

FLAUBERT AND TURGENEV - AN EXAMINATION OF THE  
PARALLELS IN THEIR INTELLECTUAL AND LITERARY  
DEVELOPMENT



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DEVELOPMENT

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by

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- ABSTRACT -

This thesis sets out to show that the close intellectual affinity revealed in the correspondence between Flaubert and Turgenev has its roots and explanation in the parallels that can be established in their intellectual development as writers, in their literary aesthetic, and in the treatment of certain themes and ideas in their works.

Questions of parallels in personality, temperament and literary aesthetic are dealt with in Chapter I. Chapters II, III and IV deal with the various forces that influenced the early development of the two writers: the common literary influences of Byron, Goethe, Shakespeare and Cervantes; the evolution of an attitude towards nature, and experience of love and the quest for happiness. Chapter V examines parallels in the political attitudes of Flaubert and Turgenev, as revealed in their works and correspondences. Chapter VI deals with the rôle and significance of dreams and the supernatural in the work of the two writers. Chapter VII examines their treatment of a common theme: the subject of the 'Temptation of Saint Anthony'.

Chapters VIII and IX aim at a more wide-ranging view. The contribution of the elements mentioned above to the formation of a pessimistic philosophy on the part of Flaubert and Turgenev, and the expression of this view in their novels, is dealt with in Chapter VIII. Chapter IX explores the two writers' attitude to work as a possible means of alleviating a pessimistic view of life.

The concluding chapter draws these threads together into an overall picture of the closeness of the experience and ideas of Flaubert and Turgenev concerning life and art.

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## FOREWORD

Quotations from the works and correspondence of Flaubert are taken from the Conard edition of the Oeuvres Complètes in fourteen volumes (Paris 1910-1954), and of the Correspondance - nouvelle édition in nine volumes (Paris 1926-1933) and the Correspondance - supplément in four volumes (Paris 1954).

For Turgenev, all quotations are from the Polnoe sobranie sochinienii i pisem published by Izdatelstvo akademii nauk SSSR in twenty eight volumes (Moscow-Leningrad 1961-1968).

In the foot notes, the above edition is abbreviated to Pol. sob. soch. and Pol. sob. pisem .

Because of the difficulties of incorporating Russian quotations into an English typescript, in the body of the text these quotations are given in English translation. The Russian originals of these are appended to each chapter. Unless otherwise stated, the translations are my own.

When quotations are from letters, the addressee and the year are given; the day and month are not given unless of special significance.

## CHAPTER I - Introduction

"...nous sommes deux taupes qui  
poussons notre sillon dans la même  
direction." \*

As early as March 1863 - barely a month after his first meeting with the Russian writer - Flaubert wrote to Turgenev:

Que de choses senties par moi, éprouvées, n'ai-je pas retrouvées chez vous... (1)

The main aim of this thesis will be to seek out these "choses" which the two writers felt and experienced in common, and to examine and compare the significance of these elements in their literary works.

We shall not be concerned with any question of influence from the one to the other, (2) nor except in an introductory way, with the personal relationship between the two writers. We shall be concerned primarily with the ideas and attitudes which were common to both Flaubert and Turgenev, and the comparisons will be of basically parallel expressions of these in their works and in their correspondence. (3) As we are concerned primarily with intellectual development, a fair proportion of our attention must necessarily be directed towards early works, plans, minor and unpublished works, as well as those

(\*) Turgenev addressed this comment to Flaubert in a letter dated May 26th. 1868. (Pol. sob. pisem, volume VII, p.140)

(1) Correspondance, supplément vol. I, p.318

(2) This subject has already been dealt with by A.B.MURPHY in his thesis The Influence of Flaubert on Turgenev (M.A. , London, 1955). His general conclusion was that it is not possible to prove conclusively that there was an influence.

(3) In the use of quotations from Flaubert's Correspondance, an attempt has been made to use only those which reflect a definite trend, or leitmotif, for this collection of letters, by virtue of its great diversity does have its dangers. Sherrington has said of it: "As a sort of bible of Flaubert studies, it can be used to prove almost anything." (R.J.Sherrington, Three Novels by Flaubert, Oxford, 1970, p.1

written in old age. For it is in this kind of material, rather than in the masterpieces of his middle years, that we are most likely to find a writer experimenting or exploring a new line of thought.

On embarking on a comparative study, one should perhaps pause to agree with Le Vicomte de Vogüé, who wrote in the 'avant-propos' to his Le Roman russe: "je sais d'ailleurs le danger de ces analogies, elles boitent toujours." (4) But on the other hand, there is some encouragement to be had from the fact that both Flaubert and Turgenev themselves - at least according to Guy de Maupassant's recollections - seem to have been interested in the principle of comparative literature. Maupassant wrote of Turgenev in his obituary notice for Le Gaulois - idealising a little perhaps in view of the circumstances:

Ses opinions littéraires avaient une valeur et une portée d'autant plus considérables qu'il ne jugeait pas au point de vue restreint et spécial auquel nous nous plaçons tous, mais qu'il établissait une sorte de comparaison entre les littératures de tous les peuples du monde qu'il connaissait à fond, élargissant ainsi le champ de ses observations, faisant des rapprochements entre des livres parus aux deux bouts de la terre, en des langues différentes. (5)

And in a study of Flaubert he composed for an edition of his letters to George Sand Maupassant wrote:

...il [Flaubert] parcourait les siècles d'un bond de sa pensée pour rapprocher deux faits de même ordre, deux hommes de même race, deux enseignements de même nature, d'où il faisait jaillir une lumière comme lorsqu'on heurte deux pierres pareilles. (6)

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(4) DE VOGUE Eugène-Melchior, Le Roman russe (second edition), Paris, 1888, p.X

(5) Maupassant's article appeared in Le Gaulois dated September 5th. 1883.

(6) MAUPASSANT G.de, 'Gustave Flaubert', pp.LXX-LXXIII, in Lettres de Gustave Flaubert à George Sand, Paris, Charpentier, 1884.

For the most part, the individual chapters will not show intellectual or literary tendencies that were necessarily exclusive to Turgenev and Flaubert. Naturally, in many ways their parallel treatment of certain themes is in accordance with tradition or current trends. But by the number of instances in which their ideas and work coincide, we hope to show that their intellectual development did indeed follow a largely parallel course. For both writers followed a fairly steady path of development, the roots or origins of which can, for the most part, be traced back to their early, formative years as writers. Neither was the kind of man to undergo a dramatic conversion or make a sudden volte-face.

In comparing these two writers as men, as artists and as thinkers, we hope to show to what extent Maupassant's assessment of the relationship between Flaubert and Turgenev was accurate when he wrote of them:

Ils s'aiment, ces deux hommes, d'une amitié fraternelle, ils s'aiment par la sympathie du génie, pour leur science universelle, pour les habitudes communes de leurs esprits. (7)

So before we proceed in the following chapters to examine the intellectual aspects referred to above - the 'sympathie du génie' and shared mental activity - let us look briefly at these two men and their 'amitié fraternelle' - not simply from a chronological point of view, but rather to discover the nature of their relationship, and the importance of this friendship to each of them.

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(7) MAUPASSANT G. de, 'Souvenirs d'un après-midi chez Gustave Flaubert', article in Le Gaulois, dated August 23rd. 1880.

Perhaps we should begin by comparing very briefly the personal situation and family background of each man. And despite the obvious differences between a family of the gentry in rural Russia and that of a doctor of medicine in Rouen, the situation of the two young writers as they grew into manhood does reveal some basic parallels.<sup>(8)</sup> Both were the younger sons of provincial families, and although because of this status they were never terribly wealthy, they were nonetheless comfortably provided for. Neither therefore had to rely on his writing for his living in the way that Balzac or Dostoevsky did. Also, neither the Flaubert nor the Turgenev families welcomed their younger son's choice of the career of writer. Both tried to persuade them to follow some other course: law in the case of Flaubert, and the government service in the case of Turgenev. But both of them succeeded in rebelling against their families' wishes, making writing their only career. Flaubert and Turgenev both undertook university studies - the latter with a markedly greater degree of success than the former however. Turgenev successfully completed a master's degree in philosophy, whereas Flaubert left, disillusioned, after three years with no qualification.

It is also possible to see that travel played a part in the development of the two writers, helping to form powers and techniques of observation, and building up a storehouse of memories, impressions, details. It is of

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(8) Flaubert and Turgenev were of course of the same generation, only three years separate their births: Turgenev was born in 1818, Flaubert in 1821.



course well-known that Turgenev's early contact with western culture and ideas had a determining effect on his career as a writer, and indeed he remained a great traveller, commuting from one end of Europe to the other with amazing regularity. Most people do not think of Flaubert - who is usually labelled 'the hermit of Croisset' - as a traveller, but in fact he did, like his hero in L'Education sentimentale experience "la mélancolie des paquebots, les froids réveils sous la tente, l'étourdissement des paysages et des ruines, l'amertume des sympathies interrompues." (9) And apart from his long 'Voyage en Orient', which he made between October 1849 and May 1851, taking in Malta, Egypt, the countries of the Middle East, Turkey and Greece, Flaubert also visited Italy, Switzerland and England. He also travelled extensively in France, making journeys to Corsica, Brittany, the South and the Pyrenees.

Another point which must have contributed to their friendship, helping it to reach the degree of intimacy that it did - and which was quite possibly also a consequence of their travels - is the openness of mind of both men. Without being unpatriotic, neither was chauvinistic, nationalistic, or harboured any misgivings about 'foreigners'. Flaubert once wrote to Louise Colet on this subject:

Quant à l'idée de la patrie, c'est à dire d'une certaine portion de terrain dessinée sur la carte et séparée des autres par une ligne rouge ou bleue, non! la patrie est pour moi le pays que j'aime,

c'est-à-dire celui que je rêve, celui où je me trouve bien. Je suis autant Chinois que Français.(10)

And in 1850 we find Turgenev writing to Louis Viardot:

La patrie a ses droits sans doute; mais la vraie patrie n'est-elle pas là où on a trouvé le plus d'affection, où le coeur et l'esprit se sentent plus à l'aise? (11)

Moving on now to the personal relationship between Flaubert and Turgenev, the Briefwechsel between the two writers consists of some two hundred and twenty letters extant, written between 1863 and 1880, but clearly some have been lost.

As far as their friendship is concerned, there seems now to be no doubt that they met for the first time at Magny's restaurant on February 23rd. 1863, at one of those famous literary dinner parties originally instituted by Sainte-Beuve. (12) The two seem to have taken an immediate

(10) Correspondance, vol. I, p.218-9 (1846)

(11) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. I, p.386

(12) Halpérine-Kaminsky (Ivan Tourgueneff d'après sa correspondance avec ses amis français, Paris, 1901) states categorically that the two met in 1858, but there is no evidence whatsoever for this. Turgenev's friend Pavlovsky (Souvenirs sur Tourguéneff, Paris, 1887) maintains that it was through George Sand that the two got to know each other. But in fact Turgenev - although he had met her, was not on friendly terms with George Sand until the 1870's, and she herself did not attend a Magny dinner until 1866. Baldick (Dinner at Magny's, London, 1971) dates Turgenev's first appearance at Magny's as February 28th. 1863. However the Goncourts record this event in their Journal for February 23rd. 1863. As for evidence of this being their first meeting, the letters speak for themselves: Flaubert, in his first letter (dated March 16th. 1863) says: "J'ai été bien heureux, il y a quinze jours, de faire votre connaissance et de vous serrer les mains." (Correspondance, supplément vol. I, p.318). And five years later, Turgenev refers back to their first meeting in the following terms: "...la première fois que je vous ai vu - (vous savez, dans une espèce d'auberge - de l'autre côté de la Seine)." (Pol. sob. pisem., vol. VII, p.140, dated May 26th. 1868)

liking to each other, for in his very first letter, written a few days later, Turgenev speaks of "le regret que j'éprouve de vous avoir rencontré si tard." (13) Flaubert replied promptly and with enthusiasm concerning Turgenev's literary achievements:

Depuis longtemps, vous êtes pour moi un maître. Mais plus je vous étudie, et plus votre talent me tient en ébahissement. J'admire cette manière à la fois véhémence et contenue...  
 Quel art vous avez! Quel mélange d'attendrissement, d'ironie, d'observation et de couleur!(14)

And in his second letter, Turgenev, delighted with the compliments, seems already sure of the course their relationship will take:

Je serais si heureux de continuer mes rapports avec vous qui avaient commencés sous de si bons auspices - et qui - j'en suis sûr pour ma part - ne demanderaient pas mieux que d'aboutir à la plus franche amitié. (15)

He ends the letter with his "sentiments les plus affectueux". Indeed it is possible to trace the progression of the relationship through the openings of the letters alone: the earliest ones are addressed 'Cher Monsieur Flaubert' and 'Cher Monsieur Tourguéneff', this gives way to 'Mon cher confrère' which in turn is replaced by 'Mon cher ami', and in the last period of their friendship, even more affectionate forms are used: 'Mon cher grand' and 'Mon vieux chéri'.

The nascent friendship suffered a break of a few years while Turgenev was living in Baden - Flaubert never managed the proposed visit. But by the late 1860's, the

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(13) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. V, p.103

(14) Correspondance, supplément vol.I, p.318

(15) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. V, p.106

relationship was already on a much firmer footing. We can see clearly how much they had come to value each other's company. In 1868, for example, Turgenev wrote:

...je me suis pris d'une grande sympathie pour vous - il y a peu d'hommes, de Français surtout, avec lesquels je me sente si tranquillement à mon aise et si éveillé en même temps - il me semble que je pourrais causer avec vous des semaines entières. (16)

And Flaubert wrote in similar vein two years later:

Je peux bien dire que je n'ai eu de bon depuis longtemps, que votre dernière visite, trop courte. Pourquoi vivons-nous si loin l'un de l'autre? Vous êtes, je crois, le seul homme avec qui j'aime à causer. Je ne vois plus personne qui s'occupe d'art et de poésie. (17)

And as time went by, frequent contact became virtually a necessity. The correspondence of the late '60's and the '70's is full of comments such as "il faut absolument que je vous voie" (18), "je grille de l'envie de vous voir et de vous embrasser" (19) and "je crève d'envie de causer avec vous indéfiniment." (20)

Flaubert and Turgenev met quite frequently during the Paris winter seasons of the 1870's. Another series of literary dinners of which they were both founder members constituted one opportunity to meet: these were the 'dîners des auteurs sifflés'. Goncourt describes the first meeting on April 14th. 1874:

Dîner chez Riche, avec Flaubert, Tourguéneff, Zola, Alphonse Daudet. Un dîner de gens de talent qui s'estiment, et que nous voudrions faire mensuel, les hivers suivants. (21)

Another occasion for frequent meetings were Flaubert's

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- (16) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. VII, p.140  
 (17) Correspondance, supplément vol.II, p.230 (1870)  
 (18) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. XII (ii), p.26 (1879)  
 (19) Correspondance, supplément vol.II, p.162 (1868)  
 (20) Ibid., supplément vol.III, p.93 (1873)  
 (21) GONCOURT E. de, Journal, vol. V (1872-1877), p.94

Sunday afternoon gatherings in his flat in the rue Murillo and later in the Faubourg St.Honoré. In his Les Romanciers naturalistes, Zola recalls these meetings of Flaubert's 'cercle' while he was working on La Tentation de Saint Antoine. He lists the 'intimes' as himself, Daudet, Maupassant and "Tourguénier qui était l'ami le plus solide et le plus cher." (22) But Flaubert tended not to like these social gatherings very much - he always preferred to get Turgenev on his own. In 1878 he wrote to his Russian friend:

L'hiver, nous nous voyons dans de mauvaises conditions, c'est-à-dire avec trop de monde autour de nous. Nos petits amis sont bien gentils,..mais... aucun n'est vous, enfin. (23)

And certainly their relationship reached a marked degree of intimacy during the last ten years of Flaubert's life. He especially was not afraid to let his emotions run over into his letters. Of his constant impatience to see Turgenev we read:

Ah! cher ami, je voudrais bien m'étaler près de vous sur vos grandes meules de foin! Cela rafraîchirait mon triste individu...(24)

Je vous embrasse, en brûlant d'impatience..(25)

Jamais je n'ai eu envie de quelqu'un comme j'ai envie de vous...(26)

On the other side, we can see the strength of Turgenev's feelings in the letters he wrote to his friends in the

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(22) ZOLA Emile, Les Romanciers naturalistes, Paris, 1881, p.182-3.

(23) Correspondance, supplément vol.IV, p.91 (1878)

(24) Ibid., vol.III, p.34 (25) Ibid., p.103

(26) Ibid., vol.IV, p.141 (\*)

(\*) It is presumably comments such as these which led Theodor REIK (Flaubert und seine Versuchung des Heiligen Antonius: Ein Beitrag zur Künstlerpsychologie, Minden, 1912) to write of 'die versteckte homosexuelle Tendenz' in Flaubert which he claims came to the surface in his relationship with Turgenev whom he describes as "leise erotisch".(p.111) His arguments are somewhat tenuous however, and of course there is no concrete evidence.

period following Flaubert's death. Turgenev was in Russia, at home at Spasskoie at the time, and ironically, in the very last letters they exchanged, they had been looking forward to an affectionate reunion before long. In his last letter - only four weeks before his death - Flaubert had written:

Quand vous reverrai-je? Au milieu de mai, n'est-ce pas? Qu'il me tarde de vous embrasser! (27)

Turgenev replied: "...au mois de juin je suis à Paris et j'espère vous serrer dans mes bras." (28)

There are five letters in which we can see how deeply Turgenev was affected by his friend's death. He learnt the news only from a newspaper article, and on the day he read the report, he brought two letters - one to Stasyulevich, the other to Toropov (29) - to a rapid conclusion, saying that he was too upset by this news to write any more. A few days later, he wrote to Stasyulevich again, by now feeling more able to talk about his sad loss:

These last few days I have been in a sad frame of mind... the death of my friend Flaubert struck me deeply. He was a man of gold, and his talent was great. (30)

Zola wrote to Turgenev, presumably to let him know the news, and in his reply, Turgenev describes his reaction:

J'ai reçu le coup de la façon la plus brutale, ici, il y a trois jours, en lisant un feuillet du "Golosse". Je n'ai pas besoin de vous parler de mon chagrin: Flaubert a été l'un des hommes que j'ai le plus aimé au monde. Ce n'est pas seulement un grand talent qui s'en va, c'est un être d'élite, et un centre pour nous tous. (31)

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(27) Correspondance, supplément vol. IV, p.329(April 15th.1880)

(28) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. XII (ii),p.240 (1880)

(29) Ibid., p.246-7

(30) Ibid., p.248

(31) Ibid., p.251

He also wrote to Flaubert's niece Caroline, offering his sympathy. He wrote of her uncle's death as

...un des plus grands chagrins que j'ai éprouvés dans ma vie et je ne puis m'accoutumer à la pensée que je ne le reverrai plus...C'est une de ces douleurs dont on ne veut pas se consoler. (32)

It is also interesting to note from this letter Turgenev's view of what caused Flaubert's death. He offered Mme. Commanville his services in assuring the publication of the unfinished Bouvard et Pécuchet, which he describes as "ce roman qui l'a tué".

But the bond between Flaubert and Turgenev was cemented with something stronger than simply personal feeling: there was a whole field of intellectual contact between the two. In their letters and at their meetings they discussed current affairs, the latest books and the latest plays, and clearly valued each other's judgement enormously. The prime example of this, perhaps, concerns Tolstoy's War and Peace. Turgenev sent Flaubert the three volumes of this in December 1879 in a recently published French translation, and was eager for his opinion of the work. Flaubert read it promptly and replied enthusiastically in January 1880:

C'est de premier ordre...Quel peintre et quel psychologue! Les deux premiers [volumes] sont sublimes... Je poussais des cris d'admiration pendant cette lecture...Oui, c'est bien fort, bien fort. (33)

He did however have certain misgivings about the final volume which he considered unsatisfactory from an artistic point of view. His main objection was that it was

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(32) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. XII (ii), p.256

(33) Correspondance, supplément vol.IV, p.298-299

too personal. He commented "on voit le monsieur, l'auteur et le Russe", whereas the first two volumes had been a reflection of "la Nature et l'Humanité". Turgenev wrote back immediately and was delighted with his friend's assessment:

Vous ne pouvez vous imaginer quel plaisir m'a fait votre lettre et ce que vous dites du roman de Tolstoï. Votre approbation fortifie mes idées sur lui. Oui, c'est un homme très fort - et pourtant vous avez mis le doigt sur la plaie: il s'est fait, lui aussi, un système de philosophie, à la fois mystique, enfantine et outrecuidante, qui a diablement gâté son troisième volume. (34)

And we can see the extent to which Turgenev valued Flaubert's judgement in his final comment on this subject: "...pour moi la chose est décidée: Flaubertus dixit. Le reste n'a pas d'importance." (35)

However, what drew Flaubert and Turgenev together above all else was their own work, the bond of the 'métier d'écrivain'. We have already seen Flaubert admitting that Turgenev is the only one of his friends who really understands and shares his views on art and beauty. Indeed he referred to him as "le seul littérateur qui existe", (36) but the feeling was mutual and for Turgenev, Flaubert was definitely the master in anything concerning literature. They were in fact both convinced of the profound mutual understanding between them, and often in their letters made references to the "sympathie complète" which seemed to exist between their two minds.

And all questions of tangible influence aside, they did 'share' their works with each other. Turgenev was

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(34) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. XII(ii), p.206 (1880)

(35) Ibid.

(36) Correspondance, supplément vol. III, p.80



involved to some extent with all of Flaubert's works from L'Education sentimentale onwards. The first stage in this pattern of involvement was usually that Flaubert would tell Turgenev that he had a new idea or plan for a book, and that they simply must get together to discuss it. As he wrote for example in 1872 when he was hatching his first plans for Bouvard et Pécuchet: "J'ai besoin de vous exposer très en détail le plan d'un livre" (37) and a little later: "J'ai bien envie de causer avec vous longuement, et surtout de vous parler du bouquin que je médite".(38) Then as work progressed and the book began to take shape, Turgenev would be kept informed of developments and summoned to come and hear Flaubert read the latest chapter or episode. The reading of course was followed by discussion, which often spread over into the ensuing letters. (39)

Flaubert clearly enjoyed these discussions and valued Turgenev's judgement. In October 1873, for example, Turgenev spent three days at Croisset, and most of this time was apparently occupied with discussions of Flaubert's theatrical efforts. He wrote to his niece of Turgenev's visit and the value of their exchanges of views:

...nous n'avons pas arrêté de parler, et franchement j'en ai la poitrine défoncée! Ah! voilà trois journées <sup>33</sup> tistiques!

Je lui <sup>34</sup> ai lu le Sexe faible, la Féerie et le premier acte du Candidat, avec le scénario d'icelui. C'est le Candidat qu'il aime le mieux; il ne doute pas du succès du Sexe faible. Quant à la Féerie, il m'a fait une critique pratique que je mettrai à profit. Le Pot-au-feu lui a fait

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(37) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.52

(38) Ibid., p.72

(39) We shall have cause to look at this process again later when discussing Turgenev's involvement with Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint Antoine (Chapter VII).

pousser des rugissements d'enthousiasme! Il prétend que ça écrase tout le reste. Mais il croit que le Candidat sera une forte pièce! ce jugement m'encourage beaucoup, et dès demain je m'y remets. (40)

But these discussions between the two writers were certainly not just flattery sessions. For example, Turgenev did not like the title 'L'Education sentimentale', and did not hesitate to say so. (41) And later on, we see that he was not convinced that Flaubert was approaching the composition of Bouvard et Pécuchet in entirely the right way. He thought he was spending far too long on the book, and especially getting bogged down in his documentation. Turgenev wrote, offering advice:

Mais plus j'y rêve - plus c'est un sujet à traiter presto - à la Swift, à la Voltaire. Vous savez que ça a été toujours mon opinion. Votre scénario raconté m'a semblé charmant et drôle. Si vous vous appesantissez là-dessus, si vous êtes trop savant....(42)

As far as Turgenev's works are concerned, the pattern was somewhat different. He does not seem to have had discussions with Flaubert about the plans of his novels, and because of the language barrier, there were no pre-publication readings. (43) However, he did tell Flaubert in his letters when he was having particular difficulty with something he was writing. (44) And as soon as the works appeared in French translation, he sent copies to Flaubert, who usually recorded his reactions and comments in a letter soon afterwards. And for this reason, we have

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(40) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.71-2 (In Flaubert's letters, the symbols {} stand for 'art' or 'artistique'.)

(41) In a letter dated November 24th. 1868 (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VII, p.238).

(42) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.261 (1874)

(43) In view of his excellent command of the French language, it is perhaps surprising that Turgenev did not attempt to translate some of his own work, using Flaubert as stylistic advisor.

(44) This was especially the case during the composition of Virgin Soil. (See Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XI, p.136, 1875)

a precise record of Flaubert's opinion of a good many of Turgenev's works. Of the novels, we can establish that he read Rudin, On the Eve, Fathers and Children, Smoke and Virgin Soil, as well as a considerable number of his stories and short novels. (45) He was certainly always enthusiastic at the reception of a parcel of books from 'le bon Moscove'. (46) For example, when Turgenev hinted that perhaps he was sending Flaubert too many books, the reply was:

Bourrez-moi donc, cher confrère! J'attends votre livre avec impatience, et je le lirai avec délectation, j'en suis sûr. (47)

And such comments were not made for politeness' sake alone: Flaubert also wrote to others of the pleasure he gained from reading Turgenev's works. In 1873, for example, he wrote to Caroline that he had received from Turgenev:

...un nouveau conte de sa façon, intitulé les Eaux printanières, qui m'a fait passer une journée délicieuse. Quel homme! (48)

It is interesting to note which aspects of Turgenev's work appealed especially to Flaubert. The first work for which a reaction is recorded is the Scènes de la vie russe. (49) And here, Flaubert admired especially the suggestive powers of Turgenev's writing: "cette manière...qui

(45) Of these, Flaubert definitely read The diary of a superfluous man, Jacob Pasynkov, Three Encounters, First Love, King Lear of the Steppe, Torrents of Spring, Knock... Knock... Knock..., The Song of Triumphant Love, The Abandoned one.

(46) This was Flaubert's pet name for Turgenev - despite the fact that he was not a Muscovite!

(47) Correspondance, vol. I (supplément), p. 324 (1863)

(48) Ibid., vol. VII, p. 45

(49) This volume was Louis Viardot's translation, published by Hachette in 1858. At the same time, Turgenev sent Flaubert 'Dmitri Roudine suivi de Journal d'un homme de trop et Trois rencontres' (translator unknown), Hetzel 1862.

donne une pensée aux paysages. On voit et on rêve".(50)

And precisely this ability to provoke an imaginative participation on the part of the reader was, for Flaubert, one of the essentials of artistic achievement. He wrote on this subject to Louise Colet:

...ce qui me semble..le plus haut dans l'Art (et le plus difficile)...[c'est] d'agir à la façon de la nature, c'est-à-dire de faire rêver. (51)

Flaubert goes further and makes a comparison between the evocative powers of Turgenev's portraits of Russian life and Cervantes' Don Quixote, which he had always esteemed very highly, and which was one of his favourite books.

He wrote:

De même que quand je lis Don Quichotte je voudrais aller à cheval sur une route blanche de poussière et manger des olives et des oignons crus à l'ombre d'un rocher, vos Scènes de la vie russe me donnent envie d'être secoué en télègue au milieu de champs couverts de neige, en entendant des loups aboyer. (52)

Flaubert was also moved by the elegiac tone of Turgenev's work. Still à propos of the Scènes de la vie russe he wrote:

Il s'exhale de vos oeuvres un parfum âcre et doux, une tristesse charmante, qui me pénètre jusqu'au fond de l'âme. (53)

And in the same letter, Flaubert admires yet another feature of Turgenev's composition which, in his opinion, is an essential quality of great art. He writes: "Tout en étant particulier, vous êtes général." (54) Flaubert's

(50) Correspondance, supplément vol.I, p.318

(51) Ibid., vol.III, p.322 (1853) (c.f. also Vol.II, p.67: "...est-ce que le poète n'est pas fait pour nous transporter ailleurs?")

(52) Correspondance, vol.I (supplément), p.318

(53) Ibid.

(54) Ibid.

correspondence contains many pronouncements on the value of generalisation in art. In 1852, for example, he wrote:

Ce qui distingue les grands génies, c'est la généralisation et la création. Ils résument en un type des personnalités éparses et apportent à la conscience du genre humain des personnages nouveaux. (55)

And similarly, some ten years later:

...le roman, qui en est la forme scientifique[de la vie], doit procéder par généralités et être plus logique que le hasard des choses. (56)

And of course these two quotations reflect precisely the effect that Flaubert hoped to achieve with Mme. Bovary. Of the general application or relevance of this work he asserted confidently:

Ma pauvre Bovary, sans doute, souffre et pleure dans vingt villages de France à la fois, à cette heure même. (57)

The next works of Turgenev to be read by Flaubert were A la veille and Premier amour in Delaveau's translation. And once again he was impressed: we can see from his assessment of Turgenev's achievement that he admired the very effects that he strove for in his own work, including the value of the dimension of form and style:

Vous trouvez moyen de faire vrai sans banalité, d'être sentimental sans mièvrerie, et comique sans la moindre bassesse. Sans chercher les coups de théâtre, vous obtenez par le seul fini de la composition des effets tragiques. (58)

Flaubert - who always went to such pains over the psychology of his own female characters, Emma and Salammbô especially - was also very impressed by Turgenev's portrayal of women. The characterization of Elena and Zinotchka prompted him to write:

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(55) Correspondance, vol.III, p.31 (to Louise Colet)  
 (56) Ibid., vol.V, p.179 (to Maricourt, 1865)  
 (57) Ibid., vol.III, p.291 (to Louise Colet, 1853)  
 (58) Ibid., vol.VI, p.47 (1869)

C'est une de vos qualités que de savoir inventer des femmes. Elles sont idéales et réelles. Elles ont l'attraction de l'auréole. (59)

He also admired the psychology of the handling of the love story in these two works. He singled out one page dealing with an encounter between Elena and Shubin in On the Eve which, he said "ne sera sentie par personne comme par moi," adding the comment "Quelle psychologie!" And as far as First Love is concerned, he was very interested in the treatment of the rivalry between father and son in love. He described Turgenev's comments on this situation as "d'une profondeur effrayante...pour moi, voilà du sublime."

Flaubert had further occasion to compliment Turgenev on his treatment of a love story some ten years later in 1873 when he read Torrents of Spring. He admired not only the psychological truth of the subject matter, but again the form and style of the expression Turgenev had given to it. He wrote of the work:

Ah! voilà un roman d'amour s'il en fut. Vous en savez long sur la vie, mon cher ami, et vous savez dire ce que vous savez, ce qui est plus rare... (60)

As far as Smoke is concerned, we only know that Flaubert liked it well enough for it to prompt him to write and compliment its author after a break of five years in their correspondence. This letter has been lost, but Turgenev's acknowledgement of the praise has survived. (61) Flaubert also wrote to his niece Caroline recommending her to read Fumée. (62)

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(59) Correspondance, vol. VI, p.48 (1869)  
 (60) Ibid., supplément vol.III, p.96-7 (1873)  
 (61) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VII, p.139 (1868)  
 (62) Correspondance, vol. V, p.368 (1868)

The reaction of Flaubert to Turgenev's last novel, Virgin Soil, is especially interesting. This was not a great success at the time of publication, and it is generally considered to be his weakest novel. But this was not at all Flaubert's opinion. After reading the French translation which appeared in serial form in Le Temps during the spring of 1877, he wrote to Turgenev:

Ça, c'est un bouquin, et ça vous dégrasse la cervelle des lectures précédentes! J'en suis étourdi, bien que j'en saisisse parfaitement l'ensemble. Quel peintre! Et quel moraliste vous faites, mon cher, bien cher ami! Tant pis pour vos compatriotes s'ils ne trouvent pas votre livre une merveille. Moi, c'est mon avis, et je m'y connais. (63)

And again, this was not merely consolation offered to a maligned fellow artist, for Flaubert makes equally favourable references to this novel in letters to others. He commented on it to Mme. Roger des Genettes:

J'en ai lu un [livre], avant-hier, que je trouve bien fort: Les Terres vierges de Tourguéneff. Voilà un homme, celui-là! (64)

As far as more direct collaboration in literature is concerned, there are a few examples of this. In 1879, Turgenev was working on a short story for publication in French. This was Monsieur François, which has since been better known as The Man with the grey spectacles. (65) Turgenev sent his manuscript asking Flaubert to:

Lisez cette petite bêtise, corrigez, changez, coupez ce que vous voulez....Je vous en serai reconnaissant, autant qu'on peut l'être. (66)

The following week, Turgenev paid a visit to Croisset, on which occasion this text was presumably discussed. Sim-

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(63) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.344

(64) Ibid., vol.VIII, p.25 (1877)

(65) This was published in the Nouvelle Revue of December 15th 1879.

