knows in real life and portray them in novels as they exist rather than recombine them by synthesis. The main purpose of this thesis, therefore, will be to show that Flaubert was a realist because the heroines of his books are people he discovered and not characters which he created.

CHAPTER I

REALISM

The terms "realism" and "naturalism" have been used so interchangeably that it is difficult to make a clear distinction between them, and to say whether an author is a realist or a naturalist. Flaubert is considered by many to be the leader of the realists, though the term was obnoxious to him, and by others a leading naturalist.

The word "réalisme" was first made popular by a painter Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), who was head of a new school of painting in Paris in 1850. His school was characterized by its frank and brutal treatment of subjects.¹ This style passed into literature from painting by the pen of a great admirer of Courbet, Jules Husson Champfleury (1821-1889), who was the recognized leader of the "école réaliste" of French novelists because of his frank, realistic treatment of characters in his novels.²

The term "réaliste" soon became repulsive for

¹Louis H. Dow and Prescott O. Skinner, Quelques contes naturalistes (New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1907), p. iv.

²Ibid., p. iv.

most readers because of Champfleury's narrow conception of realism as an exact but indiscriminate and inartistic treatment of the most gross and trivial affairs of the lower classes. This is why the term did not appeal to Flaubert. He was still a romantic at heart. His heroes were Victor Hugo and Théophile Gautier. "Il a suivi, en eux, toute la pure tradition du lyrisme romantique, ambitieux d'images grandioses, de sentiments exaltés et de vocables harmonieux."³

Champfleury explained realism this way:

Ce que je vois entre dans ma tête, descend dans ma plume et devient ce que j'ai vu. La méthode est simple et à la portée de tout le monde. Mais que de temps il faut pour se débarrasser des souvenirs, des imitations, du milieu où l'on vit et retrouver sa propre nature! La reproduction de la nature par l'homme ne sera toujours une interprétation...L'homme, n'étant pas machine, ne peut pas rendre les objets machinalement.⁴

The realists scorned their romantic predecessors and led a campaign against them which was as heated as that which the romanticists had led against the classicists. The members of this early school of realism saw nothing good in poetry and felt that prose was the only good literature.

³Martino, op. cit., p. 155.

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

In a publication called Réalisme directed by Duranty⁵ in 1856, the following ideas were expressed:

Victor Hugo est un esprit difforme, un journaliste; Béranger n'est autre chose qu'un journaliste; Lamartine une créole; Musset, une ombre de Don Juan qu'il a pris au sérieux; de Vigny un hermaphrodite. Leconte de Lisle lui-même et Baudelaire ne trouvent point grace; l'un est trop érudit; l'autre trop exclusivement préoccupé du laid. L'extinction de la poésie est une des conditions nécessaires absolument au triomphe du réalisme; il ne faut pas "chanter" ni "mettre en musique", il faut peindre.⁶

It is interesting to note that these early leaders of realism did not even recognize as realists Balzac and Flaubert, who today are considered two of the principal realistic authors. They found Madame Bovary completely uninteresting. Another article in Réalisme criticized Madame Bovary soon after its publication:

Madame Bovary, roman par Gustave Flaubert représente l'obstination de la description. Ce roman est un de ceux qui rappellent le dessin linéaire, tant il est fait au compas, avec minutie; calculé, travaille, tout à angle droit et, en définitive, sec et aride... Trop d'étude ne remplace pas la spontanéité qui vient du sentiment.⁷

The idea of this early school of realism was that there should be no descriptions or only those that inform us directly about the character or the action.

⁵Duranty. A leader of the realists who later joined the naturalists. He wrote Le malheur d'Henriette Gérard, a study of provincial life.

⁶Martino, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

⁷Ibid., p. 93.

The essential aim of these early realists was psychological, a study of characters. (Stendhal could very well have qualified as a realist in this respect. Not until 1864, twenty-two years after his death, was he declared to be a realist by Hippolyte Taine).⁸ This study of characters had to be as they function in their environment and social state. To be a realist writer, one had to explain the past of his characters: their education, surroundings, interests, the beliefs of each class--its virtues, vices, prejudices. One must describe the types of characters--not imagine them and recompose them by synthesis--but just discover them, for they exist: grocers, lawyers, shoemakers. One must describe the fancies, ideas, and prejudices of different grocers, lawyers and shoemakers.⁹

Up to this point the main emphasis of this thesis has been on realism as it was conceived by the early school of realists. As has been mentioned previously, Balzac and Flaubert were not considered realists by this early school.

⁸Ibid., p. 221.

⁹Ibid., p. 94.

Edwin Preston Dargan, in his book Studies in Balzac's Realism gives a modern definition of realism: "It is the art of representing actuality viewed largely from the material standpoint, in a way to produce as closely as possible the impression of truth."¹⁰ To distinguish realism from naturalism Dargan says: "As for naturalism, with its craving to 'mention the unmentionable', it is in the pejorative sense a 'reductio ad absurdum' of the foregoing."¹¹ Naturalism also has more scientific exactness than realism. "La littérature naturaliste sera donc la littérature positiviste et scientifique, au sens que ces mots de combat eurent dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle."¹² After the Goncourt brothers and Emile Zola took the term to such extremes, naturalism came to mean "une vraie fureur de montrer la nature et l'homme dans ce qu'ils ont de plus vulgaire et de honteux."¹³

¹⁰Edward Preston Dargan, Studies in Balzac's Realism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932), p. 14.

¹¹Ibid., p. 14.

¹²Pierre Martino, Le Naturalism Francais (Paris: Librairie Armand-Colin, 1923), p. 5.

¹³Ibid., p. 6.

Dargan makes a list of what he calls possibilities of realism in literature:

Truth, or correspondance with objective reality.
 Materialism: animalism, money, externality.
 Impersonality.
 The scientific approach, pathology, etc.
 The documentary method, or technical erudition.
 Tediousness.
 Representation of mediocrity and triviality.
 Solidity.
 Sympathy with ordinary life.
 Sociological features.¹⁴

Using this list of characteristics of realism in the modern sense, let's compare for realism three outstanding French authors of the nineteenth century: Balzac, George Sand, and Flaubert. We shall start with Balzac, then treat George Sand, and deal finally with Flaubert.

Is there truth in Balzac's novels? His characters are true to life. All of them could exist, though they are often exaggerated. What makes them seem unreal is the fact that he deals with the more unusual characters of society--those who are the exception rather than the rule. He also becomes melodramatic and romantic in his treatment of characters.

Balzac denied that he was a materialist in his novels. In spite of this denial we frequently find

¹⁴Dargan, op. cit., p. 15.

business adventures in Balzac's novels. Madame Marneffe's life in La Cousine Bette is a constant business adventure of trying to become wealthy any way she can---even by being mistress to five or six different men when she could easily have married and lived comfortably. Balzac insisted always on the importance of money and incomes.¹⁵ His training for the bar and his own private business affairs gave him knowledge of how to write of these affairs.

Dargan's third characteristic of realism is impersonality. One would not consider Balzac impersonal in his novels. He displayed much feeling for his characters. Balzac was certainly very sympathetic toward the poor Baroness Hulot who, throughout her wretched life as the wife of a mistress seeker, remained a faithful Christian. Balzac manifested sympathy toward Pere Goriot when the latter sank into abject poverty. One of Zola's main objections to Balzac was that he was "continually obtruding his own personality."¹⁶ Balzac took sides too much, perhaps, with his favorite characters. Because of his use of the next characteristic,

¹⁵Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 19.

scientific approach, Balzac is often classed as a naturalist. His characters are divided up by classes and trades like a biologist would divide species of animals.

The documentary method of Balzac was the usage of his own technical knowledge in many fields-- especially in terms of law and the use of actual documents such as proclamations by historical figures like Napoleon. Dargan says that some novels by Balzac are so full of documents that they might be called "recueils de documents" [sic]¹⁷ Balzac, with his desire to tell everything, sometimes bores the reader. Everything is described in minute detail so that often the plot is obscured. Taine expressed very accurately the reader's feeling: "Il est désagréable de faire antichambre."¹⁸ Mediocre and trivial details which would have seemed absurd to the classicists are found in Balzac's novels. With his close attention to small details and to the background of minor characters, however, Balzac creates a solidarity in his novels.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 22.

As mentioned previously under the characteristic "impersonality", Balzac is sympathetic to his characters; much more than Flaubert. The titles of Balzac's novels emphasize the fact that he was very interested in the social status of his characters: La Comédie Humaine and Le Roman de mœurs. His side remarks, as well, were often of a sociological nature. As can be seen from the above comparison, Balzac's novels contain many of the characteristics of realism as outlined by Dargan.

An examination of George Sand, however, will reveal that she was less realistic in most of her novels than Balzac or Flaubert. We do not find much of Dargan's first characteristic of realism, truth or correspondance with objective reality in George Sand's novels. Her characters are what she would like for human beings to be rather than what they actually are. In her novel, La Petite Fadette, Fadette at first is considered the meanest and ugliest girl in the village, but after the end of a year she has somehow become the prettiest and most liked of all the girls of the town.

Little of the second characteristic, materialism, is found in the novels of George Sand.

She places little importance usually on money and incomes, and concentrates more on the character of the individual. George Sand could not be considered impersonal with most of her characters. On the contrary she displayed her love for them and did not hesitate to manifest her own personal feelings--more so even than Balzac. She criticized Flaubert for his cold impersonality:

Mais cacher sa propre opinion sur les personnages que l'on met en scène, laisser sur les personnages que l'on met en scène, laisser par conséquent le lecteur incertain sur l'opinion qu'il en doit avoir, c'est vouloir n'être pas compris et alors le lecteur vous quitte.¹⁹

She preferred not to divide her characters into professions and trades like Flaubert and Balzac and had no scientific pretensions. Some readers find the next realistic characteristic, tediousness, in her novels, but not because of an abundance of minute details and descriptions as in those of Flaubert or Balzac. The author of this thesis finds that a lack of depth and reality contribute to make her novels tedious. George Saintsbury considers her novels so superficial that they are "very nearly rubbish" and hardly worth reading.²⁰ Suicides are

¹⁹Rene Dumesnil, Flaubert, son hérédité, son milieu, sa méthode (Société d'Imprimerie et de librairie, n. d.), p. 175.

²⁰George Saintsbury, History of the French Novel (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1919), p. 180.

described in her novels in a more romantic than realistic way. She differs greatly from the realists in this respect. The reader is reminded of the slow, realistic death of Emma Bovary in Flaubert's Madame Bovary where every detail was described accurately. Flaubert, the son of a doctor, had seen many people die in his father's hospital and had even made notes on deaths in order to be accurate in his descriptions. Accurate details on such a subject were unimportant to George Sand. She was very sympathetic with ordinary life, especially when she wrote about simple peasants but also was bitter about social conditions in her novels. Thus we see that George Sand had few characteristics of the realists.

The third writer in this comparison on realism, Gustave Flaubert, strove for truth and objective reality in his portrayal of the bourgeoisie and was extremely harsh in this portrayal. His Emma Bovary, whose head was filled with romantic novels and illusions, had an unhappy marriage followed by illicit love affairs. This could very well have been true in Flaubert's time and still is true in every country today though the present-day Emma is saturated with romantic movies

today rather than with novels. Most of Flaubert's characters were taken from real life as will be seen more clearly in the following chapters.

There is much of Dargan's second characteristic, materialism, in the novels of Flaubert as in those of Balzac. It was financial dispair that brought on Emma's suicide rather than her illicit love affairs, though these love affairs were responsible for the financial dispair. Flaubert had lost most of his own money in a suit which had been brought against his nephew and it was easy for him therefore to describe accurately such matters in his novels. The husband of Madame Schléssinger (the woman Flaubert loved all his life), lost his property when his business failed. Flaubert brought this out clearly in describing the suit against M. Arnoux in L'Education Sentimentale.

Flaubert used the scientific approach with his characters. Human beings were classified in his novels almost as a biologist would classify animals by species. His scorn for the bourgeois class was evident throughout most of his novels. Flaubert has been considered by most readers to be very impersonal in regard to his characters. His idea was "art for art's sake" and he did not feel that a writer should

manifest any personal feelings and seldom did he express a personal opinion in his novels. This is a point that George Sand disputed with him. If we remember the third in the list of characteristics of realism we might consider Madame Bovary a more realistic novel than any of Balzac's. However several modern critics such as Paul Bourget and Emile Henriot do not agree that Flaubert was an impersonal writer. So much investigation of the background of his novels has been undertaken, in which the characters have been identified, that he is considered by some readers to be very personal. Emile Henriot finds much of Flaubert's personality in his novels:

On s'aperçoit qu'il y a lieu de réviser du tout au tout une idée jusqu'ici tenue pour acquise, le dogme de la prétendue impersonnalité de Flaubert. En vérité, nul écrivain ne fut moins impassible que celui-là, qu'on nous donne toujours pour le type absolu de l'observateur désintéressé et du romancier objectif, quand les deux tiers de son oeuvre, et peut-être la plus importante, sont justement une confusion quotidienne.²¹

It seems contradictory that a writer who believes in "art for art's sake" would use a scien-

²¹Henriot, op. cit., p. 28.

tific approach. Flaubert, however, felt that every detail in his novels should be accurate. For Sal-ambo he went to Africa to make a first-hand study of the topography around Tunis. He studied closely every feature of the town of Ry which is Yonville l'Abbaye in Madame Bovary, and which is easily recognizable to readers familiar with this town. Flaubert's knowledge of medicine was very complete and every detail was accurate in Madame Bovary. The sickness of Mme Arnoux's son was described with the accuracy of a doctor. The operation by Charles Bovary on the foot of Hippolyte Tautain likewise showed a thorough knowledge of medicine on the part of this keen realist. In reading the following description of the operation, we feel we are reading the account of a doctor:

Faisant avec la jambe une ligne presque droit ce qui ne l'empêchait pas d'être tourné en dedans, de sorte que c'était un équin mêlé d'un peu de varus ou bien un léger varus fortement accusé d'équin.²²

Madame Bovary was completely medical. The story was suggested to Flaubert by his friend Maxime Du Camp who had known a medical officer at Ry named Delamare.²³

²²Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary (Paris: Corard, 1921), p. 196.

²³Henriot, op. cit., p. 8.

Delamare's wife, bored with life in a small town and with her dull husband, had illicit affairs with other men in Ry. Flaubert, who had completed some medical study and who had grown up in the home of a doctor, found this an easy subject to treat.

Flaubert, like Balzac, made use of the next realistic characteristic, documentary method. He used documents as well as his own technical erudition to make his novels accurate. Martino says of him:

Quand ses tiroirs étaient insuffisants, Flaubert savait les remplir; il se lançait à la chasse au document, et il y associait ses amis; il consultait un avocat sur les embarras financiers de Madame Bovary; il s'informait sur les pieds bots, sur les effets de l'arsenic, sur le cérémonial funèbre, etc. Ce souci n'a fait que grandir par la suite: la soif de la documentation est devenue chez Flaubert une sorte de besoin physique.²⁴

One must admit that Flaubert also had the characteristic of tediousness at times. Many readers find L'Education sentimentale a very dull novel. Too many accessory characters pursue too many goals and never attain any; in the middle of so many digressions and episodes the reader becomes lost and forgets the

²⁴Martino, op. cit., pp. 164-65.

real goal of Flaubert. His preoccupation with style, perfection of vocabulary make him dull at times for foreigners. Mediocrities and trivialities are not uncommon in Flaubert's novels. He used a whole page to describe Charles Bovary's cap in Madame Bovary.

Flaubert had almost no sympathy for ordinary life. He was still a romanticist at heart and felt himself superior to other people. He was especially disgusted with the bourgeois class, though he himself was bourgeois, and this disgust is sensed throughout his novels. He said he had to force himself to write Madame Bovary, so much did he dislike the characters of this novel. In order to remain away from other people he isolated himself in Croisset and received only a few friends like Bouilhet and Du Camp.

By painting a detailed background of each character before presenting him in the novel, Flaubert created solidity in his characters. He then explained everything by logical progression. His characters were products of their milieu; with the account of Emma's education in a secluded convent and her reading so many romantic novels, one could

almost guess what her life would be like. Social-
 ological features are abundant in his works. His
 intense dislike for the bourgeois class has already
 been mentioned. He concentrated almost completely on
 bourgeois characters, nevertheless, to show how stupid
 and ridiculous they could be. He also had very little
 sympathy for socialists and constantly ridiculed them
 in L'Education sentimentale.

No article concerning Flaubert would be com-
 plete without some mention of his style. To Flau-
 bert harmony was the important thing--not what was
 said, although as pointed out before, he felt that
 every detail should be accurate.

Soucieux seulement de l'harmonie, du nombre
 et des rythmes, il dédaignait la syntaxe et ne
 se pliait qu'à grand peine à ses tyrannies
 prétendant que l'écrivain est libre de prendre
 avec elle certaines libertés et que le souci
 de l'euphonie doit primer celui de la correction
 grammaticale.²⁵

When told by a friend that the use of "elle" in the
 opening paragraphs of Un coeur simple was ambiguous,
 Flaubert replied simply: "Tant pis pour le sens, le
 rythme avant tout!"²⁶ He tried to avoid the use of

²⁵Dumesnil, op. cit., p. 246.

²⁶Dow and Skinner, op. cit., p. 158.

the imperfect subjunctive, and when his friend Du Camp showed him an error he had made in the use of this construction, Flaubert replied: "Oui, vieux pédagogue, l'accord des temps est une ineptie. J'ai le droit de dire: je voudrais que la grammaire soit a tous les diables et non pas fût, entends-tu?"²⁷

Flaubert liked the language of Rabelais and Montaigne of the sixteenth century, which gave the mind so much ease in expressing itself. He was against the strict observance of rules. Nevertheless, he spent hours on the same paragraph, writing and re-writing it until it seemed perfect to him. Sometimes he reduced a whole page to a few lines after his corrections. The description of the country fair in Madame Bovary is an example of this. Some of Balzac's novels would certainly have been shortened had Flaubert corrected them! He tried to avoid the repetition of the same word in a paragraph. In his Saint Julien he had written:

Au bout d'un tres longtemps un museau noir parut, puis la souris tout entière. Il frappa un coup léger et demeura stupéfait devant ce petit corps qui ne bougeait plus...Un matin comme il s'en retournait par la courtine, il vit sur la crête du rempard un gros pigeon

²⁷Dumesnil, op. cit., p. 246.