(66) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII(ii), p.182

ilarly, in 1876, Flaubert had corrected the manuscript of some translations into French that Turgenev had made of poems by Pushkin. (67)

Nevertheless, the height of their literary collaboration was undoubtedly the translation into Russian of Flaubert's Trois contes. Turgenev undertook to render La Légende de Saint Julien and Hérodias himself. He would have taken on Un coeur simple as well, but Flaubert claimed he did not want to abuse his friend's good will. The truth was rather that at this particular time, Flaubert was in urgent need of the money that the Russian publication would bring him, and thus wanted the job done quickly. Flaubert was in fact somewhat hard on Turgenev over the question of these translations, accusing him of rather dragging his heels. But Turgenev's friend Pavlovsky, in his recollections, has a different story to tell:

Flaubert était son idéal...Il [Tourguéneff] avait traduit deux de ses contes...avec un amour qui touchait à la passion. Il mit un mois entier à traduire chacun de ces contes, passant des heures à chercher l'expression juste. Aussi peut-on dire que Flaubert est rendu là comme il ne le sera jamais en aucune langue. (68)

The two translations were finally published in the fourth and fifth issues of the Vestnik Evropy for 1877 .

Leaving now the personal relationship between Flaubert and Turgenev, let us - before going on to make more specific comparisons between their work - look at the literary aesthetic of each writer, in an effort to det-

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(67) The manuscript of Flaubert's corrected version of these is reproduced by A.MEYNIEUX in his article 'Trois stylistes traducteurs de Pouchkine'. (Cahiers d'Etudes Littéraires, Librairie des cinq continents, Paris, 1962)

(68) PAVLOVSKY, op. cit., p.71



ermine what they hoped to achieve by their art, and in a general sense, how they tried to accomplish this.

A prime consideration facing any writer is, of course, the question of what to write about, what kind of subject matter he should turn his attention to. In 1850, we see Flaubert - as yet having produced nothing for the literary market - groping around for subjects. After the cold reception by his friends of his highly romantic Tentation de Saint Antoine set in Ancient Egypt, Flaubert knew to which area of subject matter he should direct his artistic attention. He wrote to Louis Bouilhet:

En revenir à l'antique; c'est déjà fait. Au moyen âge; c'est déjà fait. Reste le présent...(69)

But within the confines of this area, Flaubert was still very unsure which aspects to select. In the same letter we see his doubts about 'le présent' as a subject for literature. He asked: "Mais la base tremble; où donc appuyer les fondements?" And this was a problem which Flaubert never entirely solved. The question of subject matter seems to have been a constant source of anxiety to him. In his letters, we can find expressions of disgust at the subject of virtually all his major works. Eventually however, three out of four mature novels and one out of three short stories were to deal with 'le présent' - nineteenth century France.

Turgenev also determined early in his career that he should deal with the present in his literary works. In 1845 he wrote an article for a French magazine on contemp-

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(69) Correspondance, vol. II, p.255 (1850)

orary Russian literature, where we see him writing of the growing movement of realism in Russia:

Reproduire la vie actuelle dans toute la variété de son ensemble devint le but commun des efforts de tous les écrivains. (70)

But for him, unlike Flaubert, this constituted a firm resolve to concern himself with actual problems of present-day society. From this time onwards, he had no doubts about what the subject or setting of his novels should be, for after the model of Gogol, what self-respecting Russian novelist would not aspire to a similar "manière large et calme de reproduire l'état présent de la Russie." (71) And indeed, all of his major novels deal almost exclusively with Russia or Russians and Russian problems. For Turgenev was echoing Belinsky's idea of the desirability of social relevance in literature when he wrote to his friend Botkin:

There are periods when literature cannot remain only art, when there are interests higher than poetic interests. (72)

And Russia - in the view of its young writers - was passing through just such a period of crisis.

In principle then, Turgenev was a realist. In his letters, and in his article 'On Fathers and Children', (73) we can find declarations of this faith. His work was, however, not quite as consistent as he sometimes claimed. In a letter to M.A.Milyutina, for example, we find the following firm declaration:

Briefly, I can say that on the whole I am a realist, and am interested above all else in the truth of

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(70) This article appeared in L'Illustration of July 19th. 1845.

(71) Ibid.

(72) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.282 (1855)

(73) This defence of his work was written in 1868-9.

human physiognomy; I am indifferent to all supernatural things...(74)

But nonetheless, the romantic or mystical side of Turgenev's character was sometimes in the ascendant, as we shall see later, when studying his 'dream' tales.

So on the whole, we can describe both Flaubert and Turgenev as realist novelists, if we accept as the basis of this term René Wellek's definition: "the objective representation of contemporary social reality." (75) But neither writer wished to be classified as part of a literary movement or to base his works on any kind of doctrine or system of philosophy. We have already seen their reaction to Tolstoy's rigid adherence to a particular philosophy in the third volume of War and Peace. And in the letter to Milyutina quoted above, Turgenev makes his own position clear on this issue. He declares: "I do not believe in any absolutes or systems".(76) And Flaubert, whose only doctrine was "moins de paroles et plus d'oeuvres!",(77) rejected most vigorously the idea of belonging to a literary group or movement. He wrote emphatically to George Sand on this subject:

..je m'abîme le tempérament à tâcher de n'avoir pas d'école! A priori, je les repousse toutes.(78)

Equally, he rejected all philosophies which claimed to offer a definitive explanation of things. He asked the question:

Comment pouvons-nous, avec nos sens bornés et notre intelligence finie, arriver à la connaissance absolue? (79)

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(74) Pol. sob. pisem., vol. XI, p.31 (1875)

(75) WELLEK René, Concepts of Criticism, London, 1963, p.240-1

(76) Pol. sob. pisem., vol. XI, p.31

(77) Correspondance, supplément, vol.IV, p.84 (Camille Lemonnier, 1878)

(78) Ibid., vol.VII, p.281 (1875)

(79) Ibid., vol. IV, p.181 (Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, 1857)

So if Flaubert and Turgenev rejected realism as a literary doctrine or system, let us try to determine the implications of this term for them personally. In fact both rejected certain aspects of realism as practised by their fellow writers, and in a fundamental respect, their views coincide. They considered that reality should, above all, be a spring-board for the artist. Thus he should not try to reproduce it detail for detail in the way that a photographer would. For example, we find Turgenev levelling the following criticism at George Sand's François le Champi :

Elle y entremêle peut-être un peu trop d'expressions de paysan; ça donne de temps en temps un air affecté à son récit. L'art n'est pas un daguerréotype, et un aussi grand maître que Mme. Sand pourrait se passer de ces caprices d'artiste un peu blasé. (80)

And in similar terms, we see Flaubert, in a letter to Turgenev, criticising Daudet's Nabab:

C'est disparate. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de voir, il faut arranger et fondre ce que l'on a vu. La Réalité, selon moi, ne doit être qu'un tremplin. Nos amis sont persuadés qu'à elle seule elle constitue tout l'Art. (81).

So they did not wish to copy reality, but rather to make a choice from among the disparate elements of the real world. What they objected to in naturalism was precisely the lack of this kind of selection on the part of the artist. Turgenev for example felt that Zola was often guilty of purveying an overdose of reality in novels such as L'Assommoir. (82)

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(80) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.292 (to P.Viardot, 1848)

(81) Correspondance, supplément, vol.IV, p.52 (1877)

(82) He wrote to Flaubert à propos of this: "J'ai mis le nez dans "L'Assommoir", je n'en suis pas enchanté (ceci entre nous, strictement). Il y a bien du talent - mais c'est lourd - et on remue trop le pot de chambre." (Pol. sob. pisem, vol. XII(i), p.19 (1876))

In the view of Flaubert and Turgenev, then, the writer should above all present reality to the reader. He should aim to show and to demonstrate "les choses de ce monde", (83) but should make no explicit judgement or conclusion about them. Flaubert summed up neatly this view of the artist's function when he wrote to Louise Colet:

...ne blâmons rien, chantons tout, soyons exposants, et non discutants. (84)

And we can see that he was convinced that the secret of great achievement in literature lay along this path, for he wrote to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie some ten years later:

...les plus grands génies...tous les fils aînés de Dieu... se sont bien gardés de faire autre chose que représenter. (85)

And this is of course exactly the process used by Turgenev in his Hunting Sketches. The inhumanity of the serf-based economy is made crystal clear in stories such as Ermolai and the Miller's Wife, with its sensitive characterisation of the muzhik who is treated simply as a chattel by his master, or in Ovsianikov the Freeholder, where the landowners appear to have no human feelings at all as far as their peasants are concerned. Yet nowhere does Turgenev as author explicitly condemn the system or pass sentence on the landowners. Interestingly enough, Turgenev's Hunting Sketches reveal precisely the virtues which Flaubert found sadly lacking in Harriet Beecher Stowe's account of slavery in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

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(83) Flaubert's phrase in a letter to George Sand of 1867. (Correspondance, vol.V, p.347)

(84) Correspondance, vol. III, p.163 (1853)

(85) Ibid., vol.V, p.111 (1863)

He described this work as

...un livre étroit. Il est fait à un point de vue moral et religieux; il fallait le faire à un point de vue humain. (86)

And it is precisely the human aspect of the question that Turgenev stresses, presenting the muzhik as a sensitive and dignified being, capable of fine feelings in stories such as Khor and Kalynich, Raspberry Spring and Kassian of the fair lands. Flaubert also disliked the intrusions of the author in Uncle Tom's Cabin:

Les réflexions de l'auteur m'ont irrité tout le temps. Est-ce qu'on a besoin de faire des réflexions sur l'esclavage? Montrez-le, voilà tout. (87)

And of course, the process of simply showing a social evil to the reader is exactly the path which Turgenev chooses in the Sketches. In his study of Turgenev, Mérimée summed up his technique in this work as "laissant à son lecteur la tâche de faire la somme du bien et du mal et de conclure en conséquence". (88)

This is of course in complete harmony with Flaubert's maxim 'ne pas conclure', an idea which recurs with the frequency of a leitmotif in his correspondence. For in his view, writers of genius - such as Goethe and Shakespeare - never tried to express precise conclusions about life or art in their work. (89)

From this, the next step is of course the question of objectivity and the self-effacement of the author in his work. Here again the views of Flaubert and Turgenev

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(86) Correspondance, vol.III, p.60 (to L.Colet, 1852)

(87) Ibid., p.61

(88) MÉRIMÉE Prosper, 'Ivan Tourguéneff' in Portraits historiques et littéraires, Paris, 1874, p.243

(89) A good many references to this work are listed by CARLUT in La Correspondance de Flaubert - étude et répertoire critique, Paris, 1968, p.771 et seq.

would appear to coincide, for this elimination of the person of the author was something they both consciously strove for in their writing. Basically, Flaubert's view was that the author's relationship to his work should be essentially the same as God's relationship to his universe, that is, "présent partout, et visible nulle part". (90) And again like God, the writer should "faire et se taire". (91)

And Turgenev achieves this ideal with consummate skill in Fathers and Children. For as Freeborn has said of this work:

He [Turgenev] intentionally refrains from having any relationship to the fiction save that of a chronicler, withholding himself from the fiction to an unprecedented degree. (92)

And indeed, Turgenev and Flaubert's view of objectivity in literature would seem to be an extreme one, with Flaubert making such forceful assertions as:

Un romancier, selon moi, n'a pas le droit de  
dire son avis sur les choses de ce monde. (93)

and ...plus vous serez personnel, plus vous serez faible. (94)

And Paul Bourget, in his Nouveaux essais de psychologie contemporaine, gives an interesting glimpse into what objectivity in literary composition meant for Turgenev. Bourget writes of his efforts to achieve this God-like, impassive relationship with the characters of his creation - which, as we have seen, was Flaubert's ideal:

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(90) Correspondance, vol.III, p.61 (to L.Colet, 1852)  
 (91) Ibid., vol.V, p.228 (Amélie Bosquet, 1866)  
 (92) FREEBORN Richard, Trends of development in the Russian 19th. century realistic novel (1830-1880), D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1958, p.230  
 (93) Correspondance, vol. V, p.227 (Amélie Bosquet, 1866)  
 (94) Ibid., vol.II, p.461 (L.Colet, 1852)

Il [Touргуéniév] disait, employant une métamorphose [sic] brutale mais bien expressive, que sa grande affaire lorsqu'il composait un roman était de couper le cordon ombilical entre ses personnages et lui. (95)

It is interesting to note that - perhaps as a by-product of this search for objectivity - both writers reveal a considerable amount of modesty as far as their literary careers are concerned. Flaubert put his notion of "cache ta vie" into practice not only in the composition of his works, but in his everyday life as well. The most striking example of this was in 1879, when he had had a fall at Croisset and broken his leg. The editor of Le Figaro had come to hear of this, and in his pages mentioned the fact to his readers, and wished M. Flaubert a speedy recovery. Far from being pleased at this concern for his well-being, Flaubert took it almost as an insult. He wrote to Turgenev on this occasion:

De quel droit ma jambe appartient-elle à Villemessant? Notez qu'il croit m'honorer et me faire plaisir. Cet entrefilet m'a été très désagréable. Je n'aime pas à "intéresser" le public avec ma personne. (96)

Turgenev also felt that the works themselves were far more important than the details of the writer's personal life, and as testified by Maupassant, his reaction to such articles as Villemessant's was very similar to Flaubert's. We read in Maupassant's obituary on Turgenev:

...quand un journaliste donnait à propos d'un de ses livres des détails particuliers sur lui et sur sa vie, il éprouvait une véritable irritation mêlée d'une sorte de honte d'écrivain, chez qui la modestie semble une pudeur. (97)

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(95) BOURGET Paul, Nouveaux essais de psychologie contemporaine, Paris, 1886, p.215

(96) Correspondance, supplément vol. IV, p.155

(97) MAUPASSANT, art. cit.



Moving on now to another aspect of their aesthetic, both Flaubert and Turgenev reveal a concern to convey what is 'true' in their works. This was not their prime preoccupation, for as we have seen, they did not care for novels which were nothing but 'a slice of life' - indeed we find Flaubert saying, à propos of L'Assommoir : "Faire vrai ne me paraît pas être la première condition de l'art". (98) But 'truth' is an important consideration in so far as both writers preferred to base their work on observation and research, rather than on invention. Flaubert, for example, offered the following advice to Louise Colet:

Aie en vue le modèle, toujours, et rien autre chose. (99)

He also referred to

...ce coup d'oeil médical de la vie, cette vue du Vrai, qui est le seul moyen d'arriver à de grands effets d'émotion. (100)

And many years later, when he was writing his short story Un Coeur simple, in which the aged servant Félicité becomes strangely involved with a stuffed parrot, we find Flaubert writing to Mme. Roger des Genettes:

...j'ai sur ma table un perroquet empaillé, afin de "peindre" d'après la nature. (101)

And of course Flaubert's research is legendary. The supreme examples of this are his visit to Tunisia to observe the site of Carthage for Salammbô, and the long years of research spent on building up the huge dossiers for Bouvard et Pécuchet. And in their detail and scrupulousness, these seem rather more like the material for

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(98) Correspondance, vol. VII, p.351 (Princesse Mathilde, 1876)

(99) Ibid., vol.III, p.21 (1852)

(100) Ibid., vol.II, p.398 (1852)

(101) Ibid., vol.VII, p.331 (1876)

an academic thesis than for a novel.

Similarly, Turgenev believed that "to reproduce truth and the reality of life, correctly and powerfully, is the greatest happiness for an author." (102) He also relied considerably on observation for the characters and settings of his novels. For although Turgenev was based in the West for a good many years, hardly a year went by in which he did not make an extended visit to Russia in order to "respirer l'air natal", as he told Flaubert, and to observe people and places. The importance Turgenev attached to such visits is clear from a letter he wrote à propos of Virgin Soil:

...of the twelve characters who make up the cast, two were not studied by me carefully enough on the spot - they were not captured alive; and I do not want to invent in that particular sense...Thus one must gather material...(103)

7. | And indeed in his novels, Turgenev describes only places he knew personally. Mostly the scene is set in either the Russian capitals or countryside, but when it does move beyond the national frontier - be it to Baden, Frankfurt or the Isle of Wight - it is always to a place visited by the author.

Turgenev makes some interesting revelations about the rôle of observation in his creation of character in his study 'On Fathers and Children! He writes:

I must confess I never attempted to 'create a character' unless I had for my starting point not an idea, but a living person. Not possessing a great amount of free inventive powers, I always felt the need of some firm ground on which I could plant my feet. (104)

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(102) 'On Fathers and Children', Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIV, p.100

(103) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. X, p.49 (S.K.Kavelina, 1873)

(104) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIV, p.97

And we learn that the character of Bazarov was inspired by a young provincial doctor who had made a great impression on Turgenev.

We must not leave the question of Flaubert's and Turgenev's literary aesthetic without making some mention of their attitude to 'beauty' and 'the beautiful'. In his correspondence, Flaubert was prolific in his utterances on this subject. It figures at the very centre of his views on art, and constitutes the essence of what he personally hoped to achieve. He wrote to George Sand of his quest in his literary career:

Je recherche par-dessus tout la beauté. (105)

Flaubert admired the art of the classical world precisely because of its achievements in this respect. He wrote:

Quels artistes que ces anciens...! c'est là qu'il faut vivre...au pays du Beau. (106)

and

Quel artiste on serait si l'on n'avait jamais lu que du beau, vu que du beau...les Grecs avaient tout cela. (107)

On the contrary, he found writing about life in the bourgeois society of nineteenth century France diametrically opposed to his concept of beauty. For example, while working on Mme. Bovary we find him confessing:

...il me tarde d'avoir fini la Bovary...pour me livrer au 'Beau pur'. (108)

This was the purity he had striven for in his first version of La Tentation de Saint Antoine.

However, although Flaubert may have found beauty lacking in the subject matter of his novels dealing with

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(105) Correspondance, vol. VII, p.281 (1875)

(106) Ibid., vol. II, p.70 (L.Colet, 1847)

(107) Ibid., vol. III, p.281 (L.Colet, 1853)

(108) Ibid., p.317 (Louis Bouilhet, 1853)

contemporary society, he did of course strive to compensate for this lack in the achievement of beauty in the domain of form and style. In his view, these elements of a work of art should be inextricably linked to an ideal of beauty. In a letter of 1856, for example, we read:

La morale de l'Art consiste dans sa beauté même,  
et j'estime par-dessus tout d'abord le style,  
et ensuite le Vrai. (109)

Flaubert also considered that the future of art should follow a path that would lead it ever closer to an ideal of beauty. For in a letter to Louise Colet he referred to:

...l'Art de l'avenir...l'hypothèse du Beau...ce  
type idéal enfin où tout notre effort doit  
tendre. (110)

Turgenev also believed that there is an essential link between beauty and art worthy of the name, and that the artist, if he is to succeed, must strive for some kind of relationship with beauty. For as Bersyenev tells Shubin, the young artist in On the Eve :

If you don't respond to beauty, if you don't  
love her wherever you meet her, beauty will  
elude you in your art...(111)

The power and significance which Turgenev attributed to an ideal of beauty incarnated in a work of art emerge in his 'prose poem' Enough!. For here he considers the Venus de Milo to be a greater achievement than Roman law or the principles of 1789. He admires the lasting quality of art, as opposed to the transience of man and other children of nature. It is the artist's rôle to give form to the disparate manifestations of beauty scattered

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(109) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.136 (Bonenfant, 1856)

(110) Ibid., vol. III, p.368 (1853)

(111) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.9

in the world of nature, so that they may endure beyond their otherwise limited term.

But although a form of beauty captured in a work of art may not be eternal - Turgenev refers to the statue of Apollo shattered under the barbarian's weapon - he clearly believed that Beauty in essence or as an absolute is always present. He reveals his views on the immortality of beauty in a letter to Pauline Viardot:

Vous me demandez en quoi réside le "Beau". Si, en dépit des ravages du temps qui détruisent la forme sous laquelle il se manifeste, il est toujours là...C'est que le Beau est la seule chose qui soit immortelle, et qu'aussi longtemps qu'il reste un vestige de sa manifestation matérielle, son immortalité subsiste. Le Beau est répandu partout, il s'étend même jusque sur la mort. (112)

As for Turgenev's own personal faith in beauty, we see that he did find in this 'ideal' some relief from the sadness of life. In 1861, for example, when Turgenev was passing through one of the blackest phases of his life - his melancholy in part prompted by a crisis in his relationship with Pauline - we find that he was able to find some comfort in a love of beauty. He wrote to the Countess Lambert at this time:

I feel like a creature who died long ago, who belongs to the past...but a creature who has retained a living love for the Good and for the Beautiful. (113)

In conclusion, then, we can say that Flaubert and Turgenev were realist novelists, but with the qualification that they wished not only to portray reality - however important observation and accuracy in detail may have been to them - but to convey also in their work

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(112) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. I, p.389 (1850)

(113) Ibid., vol.IV, p.184

truth and beauty. Thus they hoped to raise their art above the level of the mundaneness of the real world. Indeed as Flaubert said:

...la vérité matérielle ne doit être qu'un tremplin pour s'élever plus haut. (114)

And the sentiment of this is entirely comparable to a phrase of Goethe's which was one of Turgenev's favourite maxims: that the writer's aim is essentially

Die Wirklichkeit zum schönen Schein erheben..(115)

Thus we can see that the intimate friendship that developed between Flaubert and Turgenev was, to a considerable extent, founded on the mutual attraction of their characters and interests. And, moreover, the literary aesthetic of the two novelists reveals a remarkable intellectual kinship. So we can agree with the critic Digeon who writes of the "compréhension profonde" between Flaubert and Turgenev:

...si dans le détail leurs goûts différaient, leurs jugements étaient toujours guidés par les mêmes principes. (116)

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(114) Correspondance, vol.VIII, p.374 (Léon Hennique, 1880)  
 (115) He uses this, for example, in his essay on Vronchenko's translation of Faust. (Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, p.227)  
 (116) DIGEON Claude, Le dernier visage de Flaubert, Paris, 1946, p.60

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER I

( 30) М.М.Стасюлевичу:

Все эти дни я в печальном настроении...смерть моего друга Флобера меня глубоко поразила. Золотой был человек и великий талант! (Письма , XII(i), 248)

( 72) В.П.Воткину:

Бывают эпохи, где литература не может быть только художеством – а есть интересы высшие поэтических интересов. (Письма , II, 282)

(74) М.А.Милутиной:

...скажу вкратце, что я преимущественно <sup>а</sup>реалист – и более всего интересуюсь живою правдою людско<sup>й</sup> физиономии; ко всему сверхъестественному отношусь равнодушно... (Письма , XI, 31)

(76) М.А.Милутиной:

...ни в какие абсолюты и системы не верю...(Письма ,XI,31)

(102) По поводу «Отцов и детей»

...точно и сильно воспроизвести истину,реальность жизни – есть высочайшее счастье для литератора.. (Соч. , XIV, 100)

(103) С.К.Кавелиной:

...но из двенадцати лиц, составляющих мой персонал, два лица не довольно изучены на месте – не ввзяты живьем, а сочинять в известном смысле я не хочу... След, нужно набраться материалу...(Письма , X, 49)

(104) По поводу «Отцов и детей»:

...с всей стороны, я должен сознаться, что никогда не покушался «создавать образ», если не имел исходною точкою не идею, а живое лицо, к которому постепенно приприсабливались и прикладывались подходящие элементы. ( ?  
Не обладая большою долею свободной изобретательности, я всегда нуждался в данной почве, по которой я бы мог твердо ступать ногами. (Соч. ,XIV, 97)

(111) Накануне:

Если ты не будешь сочувствовать красоте, любить ее  
всюду, где бы ты ее ни встретил, так она тебе и в  
твоем искусстве не дана. (Соч. ,VIII, 9)

(113) Е.Е.Ламберт:

Я чувствую себя как бы давно умершим, как бы при-  
надлежащим жую любовь к Добру и Красоте. (Письма, IV, 181)  
(к давно минувшему, ... но существам, сохранившим)



CHAPTER II - Common literary influences in the development of Flaubert and Turgenev

"Le génie par excellence est celui qui s'assimile tout, qui sait tout s'approprier sans préjudice pour son caractère inné." \*

The achievement of such a degree of mutual sympathy and understanding between Flaubert and Turgenev during the years of their friendship is easier to understand - and indeed seems almost a logical consequence - if one looks carefully at the two writers' earliest periods of development and literary activity. Such comparisons reveal that both had similar tastes in their favourite reading, especially Byron - either directly or via other Romantic writers influenced by him - Goethe, Shakespeare and Cervantes. Thus their first literary productions show common influences and certain parallels in concept and in execution. Indeed, as Digeon has said, the very first letters exchanged by Flaubert and Turgenev in the early 1860's already give an insight into "le sentiment puissant de la communauté d'origines littéraires" (1) that was to form the basis of their intellectual relationship.

Although the purpose of this present examination is primarily to assess their readings in the works of the four authors mentioned above, and the effect of these on their own literary efforts, we shall also try to determine which aspects of literary influence occur only as a passing phase in the earliest period of their careers,

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(\*) Quoted from REMY DE GOURMONT, (La Culture des idées, Paris, 1900, p.47) who refers to it as a quotation from a letter Goethe wrote to Humboldt in 1832)

(1) DIGEON, op.cit., p.60

and which, on the other hand, have a more permanent effect, becoming absorbed into the two writers' own patterns of ideas on literature and life.

What may be described as a direct influence from particular authors - textual resemblances, parallel characters and structural resemblances between works, - is principally evident in the youthful works of Flaubert and Turgenev. However, with the help of their correspondences and reminiscences, as well as their works, we can see that on a more general level, both retained a life-long interest in and even enthusiasm for the writers who stimulated them in their youth.

It should perhaps be mentioned at this point that Turgenev enjoyed considerable linguistic superiority over Flaubert, for from his schooldays onwards, he was able to read English and German literature in the original without difficulty. (2) The catalogue of his personal library at Orel reveals that he possessed works by Byron, Shakespeare and Goethe in English and German from early youth onwards. Although Flaubert boasts in a boyhood letter to Ernest Chevalier that he has been studying English in order to be able to read Byron in the original, he usually had recourse to Pichot's and other translations. (3) He certainly never knew German well enough to attempt Goethe in the original, and relied much on Nerval's translations of Faust. (4) Flaubert

(2) Turgenev also had a good knowledge of Spanish and was able to read Don Quixote in the original, but he was less accomplished in this language than in German and English.

(3) Translations of Byron were very readily available in France at this time. ESTEVE (in Byron et le romantisme français, Paris, 1907) lists seventy different translations which would have been available during the period of Flaubert's youth.

(4) Nerval's translation of Faust part I appeared in 1828.

was aware of the disadvantages of his lack of linguistic ability, although this does not seem to have interfered seriously with his appreciation of foreign literature. For looking back at his first readings of Byron, Goethe and Shakespeare Flaubert wrote:

La platitude de la traduction française disparaissait devant les pensées seules, comme si elles eussent eu un style à elles sans les mots eux-mêmes. (5)

#### i) Romanticism - Byron

However popular Byron may have been in England, it was on the continent of Europe that his influence became most widespread. The 'Byronic hero' became a literary prototype assuming almost mythical proportions. It was especially the dark romances centering on the wanderings of a mysterious and misanthropic hero which caught the European imagination. And works such as The Giaour, Manfred and Childe Harold's Pilgrimage with their gloomy passion and exoticism enjoyed the greatest success.

Naturally, it is to the very early works of Flaubert and Turgenev that we must turn to find characters and situations Byronic in inspiration. For the romantic exuberance of the poetry of Byron and those who imitated him is much more in line with the youthful passions and aspirations of our two writers than with their mature temperaments. Another important factor of course is precisely this fashionableness of Byron in the milieu in which the young Flaubert and Turgenev found them -

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(5) Premières oeuvres, [Edition du Centenaire, Paris, 1921] p.285

selves in the 1830's. Perhaps Byron was already considered passé in London and Paris at this time, but his works were still in vogue in Rouen and the Russian capitals.

At this point perhaps we should try to assess briefly the status and nature of Byronism in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century, for it is of necessity somewhat different from the French interpretation of the same phenomenon. It has to be seen within the context of efforts to create a 'national literature' in Russia. It was Pushkin and Lermontov who brought the figure of the Byronic hero to the forefront of Russian literary interest in the 1820's and 30's. But although Eugene Onegin may resemble Childe Harold's Pilgrimage structurally, and the moody reveries of an Onegin or Pechorin with their sense of not fitting into the world around them may be in the best Byronic tradition, the social aspect of this malady is stressed far more by the Russian writers. Indeed the kind of character who has his origins in Byron's influence passes through processes of naturalisation in Russia to emerge eventually as the type of the superfluous man. Thus there appears to be an interesting ambivalence on the part of Russian writers at this time in their use of basically Byronic material. There is admiration for Byron's achievement, and a detectable influence on their own works, and yet at the same time there is a reaction against Byronism in its purest form. They see that the English poet's romantic heroes certainly have their parallels in contemporary Russian society, but the very nature of this

society also forces them into the recognition that revery alone is not enough, and that a far more dynamic approach to social conditions is necessary. Pushkin and Lermontov hint at this with Onegin and Pechorin, but never fully realize the potential as far as the social aspect is concerned; this comes only with the next generation under the initial guidance of Belinsky. Turgenev was a member of this following generation, but his earliest works - before his social conscience was fully roused - still cling to the models of Byronism. In fact at this early stage in his career, Turgenev found very much the same stimulus and fire to his imagination in the works of the English poet as did his young French contemporary, Flaubert. But as we have already seen, the domain of social reality was eventually to receive attention from Turgenev much earlier than it did from Flaubert.

To return now to the early works of the two writers, Flaubert's interest in and knowledge of Byron is established from the age of fourteen, for among the juvenilia of 1835 is a Portrait de Lord Byron. Short, conventional and probably a class exercise in origin, it is however interesting to note from it the features of the subject's personality that had a particular appeal for the young Flaubert. It is in fact the solitary and contemplative aspects of the poet's character that are stressed. Also here for the first time there occurs a Byronic feature that is to become virtually a leit-motiv recurring frequently in Flaubert's work. Describing

the poet's life in Venice he writes:

...il restait toute la nuit à regarder une tête de mort, posée au milieu de sa cheminée. (6)

This is a feature which Byron also attributed to his hero Lara. (7) Later we learn from his correspondence that Flaubert himself had adopted the same highly romantic habit of keeping a skull on his mantle-piece. And in his works, this feature becomes virtually inseparable from the artistic temperament: the hero of Mémoires d'un fou has one, so does Jules in the first Education sentimentale, then some twenty years later it turns up again on the prie-dieu in the artist Pellerin's studio in the 1869 Education sentimentale.

As far as Turgenev is concerned, an active interest in Byron is revealed in his very first literary effort to have survived, Steno, composed during the autumn of 1834. In one of his literary reminiscences Turgenev looks back at this work from a distance of over thirty years, with the following sentiments:

...a fantasy drama in iambic pentameters under the title of Steno...this impossible work of mine in which with childish incompetence, I was slavishly imitating Byron's Manfred. (8)

His interest in Manfred is shown further by the fact that he made his own translation of at least part of this work in 1836. The translation itself has not survived, but Turgenev gives a list of the literary translations made by him during this year in a letter to Nikitenko. (9)

(6) Oeuvres de jeunesse inédites, vol. I, p.26

(7) Lara, I, ix.

(8) 'A literary evening at Pletnev's', Pol. sob. soch., vol. XIV, p.11 (This piece was written in 1868)

(9) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. I, p.164 (March/April 1837)

The majority of the elements in the early works of Flaubert and Turgenev that can be labelled Romantic in general or Byronic in particular do, in fact, emerge from a comparison of Steno and two works from Flaubert's early 'autobiographical' cycle, the Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre.