à pattes rouges qui se rengorgeait au soleil.²⁸

When Flaubert was informed that white mice do not have black snouts but pink ones he corrected it but left "pattes roses" out to avoid the repetition of the word "pink".

Flaubert did not let any of his characters speak the same language; each had his own manner of expressing himself so that his social position and profession was characterized. "Chacun parle exactement le langage qui lui convient et à l'exclusion de tout autre."²⁹

The loose construction, with situations often repeated, preventing a progressive interest for the reader, was a big fault in Flaubert's novels. This was especially true in L'Education sentimentale and was also evident in Salambo and Madame Bovary.

"Seuls les Trois contes nous présentent dans l'oeuvre de Flaubert un ensemble harmonieux, classiquement composé."³⁰ Flaubert made special uses of tenses. He used the preterite to represent an action abstractly

²⁸Ibid., p. 255.

²⁹Ibid., p. 266.

³⁰Ibid., p. 213.

or in an historical sense and the imperfect was descriptive; it was used to show prolonged duration of actions so that they may be seen and followed in their development.

In this first chapter, an attempt has been made to show the early development of realism in French literature, noting that two of the main realist writers, Balzac and Flaubert, were not even recognized by the early school. Then by a modern definition of realism, and a list of characteristics of this type of writing, used to compare Flaubert, Balzac and George Sand, it has been shown that Balzac and Flaubert were indeed realists in the modern sense of the word.

In the next chapters, a close observation of the heroines of Flaubert's novels will be made in order that the reader may see more clearly just how Flaubert used realism in his writings.

CHAPTER II

MADAME BOVARY

This chapter will give a clearer idea of how Flaubert used realism in Madame Bovary. As was pointed out in the chapter on realism, a realist author must explain the past of his characters, their education, surroundings and interests, but must not imagine and recompose them by synthesis. One had only to discover them. To show how Flaubert used this aspect of realism is one of the main purposes of this thesis.

Henriot feels that Flaubert's characters did exist and Flaubert only discovered them:

Emma Bovary a existé, et son triste epoux, et ses amants, dont on sait les noms, la demeure, le curriculum. Le docteur Larivière, dans ce livre, c'est le propre père de l'écrivain, le docteur Flaubert; Homais et Bournisien ont existé. L'admirable servante d'un Coeur simple, Flaubert n'a pas eu à chercher bien loin pour en découvrir le modèle exact.¹

Three French critics, Auriant, René Dumesnil, and François Denoeu, all feel that Emma Bovary really lived in Flaubert's time but each believes that she was a different person. Denoeu feels that Emma was a country doctor's wife, Adélphe Courturier in the

¹Henriot, op. cit., p. 30.

little French town of Ry. Auriant, on the contrary believes she was Flaubert's Parisian mistress, Louise Colet. Dumesnil says Emma was Louise Pradier, wife of James Pradier, a shop keeper in Paris. One must remember also that Flaubert said that Madame Bovary was he himself. All four conjectures will be treated in this chapter. The reader can decide which he thinks is the real Emma Bovary or whether she is a combination of all of them. Each of these women might have been a source for Flaubert's creation of Emma; maybe none of Flaubert's characters is an exact portrait of any particular person in real life, but a composite image with a certain trait borrowed from one real life person and another from someone else. A good example of this "composite image" is Frédéric in L'Education Sentimentale. Frédéric is Flaubert until the Dambreuse² episode and from then on is his friend Maxime du Camp.³ However, one cannot detect exactly where one is superceded by the other. From the beginning to the end, Frédéric seems to the reader to be the same person. The traits of several people flow together into one person like small streams flowing into a river.

²A lover of Frédéric in Education Sentimentale.

³René Dumesnil, "La véritable Bovary", Mercure de France, CCCIV (1948), 437.

In this examination to find out who Emma Bovary really was, let's begin with Flaubert himself. Indeed a close look at Flaubert's life will reveal that he did have much in common with Emma. His life was full of torment and frustration like Emma's. Flaubert never was completely successful in his love life. He fell in love with a German Jew's wife (really the Jew's mistress at the time, though Flaubert did not know it), named Elisa Schlésinger, whom he met when he was sixteen years old on the beach at Trouville. For several years he tried unsuccessfully to win her and gave up in frustration, like Emma when she could not win the hearts of Léon and Rodolphe in Madame Bovary.

Flaubert himself, like Emma, was brought up on romantic novels. A romantic by temperament and education, he felt himself different from all other people. It was partly for this reason that he wished to remain isolated at Croisset with no one but his mother. When his friend Alfred Le Poittevin suggested to him in 1845 that he take a mistress and enjoy himself like other men he was unwilling to step down from his lofty world of illusions and admit he was like other men. ✓

Auriant describes Flaubert's dream world:

Il avait vécu avec Horace, Shakespeare, Hugo, la gloire, l'amour, les lauriers en orient, il les avait rêvés. Son imagination bondissait vers l'azure, planait légère, heureuse; en plein vol, il prenait soudaine conscience de sa folie, de son impuissance; l'élan brisé, il retombait brusquement vers ce pays de boue où, transporté par les vents malins, jamais il ne réaliserait ses désires immenses et insatiables...Ayant rompu toutes attaches avec son siècle.⁴

Emma Bovary had not lived with Horace and Shakespeare, but in her dreams she had lived with the gallant lovers of the romantic novels which she had read while studying in the convent. Her imagination also had boundless azure horizons, and after facing brutal reality with a dull husband and unfaithful lovers she "sank" into the mud of Yonville.

Flaubert, who never knew how to dance himself, would only watch people dance and choose the girl he would like to be able to dance with and dream about her for days. It was very probably himself he could see in Emma at the dance in Vaubyssard when Emma first realized she could waltz and really be popular.

"Emma ne savait pas valser. Tout le monde valsait."⁵

⁴Auriant, "Madame Bovary, nee Colet", Mercure de France, CCLXVIII (1936) 247-280.

⁵Flaubert, Madame Bovary, p. 57.

After having discovered the traits of Emma in Flaubert himself, let's go now to the second probable source, Adeline Couturier.

C'est Emma Bovary, et, à travers celle du roman de Flaubert, la vraie, celle qui a réellement existé et dont il est désormais permis, avec un peu d'application et quelques fiches, de trouver, dans les lieux mêmes où elle a vécu.⁶

Adeline was the wife of a health officer in the little town of Ry not far from Croisset. Her head was also full of romantic novels and illusions like Emma's. She was bored with her country-doctor husband and sought "real" life with with several lovers.

One of the devout believers in Adeline as the prototype of Emma is François Denoeu of Dartmouth College. Denoeu, in an article "L'ombre de Madame Bovary"⁷, tells of a trip he made with a student to Ry. After several days of investigation and observation there, they were convinced that Adeline was the real Emma Bovary. Denoeu talked to the owner of the hotel "Rose Blanche", an old man who actually had known acquaintances of Adeline. This inhabitant

⁶Henriot, op. cit. p. 8.

⁷François Denoeu, "L'ombre de Madame Bovary", Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America, I (December 1935), pp. 1165-1185.

explained to Deneou that Adeline was born a kilometer from Ry, had married at the age of eighteen, a doctor named Eugene Delamare who, like Charles Bovary, had been a widower for about a year. In 1842 they had a daughter Alice-Adeline. In 1848 Adeline poisoned herself, and in less than two years, Eugene followed her to the grave.

The story of Adeline's life had been suggested to Flaubert as a topic for a novel by his friends Maxime Du Camp and Louis Bouilhet after their first reading of Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint-Antoine, which they found too romantic. They felt he should pick a topic he could describe realistically. The reader might wonder whether Flaubert knew Adeline well enough to write a realistic novel based on her life. According to Henriot "Flaubert certainement a connu Madame Delamare (Adeline), puisqu'il connaissait le mari, ancien élève de son père le docteur Flaubert à l'Hotel-Dieu de Rouen".⁸ Francois Deneou also tells of Flaubert's trips to Ry:

De temps en temps il prenait l'Hirondelle
et venait passer une journée ou deux a Ry

⁸Henriot, op. cit., p. 11.

avec Louis Bouilhet. Il ne manquait pas d'aller voir Delamare qu'il connaissait par son père. On l'appelait Monsieur Gustave.⁹

It seems quite probable, therefore, that Flaubert did know the Delamare family well.

The hotel-owner's father had known Adeline and had told his son that Adeline was a good dancer and loved fun. She was very beautiful and always was well-groomed. The hotel-owner informed Denoeu that he himself knew Stanislas-Narcisse, who, he said was Léon Dupuis in Madame Bovary. He also knew Louis Champion (Rodolph in Madame Bovary), who was really a "heart-breaker" in Ry. Another friend of this hotel-owner had been Guillaume Jouanne, the Homais in the novel, Madame Bovary.

Adeline, like Emma, was "intoxiquée de littérature fausse, d'ennui et d'adultère".¹⁰ The only person who forgave her and understood her, says Denoeu, was her poor old maid, Augustine Menage, Félicité in Madame Bovary. Félicité, the proprietor explained, was really Emma's step mother, since M. Rouault had married her after the death of his first wife.