One element in Byron's work which seems to have had a particular appeal for the young Flaubert and Turgenev is his notion of the poet (and thus of his hero) as separate and different from the rest of humanity; this concept is well defined by Estève:

Le fond du byronisme peut se définir d'un mot: c'est l'individualisme, hautain, irréductible, absolu. Etendre son moi au delà de toutes limites.. ne donner à son activité d'autre but que lui-même, ne voir dans tout ce qui existe que le reflet de son être. (10)

There are most probably personal reasons associated with the two writers' fondness for this idea during adolescence. As already mentioned, neither was encouraged in his literary aspirations by his family, and indeed Turgenev's mother, Varvara Petrovna, was unquestionably a tyrant. So the idea of the creative, sensitive being as someone separate from the rest of the world would have a natural appeal.

Thus in Steno, the hero of the same name (11) remains a solitary figure throughout the play, for he is unable - because of his introspective nature - to form genuine relationships with other human beings. In his conversation with Julia in the first scene, for example, he

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(10) ESTEVE, op. cit., p.4

(11) The title and name 'Steno' are probably owed to Byron's character Michel Steno in his verse drama Marino Faliero.

refers to the black wings which seem to close in on him, constricting him and rendering the sight of other people odious to him. (12)

Similarly, in both Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre the idea of the young poet - here Gustave Flaubert himself - as being above the lot of other mortals, cut off from their affairs, is much in evidence. In Novembre, for example, we find the hero declaring pompously:

...je me suis amusé du bruit des tempêtes et du bourdonnement vague des hommes qui montait jusqu'à moi; j'ai vécu dans une aire élevée, où mon coeur se gonflait d'air pur, où je poussais des cris de triomphe pour me désennuyer de ma solitude.(13)

Out of this feeling of separateness and isolation grow a number of other features which are to be found in Flaubert's autobiographical heroes and in Turgenev's Steno alike. The processes of introspection become exaggerated in these characters, and thus a state of mental anguish is produced. In the case of Steno, this appears virtually as an inability to stop thinking and constantly questioning. Indeed in his soliloquies we see him meditating continually on his past, and dissecting his own personality. Act I, scene I, for example finds him asking:

My head

Is burning...Oh for what purpose is life given us?  
It is as empty as a dream, as airy as an apparition  
.....  
What is the meaning of life? What is the meaning  
of death?(14)

Flaubert's two heroes are also egocentric, and this is of course helped by the device of the first person narr-

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(12) Pol. sob. soch., vol. I, p.376, ll.145-149

(13) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.II, p.174

(14) Pol. sob. soch., vol. I, p.370



ative. Mémoires d'un rou and Novembre also embody a tragedy of disillusionment as we see the young writer probe deep into his own emotional and artistic sensitivity.

Such self-analysis leads on naturally to an expression of extreme pessimism, or perhaps nihilism is a more accurate description of the bleak views expressed by Steno and Flaubert's heroes. Indeed Flaubert himself stresses the nihilistic nature of the Mémoires d'un rou in his dedication, addressed to Alfred Le Poittevin. Here he speaks of a work "où le scepticisme serait poussé jusqu'aux dernières bornes du désespoir". (15) And the Mémoires abound in meditations upon death - so dear to the Romantic school. And many are the echoes of Childe Harold, as the young author passes from one major experience to another, each of which dominates his entire existence for the period of its supremacy. However, all invariably ends in despair and a longing for death:

Enfant, j'ai rêvé l'amour; jeune homme, la gloire;  
homme, la tombe, ce dernier amour de ceux qui  
n'en ont plus. (16)

And Steno, in his solitary contemplation of the emptiness of his heart, can never forget his reasons for hating life - the sense of which he cannot understand. In his last speech before his death he says that his soul has already died, long ago. Novembre and Steno are alike in so far as the hero's death is occasioned primarily by his own lack of will to live. (17) Steno does not simply

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(15) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol. I, p.483

(16) Ibid., p.491

(17) This is also reminiscent of course of the fate of Chulkaturin in Turgenev's Diary of a superfluous man.

fade away in the way that Flaubert's hero does. His inability to come to terms with the emptiness of life drives him, like Manfred, to suicide. But it is not in a fit of passion or frenzy that he kills himself - his suicide is rather a calm and calculated exit from a meaningless world in which he has no desire to live.

As far as the expression of a less personal form of nihilism is concerned, there is an element of this in the Mémoires d'un fou in a passage which reveals certain parallels with another of Turgenev's early works, his poem Darkness. This is the young Flaubert's vision of a holocaust and the ensuing annihilation of humanity. (18) The whole description of this horrible final episode in the history of the world is romantically coloured and highly dramatic. And certain elements of this vision are essentially the same as we find in Turgenev's treatment of a parallel subject in Darkness, which was a translation of Byron's poem of the same name. The idea of a great disaster befalling the world (in Flaubert's work it is a fire, in Turgenev's the death of the sun) and the extinction of the human race - which in both works is seen as basically evil anyway - obviously had a lugubrious appeal to the creative imagination of the two young writers.

Returning now to our comparison between Steno and the Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre, there is in all three works a forcefully expressed feeling that the hero is being pursued by fate. There are two dimensions to

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(18) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol. I, p.498-9

this concept: on the one hand there is a strong internal fatality, for these characters, like Byron's Giaour, are motivated by the tyranny of their passions. On the other hand, there is a portrayal of fate or destiny as an external force, something evil against which the hero can struggle only ineffectually. In Novembre, this dominating fate assumes the dimensions of "une atroce divinité". The hero reflects:

...la fatalité, qui m'avait courbé dès ma jeunesse, s'étendait pour moi sur le monde entier, je la regardais se manifester dans toutes les actions des hommes aussi universellement que le soleil. (19)

And many are Steno's references to his pursuit by fate, which he describes as "my horrible enemy". (20) Destiny actually intrudes into the course of the action in the form of the voices which haunt Steno. This echoes Byron's Manfred, where the 'Destinies' appear in human guise.

All three heroes - in the Mémoires, Novembre and Steno - are also involved in a tragedy of love. For all of them have seen love as the one thing that could give value to life, and yet their experience reveals that love is in fact inseparable from suffering and unhappiness. At the root of all Steno's mental anguish is his unfulfilled ideal love for a young girl who died. He cannot get over the tragedy of this loss, and rejects the love offered him by Julia - and this in turn causes her death. In the Mémoires d'un fou we see

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(19) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.II, p.184

(20) Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, p.373

the "émotion toute religieuse" of the young hero's brief involvement with Maria. But as in the case of Steno, this ideal is equally unattainable and the young man is again plunged into the nothingness of life. Flaubert's farewell to Maria :

O Maria! Maria, cher ange de ma jeunesse, toi  
que j'ai vue dans la fraîcheur de mes sentiments...  
Adieu et cependant je penserai toujours à toi.(21)

seems to be a fairly close parallel to Byron's poem of farewell to his Mary Chaworth. These incidents also had their parallels in Flaubert's own emotional experience - and indeed in Turgenev's as well, if we accept the involvement with Zinotchka in First Love as at least in part autobiographical. (22) It is interesting to note that Flaubert later found the confession of youthful love in First Love very moving, and commented, recalling his own youthful romanticism:

Quant à votre Premier amour...Tous les vieux romantiques (et j'en suis un, moi qui ai couché la tête sur un poignard), tous ceux-là doivent vous être reconnaissants pour ce petit conte qui en dit long sur leur jeunesse! (23)

In the Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre, there is a certain irreverence - Byronic in tone - for such conventional institutions as religion and the family. In contrast to such Romantic heroes as Chateaubriand's René, Flaubert's heroes sneer at such venerable social institutions, seeing in them only hollowness and mockery. We know that Flaubert admired this mocking stance of Byron from a letter he wrote to Ernest Chevalier in 1838:

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(21) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol. I, p.540

(22) The autobiographical aspects of First Love will be looked at more closely in Chapter IV.

(23) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.47-8 (to Turgenev, 1869)

Vraiment je n'estime profondément que deux hommes, Rabelais et Byron, les deux seuls qui aient écrit dans l'intention de nuire au genre humain et de lui rire à la face. Quelle immense position que celle d'un homme ainsi placé devant le monde! (24)

Turgenev's hero Steno also rejects conventional religion. Some of the scenes between the hero and the monk Antonio parallel the conversations between Manfred and his abbot of St. Maurice. Similarly, both Manfred and Steno are deprived of belief in God by their intellectual faculties. As far as an element of irreverence is concerned, this is probably at its strongest in Turgenev's long satirical poem Pop, which owes a debt to Byron also. The author goes some way towards acknowledging this:

My intention was to imitate everything without  
Restraint...For days on end I read Pucelle and  
Beppo. (25)

Another common feature of the early romantic writings of Flaubert and Turgenev is a predilection for the exotic - either Mediterranean or Oriental. In Novembre for example, the hero slides into reveries of exotic landscapes, feeling himself assimilated into an "immense forêt de l'Inde". (26) Steno finds himself among the ruins of Ancient Rome. As far as their Mediterranean settings are concerned (Spanish and Italian dominate) there is no authenticity at all in their local colour. Turgenev for example sets his Temptation of Saint Anthony partly in Italy at the time of the Sforza, but the names of the characters are the only genuine Italian element in the play. Both Flaubert and Turgenev also

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(24) Correspondance, vol.I, p.29

(25) Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, p.420

(26) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.II, p.180

have a tendency to confuse the Spain and Italy they use as their back-cloth: Flaubert's Spanish hero in his short story Bibliomanie is called Giacomo, and similarly a character in Turgenev's playlet Two Sisters is given the Italian name Valerio, despite the Spanish setting of the work. As far as the East is concerned, both seem to have been attracted by Childe Harold's lament:

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,  
With one fair spirit for my minister,  
That I might all forget the human race...(27)

This is of course especially relevant to their treatment of the subject of the temptation of Saint Anthony, but these works will be compared in greater detail in a later chapter.

Many of the Romantic or Byronic motifs referred to in the comparison of Mémoires d'un fou, Novembre and Steno appear to a greater or lesser extent in a good many others of Turgenev's and Flaubert's early works - for example the former's lyric poetry and the latter's 'mystery' cycle with its echoes of Cain. But let us now leave the earliest period of their literary activity and move on to the mid-1840's to see how the figure of the Byronic hero fares in the increasingly mature approach to literature of the two young writers. By now they have shaken off a considerable part of the youthful cloak of Byronism behind which they had hidden in their first works. Yet the Byronic hero is not forgotten - on the contrary, instead of simply aping his pose, both of them begin to use him consciously, and

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(27) Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, IV, 1.177

virtually as a literary device. Let us see how Flaubert achieves this in his first full-length novel, L'Education sentimentale of 1845.

Flaubert draws from the stock Romantic range in the characterisation of Jules, a young artist, in order to bring out the contrast between him and Henry, the young man who gets over his youthful infatuations, in time to build himself a solid and conventional career. Henry's only concession to the romantic is to include a couple of lines from Byron on the bottom of one of his love letters to Mme. Renaud. Jules, on the other hand, is presented as a thorough-going victim of artistic sensibility with strong romantic tendencies, which cause him to suffer mental anguish as well as intellectual solitude. When Jules is disappointed in love, naturally he rereads Byron, and as mentioned before, he keeps a skull on his mantle-piece. Yet Jules is trying to be more objective in his attitude towards literature. As he reads René, Werther and Byron after his unhappy personal experiences, he recognises that his admiration of such works is too full of personal sympathy, and that this is far removed from the disinterested contemplation of the real artist. As Jules can be seen as a self-portrait of Flaubert, this episode shows an interesting evolution in the young writer's own ideas on originality and objectivity in literature. But the process of evolution is not yet complete, for echoes of Byron are plentiful in the account of Jules' earlier adventures, before reaching this more mature standpoint.

For example, Jules' vision of Henry as he writes to him in Paris is of an envied and imaginary Byronic Henry, gazing from his lady's shoulder into a dazzlingly bright sky. This bears little resemblance to the actual state of affairs where Henry, a student, is indulging in clandestine flirtation with his schoolmaster's wife. There is also an echo of The Giaour, as Jules, fallen into revery on monastic life in the Middle Ages, sees the faithful kneeling in prayer and feels a strange wonder and a profound mockery in his heart.

Although Flaubert appears to be nearing the end of his literary apprenticeship and setting himself new standards of objectivity, there is evidence in L'Education sentimentale that he still has a definite esteem for Byron. He considers him to be far superior to the run-of-the-mill Romantic poets, as we see when he notes in the final section of the book when discussing Henry's bedtime reading:

Il n'avait gardé du romantisme - vieux mot qu'on emploie à défaut d'un meilleur - que le côté tout extérieur...ce romantisme à ogives et à cottes de mailles, qui est à celui de Goethe et de Byron ce qu'est le classique de l'empire au classique du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. (28)

In his stories of the mid '40's, Turgenev also uses Byron more consciously. In Andrey (also written in 1845), the Byronic hero is used as a point of reference. Andrey, Turgenev tells us, is considered an eccentric because he does not smoke and does not play cards, and certainly, he is a victim of ennui. But he is not bored in the manner of Byron's Corsair, but rather as a des-



cendant of Tartar adventurers. Thus his boredom is no romantic pose of foreign importation, but rather a genuine plight, its origins inseparable from the Russian situation. For this Russian gentleman, like so many others, finds himself without a useful rôle to play in society.

But perhaps the most interesting among Turgenev's compositions of this period is Parasha of 1844. This was his first published work of any length, and won favourable comment from Belinsky. It was his first really serious attempt to come to terms with the Russian scene. As mentioned above, many of his earlier works were set against an indeterminate romantic background with exotic overtones. Parasha, on the contrary, shows signs of a new maturity, and derives clearly from the traditions of Pushkin and Lermontov. Turgenev is obviously indebted to Pushkin, as this 'story in verse' reveals the influence of Eugene Onegin in both setting and characterisation. However, the hero, Victor Alekseyevich, retains certain links with the Byronic tradition of Steno. He shows the same haughtiness and indifference as one finds in Byron's disillusioned heroes. But it is the characterisation of Parasha herself that is of real interest here, for it is Turgenev's first fully developed female portrait. Parasha has a capacity for deep emotion, yet without undue sentimentality, and in this respect, she emerges as the prototype for many more of Turgenev's heroines. Thus a change in direction is visible: ironic asides are becoming rarer, and bouts of melancholy more

discreet: the romantic hero is on the decline, while the Turgenevan heroine is rapidly emerging.

With the appearance of Andrey Kolosov, another interesting feature can be observed. The Byronic young man appears once again, but as one among others, as a device in the process of characterisation. In the same way that Flaubert drew a contrast between Jules and Henry in L'Education sentimentale, here a distinction emerges between the "emotional realism" of the central hero, Kolosov himself, and the emotional "romanticism"(29) of the narrator. Just like Henry, Andrey falls in love with a girl whom he later ceases to love and therefore abandons. The moral is clearly pointed:

Gentlemen, he who breaks with a woman whom he once loved at that bitter, yet significant moment, when he knows, in spite of himself, that his heart is no longer overflowing with love for her - well, he understands better and more deeply the sacredness of love than those who, out of boredom and weakness, continue to harp on the broken strings of their languid and sensitive hearts. (30)

So here, it is the un-Byronic hero who is seen to be on the right path. From now on, those characters who persist in playing on these broken heart strings will be portrayed either satirically or with implicit criticism as Turgenev strives to break with Romanticism and achieve greater naturalness in his characterisation.

Contrary perhaps to expectations, however, the romantic hero with Byronic overtones never fades out completely from the work of Flaubert and Turgenev, and

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(29) This distinction is made by R.FREEBORN in his Turgenev- A study, Oxford, 1960, p.27

(30) Pol. sob. soch., vol.V, p.35

is indeed still present in modified form in some of their most mature creations. Once a more detached and rational attitude towards this kind of figure has been evolved, the romantic hero remains a constant, a permanent feature of the writer's repertoire. And this is brought out in the mature works as an illustration of certain points and ideas. Perhaps the most valid use of this device is to demonstrate a feeling of separateness on the part of a character, highlighting his different nature and his inability to find a rôle in society - which is ultimately Byronic and romantic in inspiration. Flaubert's and Turgenev's most accomplished portraits of this type of hero are Frédéric Moreau and Rudin. Although these characters are firmly set in and closely related to the world of reality, there surrounds them the same Byronic isolation that was already present in the Mémoires d'un fou and Steno. It is still, in fact, in modified form, the isolation of Childe Harold.

And as late as 1870 we find Turgenev using the Byronic figure as a 'device' in his story Knock...Knock...Knock.... Again it is used to indicate the type of man who is ineffectual and irrelevant in the contemporary Russian situation. In this story, Turgenev looks back at the sort of men who were common in the 1830's and reflects:

And what did we not find: Byronism, Romanticism, echoes of the French Revolution and the Decembrist uprising...faith in destiny, lucky stars and the strength of character, poses and declamations - and the boredom of nothingness. (31)

Turgenev expresses a concern that this Byronic kind of character, such as his hero Tieglev, is still posing a problem in Russia.

As fashion had been a factor of at least some significance in the two writers' interest in Byron, it is not surprising that his work later lost its once powerful grip over their creative imaginations. However, apart from this retention of certain features from the Byronic repertoire for use as literary devices, Flaubert and Turgenev do retain an interest in Byron as a poet in later life. In the late 1840's for example, Flaubert was rereading Byron and his comment à propos of Cain is still "Quel poète!" (32) And as late as 1876 Turgenev still found in Byron a source of stimulation, for we see him writing to Flaubert:

J'ai lu le deuxième chant du Don Juan de Lord Byron - et ça a été une trace lumineuse à travers toute cette grisaille. (33)

So having initially assimilated largely comparable colourful, romantic elements from Byron's poetry, Flaubert and Turgenev retain similar points from his lessons. With increased maturity, the romantic influence is levelled out, but certain features are retained, as we saw for example in the characterisation of Jules and Victor Alekseyevich. And although the literary ideals of the two writers changed considerably between the days of characters who aped Manfred or Childe Harold, and the creation of such complete and original portraits as Frédéric Moreau and Rudin, it remains valid to apply to

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(32) Correspondance, vol.II, p.6 (L.Colet, 1847)

(33) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XI, p.331

Flaubert and Turgenev the comment made by Estève on the influence of Byron on writers of this generation:

...mais ils gardent au fond du coeur une place  
au poète qui a enthousiasmé leur jeunesse. (34)

For in later life, they still found his models relevant to their own literary experience.

## ii) Goethe

That Goethe had a strong and lasting significance in the development of Flaubert and Turgenev is clear from both their works and their correspondences. Although some critics have tried to minimize the influence of this German poet (35), others, who have undertaken more detailed study of the works involved are quick to acknowledge that both Flaubert and Turgenev owed a considerable debt to Goethe. (36) And certainly they ranked him among their 'masters' in literary matters.

That their interest in and enthusiasm for Goethe was lifelong is easy to establish. As far as Flaubert is concerned, even if we take with the pinch of salt that it merits his niece Caroline's romanticized tale of her uncle's enraptured discovery of Faust I to the sound of the Easter bells on the Cours la Reine at Rouen, the basic fact remains valid: that Flaubert was deeply fascinated by Faust from his schooldays onwards. Turgenev's

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(34) ESTÈVE, op. cit., p.283

(35) For example, in the case of Flaubert, Baldensperger in Goethe en France, Paris, 1904, p.184.

(36) A Swiss doctoral thesis has been devoted to a study of the principal aspects of Turgenev's view of Goethe and his work: SCHÜTZ Katharina, Das Goethebild Turgenjews, Bern 1952.

Flaubert's debt to Goethe has been assessed in a fairly detailed study by Léon DEGOUMOIS in Flaubert à l'école de Goethe, Geneva 1925.

early interest in Goethe is established by the letters he wrote to Granovsky at the time of his studies in Berlin in the late 1830's. (37) Here we read for example:

I am reading Goethe all the time. This reading strengthens me in these dismal days. What treasure I am constantly finding in his works! (38)

For evidence of the persistence of this common interest in Goethe on the part of Flaubert and Turgenev, we need only turn to Edmond de Goncourt's accounts of the Sunday afternoons at Flaubert's flat in the rue Murillo during the 1870's. Turgenev was a regular attendee at these gatherings, and it appears, would frequently delight his host with his readings and extempore translations of works by Goethe. Goncourt notes, for example, in his Journal for 1875:

Chez Flaubert Tourguéneff nous traduit le Prométhée et nous analyse le Satyre : deux oeuvres de la jeunesse de Goethe, deux imaginations de la plus haute envolée. (39)

Looking now at the influence of Goethe in more detail, this process has in the case of Flaubert, been described as "une lente assimilation", (40) spanning the whole of his career, from Voyage en enfer to Bouvard et Pécuchet. Thus the true extent of Goethe's influence is difficult to assess accurately, for his contribution to Flaubert's intellectual development becomes closely interwoven with his own ideas.

Beginning with Flaubert's early 'mystery' cycle, there are obvious influences from Faust. In works such

(37) It is unfortunately not possible to pinpoint Turgenev's first reading of Goethe, as letters for the period of his youth are very sparse - only fifteen are extant for the first twenty years of his life.

(38) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.176 (1839)

(39) Journal des Goncourt, vol.V, p.197

(40) This phrase is Degoumois's.

as Smarh, for example, we find the situation - as in Faust - of the devil accompanying a mortal through the heavens in order to tempt him. There are parallels of character, too, in figures such as Arthur Almaroës of Rêve d'enfer, a German alchemist in a lonely castle, who cannot find salvation even in the idyllic love of an innocent young village girl. Also the young heroes of Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre could be said to have borrowed their romantic pose equally from Byron's Childe Harold and Goethe's hero Werther.

And by the time he embarked on the first Education sentimentale in 1845, Flaubert was clearly familiar with the text of Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre. For example, Jules' infatuation with Lucinde constitutes a fairly close parallel with the Mignon episodes of Goethe's work. And there is of course the basic similarity of the form of the Bildungsroman.

Numerous comparisons have been made between Faust and Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint Antoine. But surely the most interesting point to be made here is not that Flaubert may or may not have tried to copy certain characters or scenes from Goethe, but rather that he was striving to create - working from the same fundamental principles - a work that would be an achievement in French literature parallel to that of Faust in German literature. Thus there is a close link in concept and in spirit between the two works, rather than in textual resemblances. Faust and La Tentation have certain other features in common too: for their authors, these works

were both "l'oeuvre de toute une vie", (41) being reworked or developed several times. Also both works have their origins in popular legend, and even in the puppet theatre. (42)

As for active involvement with Goethe on Turgenev's part, the earliest example seems to be a translation of Klärchens Lied from Egmont. He refers to this in a letter of September 1840, saying that this poem is haunting him, and he is singing it to himself all day long. (43) This, together with the other pieces which Turgenev translated from Goethe at this time - the last scene of Faust I (the final separation of Faust and Gretchen) and number twelve of the Römische Elegien - reveals which aspect of the German writer's work appealed to him in this early period. These fragments all show the romantic and lyrical side of Goethe's writing, and are full of sadness and the impossibility of happiness in love. Ideas which were of course very much in harmony with Turgenev's own rather romantic disposition in these years.

As for the influence of Goethe on Turgenev's own creative imagination, this can be felt perhaps most strongly in his Temptation of Saint Anthony of 1842. For here, apart from the generally romantic elements of the setting, we find a very Mephistophelean temptor in the figure of Carlo Spada, who, like his German model, offers

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(41) This was the phrase that Flaubert used himself to describe the significance of St. Antoine in his work.

(42) Goethe first saw the Faust story enacted by a Black Forest puppet theatre. Flaubert was fascinated by the puppet play on St. Anthony that was presented annually at Rouen's fair. (In the 1870's, he took Turgenev to see it.)

(43) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. I, p.199 (to Bakunin and Efremov)



rejuvenation to his victim. (44)

Parasha is an interesting case to consider next, as certain parallels can be distinguished here between the relationship of Turgenev with the German work which figured in his inspiration, and Flaubert's attitude in the composition of his Tentation de Saint Antoine. (45) Indeed Faust seems to have been very much in the forefront of Turgenev's mind as he composed his narrative poem Parasha, yet the work goes far beyond the bounds of an imitation. For what he was trying to create was, in fact, a Russian Faust and a Russian devil who would be quite distinct from their German counterparts. This intention is especially evident in the following lines characterising the hero Victor Alekseyevich and the devil in question:

Out of boredom he rebukes everything!...  
I tell you my wit aims even at the devil,  
But a Russian devil - not a German one.  
The German devil is contemplative, an eccentric,  
A strange being; but ours is a natural  
Russian demon - stout and simple....(46)

In the same work, Turgenev also attempts a parody of the Gretchen tragedy in the love affair between Victor Alekseyevich and Parasha.

In 1845, Turgenev published a very interesting review of a new translation of Faust by Vronchenko. (47) This gave him an opportunity to formulate and expound his views on Goethe, which had reached an interesting stage of development at this point. In this article, Turgenev reveals his sympathy with Goethe as the champ-

(44) This work is discussed at greater length in Chapter VII.

(45) Parasha was written during 1843-4, Flaubert began work on La Tentation in 1848.

(46) Pol. sob. soch., vol. I, p.87, stanza XXXII

(47) This article appeared in volume 38 of Annals of the Fatherland, 1845.

ion of the cause of the individual and his right to happiness, but feels he can no longer accept this as the exclusive aim of literature. He admits that his own thoughts on the subject have been modified by the social demands of the day. It is interesting that such an attitude can be found at the basis of several of the central relationships in Turgenev's later novels: in On the Eve and Virgin Soil for example, where individual happiness is sacrificed to a greater ideal. In the Vronchenko essay, Turgenev says that there is a point in most peoples' lives where Goethe's Faust seems to be the most perfect achievement of the human intellect. But then there comes another time when something stronger is needed. He writes :

...as a poet, Goethe has no equal, but now it is not only poets that we need. (48)

However, Turgenev's attitude to Goethe does not remain long in this rigid 'social' position. Indeed, in the following year, in a letter to Pauline Viardot, we find Turgenev admiring decidedly non-social qualities in Goethe's Iphigenie :

Du reste, la tragédie de Goethe est certainement belle et grandiose, et la figure qu'il a tracée est d'une simplicité antique, chaste et calme.(49)

And indeed, the echoes of Goethe do not disappear entirely from Turgenev's work, despite the idealism referred to above. For in Rudin of 1855, the impact of the figure of Werther and his particular brand of romanticism can still be felt in the delineation of the hero. And there are also of course certain parallels with the

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(48) Pol. sob. soch., vol. I, p.238

(49) Pol. sob. pisem, vol. I, p.250 (1846)

Bildungsroman situation of Wilhelm Meister.

Another example which establishes that Turgenev's 'ideological break' with Goethe was not definitive is his short story of 1856, itself entitled Faust. It has as its epigraph a line from Faust I :

Entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren!

and this is an idea central to a good deal of Turgenev's mature writing, especially of course his novel Home of the Gentry. In this short story, however, Goethe's Faust is virtually endowed with supernatural or mystical powers, so strong is its trance-like effect on the young woman, Vera Nicolaevna to whom the hero reads the play.

Meanwhile, we find Flaubert developing an equally interesting attitude towards Goethe in the 1850's. In fact he becomes a yardstick for Flaubert, a standard of excellence in art, the ultimate criterion by which must be judged all those who aspire to greatness in art. For example, when he visited Italy in 1851, the only expression that Flaubert could find to sum up the enormous achievement of Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, is to describe the paintings as "un art immense, à la Goethe", (50) as if the name alone would enable the reader of his letter to define, by comparison, the genius of Michelangelo. He makes a similar comment in a letter of 1852, where he reveals his opinion of the poetry of Ronsard. He exclaims enthusiastically:

Quel poète! quel poète! quelles ailes!...et ça vaut du Goethe, au moins par moments. (51)

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(50) Correspondance, vol.II, p.313 (Louis Bouilhet)

(51) Ibid., p.368 (L.Colet)

And indeed, as Flaubert and Turgenev themselves develop as writers, so their interest in Goethe changes and deepens. They realize that there is far more to Goethe than the romanticism which first attracted their attention. In 1852, for example, Flaubert, after reading Mémoires d'outre-tombe, reproaches Chateaubriand for not seeing that there is far more to the German poet's work than the romantic pose of Werther. He adds the comment that Werther "n'est qu'une des mansardes de cet immense génie". (52) With the passage of time, Flaubert and Turgenev become more interested in the deeper, philosophical side of Goethe's writings, finding especially fruitful Eckermann's Gespräche mit Goethe. Both make frequent references in the correspondence of their later years to the maxims of Goethe contained in this work. Many are the times we find the phrase "comme disait le père Goethe" in Flaubert's letters. In fact it is not difficult to detect a certain envy of Goethe on his part. It is especially clear in a letter to George Sand: "Voilà un homme, ce Goethe! Mais il avait tout, celui-là, tout pour lui". (53)

Turgenev liked to seek refuge in the philosophy of Goethe in the face of adverse criticism, of which he had to face a good deal in his later years. For example, we read in the final section of his study 'On Fathers and Children:

And so, my dear colleagues, it is to you that I am addressing myself:

Greif nur hinein ins volle Menschenleben!

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(52) Correspondance, vol.II, p.409 (L.Colet)

(53) Ibid., vol.VI, p.127 (1870)

I would like to say to you, quoting Goethe -

Ein jeder lebt's - nicht vielen ist's bekannt  
Und wo ihr's packt - da ist's interessant!

...  
As for the final result, the final appraisal of  
a so-called literary career - here too one has  
to recall Goethe's words:

Sind's Rosen - nun sie werden blüh'n. (54)

This last idea - 'if these are roses, they will bloom' -  
is used again in 1877 to hide Turgenev's hurt feelings  
after the unfavourable reception of Virgin Soil. (55)

And in a letter to Stasyulevich of the same period,  
Turgenev again seeks comfort in the philosophy of Goethe:

In St.Petersburg today some people are devouring  
me, others tearing me apart with their teeth...  
But the best of luck to them! Goethe was right:  
- it's simple:

Man bleibt am Ende - was man ist. (56)

Thus it becomes evident that their admiration  
for Goethe in later years was not only literary: Flaubert  
and Turgenev were attracted also to the man and his  
character in such respects as his disdain for the  
pettiness of the world.

Nonetheless, he continued to be an authority for  
them in matters literary. Indeed those who wrote to  
Flaubert asking for literary advice are very often  
referred to Goethe. This is especially true in the case  
of his letters to Louise Colet. For example, when she  
asked for help with her own composition La Paysanne,  
Flaubert supplied her with an epigraph from the Römische  
Elegien. Similarly, in a letter to a certain Gizhitsky  
who had written to Turgenev asking what reading matter  
he could recommend, the inevitable answer is of course

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(54) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIV, pl06 & p.108

(55) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII (i), p.74, (1877)

(56) Ibid., p.83 (1877)

'Goethe and Shakespeare'. (57)

As for the nature of the influence of Goethe on Flaubert and Turgenev, it would appear to be rather different from that of Byron. With the English poet, it was more a simple question of borrowing certain situations and characters. Although in the early works such as Turgenev's Temptation of St. Anthony and Flaubert's Smarh we do find alchemists, witches, devils and a general Walpurgisnacht atmosphere lifted straight out of Faust, these borrowings do give way in their more mature years to what is perhaps best described as a process of impregnation. That is, the two writers gradually absorb more and more ideas and methods from Goethe as they themselves develop. This process continues until the German writer is no longer merely a 'source' from whom certain literary techniques can be borrowed, but rather a situation is reached where Goethe becomes inextricably bound up with the fund of philosophical ideas that forms the basis of their view of literature and life. Indeed Barbey d'Aurevilly has said of Flaubert in a similar connection: "Goethe est le générateur de Flaubert".(58) For neither Flaubert nor Turgenev repeat Goethe in their work, nor can the situation be reduced to one of imitation, but it is rather, as Dumesnil has said of Flaubert, that each of them, "s'étant engagé dès sa jeunesse sur la route que Goethe lui a tracée, jamais...n'en a dévié".(59)

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(57) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII(i), p.288 (1878)

(58) BARBEY D'AUREVILLY, Le Roman contemporain, Paris 1902, p.119

(59) DUMESNIL René, 'Flaubert et Goethe' article in Les Marges, April 15th. 1925.

So it emerges that the influence of Goethe on the two writers was more substantial and had a more profound effect than that of Byron and other purely romantic poets. Whereas Flaubert's and Turgenev's interest in the English poet was initially the reflection of a contemporary fashion - although as we have seen, useful lessons were learnt from this experience - the influence of Goethe was felt on a more intensely personal level. Although the German writer's general popularity in France and Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century is unquestionable, he was not 'fashionable' in the way that Byron had been. Rather his works were linked closely with the intellectual development of Flaubert and Turgenev as young writers, because they found so much in Goethe that was a reflection of, or stimulus to their own ideas and aspirations.

### iii) Shakespeare

Shakespeare occupied, with Goethe, a place at the summit of literary achievement in the view of Flaubert and Turgenev. He provides a further example of a literary master discovered by the two writers at an early age, and who was to remain a constant presence in their mature tastes in literature, thus having significance for the development of their own creative imaginations.

As for early contact with the works of Shakespeare, we know that Turgenev knew him well enough to undertake translations of parts of Othello and King Lear in 1836-7 (60) And a few years later, in a letter to Granovsky, we

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(60) These translations are referred to in a letter to Nikitenko of 1837. (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.164)

find him referring to 'father Shakespeare' and quoting from Measure for Measure. (61)

Flaubert's earliest mention of Shakespeare occurs in a letter to Ernest Chevalier, written when he was only thirteen:

Maintenant je suis occupé au théâtre du vieux Shakespeare, je suis en train de lire Othello. (62)

It seems that the historical element was part of the attraction of Shakespeare for Flaubert at this stage. For example, in his historical sketch Loys XI the scenes between the king and his fool would appear to parallel certain scenes in Act III of King Lear.

However it was during the years 1845 and 1846 that Flaubert studied Shakespeare especially closely, and developed a more mature appreciation of his work. The letters of this period are full of references to the awe-inspiring nature of his genius. In a letter to Louise Colet of 1846, for example, Flaubert describes Shakespeare's genius and its effect on him personally in the following terms:

...le seul homme qui puisse remplacer tous les autres, mon vieux Shakespeare, que je vais recommencer d'un bout à l'autre et ne quitter cette fois que quand les pages m'en seront restées aux doigts. Quand je lis Shakespeare je deviens plus grand, plus intelligent et plus pur. Parvenu au sommet d'une de ses oeuvres, il me semble que je suis sur une haute montagne: tout disparaît et tout apparaît. On n'est plus homme, on est oeil; des horizons nouveaux surgissent, les perspectives se prolongent à l'infini. (63)

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(61) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.188 (This play is contained in a volume The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, part of Turgenev's library at Orel, in which is inscribed in his own hand: 'Berlin 1838, from Granovsky'.)

(62) Correspondance, vol.I, p.21

(63) Ibid., p.339



In the following year, we find Turgenev describing Shakespeare as "le poète dramatique...le plus humain, le plus antichrétien" of all time. (64) He also seems to find the achievement of Shakespeare rather overawing, as in another letter he comments: "L'ombre de Shakespeare pèse sur les épaules de tous les auteurs dramatiques". (65)

It is interesting that Flaubert picks out Hamlet for special admiration at this period. In a letter to Louise Colet he went as far as to say:

Les trois plus belles choses que Dieu ait faites, c'est la mer, l'Hamlet et le Don Juan de Mozart. (66)

For of all Shakespeare's work, it was the figure of Hamlet that had the greatest fascination for Turgenev. The first appearance of a clear-cut Hamlet figure is in Khor and Kalinych, the first of the Hunting Sketches and which appeared in 1847. For although the two central characters are Russian peasants lost in the depths of the Orlovskaya province, they are also recognizable as European literary types: there is an implicit equation of these two characters with the figures of Hamlet and Don Quixote. This opposition of the contemplative and the dynamic temperament is to develop into a major feature of Turgenev's work, culminating in his philosophical essay Hamlet and Don Quixote of 1860.

The Hamlet figure reappears in another of the Hunting Sketches, Peter Petrovich Karataev. The hero

(64) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.279 (to Pauline Viardot) (The label 'antichrétien' is of course a compliment, and not a term of abuse coming from Turgenev.)

(65) Ibid., p.273 (1847, to Pauline Viardot)

(66) Correspondance, vol.I, p.352 (October 1846)

of this story, a Russian country squire, identifies himself directly with the hero of Shakespeare's tragedy, and quotes at length from the play in his conversation with the narrator. He seems to be especially in sympathy with the sentiments of the speech:

No more, and by a sleep to say we end  
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks..(67)

Hamlet is again transposed into the Russian backwoods in the story Hamlet of the Schigrovsky District. This hero, although presented as "corroded by introspection" and having been on the point of suicide several times, has nevertheless something of the social dimension of the Russian superfluous man. For he wonders what link there can be between European philosophy and Russian rural life, preferring personally the lessons of Russian life.

The Hamlet figure is again in the forefront in the short story A Correspondence, completed in 1854. It is narrated entirely through letters exchanged by a young woman, Maria Aleksandrovna and the Hamlet-type hero Aleksey. The correspondents discuss the nature of love and how it is affected by circumstances such as fate, society and the gulf between the sexes. Aleksey's attitude embodies all the disillusionment of his 'type' - for like Hamlet, he laments, the men of his generation were not young even in their youth. Certainly they were moved by high ideals and a sense of purpose, but none of their dreams were fulfilled.

In a short story of 1870, we find yet another

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(67) Hamlet, Act III, scene I.

example of Turgenev's adoption of a Shakespearean character. Indeed the same figure that had appealed to Flaubert some thirty years earlier. This is of course his King Lear of the Steppe, again set in the Russian countryside. But the problems of old Harlov with his daughters in particular and human nature in general are basically parallel to those of the Shakespearean model.

Thus it emerges that what Turgenev esteemed most in Shakespeare's work was the creation of certain human types. This is made explicit in the first section of his King Lear story where we read:

The conversation turned on Shakespeare, on his types, and how profoundly and truly they were taken from the very heart of humanity. We admired particularly their truth to life, their actuality. Each of us spoke of the Hamlets, the Othellos, the Falstuffs, even the Richard the Thirds and Macbeths (the last two only potentially resembling their prototypes) whom we had happened to come across. (68)

Such, then, in Turgenev's view, was the universality of Shakespeare's tragic heroes, that the essential type could be transposed to another period in time and another setting, and the morality embodied in the character would remain valid.

Returning now to Flaubert, we find that Shakespeare remained for him also a source of inspiration, and indeed regeneration in later years. In 1875, for example, he wrote to George Sand:

Je ne lis rien du tout, sauf Shakespeare que j'ai repris d'un bout à l'autre. Cela vous retrempe et vous remet de l'air dans les poumons, comme si on était sur une haute montagne. Tout paraît médiocre à côté de ce prodigieux bonhomme. (69)

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(68) Pol. sob. soch., vol.X, p.186 (We have of course already seen Flaubert declaring that the stamp of genius in literature is the creation of 'types'. And presumably his study of Shakespeare served only to confirm him in this view.)

In fact both were convinced that Shakespeare was essential reading for the writer. This is especially clear from a letter Turgenev wrote to Flaubert à propos of Zola :

J'ai lu le feuilleton de Zola...Que voulez-vous? Je le plains. Oui, c'est de la compassion qu'il m'inspire: et je crains bien qu'il n'ait jamais lu Shakespeare. Il y a là une tâche originelle dont il ne se débarrassera jamais. (70)

In his mature years, the aspect of Shakespeare we find Flaubert admiring particularly is his supreme achievement of the objectivity in literature that he himself was striving so hard for. In Flaubert's view, Shakespeare had succeeded in effacing completely the personality of the writer from his work. He asked:

Qu'est-ce qui me dira, en effet ce que Shakespeare a aimé, ce qu'il a haï, ce qu'il a senti? C'est un colosse qui épouvante; on a peine à croire que ç'ait été un homme. (71)

And this is the key to why Flaubert eventually came to prefer Shakespeare to Byron: he became tired of the latter's constant exposition of his own sensibility, preferring vastly the 'universality' of Shakespeare's work. Indeed he saw them as each representing a radically different 'type' of poet. He wrote to Louise Colet:

Car il y a deux classes de poètes. Les plus grands, les rares, les vrais maîtres résument l'humanité; sans se préoccuper ni d'eux-mêmes, ni de leurs propres passions, mettant au rebut leur personnalité pour s'absorber dans celles des autres, ils reproduisent l'Univers, qui se reflète dans leurs oeuvres....Il y en a d'autres

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(70) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII(i), p.256 (1878) (In fact Turgenev was wrong about Zola: his correspondence reveals that as early as 1860 he knew and appreciated the work of Shakespeare. (Oeuvres complètes, Cercle du Bibliophile, vol. 14, pp.1245-7)

(71) Correspondance, vol.I, p.386 (L.Colet, 1846)

qui n'ont qu'à crier pour être harmonieux, qu'à pleurer pour attendrir, et qu'à s'occuper d'eux-mêmes pour rester éternels...Byron était de cette famille; Shakespeare de l'autre. (72)

Other aspects of Shakespeare's genius which Flaubert particularly admired were his portrayal of women (73) and his successful combination of the powers of observation and imagination. (74)

So having discovered the plays of Shakespeare in their teens, both Flaubert and Turgenev remained faithful admirers of his work. And both seem to have considered the character of Hamlet as the pinnacle of his achievement. On a more general level, as practising writers, they praised particularly the universal quality of his work, the truth of the human element in his characterisation.

#### iv) Cervantes

Cervantes' Don Quixote was yet another great European literary achievement which provoked the common admiration of Flaubert and Turgenev, and whose influence had a not inconsiderable significance in the development of their own artistic temperaments.

(72) Correspondance, vol.I, p.385-6 (L.Colet, 1846)

(73) This emerges in a letter to Ernest Feydeau in which Flaubert declared : "Un seul poète, selon moi, a compris ces charmants animaux [les femmes], à savoir le maître des maîtres, l'omniscient Shakespeare". (Correspondance, vol.IV, p.304, (1859) Ø

(74) These aspects of Shakespeare's genius are mentioned by Flaubert after he had read Pericles. Inspired by this play he declared in a letter to Louise Colet: "Mais quel homme c'était! Comme tous les autres poètes, et sans en excepter aucun, sont petits à côté et paraissent légers surtout. Lui, il avait les deux éléments, imagination et observation, et toujours large! toujours!" (Correspondance, vol.III, p.45 (1852) )

As far as Flaubert is concerned, stories from Don Quixote were read to him at a very early age by Père Mignon, a neighbour of his family in Rouen. It was most probably the first great work of literature with which Flaubert came into contact. And at the age of nine, we see him planning to write a whole series of novels undoubtedly inspired by his contact with the knight of La Mancha. He wrote to Ernest Chevalier:

...je ferai des Romans que j'ai dans la tête  
qui sont la belle Andalouse, le bal masqué,  
Cardenio, Dorothee, la Mauresque, le curieux  
impertinent, le mari prudent. (75)

It is not possible to establish that Turgenev knew Don Quixote at such an early age; the first reference he makes to it is in a letter to Annenkov of 1853. But here he talks about his plans to translate "this immortal novel" and says that he finished rereading it some time ago. He adds the comment that Cervantes had been to him what Pushkin had probably been to Annenkov. (76) This would seem to indicate that his admiration for the Spanish writer ran deep and was of long standing.

For Turgenev, the appeal of this novel was again basically a question of literary types. He was deeply fascinated by the human type suggested by the figure of Don Quixote, just as he had been by Hamlet. And again, he incorporates this 'type' into his own artistic repertoire. We have already mentioned the use of the dynamic Quixotic character as a foil to the contemplative Hamlet

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(75) Correspondance, vol.I, p.2 (1831)

(76) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.172 (In his correspondence of later years, Turgenev makes further reference to his intention to translate Don Quixote, but the plan never came to fruition. He did however translate a short story of Cervantes - Rinconete y Cortadillo. He also translated Louis Viardot's critical study of Don Quixote (see Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII(ii), p.79)

type in the story Khor and Kalinych. But it is not only in such a situation of contrasting opposites that Turgenev uses the model of Don Quixote - its influence can be felt for example in his novel Rudin. R.Freeborn has said of the mode of composition of this work:

This style may be called the Don Quixote style, in imitation of the novel by Cervantes, which calls for the hero to be portrayed as an adventurer whose travels serve to motivate the action of the novel. (77)

It is also interesting to note Rudin's own admiration for the hidalgo, and especially for his freedom. As he leaves Daria Mikhailovna's estate, embarking once again on a nomadic existence, he says:

...do you remember what Don Quixote said to his squire as he was leaving the Duchess's palace? "Freedom" he said, "my friend Sancho, is one of man's most precious possessions, and happy is he to whom heaven has granted a piece of bread without making him obliged to another for it!" What the Don felt then, I feel now.(78)

Turgenev's most detailed analysis of the Quixotic character comes of course in his study Hamlet and Don Quixote, which was first given as a lecture in St.Petersburg in 1860. This piece has been described as "a philosophical key to his literary works". (79) At the centre of this essay is a division of humanity into two basic types. Firstly there is the category of introverts, the Hamlets who constantly refer everything back to themselves. Their introspection prevents them from acting, for - and Turgenev quotes Shakespeare - "the native hue

(77) FREEBORN R. Trends of development in the Russian 19th. century realistic novel (1830-1880), D.Phil. thesis, p.129

(78) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VI, p.335-6

(79) WALICKI A. 'Turgenev and Schopenhauer', Oxford Slavonic Papers, vol.X, 1962.

of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought". In the opposite camp are the extroverts, who exist only for the sake of something outside of themselves. This second type is epitomized by Don Quixote, whom Turgenev sees as the representative of the forces of enthusiasm and of sacrifice. The Don Quixotes of this world, those who are prepared to die in the service of an ideal, are the only real people of action, and thus the main instrument of historical progress.

Turgenev now tried to incorporate his declared preference for the Don Quixote man of dedicated action into his novels, in an attempt to make him overshadow the Hamlet figure with his intellectual preoccupations, portrayed so often in earlier works. This intention is most clear in On the Eve written shortly after the Hamlet and Don Quixote essay. For here, the selfless dedication of Insarov to his cause, Bulgarian nationalism, is contrasted with the more personal preoccupations of the other young men in the story, especially Shubin the aspiring artist.

Although Flaubert did make some use of the human types suggested by Don Quixote, as we shall see shortly, he also admired the technique and literary achievement embodied in Cervantes' novel. In 1847, for example, he reread the work with the following reaction:

J'en suis ébloui, j'en ai la maladie de l'Espagne.  
 Quel livre! quel livre! comme cette poésie-là  
 est gaie et mélancolique! (80)

And in 1852, he seems awe-inspired by the excellence of

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(80) Correspondance, vol.II, p.50 (L.Colet, 1847)



Don Quixote. He writes to Louise Colet of his recent reading:

En fait de lectures, je ne dé-lis pas Rabelais et Don Quichotte....Quels écrasants livres! Ils grandissent à mesure qu'on les contemple, comme les Pyramides, et on finit presque par avoir peur. Ce qu'il y a de prodigieux dans Don Quichotte, c'est l'absence d'art et cette perpétuelle fusion de l'illusion et de la réalité qui en fait un livre si comique et si poétique. Quels nains que tous les autres à côté! Comme on se sent petit....(81)

Indeed Don Quixote was to retain a permanent place among Flaubert's 'livres de chevet'. He read it again in 1869 with the comment "Quel gigantesque bouquin!" (82)

As for the question of influence of this work on Flaubert's own literary creation, some critics (83) have seen parallels between the characterisation of Mme. Bovary and that of Cervantes' work. But the parallel which has been seen between the relationship of Emma and Homais and the Don and Sancho Panza seems somewhat tenuous to say the least. If there is any relationship between Flaubert's novel and Don Quixote, it is surely on the thematic level. And this in the domain of what Thomas has described as "le thème cervantesque de l'illusion livresque". (84) This is the idea of a man (or woman) so completely impregnated by his readings of imaginative works, that he builds for himself a romantic ideal. He strives to realise this ideal, but with total

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(81) Correspondance, vol.III, p.53 (L.Colet, 1852)

(82) Ibid., vol.VI, p.13 (George Sand)

(83) Notably Helmut HATZFELD, 'Don Quijote und Madame Bovary', Idealist Philologie, No.3 (1927); René GIRAUD, Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque, Paris 1961; and Harry LEVIN, The Gates of Horn, New York, 1963, pp.248-50.

(84) THOMAS Romain, 'Cervantès et Flaubert', Les Langues néo-latines, April-June 1939.

disregard for the limits imposed on his struggle by reality. But finally reality takes its toll and the ideal and its victim are crushed by it. There is however nothing specific to suggest that this thematic parallel was conscious or intentional on Flaubert's part, although he did admit to Louise Colet in a letter written while he was working on Mme. Bovary :

Je retrouve toutes mes origines dans le livre  
que je savais par coeur avant de savoir lire,  
Don Quichotte...(85)

But it is Flaubert's last novel, Bouvard et Pécuchet, which seems closest to the spirit of Don Quixote. And this in characterisation as well as on the thematic level. For there is much in the presentation of the "deux bonshommes" that recalls the relationship between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza: the contrast in their physical appearance and temperament, and the loyalty of their friendship as they go through thick and thin together. But on a different level, they can be seen collectively as modern Don Quixotes, for the common aspiration of Bouvard and Pécuchet is to search for universal knowledge and truth, which they hope to achieve through all their various scientific researches. And in spite of their frequent and bitter failures, they never lose faith in the eventual realisation of their ideal. Like Don Quixote, they simply pick themselves up and begin again, going from experience to experience and disappointment to disappointment.

So we find in Cervantes' Don Quixote another

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(85) Correspondance, vol.II, p.442 (1852)

literary discovery that delighted Flaubert and Turgenev alike, and, remaining with them for the greater part of their careers, was able to provide inspiration for their own literary creations.

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Thus it emerges that the tastes of Flaubert and Turgenev coincide as far as major literary preferences are concerned. They also had similar tastes interestingly enough among writers who figured less prominently among their favourites. For example, Turgenev's reply to a M. Weinberg who suggested he translate some Balzac, has a decidedly Flaubertian ring:

I would perhaps have translated a few pages of Montaigne or of Rabelais, but nothing by Balzac, of whom I have never been able to read ten pages together, this writer is so foreign and anti-pathetic to my nature. (86)

Although it would be foolish to ascribe the origin of too much of Flaubert's and Turgenev's early work to books, their imprint is nonetheless plain upon the very first literary efforts, where Romantic models were copied with great vigour. And indeed throughout their early years as writers, we can see them standing at a crossroads where diverse literary influences intersect. But they were not passive in their reading of the 'masters'; imitation never satisfied them. They rather assimilated and adapted in their own creative imaginations the characters and ideas that came to them through reading.

In fact the experience of both writers authent-

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(86) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XIII(ii), p.76 (1882)

icates a piece of advice that Flaubert offered to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie. He encouraged her to study in depth the masters, Goethe, Shakespeare, Montaigne and assured her that in this way she would create for herself "une atmosphère intellectuelle qui sera composée par l'émanation de tous les grands esprits".(87) This experience would be beneficial because, Flaubert added on the value to the artistic temperament of contact with genius: "cela s'infiltr<sup>e</sup> à la longue".

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(87) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.197 (1857)

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER II

(8) Литературный вечер у П.А.Плетнева:

...фантастическую драму в пятистопных ямбах под заглавием «Стеино».  
...это совершенно нелепое произведение, в котором с детской неумелостью выразилось рабское подражание байронскому «Манфреду». (Соч. XIV, 11)

(14) Стеино:

голова  
горит..О, для чего нам жизнь дана?  
Как сон пустой, как легкое виденье,  
:::  
Что значит жизнь? Что значит смерть?(Соч. I,  
370)

(25) Поп:

И подражать намерен я свирепо  
Всем...я на днях читал Руссelle и Верро  
(Соч. I, 420)

(30) Андрей Колосов:

О, господа! человек, который расстается с женщиной, некогда любимой, в тот горький и великий миг, когда он невольно сознает, что его сердце не всё, не вполне проникнуто ею, этот человек, поверьте мне, лучше и глубже понимает святость любви, чем те малодушные люди, которые от скуки, от слабости продолжают играть на полупорванных струнах своих вялых и чувствительных сердец! (Соч. V, 35)

(31) Стук...стук...стук...:

Чего-чего не было в этом типе? И байронизм, и романтизм, о декабристах – и обожание Наполеона, вера в судьбу, в звезду, в силу характера, поза и фраза – и тоска пустоты... (Соч. X, 267)

(38) Т.Н.Грановскому:

Я всё не перестаю читать Гете. Это чтение укрепляет меня в эти вялые дни. Какие сокровища я беспрестанно открываю в нем! (Письма I, 176)

(46) Параша:

Он всё бранил от скуки - так!...

...

Скажу вам, в бесы метил мой остряк,  
Но русский бес не то, что чёрт немецкой. —  
Немецкой чёрт, задумчивый чудака,  
Смешон и страшен; наш же бес, природный,  
Российский бес - и толст и простоват,... (I, 87)

(48) О переводе Фауста - М.Вронченко :

...как поэт Гёте не имеет себе равного, но нам  
теперь нужны не одни поэты...(Соч. I, 238)

(54) По поводу «Отцов и детей» :

Итак, мои молодые собраты, к вам идет речь моя

Greift nur hinein in's volle Menschenleben!

сказал бы я вам со слов нашего общего учителя, Гёте, -

Ein jeder lebt's - nicht vielen ist's bekannt,  
Und wo ihr's packt - da ist's interessant!

Что же касается до окончательного результата, до  
окончательной оценки так называемой литературной  
карьер, то и тут приходится вспомнить слова Гёте:

Sind's Rosen - nun sie werden blüh'n.

(Соч. XIV, 106  
& 108)

(56) М.М. Стасюлевичу:

Сегодня меня в Петербурге иные кушают - другие  
терзают зубами... На здоровье и другим! Гёте прав:  
= как там и хитры -

Man bleibt am Ende - was man ist. (Письма XII(i),  
83)

(68) Степной Король Лир:

Беседа зашла о Шекспире, об его типах, о том, как  
они глубоко и верно выхвачены из самых недр челове-  
ческой «сути». Мы особенно удивлялись их жизненной  
правде, их вседневности; каждый из нас называл тех  
Гамлетов, тех Отелло, тех Фальстафов, даже тех  
Ричардов Третьих и Макбетов (этих последних, правда,  
только в возможности), с которыми ему пришлось  
сталкиваться. (Соч. X, 186)

(78) Рудин:

...помните вы, что говорит Дон-Кихот своему оруженосцу, когда выезжает из дворца герцогини? «Свобода, — говорит он, — друг мой Санчо, одно из самых драгоценных достояний человека, и счастлив тот, кому небо даровала кусок хлеба, кому не нужно быть за него обязанным другому!» Что Дон-Кихот чувствовал тогда, я чувствую теперь... (Соч. VI, 335)

(86) П.И.Вейнбергу:

...я бы скорее взялся перевести несколько страниц из Монтеня или Рабле, но уж никак не Бальзака, которого я никогда не мог прочесть более десяти страниц сряду, до того он мне противен и чужд.  
(Письма XIII(ii),  
76)

CHAPTER III - The concept of nature in the works of  
Flaubert and Turgenev

La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers  
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles.  
BAUDELAIRE \*

An interesting parallel is to be found in Flaubert's and Turgenev's attitude to nature, for although their early development was indubitably influenced by contact with Romantic literature, only certain aspects of the typically romantic attitude to nature are adopted. And these are developed later in a distinctive and non-romantic manner. For nature rarely appears in the guise of a comforter, mother-figure or source of consolation in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev; such a sentiment as that expressed by Lamartine in Le Vallon :

Mais la Nature est là qui t'invite et qui t'aime,  
Plonge-toi dans son sein qu'elle t'ouvre toujours.

is totally alien to them. What they do initially take from the Romantics is essentially the pessimistic side of their approach. For those characters in their early works who have or seek a relationship with nature receive little comfort therefrom. The spectacle of the natural world serves rather to fill the two writers' young heroes with a sense of their own nothingness in particular, and the meaninglessness of human life in general.

This is true, for example, of Steno, who is struck by the contrast between the serenity and eternity of nature and the transience and futility of man. In the last scene of the drama, shortly before his suicide, we find him reflecting:

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(\*) BAUDELAIRE Charles, Correspondances (Les Fleurs du Mal)



An eternal circle  
 Is your symbol, O Nature, O woe, O woe,  
 ...  
 How great you are to the minds of men,  
 They do not understand you - these men!  
 What a pitiful creation is man.

and a little later:

Nature  
 Is bidding me farewell. But it is useless  
 To waste so generously this light and life  
 In the earth and in the sky...  
 It cannot hold me back.  
 ... Farewell,  
 Earth, with all your splendours,  
 Adieu! Adieu! O shine not on me,  
 >You golden light of the sky,  
 You remind me of everything  
 I loved. (1)

And indeed this manifestation of natural beauty does not  
 succeed in stopping him from putting an end to his  
 meaningless life.

For Flaubert's hero in the Mémoires d'un fou, con-  
 tact with the world of nature produces an equally  
 negative result. Contemplation of nature leads only to  
 further introspection, and thence to questioning and  
 doubt about the sense and purpose of the struggle that is  
 human life. Towards the end of the Mémoires the hero  
 reflects:

...mais pour celui qui regarde les feuilles  
 trembler au souffle du vent, les rivières ser-  
 penter dans les prés, la vie se tourmenter et  
 tourbillonner dans les choses, les hommes vivre,  
 faire le bien et le mal, la mer rouler ses flots  
 et le ciel dérouler ses lumières, et qui se  
 demande: \*Pourquoi ces feuilles? pourquoi l'eau  
 coule-t-elle? pourquoi la vie elle-même est-elle  
 un torrent si terrible et qui va se perdre dans  
 l'océan sans bornes de la mort? pourquoi les  
 hommes marchent-ils, travaillent-ils comme des  
 fourmis?... Ces questions mènent à des ténèbres  
 d'où l'on ne sort pas...

L'homme alors est comme ce voyageur perdu  
 dans les sables, qui cherche partout une route  
 pour le conduire à l'oasis. (2)

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(1) Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, pp.415 & 418  
 (2) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.529-30

And as much of Flaubert's and Turgenev's later writing shows, the way to this 'oasis' of life is not to be found through communion with nature.

Before such a realization and acceptance of the cold hostility of nature to man however, we can detect on the part of both writers, a certain flirtation with pantheistic ideas. For confrontation with the futility of human life provokes a longing to be absorbed into the organic whole of nature. For example, in Turgenev's poem Evening of 1837, the young man, as he contemplates nature at the approach of night, yearns to reach some kind of understanding with her. But he is rejected, the secrets of the life of the natural world remaining unrevealed to man. That Turgenev was personally susceptible to what he describes as "philosophicopanthéistique"<sup>(3)</sup> experiences is evident from a letter he wrote to Pauline Viardot in May 1848, describing a walk in a wood near Saint-Cloud. He wrote:

J'ai passé plus de quatre heures dans les bois - triste, ému, attentif, absorbant et absorbé... L'impression que la nature fait sur l'homme seul est étrange... Il y a dans cette impression un fond d'amertume fraîche comme dans toutes les odeurs des champs, un peu de mélancolie sereine comme dans les chants des oiseaux..(4)

And in some of the Hunting Sketches, there is a definite feeling of closeness to the life forces of nature, as the narrator describes his long and often solitary expeditions through the Russian countryside. In the story Bezhin Meadow, for example, the feeling of being at one with the

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(3) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.298

(4) Ibid., p.297

natural world is especially strong. Here the narrator describes the curious sensations aroused in him on an occasion when he was lost at night in the countryside:

The dark clear sky in all its mysterious splendour was austere and immeasurably high above. One's chest felt a delectable pressure, as it breathed in that unique stirring and fresh fragrance - the fragrance of a Russian night in summer. (5)

Turgenev's achievement in passages such as this has been aptly summed up by the critic Irving Howe. He writes:

In his best work, and particularly in the Hunting Sketches, he achieves a tone of pan-sexual empathy which can soar to a marvellously tender identification with every living creature. (6)

It is interesting to note which characters achieve most completely this feeling of identity with nature. It is in fact the uneducated peasant living a simple and unsophisticated life who seems to enjoy the best relationship with the natural world. The most striking example of this is, of course, Kassian, the peasant philosopher who lives in complete harmony with nature. In fact one could go as far as to say that it is the positively simple minded who appear to come off best in this respect, if we take into consideration Turgenev's short story Mumu. The hero of this work, Gerasim, is a deaf mute, an unfathomable character, who seems to enjoy an equally strange relationship with the earth of his native village.

Contrasted with such characters is the lot of the educated country gentry. For in the Hunting Sketches, we see that the nobleman, deprived of the peasant's simple

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(5) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IV, p.97

(6) HOWE Irving, Politics and the Novel, New York, 1957, p.118

yet meaningful contact with nature, suffers the torments of ennui. This is especially true of course of the Hamlet of the Schigrovsky district. Thus it emerges that in Turgenev's view, it is man's intellectual faculties, the thinking process that cuts him off from a worthwhile relationship with nature.

A parallel view can be found in Flaubert's work. He had been conscious of a pulsating life force present in the harmony of nature even in his early works. And in Novembre, the young Flaubert links this phenomenon not only to his own intellectual being, but it would seem that through these vibrating rhythms, contact was made - as in Bezhin Meadow - also on the sexual level. - Flaubert writes:

J'étais dans la variété de mon être, comme une immense forêt de l'Inde, où la vie palpite dans chaque atome. (7)

And also in Novembre, he expresses his admiration of the harmony of nature declaring "...la nature m'apparut belle, comme une harmonie complète". (8)

There is also a suggestion in Flaubert's work that it is only when the thinking substance has been broken down completely, and the conscious ego has annihilated itself, that man can achieve a really complete relationship with nature. And nowhere is this made more explicit than in La Tentation de Saint Antoine, where the saint yearns to escape from his mental anguish by the elimination of his own personality and the total absorption of his being into the material manifestations of the natural

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(7) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.II, p.180

(8) Ibid. ,p.191

world. Flaubert's supreme expression of this materialistic brand of pantheism comes in Saint Antoine's final exclamation:

Je voudrais...me diviser partout, être en tout, m'émaner avec les odeurs, me développer comme les plantes, couler comme l'eau, vibrer comme le son, briller comme la lumière, me blottir sur toutes les formes, pénétrer chaque atome, descendre jusqu'au fond de la matière, - être la matière! (9)

Perhaps the most productive material for a detailed comparison of the attitudes to nature of Flaubert and Turgenev as they approach maturity as writers, is to be found in the former's notes on his travels in Brittany, Par les champs et par les grèves, (10) and Turgenev's short story Journey into the Forest, the most philosophical of his works of the 1850's. (11)

In the case of Flaubert, it has been argued that in his youth, it was the poetic aspects of pantheism that were of more importance to him, rather than its philosophical implications. However a close study of the Belle-Isle section of Par les Champs et par les grèves reveals that Flaubert was indeed fully aware of the more profound issues involved in pantheism. (12) For indeed from his

(9) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, pp.200-201 (final version)

(10) Flaubert made this trip with Maxime du Camp in 1847. This was not however the first time that his own travels had inspired in him the sensations to which he gives expression in Par les champs. In his notes on his trip to the Pyrenees in 1840 for example, he reveals a consciousness of an animate force within nature: "Tout en vous palpète de joie et bat des ailes avec les éléments, on s'y attache, on respire avec eux, l'essence de la nature animée semble passée en vous". (Notes de Voyage, p.425)

(11) This story was begun in 1853, but not completed until 1857.

(12) Most of the examples used in this chapter will be taken from this section of the work, as it is the most serious in tone, contrasting with the largely anecdotal nature of the rest of the material.

youth onwards, he had gained a close knowledge of Spinoza's philosophy through his friendship with Alfred Le Poittevin. (13) As far as Turgenev is concerned, one would expect at this stage full mastery of the philosophical implications of such a subject, for between 1838 and 1841, he studied philosophy under Werder at the University of Berlin.

What emerges above all from these two works - Par les champs and Journey into the Forest - can perhaps be most concisely summed up as a concept of the Machiavellism of nature. (14) And this is distinct from the simple 'indifference' of nature to man found in such Romantic works as Victor Hugo's Tristesse d'Olympio. Here the two writers feel the gulf between themselves and the natural world to be so great, that the situation is rather one of alienation. The pessimism of these works can be in part explained by the fact that both were written at a period of crisis or sadness in the author's personal life. In the case of Flaubert, he had not succeeded in shaking off the depression occasioned by the deaths of both his father and sister in 1846. Turgenev started his story Journey into the Forest during the bleak period of his exile at Spasskoie.

One of the most striking resemblances between these two works is the prominence accorded to the contrast between the eternity of nature and the transience of man.