⁹Denoeu, op. cit., p. 1176.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 1170.

M. Feuquères, the hotel-owner, also showed Denoeu a photograph he had taken of Adelpine's tombstone before it was destroyed. It read:

I C I
 Repose
 Le corps
 de DELPHINE
 COUTOURIER
 Epouse de Mr
 DELAMARE
 Médecin Décédée
 le 8 Mars 1848
 Priez Dieu

Pour le Repos de Son Ame¹¹

M. Feuquères said he also knew one of the choir boys at Adelpine's church who told him that, at Adelpine's funeral, it was found that the ditch was too short for her coffin and she was buried with her head higher than her feet. This same thing happened at the burial of Flaubert's sister, Caroline. Spencer describes Caroline's burial:

When Caroline was buried, the hole dug for the grave was too narrow for the coffin to go in; the men pulled about, turned it around

¹¹Ibid., p. 1172.

and manoeuvred with spades and crow-bars, til at last the gravedigger, losing patience, put his foot on the coffin just above where the head would be, and forced it down.¹²

Flaubert mentioned in Madame Bovary also that "la bière étant trop large, il avait fallu boucher les interstices avec la laine d'un matalas."¹³

Adelphine was buried beside Eugene's first wife who was as Flaubert described her in Madame Bovary, "laide, sèche comme un cotret, et bourgeonnée comme printemps".¹⁴

M. Fequères explained that Adelphine's daughter, Alice-Delphine, did not have to work in a cotton weaving plant as Flaubert said in the closing lines of Madame Bovary, but was taken in by Adelphine's aunt and given a good education. She was later married to a pharmacist and, like Adelphine, also left behind a daughter at her death.

Denoeu found that Flaubert's description of Yonville-1'Abbaye was very similar to that of Ry.

¹²Philip Spencer, Flaubert (New York: Grove Press, 1953), p. 74.

¹³Flaubert, Madame Bovary, p. 370.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 11.

Flaubert described Yonville-l'Abbaye with its three windmills in *Madame Bovary*:

Yonville-l'Abbaye...est un bourg à huit lieues de Rouen, entre la route d'Abbeville et celle de Beauvais, au fond du vallée qui se jette dans l'Andelle après avoir fait tourner trois moulins vers son embouchure.¹⁵

Denoeu found these same windmills on a river near Ry called "Rieule". He found in Ry:

Une rue principale longue d'une portée de fusil, un maréchal et un charron à l'entrée, une église au bout de la place, un cimetière à gauche de la Grande Rue, des halles, c'est encore Ry.¹⁶

How similar this is to Flaubert's description of Yonville-l'Abbaye in Madame Bovary!

Il n'y a plus ensuite rien à voir dans Yonville. La rue (la seule) longue d'une portée de fusil et bordée de quelques boutiques, s'arrête court au tournant de la route. Si on la laisse sur la droite et que l'on suive le bas de la côte Saint-Jean, bientôt on arrive au cimetière.¹⁷

Flaubert described a country fair in Yonville though there have never been any in Ry; not far away, however, in Darnetal, country fairs are held

¹⁵Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁶Denoeu, op. cit., p. 1175.

¹⁷Flaubert, Madame Bovary, p. 79.

every nine years. Flaubert wrote to Louise Colet that he had been to one of these fairs. He located the fair of Madame Bovary on the meadow outside Ry, which is very similar to the meadow he pictured in Madame Bovary where the fair took place.

The "Hotel de Rouen" was found to fit Flaubert's description of the "Lion d'or". Not far away was the home of the pharmacist Homais. Denoeu found the home of Adeline "qui semblait la plus pimpante de Ry avec ses volets blancs, ses nombreuses et grandes fenêtrés et ses rangées verticales de briques, alternant avec des rectangles de crépi grisâtre."¹⁸ On the third floor was the grainary where Flaubert said Emma wrote letters to her lovers.

Denoeu was shown a painting of Adeline but her eyes and her hair were light colored rather than dark as Flaubert had described Emma Bovary. Perhaps Flaubert changed these details so that it would not be too obvious that Adeline was the real Emma and to conceal the fact she was a copy, perhaps, of a living person rather than a literary creation.

¹⁸Denoeu, op. cit., p. 1181.

Another interesting finding in Ry was the road that led from Adeline's house to that of her lover; it passed through fields, bordered with trees, to a mansion as Flaubert had described Leon's house in Madame Bovary.

Besides these convincing arguments of François Denoeu, we have those of another modern visitor, Léo Languier, who because of his admiration for Madame Bovary, went to Ry to see if this could be the real Yonville. In the following comments, he manifests his belief that Ry is the Yonville of Madame Bovary:

Tout y est demeuré pareil, ou à peu près, depuis un siècle; l'auberge du Lion d'or, où débarquèrent, pour diner, avec Homais et le clerc de notaire Léon Dupuis, le soir de leur arrivée, Monsieur et Madame Bovary; mais le Lion d'or s'appelle en réalité l'Hotel de Rouen, et il a dû être un peu remis à neuf; la maison d'Emma Bovary, qui a été repeinte et encadrée de briques, et qui contient aujourd'hui, au rez-de-chaussee où elle a été transférée, la pharmacie, dont le comptoir est toujours celui qui appartient à M. Homais; l'église où Emma s'ennuyait; le cimetière où elle dort.¹⁹

It seems very convincing, after reading these theories, that Flaubert definitely took the theme

¹⁹Henriot, op. cit., p. 10.

of the story of Madame Bovary from the life of Adelpine Couturier and used Ry for descriptions of Yonville. Adelpine probably supplied the physical characteristics of Emma and her adulterous life the theme for the novel; for psychological characteristics he turned to Louise Colet and Louise Pradier. Who could have provided a better subject for Flaubert, who had been brought up with a medical background, than this doctor's wife, whom he probably knew personally. He had doubtless seen many deaths, suicides included, at the "Hôtel Dieu" where his father practiced medicine. It was easy for him, therefore, to give a detailed, realistic description of Emma's suicide with arsenic. To supply Emma with her psychological characteristics, as mentioned before, Flaubert had only to turn to two female admirers, Louise Colet, whom we shall examine next, and Louise Pradier who will be the last woman to be discussed in this chapter on Madame Bovary.

Another viewpoint in the search for the real Emma was found in an article, "Madame Bovary, nee Colet",²⁰

²⁰Auriant, "Madame Bovary, née Colet", Mercur
de France, CCLXVIII (1936), 247-280.

by Auriant. This critic feels certain that Emma was Louise Colet, a pretty Parisian poetess, who loved Flaubert.

Flaubert had been advised by his friend, Alfred Le Poittevin, that he should have a mistress. At first, however, Flaubert could not bear leaving his life of seclusion at Croisset where he could devote all of his time to writing and where his closest companion was his mother. Later a Parisian friend, the shop-keeper John Pradier, offered to introduce him to a frequenter of the Pradier art shop, Louise Colet. Auriant says that Flaubert was rather hesitant about such an offer:

J'ai réfléchi aux conseils de Pradier, il sont bons, mais comment les suivre? et puis, ou m'arrêterai-je? Je n'aurais qu'à prendre cela au sérieux et jouir tout de bon, j'en serais humilié! C'est ce qu'il faudrait pourtant et c'est ce que je ne ferai pas...²¹

Such a life would have been easy in Paris but impossible in Croisset or Rouen. Flaubert could not bear to be absorbed by the mass and be like just any ordinary man. Finally, however, he decided that James Pradier was right; that he really did need a normal love life which would make him forget himself and his

²¹Ibid., p. 247.

solitude. If the opportunity came, he would avail himself of it.

He finally met Louise Colet on July 29, 1846 in Pradier's shop at 1, Quai Voltaire. Louise had no more love for her husband, Hippolyte Colet, than Emma Bovary had for Charles Bovary and had already had a brief affair with Alfred de Musset and other men. Her husband was just as dull as Charles Bovary. Hippolyte Colet was very ridiculous in Louise's opinion and very ordinary. He, however, instead of being a country doctor like Charles Bovary, was a professor of harmony and counterpoint at the Conservatory in Paris. He really had very little talent but thought himself a genius far superior to Rossini.²²

Though Louise was a poetess and was quite well known in literary circles of Paris, she found life just as monotonous as Emma Bovary had. She had a romantic soul and could not resign herself to a loveless life with Hippolyte. "Je suis brisée de fatigue et d'ennui, et j'abandonnerais volontiers la littérature pour me faire couturière"²³ she said

²²Ibid., p. 252.

²³Ibid., p. 252.

to a friend. She loved her children, but her life activities could not calm her burning desire for romance. She decided that Flaubert was perhaps just the man to satisfy this burning desire. She invited him to her house at 21, rue Fontaines-Saint-Georges when her husband was away. They went out together and dined. The next day, July 30, they went for a ride by moonlight through the Bois de Boulogne and by the 31st of July she had become his mistress.²⁴ She felt guilty about committing adultery and therefore reprimanded Flaubert when he defended it. In Madame Bovary, Emma was also advised by her second lover, Rodolphe, to forget the rules of society and to give in to her passions:

Pourquoi déclamer contre les passions? Ne sont elles pas la seule belle chose qu'il y ait sur la terre, la source de l'héroïsme, de l'enthousiasme, de la poésie, de la musique, des arts, de tout enfin?²⁵

It is obvious in Emma's reply that Flaubert was thinking of Louise: "Mais il faut bien suivre un peu l'opinion du monde et obéir à sa morale". Nevertheless, though Louise felt guilty, she could not give up

²⁴Spencer, op. cit., p. 77.