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(13) Flaubert was at Le Poittevin's bedside when he died in 1848. In a letter he commented: "Jusqu'au moment où il lui a été impossible de rien faire, il lisait Spinoza jusqu'à une heure du matin..." (Correspondance, vol.II, p.83)  
 (14) This is a phrase that Flaubert himself uses later; in a letter to Renan of 1876 he talks of "le machiavélisme de la Nature". (Correspondance, vol.VII, p.298 )

For in the view of both Flaubert and Turgenev, man, when brought into a situation of confrontation with nature, is inevitably filled with a feeling of his own doom and human inadequacy. Despairing at his inability to weld a permanent link between his own being and the life-force of nature, Flaubert reflects on the pitiable situation of man in general:

Mais l'homme n'est fait pour goûter chaque jour que peu de nourriture, de couleurs, de sons, de sentiments, d'idées. Ce qui dépasse la mesure le fatigue ou le grise...Ah! que notre verre est petit, mon Dieu! Que notre soif est grande! que notre tête est faible! (15)

In a similar vein, Turgenev's narrator states that such a huge natural phenomenon as a pine forest can only bring home to man more profoundly than ever the sense of his own nothingness; for man, compared to nature, is a creature of a single day, born yesterday, and today already doomed to death.

So nature can only intensify man's awareness of his isolation, his feebleness, and the accidental quality of his existence. He must be seen as at the mercy of natural forces. And both Flaubert and Turgenev imply that the true and ultimate evaluation of man's achievements is to be made not according to the scale of values which governs his own life, but rather in relation to the eternity of nature.

As presented in both Par les champs and Journey into the Forest, nature emerges as an essentially mysterious and unfathomable entity, for it embodies ~~unchanging~~ yet inexorable laws which rule man, but which remain cold and

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(15) Par les champs et par les grèves, p.131

incomprehensible to him. For example, we see Flaubert regretting the inadequacy of his physical faculties which prevents him from perceiving fully the mysteries of nature. He writes:

...nous regrettions que nos yeux ne pussent aller jusqu'au sein des rochers, jusqu'au fond des mers...pour voir comment poussent les pierres, se font les flots...que nos oreilles ne pussent entendre graviter dans la terre la formation des granits. (16)

Thus the now familiar idea of a life-force beating throughout nature is also present. This is also the case in Journey into the Forest, where we find Turgenev referring to "the same primaeval untouched force" and "the eternal murmur of the forest". But perhaps one of the greatest similarities of experience between the two works is the revelation that both writers feel that their understanding of the functioning of nature - though still incomplete - has been deepened by this exposure to its fundamental anima. For as Turgenev's narrator sits observing an insect deep in the pine forest he declares:

Looking at it, it suddenly seemed to me that I understood the life of nature...A tranquil and slow animation, the leisureliness and restraint of its sensations and forces, a balance of health in each separate being - that is its very basis, its inalterable law. (17)

And Flaubert reveals a comparable contact with the basic life-force of nature:

...quelque chose de la vie des éléments émanant d'eux-mêmes, sans doute à l'attraction de nos regards, arrivait jusqu'à nous, et, s'y assimilant, faisait que nous les comprenions dans un rapport moins éloigné, que nous les sentions plus avant, grâce à cette union plus complexe. (18)

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(16) Par les champs et par les grèves, p.130-131  
 (17) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.69  
 (18) Par les champs et par les grèves, p.130



Another common feature to be noted in these pieces is the strange effect produced in the individual by this intensified contact with nature. Before the experience, both had hoped for extatic joy. Turgenev writes for example:

The soul was athirst for happiness so perfect that she rejected with scorn all that was small, all that was insufficient. She waited: soon happiness would burst on her in a torrent. (19)

And Flaubert had similar expectations: "Nous avions besoin jusqu'au bout d'abuser de notre plaisir et de le savourer sans rien en perdre". (20) But after he has been in the pine forest for some time, Turgenev's narrator begins to feel that he has peered into a place where no man ought to look, and now seems surrounded by a menacing atmosphere of gloom and cold, with the spirit of death hovering not far away. The parallel effect on Flaubert of his excursion to Belle-Isle is expressed rather more in concrete physical terms: his body was exhausted, his brain dizzy, confused, and his nerves felt "comme les cordes d'une harpe que l'on a trop pincées". (21) So for both writers, the experience of an intensified contact with nature must be classed as a shattering one. There is however a point of divergence between their experience which should be mentioned: for Flaubert, there was a fleeting moment of extasy as he began to feel himself being absorbed into nature. He tells us:

...nous devenions nature aussi, nous nous diffusions en elle, elle nous reprenait, nous sentions qu'elle gagnait sur nous et nous en avions une joie démesurée. (22)

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- (19) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.66  
 (20) Par les champs et par les grèves, p.129  
 (21) Ibid., p.131  
 (22) Ibid., p.130

Flaubert undoubtedly interpreted this experience as the beginning of the process of annihilation of the ego. But the process must remain incomplete, for, outside of death, man cannot become matter, and so the extatic moment is quickly past. Flaubert is left to regret the deficiencies in his own make-up that prevent him from consummating his union with nature. (23) For Turgenev's narrator, however, there is not even the briefest moment of joy. Although he has gained an intellectual insight in increased understanding, on the emotional level, nature remains essentially cold and hostile, with overtones of the positively evil. This of course leads us to the question already mentioned of the alienation of nature from man. In Journey into the Forest, the possibility of man finding help or sympathy of any kind in nature is completely excluded. From the beginning, the world of nature is presented as alien to that of man:

...he [man] feels that the last of his kind may vanish off the face of the earth - and not one needle will quiver on those pine twigs...he is more at home in the world that he himself has created. (24)

Whilst for Flaubert the violence of rejection by nature is such that it increases his awareness of the gulf between them, and even the beginnings of the experience of identification with nature cannot always be considered pleasant. For as he writes to Alfred Le Poittevin:

Quand on commence à s'identifier avec la nature..., on en est arraché tout à coup de façon à vous faire saigner. (25)

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(23) This experience at Belle-Isle can be seen as the emotional base on which Flaubert was to build St. Antoine's aspirations to be absorbed into material nature. There is also a less dramatic parallel in Mme. Bovary which will be mentioned later.

(24) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, pp.51-2

(25) Correspondance, vol.I, p.166 (1845)

Although there appears to have been no repetition in Flaubert's experience of the intensity of the Belle-Isle incident, there were other less dramatic occasions when he began to feel his own self being absorbed into a natural phenomenon or material object. For example, he describes such a sensation in a letter to Louise Colet:

A force quelquefois de regarder un caillou, un animal, un tableau, je me suis senti y entrer.(26)

This idea of assimilation with an object through contemplation or meditation is one not completely alien to Turgenev. But this is really only explicit in the Poems in Prose. Here, perhaps under the influence of Schopenhauer, he reveals, in pieces such as The Monk and Stay!, an interest in the powers of contemplation and the possibility of the annihilation of the ego.

The concept of nature as a hostile force which we have seen in these two works, Par les champs and Journey into the Forest, is also to be found in the correspondence of Flaubert and Turgenev. That the pessimism of the latter revealed in Journey into the Forest was based on personal experience of the hostility of nature is clear from a letter he wrote to Pauline Viardot in 1849. Here he recalls a violent storm he once witnessed, and this prompts him to reflect on :

...la brutale indifférence de la nature. C'est qu'elle l'est: elle est indifférente; il n'y a de l'âme qu'en nous et peut-être un peu autour de nous...c'est un faible rayonnement que la vieille nuit cherche éternellement à engloutir. Cela n'empêche pas cette scélérate de nature d'être admirablement belle...(27)

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(26) Correspondance, vol.III, p.210 (L.Colet, 1853)

(27) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.325

Similar are the sentiments we find in Flaubert's letters of the early 1850's, for example:

Comme ça se fout de nous, la nature! et quelle balle impassible ont les arbres, l'herbe, les flots! (28)

Et est-ce insolent la nature!...On se torture l'esprit à vouloir comprendre l'abîme qui nous sépare d'elle. (29)

Quel calme! Comme ça se fiche de nous, la nature!(30)

After this feeling of rejection by nature in the early period, it is not surprising that in the mature novels of Flaubert and Turgenev, nature is very much a background element, intruding rarely into the action. None of their major characters has an attitude to nature which is significant for the course of events within the novel. For example, it would not be easy on first reading to determine accurately the relationship of Emma Bovary, Frédéric Moreau, Insarov or Nezhdanov to nature. But this is not to say that nature plays no part at all in these novels, or that the author's own attitude to the natural world is not discernible through the fabric of the novel. In Mme. Bovary, for example, there is an instance - perhaps an attempt to recreate that moment at Belle-Isle - when feeling on the part of a character is linked in such perfect harmony with the common life of all things, that the one, so to speak, becomes the figurative expression of the other; we read of Emma:

...quelque chose de doux semblait sortir des arbres; elle sentait son coeur, dont les battements recommençaient, et le sang circuler dans sa chair comme un fleuve de lait. Alors elle entendit tout au loin, au delà du bois, sur les autres collines, un cri vague et prolongé...

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(28) Correspondance, vol.III, p.293 (L.Colet, 1853)

(29) Ibid., p.317-8 (Louis Bouilhet, 1853)

(30) Ibid., p.411 (Louis Bouilhet, 1853)

et elle l'écoutait silencieusement, se mêlant comme une musique aux dernières vibrations de ses nerfs émus. (31)

And in Turgenev's novel On the Eve, we find reflections of his own view of the coldness of nature in the conversation between Shubin and Bersyenev in the first section of the book. The former says:

No matter how often you knock at Nature's door, she won't answer in words you can understand - for Nature is dumb. She will vibrate and moan like a violin string, but you must not expect a song...Nature...how cold and pedantic...(32)

Another point to be made is that the treatment of nature in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev is always free from the sentimentality often associated with this concept. Flaubert, for example, is quick to mock the popular attitude in his Dictionnaire des idées reçues with the definition:

NATURE - "Que c'est beau la Nature!" à dire chaque fois qu'on se trouve à la campagne.(33)

Turgenev is also critical of the traditional sentimental reaction to nature. In his Diary of a Superfluous Man, the hero is of the opinion that lengthy apostrophes to nature are not only of no use, but even in positively bad taste:

O nature! nature! I love you so, but I came from your womb incapable of living... But there is no point in talking about this, and tearful invocations to nature are really ludicrous.. Outpourings of emotion are like liquorice: you start sucking and at first it doesn't seem bad, but then it leaves a nasty taste in your mouth.(34)

It is also interesting to see how the romantic

(31) Mme. Bovary, p.223-4 (N.B. The use here of the word 'nerfs' rather than 'âme' which would in all probability have been the choice of a romantic writer, suggests a shift to a more materialistic point of view.)

(32) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.12

(33) Dictionnaire des idées reçues, CAMINITI edition, Paris 1966, p.313

(34) Pol. sob. soch., vol.V, p.181 & p.184

notion of 'giving oneself up to nature' fares in the works of the two writers. The only characters of Flaubert who actually do this are Bouvard and Pécuchet. The retreat of these two characters to the country, and their efforts to sustain mind and body with agricultural and other rustic pursuits are, however, far from romantic. The descriptions of their country life form in fact a disturbing mixture of comedy and pathos, but Flaubert tends to dwell on the scientific and technical aspects of their activities, giving little consideration to such things as meditation or communion with nature. Similarly, those of Turgenev's characters who abandon the trials of life in the town in favour of a country retreat do so not with any idealistic hope of finding an easy solution to their problems in peaceful communion with nature, but rather seek this retreat in order to find salvation in the literal act of tilling the soil, or in attending to the efficient management of their estates. Such is the case with Litvinov, the hero of Smoke.

Another parallel in the attitude of Flaubert and Turgenev to emerge after the bitter early experience of the hostility of nature is a distinct preference for art over nature. Flaubert makes especially emphatic pronouncements on this subject in his letters of the 1870's. he wrote to George Sand, for example: "Je donnerais tous les glaciers pour le musée du Vatican. C'est là qu'on rêve". (35) It is also clear that he personally did not find

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(35) Correspondance, vol. VII, p.163 (1874)

nature a great source of inspiration, for as he wrote to Turgenev in 1874:

...je ne suis pas l'homme de la Nature: "ses merveilles" m'émouvent moins que celles de l'Art. Elle m'écrase sans me fournir aucune "grande pensée". (36)

Neither did Flaubert find a natural environment soothing or restful even in later years. In 1875 he made a return visit to Brittany, and from the letters written at this period, it would seem that nature has lost all of its former attraction for him. He wrote to Turgenev from Concarneau:

En d'autres temps, le pays où je me trouve m'eût charmé. Mais le spectacle de la nature n'est pas si bon qu'on le dit pour les agités. Il ne fait que vous renfoncer dans la conviction de votre néant et de votre impuissance. (37)

Turgenev deals with the relationship between art and nature in his 'prose poem' Enough!. Three main points emerge from the discussion in section XV of this piece: firstly that there is a basic opposition between art and nature. Nature is hostile to art essentially because it is the work of man, and is striving to emulate her own unchanging and immortal qualities. But Turgenev seems to prefer the achievements of art, rather than those of nature:

...for in nature, there is no symphony of Beethoven, no picture of Ruysdael, no poem of Goethe, and only dull-witted pedants or idle chatterers can still maintain that art is the imitation of nature. (38)

Nevertheless, Turgenev realizes that it is always nature that has the upper hand in this uneasy relationship, and

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(36) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.158

(37) Ibid., supplément vol.III, p.213

(38) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, pp.119-20

that ultimately she is inexorable. In Enough!, nature is presented as a basically destructive force, and Turgenev sees the artist's efforts to produce a work of permanent value as doomed to failure. He laments:

How are we...poor artists to be a match for this deaf, dumb, blind force, who not only triumphs in her conquests, but moves ever onward, devouring all things. (39)

Turgenev is glad, however, that man does possess artistic creativity, and remembers Schiller's idea that only the transient is beautiful, for even in the world of nature, such ephemeral phenomena as flower petals and butterfly wings are among its most beautiful manifestations.

This pessimistic trend in Flaubert's and Turgenev's attitude to nature is in fact never reversed. The experiences of later years serve only to intensify it, as an examination of their last works reveals. The heartlessness of nature is stressed as strongly as ever, for example, in Turgenev's prose poem of 1879 entitled Nature. The poet has dreamt of an immense underground temple where Nature herself sits enthroned in flowing green robes. The poet naively supposes that she is pondering on the future of man, plotting the course by which he may achieve happiness and perfection. But no, it is the problem of strengthening the leg muscles of the flea that is preoccupying her for the moment. The poet asks if men are not her favourite children, to which she replies:

All creatures are my children...and I care for them alike, and all alike I destroy....



"But right...reason...justice..." I faltered again. "Those are men's words" I heard the iron voice say. "I know not right nor wrong...Reason is no law for me - and what is justice? - I have given thee life, I shall take it away and give it to others, worms or men...I care not..(40)

So Turgenev's last word on nature is that man can expect no help from this source.

And if we look at Flaubert's Légende de Saint Julien l'Hospitalier of 1876, the attitude to nature expressed here is hardly any more optimistic. Indeed, as far as Julien is concerned, nature is a decidedly sinister force on the occasion of his two 'fantastic' hunting expeditions, for the animals and the forest assume a portentous and symbolic significance in respect of his impending downfall.

In the attitude to nature of Flaubert and Turgenev, therefore, a basically parallel pattern of development is to be found. There is an initial period where one of the dominant features of their view is a direct adoption of ideas from the Romantic school. This is the insistence on the harmony of nature, and the contrast between this and the chaos of the world of man. And although there is a certain degree of lyricism in the treatment of nature in their earliest literary efforts - for example in certain passages of the Mémoires d'un fou and in the hero's monologues in Steno - the more sentimental aspects of the romantic view of nature never appealed to them.

Then as the two writers become more conscious of philosophical issues, their interest in nature develops,

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(40) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.189

and their works and correspondences of the 1840's and early 1850's reveal a serious interest in aspects of pantheism. As we have seen, their literary works mirror their unsuccessful efforts to establish a relationship with the ubiquitous life-force of nature.

After the realization that it is impossible to reach a state of union with nature in normal circumstances, the subject remains an essentially background issue as they compose their major novels. Nevertheless, a more general pessimism, contributed to in part by this view of nature as a hostile force, is present in their novels, as will be seen later. The approach of old age and contact with new philosophies - such as Schopenhauer's idea that nature is a positively evil force, or the increasing faith in 'science' rather than nature as a source of revelation - serve only to reinforce their views on the Machiavellism of nature. For both writers, the relationship between man and nature is always an essentially uneasy - if not actually antagonistic - one.

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER III

(1) Стено:

Вечный круг

Есть твой символ, природа. Грустно! грустно!

...  
 Как велика ты для людей...  
 Они тебя не понимают — люди!  
 Какое жалкое творенье человек!

Со мной

Прощается природа. Но напрасно  
 Она так щедро расточает  
 На небо и на землю свет и жизнь..  
 Меня не может это удержать.

Прости,

Земля, со всем твоим чудесным,  
 Прости, прости! О, не сияй мне в очи  
 Ты, золотое око неба. Всё,  
 Что я любил, ты мне вспоминаешь. (Соч. I, 415 &  
 418)

(5) Бежин Луг:

Темное чистое небо торжественно и необъятно высоко  
 стояло над нами со всем своим таинственным величием.  
 Сладко стеснялась грудь, вдыхая тот особенный,  
 томительный и свежий запах — запах русской летней  
 ночи. (Соч. IV, 97)

(17) Поездка в полесье:

Глядя на нее, мне вдруг показалось, что я понял  
 жизнь природы... Тихое и медленное одушевление,  
 неторопливость и сдержанность ощущений и сил,  
 равновесие здоровья в каждом отдельном существе —  
 вот самая ее основа, ее неизменный закон... (Соч. VII, 69)

(19) Поездка в полесье:

Душа жаждала счастья такого полного, она с таким  
 презрением отвергала всё мекое, всё недостаточное,  
 она ждала: вот-вот нахлынет счастье потоком...  
 (Соч. VII, 66)

(24) Поездка в полесье:

...он чувствует, что последний из его братьев может  
 исчезнуть с лица земли — и ни одна игла не дрогнет  
 на этих ветвях...ему легче в этом мире, им самим  
 созданном, здесь он дома, здесь он смеет еще верить в  
 свое значение и в свою силу. (Соч. VII, 51-2)

(32) Накануне:

Сколько ты ни стучись природе в дверь, не отзовется она понятным словом, потому что она немая. Будет звучать и ныть, как струна, а песни от нее не жди... Природа.. какое холодное, школьное выражение! (Соч. VIII, 12)

(34) Дневник лишнего человека:

О природа! природа! Я так тебя люблю, а из твоих недр вышел неспособным даже к жизни.

...  
Больше об этом говорить не стоит. А слезливые обращения к природе уморительно смешны.

...  
Чувствительные излияния - словно солодковый корень: сперва пососешь - как будто недурно, а потом очень скверно станет во рту. (Соч. V, 181 & 184)

(38) Довольно:

...в ней нет ни симфонии Бетховена, ни картины Рюисдаля, ни поэмы Гёте, - и одни лишь тупые педанты или недобросовестные болтуны могут еще толковать об искусстве как о подражании природе... (Соч. IX, 120)

(39) Довольно:

Где же <sup>н</sup>там, ...бедным художникам, сладить с этой глухонемой слепорожденной силой, которая даже не торжествует своих побед, а идет, идет вперед, всё пожирая? (Соч. IX, 120)

(40) Природа:

- Все твари мои дети, ... и я одинаково о них забочусь - и одинаково их истребляю.  
- Но добра... разум... справедливость... - пролепетал я снова.  
- Это человеческие слова, - раздался железный голос.  
- Я не ведаю ни добра, ни зла... Разум мне не закон - и что такое справедливость? Я тебе дала жизнь - я ее отниму и дам другим, червям или людям... мне всё равно... (Соч. XIII, 189)

#### CHAPTER IV - Love and the quest for happiness

"Entre deux coeurs qui battent l'un sur l'autre, il y a des abîmes; le néant est entre eux..." \*

Before determining the significance of love and the quest for happiness as themes in the literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev, we should first assess the importance of these elements in their personal lives. For this, we must draw on their correspondence with those of their friends who were selected for the rôle of confidant, and more especially on Turgenev's letters to Pauline Viardot and Flaubert's to Louise Colet.

These correspondences, together with the facts of the personal lives of Flaubert and Turgenev, reveal how each of them reached the conclusion that as love does not in any case bring with it happiness, the writer should devote his energies to other things of greater value. And despite an essential nuance of difference, the two were generally agreed that their rôles as writer and artist were more important than anything that they might achieve in personal relationships. But, as we shall see, whereas Flaubert learnt this lesson fairly early in life, for Turgenev the struggle to renounce his love for Pauline Viardot was long, and one in which he was never entirely successful.

The question of women and love was of considerable importance to both Flaubert and Turgenev. And in the case of each of them, it is in the period before 1856-7

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(\*) FLAUBERT, Correspondance, vol.II, p.410 (L.Colet, 1852)



this story can be verified by a study of its manuscript. Using his normal technique of composition, Turgenev compiled a list of characters, together with personal information about them before beginning to write. The dramatis personae for First Love includes :-

Myself, a boy - 15 years  
 My father - 38 years  
 My mother - 40 years (3)

But the '15 years' of the young hero replaces an obliterated '13 years'. It is in fact more likely - judging from the movements of the Turgenev family - that this sentimental adventure took place in 1831, when Ivan was thirteen, rather than in 1833, as in the story. Turgenev increased the age of his hero in order to make the amorous conflict between father and son more realistic. It is interesting to note that Flaubert similarly increases his hero's age when writing of his own first love and his meeting with Elisa Schlésinger in the Mémoires d'un fou. Although this work was written less than two years after his meeting with the Schlésinger family while on holiday at Trouville, Flaubert is deliberately vague about how old he was at the time. Although, as he composed the work, he was still only sixteen, he wrote of this fatherly visit to Trouville:

Vous dire l'année précise me serait impossible;  
 mais alors j'étais fort jeune, j'avais, je crois,  
 quinze ans. (4)

So Flaubert, like Turgenev, wishes to make the intensity of feeling in his story more credible and acceptable by

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(3) For a facsimile of part of this manuscript see MAZON André, Manuscrits parisiens d'Ivan Tourguénev, Paris 1930, p.21.

(4) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.504

increasing the age of the protagonist. Both writers apparently felt a little awkward about admitting to such precocious sentimental attachments.

Flaubert's very first personal involvement with the female sex was with the woman whose memory was to become enshrined and to remain with him in perhaps an idealised form, until his death. (5) Having said this, it is perhaps important to examine what was exactly the significance for Flaubert of his later attachment to Louise Colet, for on the surface this would appear to be the most significant love affair of Flaubert's life. But by comparison with his involvement with Mme. Schlésinger, the affair with Louise was of short duration only. In fact the break between them was so final that Flaubert told her that he would never again be 'at home' to her call, and indeed did not let her into his house, despite her several attempts at reconciliation. That the affair dragged on for so long in the early 1850's is rather more a tribute to Mme. Colet's tenacity, than to Flaubert's undying affection. They had met in 1846, and although Flaubert had had various fleeting experiences, he had not had a real mistress. He was attracted to Mme. Colet for obvious reasons, but was perhaps attracted also by the idea of having a mistress. But he had probably not realized just how much time and nervous energy such a diversion would consume, and especially when the mistress

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(5) His other youthful infatuations did not come until several years after the first meeting with Elisa : he did not meet Eulalie Foucaud in Marseilles until 1840, and his flirtations with the Collier sisters took place in the summer holidays of 1842.



was as demanding as Louise Colet was. Nevertheless, even in the months before he embarked on this affair, Flaubert was already concerned about the incompatibility of the rôles of lover and writer. For as he was considering the sculptor Pradier's suggestion that he should take a mistress, he wrote to Alfred Le Poittevin:

Un amour normal, régulier, nourri et solide, me sortirait trop hors de moi, me troublerait, je rentrerais dans la vie active, dans la vérité physique, dans le sens commun enfin, et c'est ce qui m'a été nuisible toutes les fois que j'ai voulu le tenter. (6)

As we shall see later, this was an idea that was to assume progressively a much greater significance for Flaubert, and for Turgenev also.

Ten years before his meeting with Louise, Flaubert had lost his heart to Mme. Schlésinger and had accepted at that time that there could be no other real love in his life. We have testimony to this effect in the Mémoires d'un fou where Flaubert writes of the period following his meeting with Elisa:

Je me suis efforcé d'attacher mon coeur à d'autres passions; il y a glissé dessus comme sur la glace. (7)

Une femme se présenta à moi, je la pris, et je sortis de ses bras plein de dégoût et d'amertume. (8)

So the affair with Louise was perhaps an attempt to disprove what Flaubert knew inside himself to be a firm fact. It was a second attempt. But he did not love Louise without reservation for long, and the end of the affair was certainly accelerated by her demands for more

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(6) Correspondance, vol.I, p.186 (1845)

(7) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.515

(8) Ibid., p.524

and more of Flaubert's valuable time and attention.

But to return to Elisa, we have to date seen this relationship only in terms of an admiration from afar on the part of Flaubert. It would seem hardly likely that this kind of involvement could provide a basis for such a long-lived and exclusive relationship as this turned out to be, and indeed Flaubert's attachment to Mme. Schlésinger did have an intense and even passionate stage. This occurred during his years in Paris as a law student between 1842 and 1844. There is a certain amount of conflict between the views of various critics as to whether they actually became lovers at this time. (9) What is certain, however, is that Flaubert made frequent visits to the Schlésinger household during these years, and what seems most likely is that he made some kind of declaration of his affection. As for Mme. Schlésinger, it would seem that while she did not reject him out of hand, she made it clear that she was not prepared to jeopardize for his sake her status as a respectable middle class wife and mother. In fact we can presume that there took place a confrontation largely the same as that between Frédéric and Mme. Arnoux in Chapter VI of L'Education sentimentale. Gérard-Gailly in Les Fantômes de Trouville has summed up well the poignancy of Elisa's

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(9) At one end of the scale Jean Pommier and Jean Bruneau believe that Flaubert's love for her was over by the end of his teens. At the other extreme, Mme. Durry, drawing her evidence for this from the plans of the 1869 Education sentimentale maintains that they were lovers. But Frédéric Moreau and Gustave Flaubert are not necessarily identical all of the time. Others support the same argument as Mme. Durry but using as evidence the 1845 L'Education sentimentale where Henry becomes the lover of Mme. Renaud. The most likely interpretation of this episode seems to be the middle course outlined above. This is the solution favoured by Enid Starkie and René Dumesnil.

probable reaction. He writes:

L'admiration ancienne et muette de l'enfant lui était rapportée identique par le regard de l'homme. Quelle importance et quelle plénitude soudain restituées à ce qu'elle n'avait cru être qu'une jolie effusion puérile. (10)

As further testimony to the intensity of this attachment, we have Flaubert's admission to Louise Colet herself of this most passionate relationship of his youth and early manhood. Naturally enough, however, he did not furnish the jealous Louise with all the details. At the same time, it is clear that he already considered love to be a burden. For he wrote to her of his earlier love:

J'en ai aimé une [femme] depuis quatorze ans jusqu'à vingt sans le lui dire, sans lui (sic) toucher; et j'ai été près de trois ans ensuite sans sentir mon sexe. J'ai cru un moment que je mourrais ainsi; j'en remerciais le ciel. Je voudrais n'avoir ni corps ni coeur...(11)

He also revealed that he did not find Louise's love for him completely compatible with his own concepts, for he wrote in the same letter:

Tu m'as fait mentir à mon système, à mon coeur, à ma nature peut-être...(12)

But perhaps the most interesting and relevant directly personal account of his relationship with Mme. Schlésinger is contained in a letter written in 1859 (some five years after the final break with Louise) to Amélie Bosquet. She had been teasing him about his reputation as 'un coureur de filles', to which he replied:

Je suis encore timide comme un adolescent et

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(10) GERARD-GAILLY, Flaubert et les fantômes de Trouville, Paris 1930, p.80

(11) Correspondance, vol.I, p.226 (1846)

(12) Ibid.

capable de conserver dans des tiroirs des bouquets fanés. J'ai, dans ma jeunesse, démesurément aimé, aimé sans retour, profondément, silencieusement. Nuits passées à regarder la lune, projets d'enlèvements et de voyages en Italie, rêves de gloire pour elle, tortures du corps et de l'âme, spasmes à l'odeur d'une épaule, et pâleurs subites sous un regard, j'ai connu tout cela, et très bien connu. Chacun de nous a dans le coeur une chambre royale; je l'ai murée, mais elle n'est pas détruite. (13)

So Flaubert's admission at this stage that he had within him this 'chambre murée' reveals to what extent he had already renounced the quest for love and happiness. But, as he told Amélie Bosquet, the special compartment in his heart, although shut up so as not to cause mischief, was still there. And it was to remain in existence virtually until Flaubert's death. For example, it was not until 1871 that Flaubert sent his first openly affectionate letter to Elisa, what Gérard-Gailly has called "sa première lettre d'amour...avec un retard de trente-cinq ans" .(14) This was shortly after the death of her husband Maurice, and now instead of the conventional "Chère Madame", Flaubert addresses her as "Ma vieille tendresse, ma toujours aimée".(15) The evocative powers of his memories of Elisa are perhaps most clearly revealed in the last surviving letter that Flaubert wrote to her. Towards the end of 1872 he wrote to her of his depression at his approaching old age, and his sense of inability to publish any more. We see just how closely thoughts of Elisa are mingled with his view of his own past, for he writes:

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(13) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.351-2

(14) GERARD-GAILLY, op. cit., p.174

(15) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.237-8

L'avenir pour moi n'a plus de rêves, mais les jours d'autrefois se représentent comme baignés dans une vapeur d'or. Sur ce fond lumineux où de chers fantômes me tendent les bras, la figure qui se détache le plus splendidement, c'est la vôtre! - Oui, la vôtre! O pauvre Trouville... Adieu, et toujours à vous. (16)

These letters are however far from being isolated links with his past emotional experiences, for Flaubert did see Mme. Schlésinger on several occasions during the early 1870's. Moreover throughout the period of their friendship, he had followed with close interest her family's affairs, sending especially warm messages on the occasion of births, marriages etc. (17)

So Flaubert maintained, throughout the years following the more intimate association of his student days in Paris, close ties with Mme. Schlésinger and her family. However he did not find the courage to be once more overtly affectionate until the approach of old age forced upon him the realization that memories of the past were now to be his only comfort.

But a complete picture of Flaubert's vie sentimentale should not overlook the significance of his minor relationships in middle life with a number of other women. Those with whom he had the lengthiest correspondences were the Princess Mathilde, Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, Mme. Roger des Genettes, Amélie Bosquet, and the sisters Mme. Lapierre and Mme. Brainne. Although the letters to each woman differ slightly in tone, Flaubert's relationship with each was basically the same. By the time he

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(16) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.427-8

(17) See especially on the subject of the baptism of Mme. Schlésinger's grandchild a letter of October 2nd. 1856. (Correspondance, vol.IV, p.128)

began these exchanges of letters in the late 1850's, he had already become disillusioned with the idea of love as a panacea, and had renounced the quest for happiness through a lasting relationship with one woman. In fact he makes quite explicit his exact standpoint in this matter in one of his earlier letters to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie. Here he reveals a certain amount of bitterness as he writes:

Quant à l'amour, je n'ai jamais trouvé dans ce suprême bonheur que troubles, orages et désespoirs! La femme me semble une chose impossible. Et plus je l'étudie, et moins je la comprends. Je m'en suis toujours écarté le plus que j'ai pu. C'est un abîme qui attire et qui me fait peur...(18)

Nonetheless in actual fact there was a certain ambivalence in his attitude to women, and although the example quoted above is far from being an isolated expression of such a view, at other times Flaubert enjoyed the diversion of female company, and as Dumesnil has said "avait... un impérieux besoin de tendresse féminine, à défaut d'amour". (19)

All of these other, secondary relationships are perhaps best summed up in the words of someone who was directly involved. Amélie Bosquet wrote in the foreward to her personal collection of letters from Flaubert that he had never paid court to her in the conventional sense and that any moments of passion in their relationship had been inspired by intellectual subjects only. She provides the key to Flaubert's renunciation of the quest for happiness through love when she writes:

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(18) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.356 (1859)

(19) DUMESNIL René, Gustave Flaubert, l'homme et l'oeuvre, Paris 1947, p.190.

...tous ses amis savent que du jour où il s'est entièrement donné à la vie littéraire...il eût redouté, jusqu'au point le plus extrême, tout lien qui eût mis une entrave à son travail. (20)

We should also perhaps mention in passing that Flaubert's friendship with George Sand was one of the greatest consolations of his later years. His essential respect for her is revealed in his frequent references to her as 'la mère Sand' and 'mon cher maître'. The special nature of his relationship with her is perhaps most poignantly revealed in a letter to Maurice Sand after her death. He wrote: "Il m'a semblé que j'enterrais ma mère une seconde fois".(21)

To return now to Turgenev, his attachment to the young heroine of First Love was a significant stage in his emotional development, but unlike Flaubert's first sentimental adventure, was not long-lasting. During his adolescence, Turgenev had two other emotional involvements: one with his mother's seamstress who was to become the mother of his only child, and the other a flirtation with Bakunin's sister Tatjana. Both of these affairs were without great significance for Turgenev's development and were of short duration only.

Turgenev did not meet his ideal of womanhood until he was twenty-five. (22) But apart from his greater maturity, the impact of Turgenev's meeting with this ideal in the form of Pauline Viardot, and the subsequent pattern of their relationship, can be compared in outline to

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(20) Amélie Bosquet bequeathed her letters from Flaubert, which covered the period 1859-1869, to the Bibliothèque municipale at Rouen. She added an introductory note to them.

(21) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.309 (1876)

(22) Turgenev met Pauline Viardot on November 13th. 1843, in St.Petersburg, while she was giving her first operatic performances in Russia.

Flaubert's involvement with Mme. Schlésinger. Having traced the major stages of Flaubert's love for Elisa, if we now examine Turgenev's relationship with Pauline, we shall see how both affairs progressed through broadly similar stages, and more importantly brought comparable experiences and lessons to both writers. For both affairs began as love at first sight, followed by a period of intense involvement. And this in turn was succeeded by a crisis which led to the lover's relegation to the ranks of family friend and distant admirer. The final stage of each relationship was a certain mellowing at the approach of old age, thus finding anew some of the former tenderness.

Nonetheless, Turgenev was to persevere in the quest for happiness through love far more than Flaubert. Although circumstances obliged him to reach conclusions comparable to Flaubert's concerning women and love, he was more loath to give up the struggle. For many of his long years of travel around Europe were basically an effort to be near Pauline, wherever she might be performing. His visits to England and Germany coincided with her appearances there, and his long periods of residence in the West - in Paris and in Baden - were occasioned by love for Pauline, rather than by love of the countries involved. (23)

Turgenev first gained access to Pauline Viardot the

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(23) This seems especially true in the light of declarations such as "All that is French stinks to my nose" (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.304, to Annenkov 1859) - which also demolish the myth of Turgenev's life-long Francophilia.



woman through Pauline Viardot the operatic singer. For it was as an admirer of her work that he gained admission to her circle of friends. Before he got to know her well personally, there ensued several years of admiration from his box at the great opera houses of Europe, and of contriving to be invited to the same dinners and receptions. He was successful in this quest and was admitted as a family friend. In the summer of 1847, he was invited for the first time to stay at the Viardot's country house at Courtavenel.

The years between this first visit and 1850 constitute the most intense and most significant period of their relationship. In these brief years, they came face to face with their love for one another, but also with the reality of their situation. Yarmolinsky (24) is now virtually alone among critics in maintaining that this love remained platonic. Most other critics (25) agree that it is most probable that Pauline and Turgenev became lovers for a brief period between 1847 and 1850. But as Turgenev's diary was destroyed after his death by Pauline acting on his instructions, the exact details will never be known. This intimate phase in the relationship was brought to an end by Pauline's recovery of her usually

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(24) In Turgenev, the man, his art and his age, (New York, 1959) p.100 and p.150ff.

(25) E. SEMENOFF in La vie douloureuse d'Ivan Tourguéneff, Paris 1933 ; A. FITZLYON in The Price of Genius, London, 1964 (p.250); D. MAGARSHACK in Turgenev - a life, London 1954; and I.M. GREVS in Istoriya odnoy lyubvi, Moscow 1927 (p.39 ff).

strong will-power. For she wrote to George Sand in 1850:

What interior happiness one has each time one's will-power has gained a victory over passion, over instinct...When one wants to, one can always find the antidotes - yes, alas, one finds them! (26)

So like Mme. Schlésinger with Flaubert, Pauline Viardot was not prepared to put her social status at risk. And indeed she had much more to lose. She was constantly in the public eye, and her career could have been ruined by an indiscreet affair.

After Turgenev's return to Russia in 1850, they continued to correspond as before, but the tone of the letters is quite different. The note of hope is no longer to be found on Turgenev's side - it is in fact replaced by traces of melancholy and regret. His letter to her of September 18th. 1850 is typical. He writes:

J'ai le coeur gros; les souvenirs s'y pressent en foule, nombreux, lucides - mais rapides; je ne puis en fixer un seul..."Guarda e passa".(27)

The sentiment of this quotation from Dante's Inferno really marks the turning point of Turgenev's relationship with Pauline: he had renounced the quest for happiness through love shared with her, and now nothing but a formal, distant friendship remained. Renunciation was hard for Turgenev, and he continued to write to Pauline often, but she answered him only occasionally. Nonetheless, he realized that a new period was beginning in his life. This is especially clear from his correspondence with the Countess Lambert. He wrote to her for example:

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(26) Quoted from FITZLYON, op. cit., p.247  
 (27) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.395-6

In human life there are moments of crisis, moments during which the past dies, and something new is born. Woe to him who does not know how to feel them - and either stubbornly clings on to the dead past, or wants to call into life prematurely that which is not yet ripe. (28)

It is also evident that he had already accepted that there could be no other woman in his life, and that there would be no normal family life for him, for he wrote, again to the Countess Lambert:

At my age, to go abroad means to consign oneself finally to the life of a gypsy...But what is to be done? Evidently such is my fate. (29)

And although, as these letters show, Turgenev had no real illusions about a possible resumption of his affair with Pauline, still he was drawn to her. She was irresistible to him, and against his better judgement, he maintained some infinitesimal hope. What he hoped for was a certain mellowing in Pauline's coldness towards him. This is revealed implicitly in the same letter to the Countess:

I no longer reckon on happiness for myself. That is, on happiness in that disturbing sense in which it is accepted by young hearts. It is no good thinking about flowers when the season for flowering is past. But please God that there should be some sort of fruit. (30)

And indeed with the passing of time, there came a truce in the former uneasy triangular situation between Turgenev, Pauline and Louis Viardot. The three of them spent their old age together, dividing their time between the Viardots' town house in the rue de Douai, and their country villa at Bougival. They were now able to live together in an atmosphere of tranquil, but friendly resignation.

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(28) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.163 (1857)

(29) Ibid., vol.II, p.364 (1856)

(30) Ibid., p.365

So perhaps Turgenev found the 'fruit' that he was hoping for some twenty years earlier in this affectionate companionship in old age, which helped him to forget the faded flowers of his youthful passion.

Although, as we have seen, Turgenev's love for Pauline Viardot was of an exclusive and dominant nature, we must not ignore the relationships that he had with other women on a completely different level. It is interesting to note that Turgenev, like Flaubert, when he had realized that he would not find happiness in the conventional love-relationship, developed another kind of friendship with a number of other women. And as was the case with Flaubert, these affairs appear to have been conducted largely by correspondence. The kind of relationship on which both of them seem to have thrived was a form of amitié amoureuse, which has been described as "that delightful brand of friendship which hovers perpetually on the brink of being something more". (31) Turgenev's relationships with the Countess Lambert, and the Ukrainian writer Marko Vovchok, fit into this category. The main rôle of these women was to act as confidantes for personal confessions, but they also served as sounding-boards for philosophical and literary ideas.

Of all Turgenev's minor involvements, his relationship with the Countess Lambert, the pious wife of an official at the Russian court, was undoubtedly the most significant. Their correspondence was extensive, and Turgenev was sincerely fond of her over a period of years.

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(31) FITZLYON , op. cit., p.367

She even had a certain passing influence on his literary work, for it seems probable that the pious character of Liza in A Home of the Gentry was in part inspired by her.

So throughout the greater part of their middle years, both Flaubert and Turgenev remained faithful to a faded ideal of love - faithful in so far as they never married, and in so far as their relationships with other women remained superficial by comparison. This led inevitably to bitterness in their view of the rôle and functioning of love in general. This disillusionment can be seen most clearly in their literary works, but parallel sentiments are revealed in their letters.

Both writers reached the conclusion that for the serious man, and especially for the writer, love must be relegated to second rank in his order of priorities. Flaubert was most explicit on this subject in one of his letters to Louise Colet. He wrote:

Pour moi, l'amour n'est pas et ne doit pas être au premier plan de la vie; il doit rester dans l'arrière-boutique. Il y a d'autres choses avant lui, dans l'âme, qui sont, il me semble, plus près de la lumière, plus rapprochées du soleil. Si donc tu prends l'amour comme mets principal de l'existence: NON. Comme assaisonnement: OUI.  
(32)

Through this idea, Flaubert arrived at the more general philosophical conclusion that happiness is the enemy of beauty in art. This was another lesson that he tried to teach the wilful Louise, for he wrote to her some six years after the letter quoted above:

Si vous voulez à la fois chercher le Bonheur et

le Beau, vous n'atteindrez ni à l'un ni à l'autre, car le second n'arrive que par le sacrifice. (33)

Turgenev's arrival at the same broad conclusions was a somewhat slower, and much more painful process. For example, he wrote of his difficult renunciation to Tolstoy's sister:

When you knew me, I still dreamed of happiness, I did not want to give up hope; now I have finally taken leave of all that. Everything has subsided, the rough edges have disappeared, the inner reproaches have died down - why stir up the ashes? Doing so will not rekindle the flame. (34)

And of the realization that his career as a writer was to be of more value to him than personal relationships, he wrote to the Countess Lambert:

I shall soon be forty years old... and it is time for me to become, if not a sensible person, then at least someone who knows where he is going, and who wants to achieve something. There is nothing I can be, except a writer, but until now I have been more of a dilettante. This will not be the case in the future. (35)

In view of their experiences, it is not surprising that neither Flaubert nor Turgenev held very favourable views concerning marriage. These views were no doubt influenced by the fact that the marriages of the women with whom they were personally involved had not been successful: Maurice Schlésinger was notoriously unfaithful to Elisa, the Colets' marriage had broken up at a very early stage, and Pauline's marriage to Louis Viardot who was twenty years her senior, was far from being a love match. The whole thing had been arranged by George Sand, at a time when Pauline needed a manager/protector for the

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(33) Correspondance, vol.III, p.306 (1853)

(34) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.65 (1857)

(35) Ibid., p.163 (1857)

sake of her career as a singer.

But there was another factor which influenced their view of marriage, and this was the fear of domination by women. In Flaubert's case, this stems mainly from his affair with Louise Colet. For as we have seen, her demands for more and more of his time and attention were a major factor in bringing about the end of the relationship. Flaubert expressed himself perhaps most forcefully on the subject in a letter to Emmanuel Vasse. He wrote bitterly, advising him against marriage:

Reste toujours comme tu es, ne te marie pas, n'aie pas d'enfants, aie le moins d'affections possible, offre le moins de prise à l'ennemi. J'ai vu de près ce qu'on appelle le bonheur et j'ai retourné sa doublure; c'est une dangeureuse manie que de vouloir le posséder. (36)

Turgenev's fear of a situation where he would be dominated by a woman appears to have been a direct result of the atmosphere in his parental home. His parents' marriage was not a happy one, and it was always his mother who gave orders and generally dominated the household. As far as his views on marriage and the writer are concerned, he is reported, in the letter of a friend, as declaring:

It is not a good thing for an artist to marry. As the ancients used to say, if you serve a Muse, you must serve her and no one else. An unhappy marriage may, perhaps, contribute to the development of talent, but a happy one is no good at all. (37)

So it would appear that both Flaubert and Turgenev feared the ties and responsibilities of marriage as being detrimental to their rôles as creative artists, and in no

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(36) *Correspondance*, vol.I, p.200 (1846)

(37) *LEONTIEV K. Stranitzky Vospominaniy*, cit. OSTROVSKI A. *Turgenev v zapisyakh sovremennikov*, Leningrad 1929, p.121

way conducive to personal happiness. And yet when it actually came to taking responsibility for another, within the family situation, both of them responded well to the challenge, and acted in accordance with conventional practice. For both Flaubert (who had expressed so many misgivings about parenthood (38) ) and Turgenev found themselves burdened with the responsibility of acting as single parent to a young girl. For Turgenev, this was his own illegitimate daughter whom he later installed in the Viardot household in Paris, showing a paternal interest in her and helping her financially until his death. For his part, Flaubert took charge of the upbringing of his orphaned niece after his sister's death in 1846, and he became virtually a father figure to the young Caroline. He himself wrote of the relationship: "J'aime ma petite nièce comme si elle était ma fille".(39) Nonetheless, these responsibilities do appear to have brought to both writers a fair measure of anxiety.

Looking back over Flaubert's and Turgenev's experiences of love in their personal lives - the early disappointments and the more bitter disillusionment of later years - it would seem relevant to apply equally to Turgenev the description that the Goncourts made of Flaubert in their novel Charles Demailly. They wrote of

...un homme qui a eu quelque chose de tué sous lui dans sa jeunesse...  
Ravagé par la passion dès quinze ans, il connut la désespérance et l'amertume de la vie avant même d'en avoir savouré la douceur. (40)

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(38) Flaubert's horror of becoming a father is revealed in his correspondence with Louise Colet, who was especially keen to have a child by him:

(39) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.61 (L.Colet, 1854)

(40) Quoted from DEDEYAN Charles, Le nouveau mal du siècle de Baudelaire à nos jours, Paris, 1968, p.370



Turning now to the rôle of women, love and the quest for happiness in the literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev, let us first examine those works which parallel to a certain extent their own personal experiences in this respect.

As far as Turgenev is concerned, it would not be easy to pin down any one of his heroines as a portrait of Pauline Viardot, although several of his literary creations may contain fragments of her personality. Neither is there a hero who can be definitely pinpointed as Turgenev himself. It is more the case that the experiences and subsequent lessons learnt by his heroes run parallel to the pattern of events in his own life, rather than seeking to provide an autobiographical account.

There is, however, one work in which it is reasonable to see a fairly detailed analysis of his own relationship with Pauline Viardot and her husband. This is his five-act play, A Month in the Country, which Turgenev worked on between 1850 and 1855. It deals with the events of 1850, the crisis year in his relationship with the Viardot household. It reflects the tension that was mounting in the triangle situation between Turgenev, Pauline and Louis during the summer months that Turgenev spent at Courtavenel that year, and how this situation was affected by the arrival of one of Pauline's talented young protégés, Charles Gounod.

This is not to suggest, however, that the character of Natalya Petrovna in the play resembles that of Pauline

herself, or that the newly arrived young tutor, Alexey is in any way a portrait of Gounod. But Rakitin, the old family friend on an extended visit, does bear certain marked resemblances to Turgenev, and Islayev, the husband and host, does react in the same way that Louis Viardot presumably did. But rather than the individual portraits, it is the general situation and the nature of the relationships between the characters that is of interest, and throws light on the probable scenes at Courtavenel during the summer of 1850.

The coincidence between the general outline of the play and the actual course of events is principally as follows: Natalya Petrovna has a boring, but wealthy husband with whom she is not in love. Rakitin loves Natalya Petrovna but the nature of their relationship is not clearly defined. She has enjoyed Rakitin's attentions, but now takes him for granted. She feels that the relationship is becoming claustrophobic. The situation is most aptly summed up by Natalya Petrovna herself in the very first scene of the play. She says to her old friend:

Do you know, Rakitin, you are very clever, of course, but...sometimes we talk as though we were making lace...Have you ever seen people making lace? In stuffy rooms, never moving from their seats...Lace can be beautiful, but a drink of fresh water on a hot day is much better...(41)

'Refreshment' arrives in the form of Alexey, a student and new tutor to Kolya, the Islayevs' son. Natalya Petrovna is stimulated by the new arrival, and finds that, in spite of herself, she is falling in love with the student. This process is observed by Rakitin with resignation and

perspicacity. His suffering is revealed in his soliloquy in Act II. He says:

I have never deceived myself, I know very well how she loves me; but I hoped that with time that quiet feeling...I hoped? Have I the right to hope, dare I hope? I confess my position is quite absurd...almost contemptible...What's the use of talking like that? She is an honest woman, and I'm not a Lovelace - more's the pity! (42)

The turning point in the play comes when Natalya Petrovna confesses to Rakitin her love for Alexey and asks him for advice. Just as she has worked herself into an emotional state, and is weeping on Rakitin's shoulder, her husband and mother-in-law arrive to find them in an apparently compromising situation. Islayev decides that it is time to have things out with Rakitin. Despite his sincere love for his wife, he had tolerated her ambiguous relationship with this family friend, so long as propriety and appearances were maintained. Now his worst suspicions seem to have been confirmed, and he feels obliged to take action. Rakitin confesses his love and agrees to leave, paying the price of his love, and yet without having enjoyed any of its fruits. Before he leaves the Islayevs' estate, Rakitin offers advice to Alexey. It is interesting to compare the sentiments expressed here - and they are clearly Turgenev's own - with those revealed by Flaubert in some of his letters to Louise Colet, (43) where he insisted that love should not be allowed to dominate life, or disaster would ensue. The general tone of scepticism and disillusionment is also reminiscent of Flaubert. Rakitin

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(42) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.78

(43) See above p.122-3

declares :

It is my belief, Alexey Nikolayevich, that all love, happy or unhappy, is a real calamity if you give yourself up to it completely...You will learn what burning hatred lies under the most ardent love! You will think of me when you yearn for peace,..as a sick man yearns for health...You will know what it means to be enslaved...and how shameful and agonizing that slavery is! You will learn in the end how little you get in return for all your sufferings. (44)

The parallels between the play and real life are only too obvious: after more than six years of Turgenev's adoration, Pauline was beginning to find the relationship overpowering. The conflict between heart and will-power was becoming too much for her, and the arrival of Gounod presumably provided a welcome relief, even if it was of an entirely intellectual nature. As for a parallel to the scene between Islayev and Rakitin, this seems quite likely in view of the correspondence between Turgenev and the Viardots at the end of 1850. It appears that he promised to stay away until recalled by Pauline. He wrote to her of the possibility of returning to France in 1851: "Aber wenn ich es auch könnte, ich komme nur, wenn Sie mich rufen".(45) Also in a letter to Louis Viardot shortly after Turgenev left Courtavenel, there are references to "l'excellence et la noblesse" of Louis's character, and he thanks him for his "bons conseils". (46)

To turn now to Flaubert, autobiographical elements figure in rather more of his literary works . This is perhaps surprising in one who made such a conscious effort to keep the novelist's personal affairs out of the novels.

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(44) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.145-6

(45) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.421 (Turgenev always wrote the intimate parts of his letters to Pauline in German.)

(46) Ibid., p.387

For the Maria of the Mémoires d'un fou and the Mme. Arnoux of L'Education sentimentale are more or less portraits of Mme. Schlésinger. Similarly, others of his female creations - such as Mme. Renaud in the first Education sentimentale - contain elements of the same woman. As for self-portraiture, the Mémoires d'un fou show quite clearly the emotional development and crises of Flaubert's early youth.

In others of his youthful works - Quidquid volueris and Passion et Vertu for example - he projected into his characters (here Djalioh and Mazza) all of his own sensual desires, which in reality had been repressed. His first real attempt at a novel, Novembre, presents another interesting case. Here the young hero's relationship with Marie is a reflection of Flaubert's brief affair with Eulalie Foucaud in Marseille in 1840. It is the only one of his works to contain a complete and frank expression of sexual desire. The prostitute Marie's realization that her quest for love is no more than "une chimère qui n'est que dans mon coeur, et que je veux tenir dans mes mains", is a view that was very much Flaubert's own at the time of writing Novembre in 1842. (47) Moreover, it is one that is to be of significance for many of the major characters of his subsequent novels. For Jules (in the first Education sentimentale), Emma Bovary, Salammbô and Frédéric Moreau all fall victim to the same illusory happiness. Each of them "souffrait toujours de quelque chose qui lui manquait...attendait sans cesse je ne sais quoi qui n'arrivait jamais", which was the condition Flaubert asc-

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(47) Especially in view of the fact that it was at this same time that Flaubert was frequenting the Schlésinger household in Paris, trying to gain the affections of Madame.

ribed to Jules.

If we now look more closely at this work - the 1845 Education sentimentale - we find less of the direct self-portraiture. But nevertheless it contains several elements of Flaubert's own experiences. In a way, both of the heroes of this novel, Jules and Henry, reflect aspects of the amorous aspirations of their author's youth. For all three of them, Jules, Henry and Flaubert, the first stage in their sentimental education was the idealisation of a woman, by which means they believed they could find complete happiness. In the second stage however, Flaubert more closely resembles Jules, for whereas Henry simply adapts himself to his disappointment after the end of his affair with Mme. Renaud, Jules, who is of artistic temperament, having realized that the love he sought was an illusion, renounces the quest for happiness through love, but yet continues in the search for some other ideal to which he can commit himself.

It is interesting at this point to compare the time relationship of the first Education sentimentale to Flaubert's personal life with that of A Month in the Country to Turgenev's. For the composition of these works coincides with the crisis points of their own affections. So both writers present in their literary works a picture of dashed aspirations, bitter disappointment, and renunciation of the quest for love in the wake of their own disillusionment.

As for autobiographical elements in others of Flaubert's works, it is perhaps tempting to see in Frédéric

Moreau a further portrait of the author's own experience, but in fact, the resemblance is in essence only. For although Mme. Arnoux may be a direct parallel to Mme. Schlésinger, Frédéric is far more mondain than Flaubert ever was. He may have had his Rosanette (in the form of Louise Colet) but the amorous adventures of real life were on a much more modest scale. It is rather in the aspirations of Moreau and Flaubert that the closest parallels lie. The position is perhaps best summed up by Zola, who wrote in Les romanciers naturalistes :

Son [Flaubert's] idée de l'amour se trouve dans L'Education sentimentale : une passion qui emplit l'existence et qui ne se contente jamais.  
(48)

For both the author and his hero were left empty handed, having spent a life-time clutching at shadows.

It is hardly surprising, bearing in mind the personal experiences of Flaubert and Turgenev, that the picture of love that emerges from a good many of their works should be of a destructive force. This is especially the case in the short stories that Turgenev wrote in the period before 1857. These stories try to show love in all its aspects - they deal with a wide range of social groupings, from peasants and rustics in the Hunting Sketches, to the more sophisticated society of The Diary of a Superfluous Man and Rudin. Yet the conclusion is always the same: love does not in any case bring with it happiness.

The Diary of a Superfluous Man is typical. Here love

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(48) ZOLA Emile, Les romanciers naturalistes, Paris 1881, p.182

is the pivot of the action, and leads to the downfall of the central characters. As he reviews his life, Chulkaturin reflects:

Is love a natural emotion? Is it human to love?  
Love is a disease, and disease obeys no law.(49)

That love does destroy - physically as well as emotionally - emerges in the portrait of the main female character, Elizaveta Karpovna. Chulkaturin comments on the change in her after she has fallen in love:

I...saw beside a window, a familiar profile.  
I didn't recognize it at first: the pale face,  
the dulled eyes, the hollow cheeks - was this  
really the same Liza I had seen two weeks before?  
(50)

Such ideas also occur in Turgenev's short story of 1855, Faust. Again happiness is shown to be unobtainable. The heroine, Vera Nicolaevna reflects:

...what need is there to dream of oneself, of  
one's own happiness? It is useless to think of  
that; it does not come - why pursue it? (51)

And her illicit love for Pavel Alexandrovich is closely connected with her death.

And in Rudin, the hero puts forward the idea that love is a positive evil. In a discussion with Natalya Alekseevna (who is in the process of falling in love with him) he compares love to a snake, crawling into the heart and then suddenly slipping away.

This is comparable to Flaubert's Novembre, where the hero's unhappy experiences of love are a major factor contributing to his death - such is the destructive power of love that he loses all will to live and apparently just fades away.

(49) Pol. sob. soch., vol. V, p.198

(50) Ibid., p.220

(51) Ibid., vol.VII, p.37



Flaubert also presents love as a destructive force in Hérodias. Here the strained relationship between Hérodias and Antipas has far-reaching consequences. Flaubert hints at this in the first section of the story. This emerges in his description of the central couple:

Elle le regardait comme autrefois, en se frôlant contre sa poitrine, avec des gestes câlins. - Il la repoussa. L'amour qu'elle tâchait de ranimer était si loin, maintenant! Et tous ses malheurs en découlaient...(52)

Of course the prime example in Flaubert's work of the destructive force of love is Mme. Bovary. Emma is the example par excellence of the person who allows love and the quest for happiness to dominate the whole of life. She is certainly not content to let love remain a second-rank consideration while getting on with the more serious business of living. For Flaubert himself, of course, the search for alternative, more worthwhile activities was not hard: his work as a writer easily filled the breach left by unsuccessful personal relationships. But in the case of Emma Bovary, it is difficult to see what kind of 'worthwhile' activity she could have devoted herself to. She lacked the artistic abilities of a Louise Colet or a Pauline Viardot, and so was not likely to find satisfaction in that direction. Neither is it easy to see her devoting herself to domestic duties like a Mme. Homais. Unlike Flaubert and Turgenev, Emma does not perceive the lesson to be learnt from her experiences at a sufficiently early stage to avert a tragic end. In fact she never really comes to terms with her own situation at all.

Whilst on the subject of Emma Bovary, it is perhaps worthwhile to look at the treatment of adultery in particular and of sexual relationships in general in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev. In fact it is true to say that the only sexual relationships to be dealt with by both writers are of an adulterous nature. In Mme. Bovary, for example, the sexual aspect of Emma's legitimate relationship with Charles is completely neglected. This aspect is dealt with only in the context of her adulterous liaisons with Rodolphe and Léon.

Apart from this most obvious example, most of Flaubert's novels, both the early and the later ones, contain some form of forbidden love. There are the involvements with prostitutes in Novembre and others of his juvenilia. And in the first Education sentimentale, Henry's love for Mme. Renaud is adulterous, as is, in the 1869 version, Frédéric Moreau's love for both Mme. Arnoux and Mme. Dambreuse. And although his relationship with Rosanette is not adulterous in the conventional sense, neither does it fall within the domain of pure or innocent love.

Raymond Giraud (53) also sees something akin to adultery in Salammbô, in the story of the heroine and Mâtho. His passion seems guilty when its object is a girl who has renounced worldly relationships and dedicated her life to the service of Tanit, the virgin goddess.

The position is comparable in Turgenev's works -

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(53) GIRAUD R.D., The unheroic hero in the novels of Stendhal, Balzac and Flaubert, New Brunswick, 1957, p.152-3

throughout his novels, sexual relationships occur only in an irregular situation. In two of his works - Smoke and The Torrents of Spring (54) - there are descriptions of events leading up to and succeeding the consummation of illicit love. In both cases, the moment of passion is overwhelming, but disastrous in its consequences. The heroes of both novels become the slaves of the married women with whom they become involved, and <sup>this</sup> causes them to break off an engagement that would have led to a happy and normal marital relationship.

Irving Howe (55) has remarked that in Turgenev's novels, the sexual impulse is seldom allowed to reach any of the usual resolutions, and for this reason he goes as far as to accuse Turgenev of sabotage - sabotage of the possibility of a happy sexual relationship in his works.

So in the novels of Flaubert and Turgenev, sexual relationships are never free from the connotation of guilt - perhaps because this had always been the case in their own lives. Neither of them had ever been really strongly attracted to a woman who was free to marry. And possibly they had both made the same discovery as Emma Bovary, for Flaubert tells us that "Emma retrouvait dans l'adultère toutes les platitudes du mariage". (56) Their personal experiences help perhaps to explain why adultery is such a recurrent theme in their literary works.

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(54) An adulterous relationship (between Varvara Pavlovna Lavretskaya and Ernest) is of course important in the development of Home of the gentry also.

(55) HOWE Irving, Politics and the Novel, New York 1957, p.118.

(56) Madame Bovary, p.401

It is also interesting to compare the rôle and overall effect of love in Mme. Bovary with Turgenev's novel, Home of the gentry, for the two works are roughly contemporary in composition. Home of the gentry was published in 1859, only three years after the appearance of Mme. Bovary.

Love emerges as very much the same destructive force in both novels, but the two works end quite differently. Initially, Turgenev's characters seek out love quite as blindly as Flaubert's Mme. Bovary, assuming, like her, that love is "what makes life worth having". And again like Emma, Lavretsky, in his relationship with Varvara Pavlovna, lets himself be dominated too much by the idea of love. For Turgenev writes of him:

His whole soul melted within him into one feeling, one desire; into the desire of happiness, of possession, of love, of the sweetness of love.(57)

Ironically enough, Lavretsky subsequently shifts for a while from resembling Emma to acting rather more like Charles Bovary. For once he has won the love of Varvara Pavlovna and married her, he mistakenly assumes that this ideal situation will last for ever. Turgenev describes his reaction when he eventually discovers his wife's infidelity, and in this respect he can be compared to Charles:

He was utterly confounded. He had trusted his wife completely; the possibility of deceit or of treachery on her part had never entered into his mind. (58)

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(57) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.170

(58) Ibid., p.175

Lavretsky, however, is not convinced of the illusory nature of love and happiness from this one lesson alone. He needs a second and even more bitter experience before accepting without question that there is no link between love and happiness. For he hopes to find consolation for his broken marriage in the love of a pure young girl, Liza. Presuming his lost wife to be dead, he proposes marriage to Liza, but the wayward Varvara Pavlovna reappears in time to spoil the plans. This one bitter experience is enough for Liza: she perceives the evil nature of love and immediately dismisses her other, perhaps more eligible suitors, and retires to spend the rest of her days in the sheltered world of a convent.

So, as in Mme. Bovary, after Emma's failure to find real happiness with either Charles or Rodolphe or Léon, we are left with the conclusion that love and happiness are chimeras, inaccessible to man - or woman. Turgenev makes this point especially strongly as Lavretsky reflects on his broken marriage:

Her fault did not actually destroy my happiness; it only proved to me that for me happiness had never really existed. (59)

But the essential difference between Flaubert's novel and Turgenev's is that whereas Emma fails to learn the lessons of experience and takes her life in despair, Turgenev's characters manage to grasp the significance of their experience in time to ward off total disaster. As we have seen, Liza retreats from the world to avoid the snares of love, but Lavretsky's solution is a more positive one.

Not only does he withdraw from the quest for love, but sees in the challenge presented by every day work a means to rehabilitation.

Flaubert's characters, then, fail to learn the lessons of experience, and those - such as Emma Bovary - who do not renounce the quest for love and happiness become victims of the destructive power of love. This is exactly what happens in Salammbô, for the deaths of both Mâtho and the heroine can be attributed directly to an excess of passion. By the late 1860's and the appearance of L'Education sentimentale, however, the position is changed. For Frédéric Moreau does eventually, after many crises spread over a long period of years, come to the realization that love, of the idyllic variety he had hoped for with Mme. Arnoux, is inaccessible. And in the penultimate chapter, we see how experience has made Frédéric indifferent to love, perhaps even killed his ability to feel at this level:

...et puis la véhémence du désir, la fleur même de la sensation était perdue....Des années passèrent; et il supportait le désœuvrement de son intelligence et l'inertie de son coeur. (60)

Frédéric learns the lesson and avoids an overtly tragic end, but he does not succeed in finding a positive solution to the problem, for his life appears as aimless at the end of the novel as it did at the beginning.

If we look now at the rôle of women and love in Flaubert's last work, Bouvard et Pécuchet, we see that the 'deux bonshommes' learn quickly, and with very little up-

set, the true nature of love. Their amorous adventures - dealt with in Chapter VI - follow on immediately from their political activities. For a time, however, their friendship is threatened by the spectre of love, as Bouvard plans marriage to Mme. Bordin and Pécuchet flirts with Mélie, the maid. Nonetheless they soon reach the conclusion that passion is an unreasonable thing, and that women are not worthy of their attention. They find themselves agreeing with all the commonplaces usually applied to the female sex:

Elles poussent au crime, à l'héroïsme et à l'abrutissement. L'enfer sous un jupon, le paradis dans un baiser, ramage de tourterelle, ondulations de serpent, griffe de chat, perfidie de la mer, variété de la lune...(61)

In consequence, they resolutely renounce the quest for love, preferring once more each other's company:

Un remords les prit. Plus de femmes, n'est-ce pas? Vivons sans elles! Et ils s'embrassèrent avec attendrissement. (62)

And they engage in a hydrotherapy cure with no further ado.