²⁵Flaubert, Madame Bovary, p. 159.

²⁶Ibid., p. 159

Flaubert. She had fallen completely in love with him but Flaubert seemed to care very little for her.

Louise begged him to stay with her in Paris and never leave her just as Emma had pleaded with Rodolphe to take her away with him, but after a week Flaubert returned to Croisset and only came to Paris to see Louise every other month.

By now Louise's husband, Hippolyte Colet, knew that something was wrong with her because she had become so nervous and irritable. She was disagreeable with him but yet hugged him and kissed him and told him how much she loved him. When she was alone however, she congratulated herself on her conquest and enjoyed her secret love, for she thought she had won Flaubert. This is very similar to Emma Bovary's feeling when she thought she had won Rodolphe:

"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.²⁷

Louise carried on a real Bovary-style correspondence with Flaubert, writing him letters and short poems every day with orange blossoms slipped

²⁷Ibid., p. 179.

into the envelopes. Flaubert did not return her love: "Ce qui l'avait attiré en Mme Colet, c'était sa chair; ce qu'il avait aimé d'elle, ce n'était pas son ame, mais sa forme qui était belle".²⁸

She proposed to him, as Emma had proposed to Rodolphe, that he take her away to some far-off place. Flaubert did go far away in October 1849, but without Louise. He went to the East and stayed over a year without even writing to her once. When he returned from this trip to the East she again made overtures to him and in July 1851 they again got together when she was on her way to London through Rouen. This second liason was not to last for long. Flaubert seems to have been attracted to Louise more from pity than from love. It was Louise, like Emma, who really loved and suffered and believed that somehow she could win his love. She worried about his health and his love; she was jealous even of his past loves:

She was so insanely jealous that she followed him around in Paris and waited outside the houses he visited. Once she burst into a private room to kill her rival and found Flaubert peacefully dining with three of his friends.²⁹

²⁸Auriant, op. cit., p. 258.

²⁹Spencer, op. cit., p. 123.

Once in the summer of 1854, Flaubert became so exasperated by her constant nagging that he almost killed her. "Perhaps it was at the same time that she followed him into the station waiting room and created such an uproar that she was ejected by the railway staff."³⁰ Flaubert even reached a point where he would pull down the blinds of his coach as he traveled through Paris for fear she would recognize and follow him.

Such affection and jealousy from Louise was greeted only with scorn from Flaubert. He told her to forget him and to try to love art more than him. This could not quite satisfy her passion! "Flaubert revenait à la charge, l'art étant la seule chose, la seule chose vraie et bonne de la vie et à laquelle on ne doit pas comparer un amour de la terre."³¹ Flaubert's dream had been to make her something different, neither friend, nor mistress, but something that would give him from time to time with her body all the joys of the soul. His letters were rather hermaphroditic. He talked of love, art, life and politics as if he were writing to a man. This

³⁰Ibid., p. 124.

³¹Auriant, op. cit., p. 262.

must have indeed been disappointing to Louise for she had thought she would have a better chance to overcome Flaubert's resistance now in this second liaison since her husband had died while Flaubert was in the East. Yet she pretended that she loved Hippolyte Colet. She wrote hypocritically after his death:

Les autres t'oublieront; moi, taisant ma douleur
 J'évoquerai ton ombre et j'en serai suivie
 A toi le plus sacré des amours de ma vie
 A toi le plus ému des regrets de mon coeur.³²

By the following spring she had completely forgotten Hippolyte and, thinking of Flaubert, she wrote: "Mes bras cherchent des bras, mon âme appelle une ame!"³³ By now it was too late, since Flaubert was completely disgusted with her. In 1855, while laboring with Madame Bovary, he sent her a note terminating their friendship.

The first part of Madame Bovary was published in the Revue de Paris three years after Flaubert's first rupture with Louise Colet. Louise must have recognized herself in poor Emma. Different names and places had been used in the novel but the personality and the disappointed romance were the same. Louise and Emma Bovary had been willing to sacrifice everything

³²Ibid., p. 266.

³³Ibid., p. 266.

they could, but it seemed that their lovers were willing to sacrifice nothing. Rodolphe abandoned Emma and even refused to lend her 3000 francs when she sank into financial despair; Flaubert refused to give up his isolation and freedom of Croisset. After seeing Flaubert as Rodolph in Madame Bovary, Louise could probably understand Flaubert's action better in their fruitless romance. She must have been quite embarrassed when she read that Emma had given Rodolphe a signet with the inscription "Amor nel Cor" for she had also had given Flaubert a signet with the same inscription.³⁴ Louise only laughed when she read Madame Bovary and pretended not to recognize anything of herself in Emma but it must have been a bitter laugh. As one can see, it is probable that Flaubert, to create the psychological image of Emma, borrowed heavily from this admirer, Louise Colet. Emma was more passive in her suffering than Louise--she never really had a chance to scold her lovers. They deceived her to the end and suddenly left her. Louise Colet on the contrary was continually suspicious of Flaubert and scolded him, usually without reason, until he finally politely sent her a note

³⁴Spencer, op. cit., p. 131.

announcing that their liaison was at an end. Nevertheless, the love life of Louise and that of Emma were similar in too many ways for Louise not to be, in part at least, a psychological source for Flaubert's creation of Emma Bovary.

In contrast to the foregoing opinions on the source of the material for the creation of Emma Bovary, the theory of René Dumesnil must be examined. Dumesnil published an article entitled "La véritable Bovary"³⁵ in which he gave a very convincing argument that the real source is another of Flaubert's lovers, Louise Pradier, wife of the shop-owner, James Pradier, who had presented Louise Colet to Flaubert. Until recently, not much had been heard about Louise Pradier. About twenty years ago, Mlle Gabrielle Leleu, librarian at Rouen, was exploring papers of Flaubert bequeathed to the Rouen Library by the writer's niece. With the papers concerning Bouvard et Pécuchet she found a file entitled Mémoires de Madame Ludovica which had until then not been noticed. This file contained letters from friends of Flaubert and newspaper clippings of trials and speeches. These have all been put

³⁵René Dumesnil, "La véritable Bovary", Mercure de France, CCCIV (1948), 431-438.

together into eight volumes called Documents divers réunis par Flaubert pour la préparation de Bouvard et Pécuchet.³⁶

Flaubert's papers had been distributed by his niece in four parts: one to the Bibliothèque Nationale, the second, the manuscript of L'Education sentimentale with notes from the Carthage and Near East trips, to the Bibliothèque d'Histoire of Paris, the third to the Bibliothèque de Rouen with the manuscript and documents of Madame Bovary and Bouvard et Pécuchet, and the fourth was sold in 1931 by Messieurs Lais-Dubreil and Raymond Warin.³⁷

The author of Mémoires de Madame Ludovica was the wife of a Parisian furniture maker, a friend of Madame Ludovica who knew Louise Pradier quite well and visited her often. Flaubert's friend James Pradier, who was born in Geneva in 1792, had a wife named Louise (née d'Arcet). Her brother had been a friend of Flaubert in school at Rouen. Their father was a professor of chemistry at the "Collège de France". Louise, who was beautiful and adventurous married M. Dupont when she was only nineteen.

³⁶Ibid., p. 431.

³⁷Ibid., p. 432.

Her husband soon died and she married James Pradier in 1833 at St. Germain des Prés. She had a daughter in 1834 and a son two years later and another daughter in 1839. Louise was a good mother and loved her children; her husband was carefree and loved a good time. She had had many lovers before Flaubert: Jadin, Alfred de Dreux, Jules Janin, Alexandre Dumas.³⁸ Her husband, James, was unaware of these lovers or at least pretended to be. Soon Louise found herself reduced to poverty by debts and bills. The reader will remember that Emma Bovary had come to the same situation after her love affairs, before she finally committed suicide. Louise Pradier also considered suicide but, unlike Louise Colet and Emma Bovary, she loved her children too much for this way out. Louise Pradier's financial despair was what finally opened her husband's eyes. James found himself ruined and after taking legal action for adultery was separated from Louise. He died on June 4, 1852.

Flaubert mentioned the Pradier home often in his Correspondance. On April 2, 1845 he wrote

³⁸Ibid., p. 433.

to his friend Alfred Le Poittevin:

M'étant procure par Panofka l'adresse de Mme Pradier, je me demandai au concierge, le logement de cette "femme perdue". A la étude que j'ai faite la, et quelle bonne mine j'y avais!...J'ai aprouvé sa conduite, je ne suis déclaré le champion de l'adultère et l'ai même peut-etre étonnée de mon indulgence. Ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est qu'elle a ete extremement flattée de ma visite et qu'elle m'a invité a déjeuner à mon retour...J'ai eu pitié de la bassesse de tous ces gens dechainés contre cette femme. On lui a retiré tous. Elle vit avec un rente de 6,000 francs, en garni, sans femme de chambre, dans la misère.³⁹

The reader is reminded that Flaubert, as pointed out earlier in the chapter, had declared himself the "champion de l'adultère" when he first met Louise Colet and Rodolphe had shocked Emma Bovary with the same words in Madame Bovary. As for Louise Pradier's financial difficulties, what better example could Flaubert have needed to describe Emma when she had lost everything! Whenever Flaubert wanted one of his characters to have financial difficulties, he probably turned to Louise Pradier as a realistic example.