Returning now to Turgenev's novels, the number of heroes who successfully - and positively - renounce the quest for love and happiness is much greater. In Fathers and Children, for example, Bazarov's search for happiness is equally as interesting as his nihilism, and just as significant in the development of the novel. He explores the possibility of a reconciliation with life through love in his relationship with Mme. Odintsova, but his other intellectual ambitions, together with his position in society, preclude this possibility. He gives up Mme. Odintsova in spite of himself to devote the little

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(61) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.240

(62) Ibid., p.240

that is left of his life to his more lofty aspirations: science and the reorganisation of society.

Litvinov, the hero of Smoke, is yet another example of the character who is forced by the bitterness of experience to renounce the quest for love. As Litvinov returns to Russia after his affair with Irena, determined, like Lavretsky, to lose himself in physical work, Turgenev writes:

...it seemed to him impossible that a man - a man! - could allow himself to be so influenced by a woman, by love...Contemptible weakness... The past is over now, let us begin afresh. (63)

Very similar is the case of Sanin in Torrents of Spring. For he also learns the lesson the hard way, after a broken engagement to a pure young girl and a disastrous affair with a married woman. Turgenev writes vividly of the turning point, the moment of renunciation in Sanin's life:

Then - his return home, (64) the poisoned, ravaged life, petty troubles, petty worries, bitter and futile regrets...a punishment concealed from view yet constantly felt, like an incurable pain, like the repayment penny by penny of an incalculable debt. (65)

He is to live more than thirty years of this hermit-like existence in isolation on his Russian estate.

We must not leave the question of women and love without considering one other group of characters of considerable importance in Turgenev's work, and not without significance for Flaubert. These are the essentially virtuous women, so common in Turgenev's works, who are

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(63) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.314-5

(64) It is interesting that all three of the adulterous liaisons in Turgenev's works (Sanin's, Litvinov's and Varvara Pavlovna's) take place in the West. And Sanin, Litvinov and Lavretsky all return home, wise after the event, to Russia to find solace and a new life.

(65) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XI, p.150



not intent only on achieving a personal happiness, and can therefore survive the disappointment when things go wrong in love. Such women occur with great frequency: Assia, Natalya, Liza, Elena, Marianna, Gemma... One of the most interesting definitions of this type of woman comes in Turgenev's play Where it is thin, there it breaks, where Gorsky says to the heroine:

I admire you Vera! Your soul is as clear as crystal, you are as youthful as a child of twelve and as resolute as Frederick the Great. (66)

One of the most interesting accounts of this aspect of Turgenev's female characterisation <sup>occurs</sup> in a study by Pisarev. (67) He classifies these heroines as those who engage positively in the struggle against life, and demand something from it in return. His study of Assia leads him to ask the question: "Of what is a woman in love not capable?" For in Assia herself, he sees embodied the full strength of admirable and noble feeling.

Virtuous these women may be, but as Turgenev's heroes testify, they have not lost their powers of attraction. And this was the very aspect of Turgenev's technique in female characterisation that, as we have seen, provoked Flaubert's interest and admiration. (\*) This is interesting in view of the fact that Flaubert himself really created only one such woman in the form of Mme. Arnoux in L'Education sentimentale. For Frédéric, her attraction remains very real and constant throughout the course of the novel, yet she retains her virtue, in so far

(66) Pol. sob. soch., vol.II, p.116

(\*) See p.19 above.

(67) PISAREV Dmitri I., 'Types of women in the novels of Pisemsky, Turgenev and Goncharov' article in Russkoe Slovo, December, 1861.

as she remains steadfast in her rôles as wife and mother. And as in Turgenev's novels, this strong, steady yet unconsummated love appears to be a source of strength, for it gives Mme. Arnoux the courage to bear her husband's philandering and their financial ruin.

It might, at first sight, seem tempting to place Louise Roque also in the category of virtuous young girl, for in the early stages of L'Education sentimentale, it is she who represents for Frédéric "la tentation de l'idylle ingénue". (68) Yet she does not remain constant to these early ideals of virtue, for the end of the novel sees her shifted to the category of 'femme adultère', for she leaves her husband to run away with a singer.

As for other virtuous women in Flaubert's work, the Maria of Mémoires d'un fou would also come into this category, but she cannot really be considered as a separate entity from Mme. Arnoux. She is very much her precursor and the characterisation of the two figures differs in no significant way. As for any others, there is Mme. Homais in Mme. Bovary and Félicité (69) in Un Coeur simple, but although these two may qualify for the 'auréole' that Flaubert spoke of in his letter to Turgenev, they have both lost completely all trace of sexual attraction.

So we can conclude that the literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev do, on the whole, reflect a pessimistic view of women, love and the quest for happiness. We

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(68) CASTEX P.-G., Flaubert, L'Education sentimentale, Paris, 1962, p.64

(69) Félicité could be compared rather with the mystically inclined old peasant woman in Turgenev's short story Living Relics - they are both "more sinned against than sinning".

have also seen that the conclusions reached in both literary and personal spheres are essentially the products of bitter disillusionment. For the love that the two writers and the majority of their principal characters experienced appears to have been very much as Turgenev summed it up in his short story The Correspondence. He writes:

In love there is no equality, none of that so-called free union of spirits and such like perfections thought up at leisure by German professors...No, in love one person is a slave, and the other a tyrant, and it is not for nothing that poets talk about the fetters imposed by love. Oh yes, love is a fetter and the very heaviest.(70)

Their works also stress the treacherous nature of happiness, which emerges very much as Flaubert summed it up in a letter to Louise Colet: "Le bonheur est une monstruosité! punis sont ceux qui le cherchent". (71)

In their own lives, both Flaubert and Turgenev were forced to the conclusion that as love would not bring them happiness, they should rather concentrate their efforts in the sphere of intellectual activity, and restrict their aspirations to this level. Flaubert reached this conclusion early in life, and the precise point is clear from a letter he wrote to Le Poittevin in 1845:

Enfin je crois avoir compris une chose, une grande chose, c'est que le bonheur, pour les gens de notre race, est dans l'idée, et pas ailleurs. (72)

For Turgenev, the conclusion was to be the same, but the process of putting it into practice in everyday life was to be slower. For he did not accept without reserve the full implications of this conclusion until the early 1860's-

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(70) Pol. sob. soch., vol. VI, p.190

(71) Correspondance, vol.I, p.229 (1846)

(72) Ibid., p.192

some fifteen years after Flaubert's letter to Le Poittevin. Nevertheless, both writers would surely have applauded the sentiment expressed by George Sand in a letter to Pauline Viardot, for she advised: "Les personnes de génie n'ont pas le temps d'aimer".

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER IV

(28) Е.Е.Ламберт:

В человеческой жизни есть мгновенья перелома, мгновенья, в которых прошедшее умирает и зарождается нечто новое, горе тому, кто не умеет их чувствовать, — и либо упорно придерживается мертвого прошедшего, либо до времени хочет вынырнуть к жизни то, что еще не созрело. (Письма III, 163)

(29) Е.Е.Ламберт:

В мои годы уехать за границу — значит: определить себя окончательно на цыганскую жизнь...Что делать? Видно такова моя судьба. (Письма II, 364)

(30) Е.Е.Ламберт:

Я не рассчитываю более на счастье для себя, т.е. на счастье, в том опять-таки тревожном смысле, в котором оно принимается молодыми сердцами, нечего думать о цветах, когда пора цветения прошла. Дай бог, чтобы плод по крайней мере был какой-нибудь... (Письма II, 365)

(34) М.Н.Толстой:

Когда Вы меня знали, я еще мечтал о счастье, не хотел расстаться с надеждой; теперь я окончательно махнул на всё это рукой. Всё затихло, неровности — внутренние упреки умолкли — к чему вдувать пепел? Огня все-таки не добудешь. (Письма III, 65)

(35) Е.Е.Ламберт:

Мне скоро сорок лет,...— и пора мне сделаться если не дельным человеком, то по крайней мере человеком, знающим, куда он идет и чего хочет достигнуть. Я ничем не могу быть, как только литератором — но я до сих пор был больше дилетантом. Этого впред не будет. (Письма III, 163)

(41) Месяц в деревне:

Наталя Петровна: ...Знаете ли что, Ракитин: вы конечно, очень умны, но...иногда мы с вами разговариваем, точно кружево плетем...А вы выдали, как кружево плетут? В душных комнатах, не двигаясь с места...Кружево — прекрасная вещь, но глоток свежей воды в жаркий день гораздо лучше. (Соч. III, 46)

## (42) Месяц в деревне:

Ракитин: Я никогда себя не обманывал, я очень хорошо знаю, как она меня любит; но я надеялся, что это спокойное чувство со временем... Я надеялся! Разве я вправе, разве я смею надеяться? Признаюсь, мое положение довольно смешно... почти презрительно. Ну, к чему такие слова? Она честная женщина, а я не ловелас. К сожалению. (Соч. III, 78)

## (44) Месяц в деревне:

Ракитин: По-моему, Алексей Николаич, всякая любовь, счастливая равно как и несчастная, настоящее бедствие, когда ей отдаешься весь... Погодите! вы узнаете, сколько жгучей ненависти таится под самой пламенной любовью! Вы вспомните обо мне, когда как большой жаждет здоровья, вы будете жаждать покоя... Вы узнаете ... что значит быть поработленным... - и как постыдно и томительно это рабство! Вы узнаете наконец какие пустячки покупаются такою дорогой ценою. (Соч. III, 145)

## (49) Дневник лишнего человека:

...разве любовь - естественное чувство? Разве человеку свойственно любить? любовь - болезнь, а для болезни закон не писан. (Соч. V, 198)

## (50) Дневник лишнего человека:

...я оглянулся и вдруг возле одного окна увидел знакомый профиль. Я его сперва не узнал: это бледное лицо, этот потухший взор, эти впалые щеки - неужели это та же Лиза, которую я видел две недели тому назад? (Соч. V, 220)

## (51) Фауст:

...что за охота мечтать о самой себе, о своем счастье? О нем думать нечего, оно не приходит - что за ним гоняться! (Соч. VII, 37)

## (57) Дворянское гнездо:

...вся душа его слилась в одно чувство, в одно желание , в желание счастья, обладания, любви, сладкой женской любви. (Соч. VII, 170)

(58) **Дворянское гнездо:**

Он обезумел. Он так слепо доверял своей жене, возможность обмана, измены никогда не представлялась его мысли. (Соч. VII, 175)

(59) **Дворянское гнездо:**

Самый проступок ее не разрушил мое счастье, а доказал мне только, что его вовсе никогда не бывало. (Соч. VII, 219)

(63) **Дым:**

...ему казалось непостижимым, каким образом может мужчина — мужчина! — допустить такое влияние на себя женщины, любви... «Постыдная слабость!»... вот, дескать, старое кончено, начнем новое. (Соч. IX, 314-5)

(65) **Вешние воды:**

Потом — возвращение на родину, отравленная, опустошенная жизнь, мелкая возня, мелкие хлопоты, раскаяние горькое и бесплодное и столь же бесплодное и горькое забвение — наказание не явное, но ежеминутное и постоянное, как незначительная, но неизлечимая боль, уплата по копейке долга, которого и сосчитать нельзя... (Соч. XI, 150)

(66) **Где тонко, там и рвется:**

Горский: Я вам удивляюсь, Вера Николаевна! Вы прозрачный, как стекло, молоды, как двухлетний ребенок, и решительны, как Фридрих Великий. (Соч. II, 116)

(70) **Переписка:**

В любви нет равенства, нет так называемого свободного соединения душ и прочих идеальностей, придуманных на досуге немецкими профессорами... Нет, в любви одно лицо — раб, а другое — властелин, и недаром толкуют поэты о цепях, налагаемых любовью. Да, любовь — цепь и самая тяжелая. (Соч. VI, 190)

## CHAPTER V - Politics in the development of Flaubert and Turgenev

However frequently or obstinately Flaubert and Turgenev may have denied themselves the right, as novelists, to have political preoccupations, to write romans à thèse, however many times they proclaimed the necessity for the writer to remain objective if he wished to convey to his readers an accurate portrait of nineteenth century society, they could not avoid tracing and reflecting the political evolution of this society. Consciously or unconsciously, they were bound to present some supporters of some doctrines in a more favourable light than others. They could not avoid taking sides, although they never formulated a precise political code.

### a) 1848 and its aftermath

In 1848, Turgenev was thirty and Flaubert twenty-seven. The former was just embarking on his professional career as a writer, and the latter had not yet brought himself to offer anything for publication, although he had already written a considerable amount. So the events of 1848 precede all the major compositions of both writers, and their influence - if any - must be considered in relation to the greater part of their literary careers.

For Flaubert, the preparation of the revolution of February and the subsequent events of 1848 constitute his first real contact with the world of politics. At this point he was forced - perhaps reluctantly - to take stock



of the situation in the outside world. This was virtually the first time that external events had forced themselves on his attention. In 1830, for example, at the time of the setting up of the July monarchy and the Polish uprising, Flaubert, at the age of nine, had been too young for these events to be of much significance in his development. Consequently, as the young Gustave was a natural introvert, and the situation in France was relatively quiet from 1830 to the mid-1840's, there is almost a total lack of political interest in Flaubert's Oeuvres de jeunesse. So when it became evident in the second half of 1847 that things were building up towards a major disturbance, the sudden and brutal contact with 'politics' came as something of a shock to Flaubert. This is clear from the reaction revealed in his own description of his experience at a 'banquet réformiste' that he attended in Rouen with Maxime Du Camp. (1) Shortly afterwards, he wrote of this event to Louise Colet:

...je suis encore dominé par l'impression grotesque et lamentable à la fois que ce spectacle m'a laissée...Je restais froid et avec des nausées de dégoût au milieu de l'enthousiasme patriotique...Quelque triste opinion que l'on ait des hommes, l'amertume vous vient au coeur quand s'étalent devant vous des bêtises aussi délirantes. (2)

So for the first time, Flaubert comes to the realization that politics, as practised in the world around him, are little more than a further manifestation of "la bêtise humaine". This is an experience to be repeated many times in his subsequent career. Ironically, Flaubert ends the

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(1) The Rouen banquet was held on Christmas day 1847 and lasted nine hours.

(2) Correspondance, vol.II, p.78-9 (December 1847)

letter to Louise Colet quoted above with a hope that the new year - 1848 - will bring an end to all the current problems in France. Perhaps the fact that he had such great hopes for this year helped to intensify the bitterness he felt at its end.

So it emerges that Flaubert, on the eve of 1848, was in no way 'engagé' as a young writer, and to date had shown little interest in contemporary events. But on the more abstract level of political theory, there had emerged in Flaubert's early correspondence and in his Souvenirs intimes traces of ideas that were to be of significance in the future development of his political thinking. For example, even as a boy, the idea of liberty was important to Flaubert. And typical is the assertion in a letter to Le Poittevin: "Qu'est-ce qu'il me faut après tout? n'est-ce pas la liberté...?" (3) He was also very indignant whenever a writer was imprisoned for being outspoken, or when the censorship was acting too viciously. In a letter to his brother Achille, for example, he refers to the censor as "l'infâme ravisseur de nos libertés publiques". (4) In fact this attachment to the notion of liberty is possibly the only substantial trait shared by Flaubert and Turgenev, as far as political thought is concerned, in this early period.

For Turgenev, the situation in the years before 1848 was of necessity somewhat different from that in which Flaubert found himself. The reason for this is virtually the fact of his Russian nationality. In Russia

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(3) Correspondance, vol.I, p.185 (1845)

(4) Ibid., p.194 (1845)

at this time, the injustices and abuses of the social and political system were so glaring - and things appeared to be getting worse rather than better - that no man of feeling could be unaware of the situation. It is not surprising therefore that among men of letters and students, a desire for the improvement of social conditions in Russia was the common preoccupation. After his return from the University of Berlin, Turgenev was very much a disciple of Belinsky in the early 1840's. Although he avoided the extremes of his 'master', he shared his concept of the social duty of the writer. During his brief period of employment in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, he wrote a paper on the condition of the Russian peasantry and agriculture<sup>(5)</sup> He continued this sociological enquiry - only on a more popularly accessible level - in the Hunting Sketches.

Another consideration of importance for Turgenev's early political development, and indeed for his reaction to the 1848 French revolution, was the Westerner versus Slavophile issue. It is not really accurate to push Turgenev into either of these camps, for he held views in common, as well as in conflict, with both sides. He did feel, however, that parliamentary democracy, if successfully established in the West, could serve as a model for future development in Russia. And as the prospect for liberal innovations at home was so bleak at this time, political progress in the West was at least looked upon as a source of inspiration and hope. That is why, then, Turgenev and

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(5) The manuscript is dated December 1842. (Pol. sob. soch. vol.I, p.459)

his young compatriots had so much to hope for from a successful democratic revolution in France, and why its failure would be such a source of bitter disappointment.

So on the eve of the revolution, we find Turgenev to be much more au fait politically than Flaubert. However, if we now examine the concrete historical situation of both writers in 1848, and their reactions to the events of that year, we will find that despite his youthful unawareness of political matters, Flaubert's reaction to the revolution can by no means be dismissed as one of indifference. On the contrary, his interest and imagination were captured from the very first by these events which turned out to have a far-reaching significance for his intellectual development.

At the outbreak of the revolution in February 1848, the immediate reaction of both Flaubert and Turgenev was the same. Flaubert was at home in Rouen when the news of violent disturbances in Paris broke on February 22nd. Losing no time, he left Rouen by train in the company of Louis Bouilhet on the morning of the 23rd., arriving in the capital in the early afternoon. He remained in Paris until the fighting was over, staying, with Bouilhet, at the house of Maxime Du Camp. Flaubert witnessed the disturbances in the area of the Madeleine and the rue de Sèze in the afternoon and evening of the 23rd., the storming of the Château d'eau on the 24th., and also the taking of the Tuileries and the fire at the Palais-Royal. (6) As for Turgenev, he had left Paris for Brussels in the second week

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(6) Although Flaubert himself kept no diary for these February days, we have a fairly detailed record of his movements in Du Camp's Souvenirs de l'année 1848 (Paris, 1876).

of February, but on being awoken at his hotel at six o'clock in the morning with news of Louis-Philippe's abdication, he decided that he must go to Paris himself immediately. He made the journey by train as speedily as possible, undeterred by the fact that the railway-lines had been taken up at the Franco-Belgian border, and at the approaches to the capital. The train was also involved in a collision during the journey, but none of these incidents dulled Turgenev's enthusiasm to get to Paris and to see for himself what was happening. He had been expecting some drastic change in the political systems of Europe since the beginning of the year. This is evident from a letter he wrote to Pauline Viardot in January: he refers to a "discours fanatique et contrerévolutionnaire" made by Montalembert and adds:

Le monde est en travail d'enfantement...Il y a beaucoup de gens intéressés à le faire avorter. Nous verrons. (7)

And in February, Turgenev still believed in the possible success of the revolution and that a whole new world could be beginning. He describes his mood during his first few days back in Paris as 'a sort of delirium'. (8)

So both Flaubert and Turgenev were on the spot in Paris during the February events, both having hurried to the scene of action as soon as they heard the news. Physical presence is established; the question of action is somewhat different, however: Turgenev's rôle appears to have been no more than that of an observer, and all that Flaubert experienced of direct action was to help carry a wounded

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(7) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.292

(8) Turgenev gives the details of his arrival in Paris in the short story Monsieur François.

man to a chemist's shop.

The correspondence of both writers is deficient in the extreme in details concerning the February events. Flaubert did not communicate his experiences to any of his usual correspondents. The absence of letters to three of these can be accounted for on purely factual grounds: he was with Bouilhet and Du Camp at the time, and Alfred Le Poittevin was on his death-bed. There are no letters from Turgenev to Mme. Viardot for this period and none of significance to any of his other correspondents. Presumably both of them found the atmosphere of uncertainty and excitement prevalent in Paris at the time uncondusive to the composition of careful eye-witness accounts.

So Flaubert returned to Rouen, and thence to the bedside of Le Poittevin at Neuville without having committed to paper his impressions of what he had seen in Paris. However it emerges from a letter written to Louise Colet in the middle of March that Flaubert shed no tears over the disappearance of Louis-Philippe and his régime:

Je me délecte profondément dans la contemplation de toutes les ambitions aplaties. Je ne sais si la forme nouvelle du gouvernement et l'état social qui en résultera sera favorable à l'Art. C'est une question. On ne pourra pas être plus bourgeois ni plus nul. Quant à plus bête, est-ce possible? (9)

We see from the letters written at the time of Le Poittevin's death that Flaubert was suffering from depression to no small extent. Alfred died on April 3rd., and in a letter to Du Camp written after the funeral, it is clear that Flaubert was very upset at the loss of his friend. By April 10th. however, (in a letter to Ernest

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(9) Correspondance, vol.II, p.80

Chevalier of this date) the depression has broadened to include a general disillusionment with events in the world around him. He was already losing faith in the ability of the Second Republic to improve the quality of life in France. He writes:

Quelle plate boutique que l'existence! Je ne sais si la République y portera remède. J'en doute fort. (10)

By now the status of the Republic seems to be sinking in Flaubert's estimation, and to be dangerously close to the level where it would join the ranks of all other manifestations of "la bêtise humaine". Flaubert's scorn is obvious when he reveals that he was himself summoned to be on parade for the planting of an "arbre de la Liberté" in Rouen. This autobiographical incident is to provide, later on, substantial material for a parody.

To return to Turgenev, he remained in Paris after the immediate hostilities had died down. He had expected rather more from this revolution than Flaubert, and his faith in its achievements was not so easily destroyed. He was still in Paris at the time of the disturbances at the Assemblée nationale. He provides his most detailed contemporary document concerning his immediate impressions in 1848 in a long letter to Pauline Viardot which he subtitles: "Relation exacte de ce que j'ai vu dans la journée de lundi 15 mai 1848". (11) From this account it is clear that Turgenev's faith in the achievements of the Second Republic is beginning to wane. He reveals his poor opinion of the members of the new Assemblée when he describes him-

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(10) Correspondance, vol.I, p.298

(11) Pol. sob. pisem., vol.I, p.299

self as "parfaitement édifié sur la faiblesse et irrésolution de nos nouveaux législateurs". (12) For Turgenev, the most salient feature of the whole business of May 15th. was the utter confusion in evidence everywhere. He writes:

Je m'avançai aussi vite que je pus...Une confusion incroyable se répandit tout à coup dans la foule. Beaucoup s'en allaient; les uns affirmant que l'Assemblée était dissoute, d'autres le niaient; enfin un brouhaha inimaginable. (13)

However, despite the crowds of protesting workers, the newly elected government was not overthrown, and Turgenev comments: "L'Ordre, le bourgeois, avait triomphé, avec raison cette fois". (14) But his steady disillusionment with the Republic is clear from the final paragraph of this letter. This also reveals a premonition that the advantages gained by the February uprising will not be long-lived. He admits that he found it impossible to assess the motives and wishes of the crowd at this point:

Je ne pouvais deviner ce qu'ils désiraient... s'ils étaient révolutionnaires ou réactionnaires.. Ils avaient l'air d'attendre la fin de l'orage.. Ils attendaient..Ils attendaient!..Qu'est-ce que c'est donc que l'histoire? Providence, hasard, ironie ou fatalité? (15)

There is no letter recording Turgenev's reactions to the events of the famous "journées de juin", although he was in Paris at the time. And the only reference Flaubert makes to these same events is a passing comment in a letter to Ernest Chevalier dated July 4th. in which he writes: "Tu sais par les journaux les atrocités qui viennent de se passer à Paris." (16)

The next letters extant from Turgenev were not written until October 1848, and judging from these - written

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(12) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.300

(13) Ibid., p.301

(14) Ibid., p.303

(15) Ibid., p.304

(16) Correspondance, supplément vol.I, p.67



during a touring holiday in the South of France - his mood also is one of depression. Getting away from Paris and its political problems had obviously not dissolved his feeling of disappointment and disillusionment with France. For example, in a letter to Mme. Viardot he states categorically: "Decidedly, France is not beautiful". (17)

So looking at 1848 as a whole, it emerges that Flaubert and Turgenev played no more than the rôle of observers, and disappointed ones at that. Having rushed to the scene in February, they failed to find in these events the source of inspiration that they had expected. Although they were both glad to see the end of Louis-Philippe's reign, neither of them could maintain for long great hopes for positive achievements by the Second Republic. By June they were thoroughly disillusioned, and this time Flaubert did not even bother to make the journey from Rouen to see what was happening.

Neither Flaubert nor Turgenev seem to be able to bring themselves to comment on directly, or even to reflect the events of 1848 at the time of the revolution itself, nor in the period immediately following - we have ample evidence for this in the lack of detailed letters, the lack of diaries, notes or descriptive works as already noted. However, both writers do ultimately return to the subject of the revolution of 1848 in their works, making quite extensive use of their own experiences in that year.

Flaubert treats the subject in the Education sentimentale of 1869 and in Bouvard et Pécuchet. Turgenev deals with it

in the second epilogue to Rudin, and in the short stories The Man in the grey spectacles and My Mates sent me. But none of these works was written until a good many years had passed after 1848.

We are faced, then, with the question of what is the reason for this paradoxical situation - two young writers live through a disturbing and important historical event, yet neither uses this as material in his work until ten years and more have passed. Considerations of censorship are of course part of the reason, and especially in Turgenev's case, but this would not explain the lack of letters or plans dealing with this subject. Having seen the immediate reactions of both Flaubert and Turgenev to the news of the outbreak of the February revolution, and adding the fact that they later returned to the subject, the argument of their indifference to the events would appear to be ruled out.

Let us then examine the opposite hypothesis, that the political events of 1848 constituted a considerable emotional shock for both Flaubert and Turgenev. This would explain the fact that they could only bring themselves to handle this material rationally and objectively - that is, to put it into artistic form - after the passage of time had removed the immediacy of it all; that they could come to terms with these events and their own reactions to them only when looking back on the period, aided by historical distance.

In order to establish this, it will be necessary to examine closely the activities - both personal and

literary - of the two writers in the period following on from the revolution of 1848, in order to determine if there is any modification in their personal attitudes and general view of life during this period.

As far as Flaubert is concerned, his letters for the early 1850's reveal the true extent of his disillusionment with politics on the one hand, and on a more general level, a far-reaching pessimism which appears to have dominated him at this period. His feelings of discontent and isolation emerge especially in his correspondence with Louise Colet in these years. The letters abound in such comments as "Plus on vit, plus on souffre", (18) The pessimism felt by Flaubert at this stage is of course not new, but a closer examination of the correspondence does reveal a new slant: his pessimism now appears to be linked to the state of the outside world, thus occasioned in part by a loss of faith in man's ability to organise his social environment. In a letter of 1854, for example, he says that the qualities generally associated with the Russian autocracy - namely "l'absolutisme, l'espionnage, l'Hypocrisie religieuse, enfin l'antilibéralisme sous toutes ses formes" (19) - are now becoming more and more the accepted practice in France. He reflects despondently : "N'était-on pas plus libre et plus intelligent du temps de Périclès que du temps de Napoléon III?" (20) Flaubert is so disgusted with French politics at this point that he prefers not to venture into the political arena; in fact he stands well aside from the general mêlée by refusing even to take sides:

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(18) Correspondance, vol.II, p.324 (1851)

(19) Ibid., vol. IV, p.39 ( L.Colet, 1854)

(20) Ibid., p.61 (L.Colet, 1854)

...je n'ai de sympathie pour aucun parti politique...je les exècre tous, parce qu'ils me semblent également bornés, faux, puérils, s'attaquent à l'éphémère, sans vues d'ensemble... J'ai en haine tout despotisme. (21)

As for Turgenev, the crisis he passed through between 1848 and 1858 is rather more complex. The disintegration of the Revolution in France, and its defeat in Germany, affected young Russian intellectuals even more deeply than their Western counterparts. The West had been their source of inspiration and hope, and now, not only was help from the West unavailable, but the West itself appeared to be going through a severe crisis. To the Russian liberals - among whose ranks Turgenev counted himself - 1848 brought dismay and bewilderment, for how could Russia be persuaded to emulate the Western models they had set before her, when the models themselves were crumbling. The revolution shattered Turgenev's liberal illusions. He was now firmly convinced that a liberal revolution was impossible, and he gave himself up to scepticism.

We have already noted his bitterness towards France when he saw the way in which the political situation was likely to evolve. It is interesting to note however that as early as June 1849 he foresaw the events of 1851. He wrote in a letter to Pauline:

La réaction est tout enivrée de sa victoire et va maintenant se montrer dans tout son cynisme. (22)

He was equally horrified when General Lamoricière went in the name of France to congratulate Tsar Nicholas I on his crushing of the Hungarian national uprising. In a letter

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(21) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.170 ( Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie)

(22) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.329

to Pauline of July 20th. 1849 he commented, revealing his disappointment and disgust with the whole of the political scene in Europe, both East and West:

Pauvres Hongrois! Un honnête homme finira par ne plus savoir où vivre: les nations jeunes sont encore barbares, comme mes chers compatriotes, ou bien, si elles se lèvent et veulent marcher, on les écrase comme les Hongrois; et les nations vieilles se meurent et empestent, pourries et gangrenées qu'elles sont. (23)

To make things worse for Turgenev, as soon as he returned to Russia from his stay in the West which had lasted since January 1847, he was exiled for his obituary article on Gogol.

His exile was a period of reflection. At this point, Turgenev was in search of some belief that would give meaning and form to his existence. The idealism of the 1840's was no longer relevant to the political problems of the 1850's.

It was the coup d'état of December 1851 that administered the coup de grâce to Flaubert's political faith. Guillemin has aptly summed up his situation at this point and its consequences for Flaubert's development. He writes:

Un grand tumulte s'est produit dans l'esprit et le coeur de Flaubert entre 1848 et 1852. Ce qui se passa en France en 1851, ce qu'il vit à son retour d'Orient, l'attitude du peuple à l'heure du coup d'Etat, le jetèrent pour de longues années dans l' "athéisme politique". (24)

Flaubert's disappointments at this stage are reflected equally in his correspondence. In 1853, for example, he wrote : "89 a démolì la royauté et la noblesse, 48 la bourgeoisie, et 51 le peuple". (25) So the political scene

(23) Pol. sob. pisem., vol.I, p.343

(24) GUILLEMIN Henri, Flaubert devant la vie et devant Dieu, Paris, n.d., p.71

(25) Correspondance, vol.III, p.349 (L.Colet)

now appears to Flaubert as no more than another aspect of "le néant de la vie". The next attitude he tries is one of indifference to the political situation: this is the standpoint that emerges in Mme. Bovary, the composition of which was to occupy the vast majority of Flaubert's time in the first half of the '50's. Although he had by this time recovered his equilibrium sufficiently to return - after Saint Antoine - to nineteenth century France for the setting of his story, and to deal once more with a "vraisemblable" subject and characters, and although it is just possible to determine that the novel is set in the period of Louis-Philippe's reign, there is no relation of the events of the story to any external or real political event. For example, it is not possible to determine the span of years occupied by the story of Emma Bovary in the way that one can for that of Frédéric Moreau: his career can be pinned down exactly, and followed year by year, together with contemporary events in the outside world. However, through Flaubert's realistic handling of the setting of Mme. Bovary, the reader is made to feel that this little world in isolation is an exact representation, on a microcosmic scale, of the whole of French society. And one of the most striking features of this small world with its closed horizons - and therefore, by implication, of the macrocosm also - is the total absence of any perspectives of improvement.

To return to Turgenev, the first and most obvious change in the nature of his literary compositions in the period immediately following 1848 occurs in the Hunting

Sketches. The sociological, proselytizing approach is strong in those stories - Khor and Kalinych, Yermolai and the Miller's Wife, Lgov, The Steward - which were written before the revolution. Here, Turgenev was implicitly pressing for liberal reforms; he presented contrasting portraits of peasants and landowners, bringing out the essential human qualities of the former group, and stressing the inhumanity of the latter. But in 1848 a change occurs. The stories of the next few years do not deal with the peasant problem, Turgenev again becomes concerned with the more intellectual problem of the superfluous man. The exposure of the inadequacy and weakness of the introspective hero in the story Hamlet of the Schigrovsky district is in fact fairly close, in its underlying spirit, to Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint Antoine of 1848-9.