It is not known whether Flaubert ever really possessed the Document of Les Mémoires de

³⁹Gustave Flaubert, Correspondance (Paris: Eugene Fasquelle, 1920), p. 75.

Mme Ludovica and whether he used his own notes after visits with Louise, or whether he used the actual manuscript. Maurice Rat is of the opinion that the Mémoires de Mme Ludovica is the only source of the novel.⁴⁰ This certainly does not seem very logical, however, because there is a conflict of dates. Gustave Flaubert began Madame Bovary in September of 1851 and did not finish it until April of 1856. In the interval we have the living novel of Louise Pradier and the Mémoires de Mme Ludovica. It is certainly possible that the money embarrassments, however, of Madame Bovary are traced to different episodes of the Mémoires. Duménil finds a very close resemblance between the Pradier household and that of the Bovaries:

La fin de Charles Bovary ressemble même étrangement à la mort de James Pradier, ruiné par la prodigalité de sa femme et rongé par le chagrin. Et puis encore, Rodolph le chatelain de la Huchette, Léon, le clerc de notaire, doivent quelques-uns de leurs traits aux amants de Louise Pradier, et la succession des aventures amoureuse d'Emma reproduit, en les condensant sur deux personnages, la série des aventures de Louise.⁴¹

Mlle Leleu, who found the Mémoires, feels that they were not the only source for Flaubert's Madame Bovary.

⁴⁰Duménil, op. cit., p. 436.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 436.

"Pour le romancier qui a posé en dogme l'obligation de profiter de tout, il n'est pas de source unique,"⁴² she says. Dumesnil feels that Mlle Leleu's finding is extremely important in throwing new light on the explanation of origin of Emma Bovary and that henceforth less emphasis might be placed on Adeline Couturier and Louise Colet as sources of Emma. This is his comment in this respect:

Peu importe d'ailleurs, hormis ceci: la découverte de Mlle Leleu enrichit singulièrement l'exégèse flaubertienne. De ce que Mme Pradier entre pour une grande part dans le personnage d'Emma, il n'en résulte pas que Charles Bovary ne doive rien à Delamare, l'officier de santé de Ry, que toutes les autres sources, connues ou supposées, de Madame Bovary ne soient qu'inventions pures.⁴³

Until this discovery, readers had generally been of the opinion that the real Emma Bovary was Louise Colet or Adeline Couturier but this document makes us begin to doubt their importance. Emile Henriot is also of this opinion:

Environ 1947, mademoiselle Gabrielle Leleu bibliothécaire de la ville à Rouen, découvre dans les papiers de Flaubert qui y sont conservés un document intéressant, de nature à substituer à Madame Delamare, pour l'original de

⁴²Ibid., p. 436.

⁴³Ibid., p. 436.

Madame Bovary, un autre modèle: Louise Pradier, la femme du sculpteur, dont Flaubert, parmi beaucoup d'autres, fut l'amant pendant quelques mois. L'affaire dont les flaubertistes ont été émus, car elle dérangeait ce qu'ils tenaient pour vérité acquise quant à la source du roman, a été exposé avec précision... Par ce qu'en cite Mademoiselle Leleu dans son étude il apparaît en effet certain que c'est aux ennuis d'argent de Madame Pradier que notre Flaubert s'est référé pour peindre les embarras d'Emma qui l'acculeront au suicide.⁴⁴

Thus we see how modern critics feel about the question of the source of Emma Bovary. It is very probable that Flaubert used Adeline and her adulterous life for physical characteristics of Emma and for the theme of the novel and that he used Louise Pradier and Louise Colet for the psychological aspects to make this one great heroine of French realist literature.

⁴⁴Henriot, op. cit., p. 16.

CHAPTER III

L'EDUCATION SENTIMENTALE

In L'Education sentimentale Flaubert told the story of the one woman he really loved, Mme Schlésinger, whom in this novel he called Mme Arnoux. Flaubert had had an affair with an English girl, Miss Gertrude Collier, at Trouville, but he was only fourteen years old when he met her; this, therefore could only have been sentimental emotion. L'Education est une histoire vraie, et c'est le propre histoire de Flaubert, l'histoire du plus grand amour de sa vit.¹ In this book "plus qu'en aucun autre de ses livres, il devait si tristement laisser parler son propre coeur."²

Elisa Schlésinger was the wife of a music editor, Maurice Schlésinger (Jaques Arnoux in L'Education sentimentale), who lived on Rue Richelieu, Paris. She was born Elisa Foucault, of Norman and Catholic origin, at Vernon on September 23, 1810.

Flaubert first met Elisa and fell in love with her on the beach of Trouville, which is not far

¹Henriot, op. cit., p. 32.

²Ibid., p. 37.

from Croisset, in August 1836, it was she who inspired him to write one of his first books, Mémoires d'un fou when he was twenty years old. It is said that Flaubert always preferred girls with brown hair and brown eyes and Elisa met these qualifications:

This raven-haired brunette was to become the prototype of all of his heroines after his encounter with her. Flaubert no longer speaks of blonds in his novels. He does not even give a single sympathetic or affectionate description of any red, auburn or chestnut-haired girl or woman in all his later works.³

Elisa had come to Trouville, when Flaubert was there, with her "husband", Maurice Schlésinger; Maurice had been invited to Trouville by his friend Alexandre Dumas. Young Flaubert found Elisa's coat on the beach about to be washed away by the water and, when he sought to return it to its owner, found that it belonged to Elisa. Later he told of this same episode in L'Education Sentimentale; Frederic had seen a long shawl of a woman floating in the Seine River and had pulled it from the water onto the river steamer in which he was riding and had returned it to the beautiful dark-skinned lady,

³Donald F. Brown, "The Veil of Tanit", Romanic Review, XXXIV (October 1943), p. 199.

Mme Arnoux. This first encounter of Flaubert with Elisa Schlésinger was in the summer of 1836. Not until between 1840 and 1842, however, did Flaubert have the occasion to meet the Schlésinger family in Paris. In L'Education sentimentale Frederic got to know Mme Arnoux by becoming a friend of her husband; likewise, in real life Flaubert became acquainted with Elisa through her husband Maurice.

In 1842 Flaubert began to write the first edition of L'Education sentimentale. In this edition Elisa was called Mlle Renaud.⁴ This edition was more optimistic than the second; for in it, Henry was successful in his affair with Mlle Renaud, whereas in the second edition, Frédéric was always disappointed and frustrated throughout the novel. This second edition was probably the more realistic of the two for Flaubert also was frustrated in his love life and never won the love of Elisa until they were both old. Flaubert could see that there was something strange in Elisa's relations with her husband. She seemed to want Flaubert's affection

⁴Gérard-Gailly, "L'unique passion de Flaubert" (Paris: Le Divan, 1932), p. 9.

but would never encourage him to make love to her. There was a great contrast between Elisa and her husband Maurice:

Elle était simple et douce, profondément pieuse. Elle ouvrait des yeux tristes dans un visage souriant. Elle semblait mystérieuse et inaccessible. Et l'on se demandait incessamment par quel décret nominatif de la Providence une femme comme elle avait pu être mariée à un homme comme lui. Ils formaient plus qu'un contraste: ils étaient deux mondes incommunicables.⁵

There was this same contrast in L'Education sentimentale between Jaques Arnoux and Mme Arnoux. Jaques was tumultuous and crude; Mme Arnoux was soft, quiet and gentle.

When Flaubert first met Elisa at Trouville she was not married to Maurice Schlésinger. Everyone called her Mme Schlésinger, but no one knew that Elisa was only Maurice's mistress. At that time Elisa was really Mme Emile Judée, the daughter of a retired infantry captain named Foucault. She had married an army lieutenant, Emile Judée, at the age of nineteen upon leaving the convent of Vernon, where she had been educated. Her husband was born in Issoudun in 1796 and had fought in Spain with the French army. They were married in November. "He and

⁵Ibid., p. 30.

Elisa were to live at Vernon and they seemed to enjoy every prospect of a happy marriage: mutual affection, a settled position, and an assured income."⁶ The only obvious discrepancy between them was the fact that he was thirty-three years old and she was only nineteen. We have no information on their first year of marriage. For some mysterious reason Judée asked for a transfer to Algeria, after one year of marriage, to fight the fierce Mohammedan tribes, and did not return to France until five years later. During Judée's stay in Algeria, Elisa left Vernon and appeared in Paris as "Madame Schlésinger". The exact time of the rupture is not known. The most puzzling question is why she left Judée. "She was always regarded as a woman of outstanding virtue, steady in her affections, unwavering in her religion, yet devoid of bigotry... Moreover she was undoubtably in love with Judée."⁷

Maybe Elisa was just lonely while Judée was away in Algeria; that is not the most likely cause, however. She was living with her parents while he was

⁶ Spencer, op. cit., p. 56.

⁷ Ibid., p. 56.

away and was well provided for. Besides, as mentioned above, she was very religious and patient. She certainly did not seem to love Maurice Schlésinger. He loved Elisa but, exactly as Flaubert pictured him in L'Education sentimentale, he was the type who desired all women and could not keep away from them until his family was completely ruined. He seemed to have no moral constraint.

Gérard-Gailly believes that Judée must have been in some kind of trouble and was afraid to resort to law. Then Maurice, who was in love with Elisa, came to Judée's rescue in return for his wife. Elisa reluctantly went with him and had to promise never to give away the secret. Thus is explained this strange conduct on her part toward Flaubert in real life and Mme Arnoux's toward Frédéric in L'Education sentimentale. Elisa seemed to want Flaubert's attention and to be able to love him. Her passions "la poussent vers Frederic [Flaubert in real life], mais c'est l'inquiétude d'une femme traquée dans un on ne sait que refuge amer, qui doit rester inviolable et inconnu".⁸ Elisa seemed

⁸Gérard-Gailly, op. cit., p. 53.

afraid to let her emotions be known. When Flaubert asked her how she could love such a man she answered only: "Tais-toi. Tu le connais mal. Il est bon, genereux, il m'aime".⁹ She would not tell Flaubert she loved him. Had she not already been married to Judée she could have been more frank to Flaubert and less passive. She must have renounced everything upon accepting Schlésinger and have vowed to be silent while she lived with a man of different nationality, race, religion and tastes. This mystery made an obstacle which Flaubert and Frédéric were unable to overcome in order to win over the love of their dreams; they did not know what this obstacle was.

Elisa could only listen when Flaubert told her he loved her and say little herself, accept kisses from him and give few in return.¹⁰ Only in 1870, after she was old, could she tell him she loved him when she returned to Croisset to see Flaubert. "Elle était devenue grand'mere, il retrouvait

⁹Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 54.

une vieille femme. Et c'est dans ce pathétique retour qu'eut lieu certainement la scène émouvante... de L'Education,¹¹ the scene in which Mme Arnoux returned to tell Frédéric she loved him after she had grown old. She was surprised that Frédéric could still admire her. "A mon âge!...Aucune n'a jamais été aimée comme moi!"¹² she said to him when he admired her. It had been many years since Mme Arnoux had seen Frédéric, for her husband had met financial disaster and had had to retire to Brittany. Flaubert took this episode from the life of Elisa Schlésinger. Maurice Schlésinger had met ruin in Paris and had had to retire to his native Germany. They went first to Prussia and then in 1849 to Baden, Germany, just at the time Flaubert was leaving for his trip to the Levant. Flaubert was describing himself after Elisa's departure when he wrote about Frédéric in L'Education Sentimentale:

Il voyagea. Il connut la mélancholie des paquebots, les froids réveils sous la tente, l'étourdissement des paysages et des ruines, l'amertume des sympathies interrompues. Il revint. Il fréquenta le monde, et il eut d'autres amours encore. Mais le souvenir

¹¹Gustave Flaubert, L'Education Sentimentale (Vol. II, Paris: Emile Fasquelle, 1920), p. 268.

¹²Ibid., p. 268.

continuel du premier les lui rendait insipides;
Des années passèrent...Vers la fin de mars 1867
à la nuit tombante, une femme entra.¹³

This woman in L'Education sentimentale who entered at nightfall was Mme Arnoux. But in real life she was Elisa Schlésinger who had returned to France from Baden to tell Flaubert that she loved him. Flaubert also had visited strange countries and ruins and slept in tents, just as described in the passage above from L'Education sentimentale, on his trip to the Levant. Elisa came back to France from time to time from Baden to visit a convent friend at Mantes. On one of these trips she came to Croisset to visit Flaubert. This was around 1864 or 1865. Her daughter Maria, who was born while Elisa was still married to Judée in April 1836 and named Adèle-Julie-Monine, recorded as being the daughter of Adolphe Schlesinger and of an unnamed mother,¹⁴ had married a German in Stuttgart and become German herself. In L'Education Sentimentale Mme Arnoux told Frederic that her daughter Berthe (Maria in real life) had married in Bordeaux. Elisa asked

¹³Ibid., p. 264.

¹⁴Gerard-Gailly, op. cit., p. 33.

Frédéric at this last meeting if he would ever marry and he answered that he would not, "A cause de vous dit Frederic en la serrant dans ses bras".¹⁵ Elisa probably asked Flaubert the same thing on her last trip to Croisset and it was likely because of Elisa, Flaubert's only real love, that he did not marry.

Mme Arnoux, before she left, took off her hat. "Mais elle parut chercher quelque chose et lui demanda des ciseaux, Elle défit son peigne; tous ses cheveux blancs tomberent. Elle s'en coupa brutalement...une longue mèche."¹⁶ Elisa Schlésinger also cut off a lock of her grey hair and gave it to Flaubert at their last meeting. He wanted to go with her again to Trouville and relive the beach scene of their first meeting but his mother had just died and he was unable to take the trip. He told Elisa:

Voilà pourquoi, chère et vieille amie,
éternelle tendresse, je ne vais pas vous
rejoindre sur cette plage de Trouville où je
vous ai connue, et qui pour moi porte toujours
l'empreinte de vos pas.¹⁷

¹⁵Flaubert, op. cit., p. 268.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 269.

¹⁷Henriot, op. cit., p.38

Flaubert died before Elisa; it is fortunate that he did not know how she finally died. About a year after Flaubert's death, one of his friends, Maxime Du Camp, who paid frequent visits to Baden, was taking a daily walk. He walked past the Illenau home for insane women and at the front of the line of women he recognized Elisa. We must remember however, that Du Camp's accounts were often inaccurate. Philip Spencer, in describing Flaubert's death, cast aside Du Camp's version and used those of Tourneux and Maupassant "who are more reliable than Zola or Du Camp".¹⁸

Du Camp wrote later about Flaubert's

L'Education sentimentale:

Il n'est pas un des acteurs de L'Education sentimentale que je ne puisse nommer, car je les ai tous connus ou côtoyés, depuis Frédéric, qui n'est autre que Gustave Flaubert, jusqu'à Mme Arnoux, qui est l'inconnue de Trouville transportée dans un autre milieu.¹⁹

Elisa Schlésinger had played therefore for L'Education sentimentale the same role that Louise Colet, Louise Pradier and Adeline Couturier had for Madame Bovary. She alone had served as the

¹⁸Spencer, op. cit., p. 245

¹⁹Henriot, op. cit., p. 38.

CHAPTER IV

SALAMBO

Flaubert, who was a romanticist at heart, had been sickened by the every-day characters he had had to describe in Madame Bovary. To satisfy his romantic dream, he chose a subject that would take him to far-away places and to the distant past. This time his subject was Carthage of 300 B. C.

To write about such a difficult subject, Flaubert made a close study of every thing he could find on ancient Carthage--of her architecture and of her customs. After writing the first two chapters at Croisset he went to Africa and tried to strip his mind of everything French, European or Christian and to really imagine himself in ancient Carthage. By the time he left the area between Tunis and Constantine he could tell himself that he now knew Carthage and its environs by heart. His main interest lay in the customs of the people of Carthage, for he wanted to create a heroine who would be realistic.

Research on Madame Bovary had not been a difficult task for Flaubert, for the subject was contemporary. He could easily describe Emma's suicide, for example, because he was very familiar with

medicine and deaths, but to recreate a Carthaginian priestess posed a difficult subject for him to deal with. To write this novel Flaubert tried to imagine himself in ancient Carthage:

Il me semble que j'ai toujours existé, et je possède des souvenirs qui remontent aux Pharaons. Je me vois à différents âges de l'histoire, très nettement, exerçant des métiers différents et dans des fortunes multiples. Mon individu actuel est le résultat de mes individualités disparues.¹

As for the heroine, Salammbô, she had very little to do with the novel except for the title itself. "Si elle tient plus de place dans le titre que dans le roman, c'est une faute, et Flaubert l'a reconnu."²

Who did Flaubert choose from real life to represent this Carthaginian priestess? In a sense Salammbô is another Emma Bovary. Salammbô was bored with ordinary life and lived in an illusive dream; she did not know what she wanted in life. The following description that Flaubert made of his heroines is also applicable to Salammbô:

Ne voyez-vous pas qu'elles sont toutes les femmes amoureuses d'Adonis? C'est l'éternel époux qu'elles demandent. Ascétiques ou libidineuses, elles rêvent l'amour, le grand amour;

¹Albert Thibaudet, Gustave Flaubert (Paris: Librairie Gallimard 1935), p. 121.

²Ibid., p. 127.

et pour les guérir ce n'est pas une idée qu'il leur faut, mais un fait, un homme, un enfant, un amant.³

In this sense Salammbô could be Adelphine Delamare or Louise Colet or Louise Pradier. However, more than any of these she is the "fourth part" of Emma Bovary, Flaubert himself, in the form of a woman with his internal emptiness, his desires, and his dreams.

La maquette de son personnage est bien une certaine idée de la femme et de lui-même, que nous retrouvons dans Madame Bovary, et qui le hantait depuis longtemps, mais de l'oriental, de l'extraordinaire et du symbolique.⁴

On the contrary Philip Spencer sees in Salamambo something of an Egyptian dancing girl, Kuchiuk Hanem, whom Flaubert had seen on his tour of the Levant and with whom he had spent one night. He also saw in her something of Elisa Schlésinger. "His new heroine, Salamambo, was not merely a Carthaginian: she was a sister of Kuchiuk Hanem and a cousin of Elisa Schlésinger!"⁵ Physically, Salamambo was probably Kuchiuk Hanem, but psychologically she was more similar to Flaubert and to Elisa Schlésinger. Gérard-Gailly is also of the opinion that Salamambo is Elisa. Salamambo was the

³Ibid., p. 128.

⁴Ibid., p. 129.

⁵Spencer, op. cit., p. 153.

"unobtainable" object of Mathô's⁶ passions as Elisa was of Flaubert's. Moreover both were equally unsuccessful in winning their lovers. Elisa had loved Flaubert for a long time but could not tell him so until she had grown old. Salammbô also probably loved Mathô from the time of their first encounter in Carthage but because of her devotion to the goddess Tanit she could never give way to her passions. Both Salammbô and Elisa were in the same predicament, but for different reasons: Salammbô for religious reasons and Elisa because she had probably made a vow to Maurice when she married him not to betray him for fear he would reveal some secret in her life with her first husband.

There still remains one person, however, that Salammbô might have represented in the mind of Flaubert when he created this Carthaginian priestess. When Flaubert was returning from the Levant, he stopped in Rome on his way back to France. Coming from the cathedral Saint-Paul-hors-les-Murs, a beautiful lady captured the passion of Flaubert for five minutes. Gerard-Gailly points out that this five minutes of

⁶The mercenary soldier in Salammbô who was in love with Salammbô but who never succeeded in winning her.

passion of Flaubert for the beautiful Roman lady was represented in Salammbô by Mathô's five minutes of passion for Salammbô. "Juxtaposant des textes, il voudrait démontrer que l'héroïne carthaginoise répète l'aspect sensible de la passante romaine, et qu'elle exprime comme elle le thème de 'l'inaccessible'!"⁷

Flaubert's description of the Roman lady:

J'ai vu venir lentement une femme en corsage rouge...J'ai vu une figure pâle, avec des sourcils noirs, et un large ruban rouge, noné à son chignon et retombant sur ses épaules. Elle avait un front blanc d'un vieux ivoire ou de paros bien poli, front carré, rendu ovale par ses deux bandeaux noirs...Le blanc de ses yeux était particulier.⁸ On aurait dit qu'elle venait d'un autre monde.⁸

If we examine several descriptions he made of Salammbô[^] in the novel by the same name we will see that there is a similarity in these descriptions:

Une influence était descendu de la lune sur la vierge...C'était la lune qui l'avait rendue si pâle, et quelque chose des dieux l'enveloppait comme une vapeur subtile...Kathô la contemplait, ébloui par les splendeurs de sa tête...et il répétait: "Comme tu es belle! Les anneaux de la chevalure se répandaient autour d'elle si abondamment qu'elle paraissait chochée sur des plumes noires."⁹

⁷Gérard-Gailly, op. cit., p. 65

⁸Ibid., p. 70.

⁹Gustave Flaubert, Salammbô (Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, n. d.) pp. 12, 221.

Both the Roman woman and Salammbô seem to have had a mystic, enchanting beauty from another world which dazzled Flaubert in real life and Matho in Salammbô.

Thus we see that Flaubert took people he already knew or had seen and united them into this one character of ancient Carthage, Salammbô.

CHAPTER V

UN COEUR SIMPLE

Flaubert's Trois contes containing the Un coeur simple appeared for the first time in 1877. It was really the last book of Flaubert, for the publication of Bouvard et Pécuchet was posthumous. He wrote the Trois contes for relaxation from the strenuous work he was devoting to Bouvard et Pécuchet.

Un coeur simple was written for his dear friend George Sand, who died before it was finished, and contains tenderness not shown by Flaubert in his earlier works.

Henriot finds that are three "veins" in the writings of Flaubert: realist, (Madame Bovary), lyric (La tentation de Saint-Antoine) and historical (Salammbô).¹ Each of the tales in Trois contes represents one of these three veins. Un coeur simple, of course, represents the realistic vein.

Who is the realistic heroine of this tale? There is a key to this one just as there is to Flaubert's other heroines. According to Flaubert:

L'histoire d'Un coeur simple est tout bonnement le récit d'une vie obscure, celle d'une

¹Henriot, op. cit., p. 51.

pauvre fille de campagne, dévote mais mystique, dévouée sans exaltation et tendre comme du pain frais. Elle aime successivement un homme, les enfants de sa maîtresse, un neveu, un vieillard qu'elle soigne, puis son perroquet; quand le perroquet est mort, elle le fait empailler, et en mourant à son tour elle confond le perroquet avec le Saint-Esprit... Je veux appitoyer, faire pleurer les âmes sensibles, en étant une moi-même... Cette fois-ci on ne dira plus que je suis inhumain... Depuis un mois j'ai empaillé afin "de peindre" d'après la nature.²

Flaubert made no mention of who Félicité was in this novel, but if we examine closely the childhood life of Flaubert we can find the true "Félicité". Flaubert had passed through Pont l'Évêque, scene of a large part of this tale, quite often on his way to Trouville. Thus he could describe with accuracy every minute detail of the country side in this area.

There was a devoted maid in the Flaubert home at Croisset, named Julie, who was very similar to Felicite of Un coeur simple.³ His relatives at Trouville also had a beloved maid whom Flaubert and his sister Caroline visited as children.⁴ She adored them as Félicité adored Mme Aubain's two children, Paul and Virginia. Flaubert and Caroline were probably

²Dow and Skinner, op. cit., pp. 157-158.

³Henriot, op. cit., p. 30.

⁴Ibid., p. 30.

the very same two children which he depicted in Un coeur simple. Virginie, in this short tale, died very young just as Flaubert's sister Caroline. The mother of Paul and Virginie, Mme Aubain, was probably Flaubert's aunt at Trouville, Mme Barkey. Even Loulou, the parrot which Félicité cherished, existed in the Barkey household. Flaubert kept a stuffed parrot before him when he was writing Un coeur simple.

Thibaudet, on the other hand, could also see someone else in Félicité: "Albert Thibaudet allait jusqu'à retrouver Flaubert lui-même dans le morne destin de la servante Félicité...mais seulement dans la mesure où il était aussi Madame Bovary."⁵ Flaubert could very well have been painting his own humdrum, frustrated, life in this poor servant.

On the contrary could not Félicité have been George Sand also? Flaubert met this great novelist late in life and she had a great influence on him. She helped him to be more personal and tender in his treatment of characters. This character of George Sand can be sensed in Un coeur simple. Félicité had

⁵Ibid., p. 53.

given her life to her mistress and to her mistress's children and still remained tender to the end; George Sand had done likewise for literature and for her readers. She died while Flaubert was writing Un coeur simple.

Thus the reader can see that Flaubert, in Un coeur simple, as in his other novels treated in this thesis, used real life people as his characters rather than create new ones.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis an attempt has been made to trace the early rise of realism in the mid-nineteenth century in France. Then, to show what the modern conception of realism is, a definition has been given of this type of writing and, using characteristics of realism, three nineteenth-century novelists have been compared.

One of the requirements of the early realists was that the novelist discover people he already knew and to use them rather than to create new characters. Although Flaubert was not considered to be a realist by this early school, he did make use of this characteristic, for he did not really create new characters-- he remembered people he knew in everyday life and placed them where he wanted them in his novels. In Chapter II, for instance, it has been shown that Flaubert probably used the doctor's wife, Adeline Courturier of Ry for physical characteristics of Emma Bovary and Adeline's love life as the theme of the novel Madame Bovary, and two of his own lovers, Louise Colet and Louise Pradier for psychological characteristics.

Moreover, in L'Education Sentimentale, as has been pointed out in Chapter III, Flaubert used

his lifetime lover, Elisa Schlésinger to portray the beautiful, mysterious Mme Arnoux who, only after she had grown old, finally admitted that she loved Frederic from the beginning. Elisa Schlésinger, it has been shown, also had loved Flaubert all her life but could not tell him so until many years had passed and her hair had turned grey.

Likewise we have seen in Chapter IV that Flaubert did not really create Salammbô, though she was a priestess of Carthage who lived three centuries before Christ. On the contrary, he used people of real life. First he used himself in his world of illusions. Also important was the Egyptian dancing girl with whom he had spent one night while he was on his trip to the Levant. Another woman whom he had seen only five minutes in Rome, when she was leaving a cathedral, also played a part in portraying Salammbô.

As for Félicité, in Un Coeur simple, it has been shown in Chapter V of this thesis that she was the portrayal of several people in Flaubert's life, including Flaubert himself. Also important were the maid in Flaubert's home and the maid of his relatives

in Trouville whom he and his sister Caroline visited as children.

Thus the main purpose and the unifying link of this thesis has been to show that Flaubert was a realist in that he used women of everyday life as heroines of his novels rather than create new characters.

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