Turgenev examines the same problem again in the following year with his Diary of a Superfluous Man. Contemporary intellectuals' emotional weakness is stressed in the hero Chulkaturin, their representative type, as he utters despondently:

I haven't the strength to get involved in discussions of elevated topics; descriptions of everyday life around me cannot even interest me.  
(26)

Also in 1850, Turgenev wrote two more Hunting Sketches : The Singers and The Meeting . But in these peasant life is simply depicted, in its less controversial aspects.

The other stories of this period are equally imbued with a similar brand of pessimism, and Turgenev's moody revery is not even shaken off in the composition of his first major novel, Rudin, which was finished in 1856.

So the events of 1848 seem to have eliminated for Flaubert and Turgenev all possibility of optimism in their writings. The philosophical gloom was at its height in the years immediately following the revolution, with a return to the metaphysical problems of death and the supernatural as in Jacob Pasyukov, Faust or La Tentation de Saint Antoine.

But although this fundamental pessimism was to remain, the indifference of the two writers to political and social subjects was not so long-lived. However much they may have tried to shut out the world of political reality from their view, they could not all the same give up entirely the search for an ideal solution, the quest for a reasonable answer to all these problems. But before moving on to look at the later political development of Flaubert and Turgenev, let us look first at the use made by both writers in later years of the material gathered directly from their experiences in 1848 in particular, and during the short life of the Second Republic in general.

The most significant work in this respect is of course L'Education sentimentale, for it is, as René Dumesnil has said:

...entre tous les romans du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, celui qui nous révèle le plus exactement la personnalité de cette époque, son caractère, ses mœurs, les courants d'idées...C'est une vaste fresque dont aucun détail n'est inutile. (27)

As for Flaubert's own frame of mind and attitude to his material as he set about the composition of this work in the second half of the 1860's, he insists from the beginning that he does not want to take sides. This, he maintains,

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(27) DUMESNIL René, En Marge de Flaubert, Paris 1928, p.22



is not part of the novelist's rôle. We get a fairly clear indication of the type of picture of the age Flaubert was trying to present in a letter he wrote to George Sand while working on L'Education sentimentale :

...je ne me reconnais pas le droit d'accuser  
personne...Je me borne donc à exposer les choses  
telles qu'elles me paraissent, à exprimer ce qui  
me semble le vrai. Tant pis pour les conséquences.  
(28)

Flaubert himself stressed the existence of two levels in the novel when he wrote to Barbès in 1867: "Mes premiers plans sont inventés et mes fonds réels". (29) It is also clear that at this point he found the historical aspect of the work highly absorbing, and was even anxious that the 'real' part of the story might turn out to be more interesting than the fiction. He expresses this fear in a letter to his friend Jules Duplan:

...j'ai bien du mal à emboîter mes personnages  
dans les événements politiques de 48...Les per-  
sonnages de l'histoire sont plus intéressants que  
ceux de la fiction, surtout quand ceux-là ont  
des passions modérées; on s'intéresse moins à  
Frédéric qu'à Lamartine. (30)

The chronology of L'Education sentimentale is carefully constructed and painstakingly accurate. The span of years covered by the story extends from six o'clock in the morning on September 15th. 1840 until the end of March 1867. The period from February 1848 to December 1851 occupies some 200 pages, (31) and every detail necessary to produce a convincing and historically accurate picture of these years is included. For example, the building up towards the revolution begins very early in the book:

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(28) Correspondance, vol.V, p.396 (1868)

(29) Ibid., p.327

(30) Ibid., p.363 (1868)

(31) In the Conard edition (from the end of Part II Chapter VI, to the end of Part III Chapter V).

although the description of the February events themselves does not begin until the end of Part II, the first civil disturbances presented occur in Part I Chapter IV. This early indication of greater unrest to come is in fact a detailed description of the street demonstrations in Paris in support of the campaign for electoral reforms. The whole is accompanied by cries of "A bas Guizot!" These scenes were witnessed by Frédéric during his student days in Paris, and there is perhaps an autobiographical note here, for as already mentioned, Flaubert himself attended a "banquet réformiste".

And what then, as presented in L'Education sentimentale, is Flaubert's view of things as they existed between 1848 and 1851? Perhaps the most striking aspect of the portrayal of these years is the negative quality of the descriptions of political events. This is of course closely linked to Flaubert's own experiences at the time of the Revolution and coup d'Etat, and his political temperament at the time of composition. The position has been aptly summed up by Canu who has written of L'Education sentimentale :

Ses [Flaubert's] idées politiques sont surtout négatives. Il a critiqué et méprisé toutes les formes de gouvernement. (32)

The principal quality of the age that emerges from Flaubert's picture is the process of steady disintegration. This is presented as an irreversible trend, the first stage in the process being the collapse of the July monarchy. Of this Flaubert writes:

D'elle-même, sans secousses, la Monarchie se fondait dans une dissolution rapide. (33)

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(32) CANU J. Flaubert, auteur dramatique, Paris 1946, p.107

(33) L'Education sentimentale, p.410

This is followed by the failure of the revolution itself to achieve any of its positive aims, despite the initial support of men such as Monsieur Dambreuse and the Archbishop of Paris. The republican values at the base of the new régime slowly crumble, and the process culminates with the death agony of the Second Republic in the imperial coup d'état. Indeed the picture that Flaubert paints is not favourable to any of the sides or parties involved in the struggle for power. Three forms of government pass by, and none emerges as an ideal form. For this reason, Flaubert was aware, before its publication, that the book would not get a sympathetic reception from any of the political camps. He wrote to George Sand:

Les patriotes ne me pardonneront pas ce livre,  
ni les réactionnaires non plus! (34)

Another interesting point to note is that the rôle of Frédéric Moreau in 1848 is very similar to his author's own: he was on the spot in Paris in February, but present as an observer only, taking no active part in the events, and like him, had lost most of his enthusiasm even for

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(34) Correspondance, vol.V, p.385 (1868)

(It is worth mentioning, by way of comparison, some interesting points in Edmund Wilson's interpretation (in 'The Politics of Flaubert', The Triple Thinkers, London 1952) of the socio-historical aspect of L'Education sentimentale. He claims that it is here that Flaubert's account of society comes closest to socialist theory; also that the presentation of the Revolution of 1848 parallels in a striking manner Marx's analysis of the same events in his 18 Brumaire de Louis-Napoléon, and this so much so that he focusses together the diverse figures of Marx and Flaubert. He seeks to establish that these two great, searching minds, pursuing courses so apparently divergent, arrived at almost identical interpretations of the events. Wilson for example sees Frédéric's liaison with Rosanette as "a symbol of the disastrously unenduring union between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie", of which Karl Marx had written in Le 18 Brumaire.

observation by June. At this point Flaubert was back in Rouen, and Frédéric was away at Fontainebleau with Rosanette during a good part of the fighting. And after the events Frédéric - also like Flaubert - takes refuge from the political turmoil in introverted contemplation.

To return to the political aspect of the work, however, Flaubert's refusal to take sides does give his work a distinct advantage, in making for a greater degree of historical accuracy. L'Education sentimentale is - in Zola's words:

...le seul roman vraiment historique que je connaisse, le seul véridique, exact, complet, où la résurrection des heures mortes soit absolue. (35)

And in any case, apart from the demands of literary objectivity, Flaubert did not consider it worthwhile to take sides in political disputes because, in his own words, "la politique est morte, comme la théologie!" (36) This same idea is developed further in another letter to the same correspondent (George Sand) written at about the time of the publication of L'Education sentimentale. Flaubert maintains that:

L'expérience prouve (il me semble) qu'aucune forme ne contient le bien en soi; orléanisme, république, empire ne veulent plus rien dire... Tous les drapeaux ont été tellement souillés de sang et de merde...(37)

This view that all political groupings are equally futile was to be developed and pushed to its logical and ultimate conclusion in Bouvard et Pécuchet, where the same basic historical material was to reappear in a somewhat different guise.

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(35) ZOLA Emile, Les romanciers naturalistes, Paris 1881, p.146

(36) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.31 (1869)

(37) Ibid. p.32

It is Chapter VI of Bouvard et Pécuchet that deals with the years 1848-51 in particular and the subject of politics in general. A study of the enormous dossiers that contain Flaubert's material for this book reveals the enormous quantity of reading that Flaubert undertook for this chapter. Yet strangely enough, this solid bank of erudition does not protrude through the surface fabric of the novel in this section. In some chapters, the sheer volume of bookish details weighs heavily on the narrative. But despite the fact that Flaubert had consulted many tomes of serious, historical analysis during the planning stage of his chapter on politics, the lighter, humorous aspect of the political events in question remains dominant for the most part. What in fact emerges from this chapter is a microcosmic representation - by the bourgeois and peasants of Chavignolles - of the French provinces in their reactions to the revolution of 1848 and its consequences.

Flaubert deals with the period from February 25th. (as is fitting, the Chavignollais did not receive the news until the events in Paris were almost over) to the coup d'état of '51. After the initial stupefaction of the bourgeois has been calmed by the news that such august bodies as the "Cour de cassation, la Cour d'appel, la Cour des Comptes etc." (39) have given their support to the provisional government, the first incident to be parodied for comic effect is the village ceremony of planting "un arbre de la liberté", which was kindly supplied by M. Bouvard, "réjoui dans son patriotisme par le triomphe du

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(39) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.191

peuple". (40) As we have already noted, Flaubert had been involved in a similar incident at Rouen. He passes subsequently to "le vertige de la députation", a subject which he had already held up to ridicule in his play Le Candidat. Now it is Bouvard and Pécuchet who cannot decide which of them should stand for election. Then the process of reaction sets in: the ridiculous prejudices of the bourgeoisie against the republican socialists are reflected in the Chavignollais giving credence to the stories of the "purées d'ananas de Louis Blanc, au lit d'or de Flocon, aux orgies royales de Ledru-Rollin". (41) Another burning issue of the day that the Chavignollais fail to settle with any degree of success is that of the right to work. The administrators propose the most futile projects to occupy the bands of unemployed demanding work. The whole business finally explodes in the incident involving a cart-load of manure and Mme. Bordin's front lawn. But like so many of their compatriots, the Chavignollais lost their enthusiasm for the Second Republic, and Flaubert concludes this episode with the bitter words:

Les débats sur la constitution n'intéressèrent personne, et au 10 décembre, tous les Chavignollais votèrent pour Bonaparte. (42)

After their experience of political action and their study of political theory, (43) the conclusions reached by Bouvard and Pécuchet in the final section of the chapter are essentially these of Flaubert. There is, for example,

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(40) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.191

(41) Ibid., p.200

(42) Ibid., p.208

(43) Between 1848 and 1851 the two set about the study of social and political theory examining the ideas of: Rousseau, Morant, Fourier, Saint-Simon, Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Pierre Leroux and Auguste Comte.

the same refusal to take sides that we have already seen in Flaubert's correspondence and in L'Education sentimentale.

For he comments:

Bouvard et Pécuchet furent dégoûtés du petit nombre comme du grand. La plèbe en somme valait l'aristocratie. (44)

So the conclusions of the "deux honshommes" are largely parallel to Flaubert's own in 1851. There is, however, an added measure of pessimism, for the author's bitterness and disillusionment as far as politics were concerned were by now total, bearing in mind that this book was written after the fall of Louis-Napoléon, the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune. The increased cynicism is evident as Bouvard and Pécuchet conclude at the time of the coup d'état :

Puisque les bourgeois sont féroces, les ouvriers jaloux, les prêtres serviles, et que le Peuple enfin accepte tous les tyrans, pourvu qu'on lui laisse le museau dans la gamelle, Napoléon a bien fait ! (45)

It is interesting to note why, in the view of Bouvard and Pécuchet and Flaubert himself, politics are so futile in the solving of problems. This is because their study is not organised along scientific lines. If politics were to become a science, they conclude, things would be so much more efficient. This conclusion is in keeping with one of the basic ideas in Bouvard et Pécuchet : that is, that most of man's activities turn sour because they lack proper method and scientific organisation.

Although Flaubert refrains from taking sides politically in both L'Education sentimentale and Bouvard et Pécuchet, there is an essential difference in the treatment

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(44) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.209

(45) Ibid., p.226.

of the 1848-51 period in the two works. The former presents the revolution and its aftermath in a factual and serious manner, with, as already noted, a considerable degree of historical accuracy and detail. In the latter work, the historical and political material is used principally to bring out yet another aspect of "la bêtise humaine" , or rather to stress Bouvard's own definition: "La Politique? une belle saleté!" (46)

Yet the fact remains that Flaubert retained his interest in the events of 1848 until his death. In addition to the evidence of his last literary work, there is also a more personal testimony in a letter to Mme. Braille written only two years before his death. Looking back thirty years Flaubert wrote:

...on était plus inepte en 48 qu'aujourd'hui, et cependant j'ai pour cette époque-là une grande indulgence. (47)

To return now to Turgenev, let us try to assess what subsequent use he made in works of literature of his experiences of the year 1848. There is one point of difference between Turgenev's later use of this material and Flaubert's however: whereas the latter combines personal experience with thorough documentation from external sources, Turgenev, as far as 1848 is concerned, relies entirely on his own experiences and memories.

The second epilogue of his novel Rudin contains the first mention in a work of Turgenev of the 1848 revolution. The addition of this second epilogue was in fact an after-thought: what is now its final page was not added to the body of the text until a second edition of Rudin was pub-

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(46) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.226

(47) Correspondance, supplément vol. IV, p.103 (1878)



lished, five years after the appearance of the first edition. Turgenev added this presumably because it occurred to him, on further reflection, just how closely his idealistic young hero fitted into the generation that sank all its hopes of positive achievements in the liberal revolutionary movement in Europe in 1848. At the point where the story ended in the first edition, Dmitri Rudin was left wandering through Russia, trying to put his socially orientated idealism to some sort of practical use, in wild schemes for making distant rivers navigable and the like.

Lord David Cecil maintained that Turgenev's hand faltered when he added the final page to the novel, but surely the fate allocated to Rudin in this epilogue is the most fitting of all possible conclusions to his story. In this final section, the rest of the novel is justified, it raises the tone of the whole work to one of ennobling pathos. Rudin's death on the barricades in Paris, towards the end of the suppression of the uprising of June 1848, lends a certain grandeur to the portrait of this superfluous man, and serves as an ironic apotheosis of his particular brand of idealism. It is eminently fitting that he - Rudin, the liberal - like Russian liberalism itself, should come to Paris, centre of the revolutionary west, only when it is too late for anything positive to be achieved.

Turgenev returned to the subject of 1848 later in two short stories, My Mates sent me (48) and The Man in the grey spectacles.<sup>(49)</sup> The first story, which is sub-titled 'An episode from the history of the events of June 1848 in Paris'

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(48) This story was first written in 1868, at exactly the same time that Flaubert was recalling his memories of 1848 for L'Education sentimentale. It was published in 1874.

(49) First published in French in 1879.

is the most detailed and most personal of Turgenev's accounts of 1848. The story is written in the first person and deals exclusively with its author's own experiences. The first section is a fairly detailed eye-witness account of the activity at the barricade near the Porte St.-Denis during the June fighting. It is perhaps easier to assess Turgenev's view of these events from My Mates sent me than from any other source. It is evident that by the time he wrote this story, twenty years after the events, he was able to look back at the period rationally, recalling and recording incidents that at the time had been too charged with emotion for him to be able to make use of them in his work. His silence in 1848 itself is easier to understand if we examine the phrases he uses to describe the period he deals with. The narrative begins on the day of June 4th. which Turgenev describes as : "one of the days that are written in blood in the annals of French history". (50) Also he found it impossible to believe that such carnage could take place in the very shade of the 'arbres de la liberté'. Turgenev conveys well the terrible atmosphere of tension that reigned in Paris at this time. He writes:

The whole day passed in indescribable apprehension.. The days that followed were terribly depressing; those who did not live through those days can have no real idea of what it was like. (51)

Clearly, then, even at a distance of twenty years, the emotional power of the 1848 events was still very real.

As a foreigner, Turgenev would not take sides: "It was not my business to fight either on one side or the other". (52) Nonetheless - and in this respect he is like Flaubert

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(50) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIV, p.136

(51) Ibid., p.140

(52) Ibid., p.139

who had also refused to take sides - it is possible to detect some of the author's own views and sympathies through the fabric of the story. From My Mates sent me, we gather that Turgenev discovered during the June fighting qualities in the character of everyday working men of which he had never even suspected the existence. These qualities are what Granjard has aptly referred to as "une humanité inconnue" and "une certaine noblesse morale". (53) Another point of interest in this story is Turgenev's obvious sympathy with the plight of the workers. He conveys well their sense of having been let down, and this by men - the Provisional Government - who were supposedly on their side.

The Man in the grey spectacles, sub-titled 'From reminiscences of 1848', is rather a different kind of story, with unpleasant overtones of espionage and political manipulation. Turgenev sets the beginning of his story in the early days of February 1848, that is, several weeks before the revolution began. Turgenev recounts his meeting with a man - the Monsieur François of the French title - who, at this point in time, prophesied the whole range of political events of that year. As Monsieur François takes coffee with the author at the Palais-Royal he declares knowledgeably:

Well, it is the beginning of February now. Before another month passes France will be a republic... Yes. But don't rejoice yet - if indeed this makes you rejoice..Before the end of the year, the Bonapartists will rule this same old France. (54)

The essence of this strange man's philosophy can be best summed up in his own words: "Power - power - to possess power - there is no other happiness on earth".(55) However,

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(53) GRANJARD Henri, Ivan Tourguéniev et les courants politiques et sociaux de son temps, Paris, 1968 (2nd. edition)p. 207.

(54) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIV, p.112

(55) This is the

a few points of interest concerning the nature of French politics emerge from Turgenev's conversations with Monsieur François. The latter maintains that just as socialism was born in France, so it will die there also, giving as his reason that the French have "epic heads" but not "socialist heads". As the two basic principles of political life in France he gives: "Two cornerstones: revolution and routine". And these he sees summed up in the personalities of Robespierre and Prudhomme. Monsieur François does however make one very interesting prophecy concerning the ultimate triumph of the proletariat. He says:

The people are just the same as the soil...It carries me and I trample on it...suddenly it shakes itself like a wet poodle and overturns everything we have built on it - all our card houses...I know perfectly well that in the end the people will swallow me. Nothing can be done about that. (56)

Turgenev however is more pessimistic, believing that such intriguers as his present interlocutor will always be a danger to the cause of the common people.

In the final section of the story, more personal material is introduced. It is here that we get details of how Turgenev himself received the news of the February uprising, and of his journey to Paris. Turgenev reveals the undercurrent of political manipulation present throughout the whole of the revolutionary period - and even before it started - with reference to various incidents. Besides the strange figure of Monsieur François and his prophecies, there was Mrs. Gordon on the train from Brussels in February, an emissary of Louis-Napoléon, who kept talking about the necessity of appealing to 'the prince', because 'the prince'

alone could save everything. Then we see Monsieur François of all people mingling with the crowds of demonstrators near the Madeleine on May 15th. shouting "Long live Poland!" Then on June 13th. there is the grotesque charlatan distributing highly laudatory pamphlets about Louis-Napoléon to the crowds in the Tuileries gardens.

The kind of picture of 1848 that Turgenev, who viewed all these events from the side-lines, so to speak, was trying to present in this story has perhaps been best summed up by Granjard. He writes of Turgenev's view:

Vue des coulisses, la Révolution est une imposture, un jeu avec des dés pipés, où le peuple perd toujours. (57)

The two stories are similar in so far as they were intended - as their sub-titles indicate - as factual accounts, rather than as pure fiction. Yet they deal with entirely different aspects of the same period. For My Mates sent me deals with the 'innocent' aspect of the revolution: here the essentially human qualities of the workers are stressed, and their plight is presented in a sympathetic light. In contrast, in The Man in the grey spectacles, it is the 'guilty', scheming side of the events that receives attention. Turgenev brings to our notice those political agitators who foresaw, and began campaigning for the return of the Bonapartist dynasty, even before the February revolution had begun.

In conclusion, we may say that despite their pretensions to objectivity, Flaubert and Turgenev were unable to avoid implicit judgements in political matters. For both of them the Revolution of 1848 was a source of hope,

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(57) GRANJARD, op. cit. ,p.208

yet equally for both the turn that events took was a source of thorough disillusionment. In their reactions, as in those of their fellow intellectuals, can be seen the tragedy of nineteenth century liberal idealism.

As we have seen, the impact of the events of 1848-1851 was such that both Flaubert and Turgenev were unable to deal with those events in their literary works for some years. Yet both returned to them, and the subject of 1848 remains one of importance to the end of their careers.

b) Attitudes to politics in the post '48 period

After 1848, pessimism is the most general and typical characteristic of the views of Flaubert and Turgenev concerning politics. They no longer expected rational political solutions to the problems of the world, but nonetheless, could not resign themselves to silence and indifference as far as political matters were concerned. Turgenev's novel Smoke of 1867, for example, contains in the lengthy conversations between Litvinov and Potugin, a good many profound reflections on the state and prospects of Russia and Europe. Potugin acts as Turgenev's mouth-piece here. From the very beginning of the story, this character reveals a firm conviction that the social and political system currently existing in Russia is based on false values, and that all must change. Potugin describes for example the faith of the Slavophiles and their belief in the inevitable social advancement of the ordinary people. He declares firmly:

It will all come they say. At the moment there is

nothing at all, and in the course of ten centuries Russia has produced nothing of her own.. But wait, have patience - it will all come. Why will it all come, may I ask? Because we educated people are poor stuff, but the people...oh, it's a great people..Look at that peasant..That's where it will all come from. All other idols have been shattered. (58)

And this is essentially a bitter echo of the message of the Hunting Sketches : a reproach to the educated classes for their apathy and lack of foresight in their failure to reform from above, before the fateful beginning of a process of change from below.

Flaubert shared Turgenev's readiness to condemn the educated classes of their day, for their achievements had, in his view, been pitiful. This point is perhaps most vociferously expressed in his famous 'Lettre au Conseil Municipal de Rouen'. (59) Here he talks of "la fin de la bourgeoisie" as a virtual certainty. He compares its disappearance to that of the French aristocracy in 1789, and gives as the reasons for both:

...le même besoin d'idoles pour les détruire...  
le même esprit de dénigrement, la même crasse  
ignorance. (60)

He urges them to remedy the situation before it is too late:

Classes éclairées, éclairez-vous!...Avec tous vos capitaux et votre sagesse, vous ne pouvez faire une association équivalente à L'Internationale!  
Tout votre effort intellectuel consiste à trembler devant l'avenir.

Imaginez autre chose, hâtez-vous! ou bien la France s'abîmera de plus en plus....(61)

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(58) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.170

(59) After the death of his friend and fellow writer Louis Bouilhet in 1869, Flaubert campaigned ardently in Rouen for a memorial to be erected to Bouilhet who had spent his last years there as municipal librarian. Steadfast refusal on the part of the authorities provoked this letter.

(60) 'Lettre au conseil municipal de Rouen' in Par les champs et par les grèves, accompagnés de Mélanges et fragments inédits, Charpentier edition, Paris 1908, p.61

(61) Ibid., p.62-3

In fact this letter is a valuable document in proving that Flaubert, despite his ivory tower image, was perfectly capable of shouting aloud his convictions when he considered the occasion propitious. It shows that he had considerable capacities for social satire, and especially when he attacks the city fathers as "Conservateurs qui ne conservent rien". (62) In fact Flaubert himself most aptly sums up the situation of his ivory tower in the surrounding sea of political instability in a letter to Turgenev. He writes:

J'ai toujours tâché de vivre dans une tour  
d'ivoire; mais une marée de merde en bat les  
murs, à la faire crouler. (63)

Largely similar sentiments - if phrased somewhat less picturesquely - are to be found, of course, in the letter from Turgenev to Botkin already referred to where he maintained that at certain periods the writer cannot concern himself with artistic matters alone, and that

The moment of self-knowledge and criticism is every bit as necessary in the development of a nation's life as it is in an individual's. (64)

And both Flaubert and Turgenev found themselves in just such a period. Flaubert for example may have expressed his disapproval of Taine's and Sainte-Beuve's preoccupation in their criticism with the social aspects of literature at the expense of all its other values, yet he himself usually expressed his own view of humanity in social terms and in historical perspective, as of course did Turgenev.

However, one of the greatest parallels between the political views of Flaubert and Turgenev during the 1860's is their attitude to socialism and socialists. But it must be stressed that at this point in time, Flaubert at

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(62) 'Lettre au conseil municipal', p.61

(63) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.61-2 ( 1872)

(64) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.282



least was familiar only with the ideas of the 'traditional' French form of socialism. His knowledge of this subject was limited to the works of such theorists as Saint-Simon, Lamennais and Fourier. He certainly did not know the works of the new radical socialists at this point, and although he probably surveyed this scene in preparation for Bouvard et Pécuchet some ten years later, at this final stage in his career, the new doctrines made little mark on his personal view. Although Turgenev, as a Russian, was probably more aware of new political developments, he does not appear to be aware, until after the Franco-Prussian War at least, of the new kind of socialism (65) that was hatching underground in Switzerland from the 1860's onwards.

Both Flaubert and Turgenev objected strongly to the form of socialism that they did know at this time. Their objections, however, were not made from a right-wing point of view. And what they objected to principally in socialism as presented by these French theorists was essentially its 'traditional' aspects. As they saw it, this socialism was not the radically new doctrine that was needed in order to restructure society, but no more than a regurgitation of old beliefs. Flaubert and Turgenev opposed these socialists on the grounds of their utilitarianism and their authoritarianism, but what they both objected to principally was the common bond of tradition between the socialists and the Church. There is ample evidence for this in their

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(65) This was of course the work of those whose starting point was the "scientific socialism" of Marx and Engels.

correspondence. It is a point that recurs with great frequency in Flaubert's letters of the late 1860's. He maintains that socialism has failed to break its ties with the traditions of the Catholic Church, and so as it stands, this doctrine is totally irrelevant to man's nineteenth century condition. The main line of Flaubert's argument is "le mysticisme a perdu le socialisme". Similarly, in a letter to George Sand, he writes:

Ce que je trouve de christianisme dans le socialisme est énorme. (66)

And he laments to Michelet:

...les prétendus hommes du progrès...Tous partent de la révélation religieuse. (67)

And earlier he had written to the same correspondent: "Les dangers du catholicisme démocratique...sont tous advenus". (68) Turgenev shared this view entirely. He had already written to Mme. Viardot describing a certain Monsieur Ott as "un démocrate catholique" which he considers to be a futile combination of doctrines. He goes on further to declare that

Cette alliance hors nature ne peut produire que des monstres. (69)

In an earlier letter to her, he had already made it perfectly clear that he considered religion to be completely irrelevant in political questions, and that man must work out his own solutions, with no expectation of divine aid. He wrote:

...je préfère Prométhée, je préfère Satan, le type de la Révolte et de l'individualité. Tout atome que je suis, c'est moi qui suis mon maître; je veux la vérité et non le salut; je l'attends de mon intelligence et non de la grâce. (70)

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(66) Correspondance, vol.V, p.385 (1868)

(67) Ibid., vol.VI, p.10 (1869)

(68) Ibid., vol.V, p.358 (1868)

(69) Pol. sob. pisen, vol.I, 355 (1849)

(70) Ibid., p.279 (1847)

With the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, both Flaubert and Turgenev were agreed that France at this time needed to be punished for the follies of the Second Empire. Turgenev, for example, in a newspaper article speaks of the future of liberalism in Europe in the following terms:

C'était impossible aussi longtemps que ce régime abject [le Second Empire] n'avait pas reçu le châtement mérité. (71)

Flaubert first echoed this sentiment in a letter to George Sand of 1870. He wrote: "Ce peuple mérite peut-être d'être châtié". (72) A year later, the feeling was even stronger as he wrote:

Quand je songe à la gigantesque stupidité de ma patrie, je me demande si elle a été suffisamment châtiée?.. (73)

But the punishment did not have the salutary effect hoped for: at the end of the mêlée with Prussia the position looked even blacker than before. Turgenev wrote to Pauline:

Les nouvelles de France ne m'ont pas surpris, tout en m'attristant profondément: je ne crois plus au succès de la lutte et je n'y vois qu'une extermination croissante de la France, de la République et de la liberté. (74)

And in this respect, Flaubert and Turgenev were most definitely agreed: that there was something radically wrong with France as she emerged from the war, defeated and shaken to her very foundations. A Republic had been declared, but it was unstable, and the claims of monarchists and imperialists had not yet been completely quashed. It was obvious to both writers that some drastic changes must

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(71) Article in St. Peterburgsky Vestnik No.216, quoted from HALPERINE-KAMINSKY, op. cit.

(72) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.142

(73) Ibid., p.246 (Princesse Mathilde, 1871)

(74) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VIII, p.312 (December 1870)

be made, and yet there appeared to be no one party or individual capable of stepping into the breach and making a fresh start on the French political scene. Once again letters are the most valuable source in the assessment of the personal views of Flaubert and Turgenev at this time. It emerges that the apparent futility of the existing political parties in France, together with their inability to take any positive steps, added considerably to the state of depression of both writers at this point.

Turgenev, for example, wrote to Ludwig Pietsch:

Was meine Person betrifft, so lebe ich absolut wie eine Schnecke - will auch gar nicht anders leben. Sonst fange ich an zu glauben, daß Frankreich todtkrank ist. (75)

Flaubert in his turn echoes these sentiments with phrases such as "L'état social m'accable". And as he wrote to Turgenev: "Je sens monter du fond du sol une irrémédiable Barbarie". (76)

Another point on which the two were agreed, was that a completely new kind of world would emerge from this morass. In Flaubert's view, the civilized world as he knew it was at an end. He laments in a letter to George Sand:

La civilisation me paraît loin. Hobbes avait raison: Homo homini lupus. (77)

He described himself at this point as submerged in a black melancholy, (78) and his letters are full of such laments as "quel avenir...ô le Progrès!" and "je sens que le monde s'en va". He agreed certainly that a completely new system

(75) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.IX, p.203 (1872)

(76) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.61 (1872)

(77) Ibid., vol.VI, p.135 (1870)

(78) Ibid, p.155 (1870)

was needed. In his view, the rot in French society had gone too deep, and the situation could no longer be remedied simply by the removal of the Napoleonic figurehead. As Flaubert saw it, the whole basis of society had been false. He wrote to Maxime Du Camp of the situation in 1870:

...nous payons le long mensonge où nous avons vécu, car tout était faux: fausse armée, fausse politique, fausse littérature, faux crédit...(79)

Turgenev shared Flaubert's sentiments as far as the dawning of a new age was concerned. He wrote on this subject to his friend Paul Heyse:

Es ist eine neue Welt entstanden, seitdem ich Ihr Büchlein gelesen habe! Und die Tragödie der Geschichte hat einen fast zu streng regelmäßigen Bau. (80)

As for the question of what kind of new world was about to begin, both Flaubert and Turgenev were full of apprehension. They felt that things would be unfamiliar at best; Turgenev expressed his grave doubts in a letter to Mme. Delessert:

...est-ce décidément le monde que nous avons connu et où nous avons vécu...? Où et quand nous reverrons-nous? J'avais eu l'intention de passer par Paris...mais maintenant - y a-t-il seulement un Paris? (81)

Flaubert felt that he was too old even to try to adapt himself to a new form of society. He described himself as "bien vieux pour me plier à des mœurs nouvelles". (82) (He was under fifty at the time.) Sometimes his view was even blacker, and he thought that he would never get over the upset caused by the war. He saw this as virtually the end of his career. He wrote to George Sand with this in

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(79) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.161 (1870)

(80) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VIII, p.290 (1870)

(81) Ibid., vol.IX p. 71 (1871)

(82) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.151 (George Sand, 1870)

mind:

Quant à moi, je me regarde comme un homme fini.  
Ma cervelle ne se rétablira pas...Je ne demande  
plus qu'une chose, c'est à crever pour être  
tranquille. (83)

As the two writers gradually grew more used to the idea of a new social order in France, there were two principal evils they both feared in this emergent new world. These were the spectres of militarism and right-wing catholic reaction. The idea that a military régime would be imposed in France was one that recurred with great frequency in Flaubert's letters of the early 1870's. In October 1870, for example, he was very depressed about the future. He wrote:

Je suis convaincu que nous entrons dans un monde hideux...On sera utilitaire et militaire...(84)

He also described this future militaristic society as "antipathique à tous mes instincts". (85) Turgenev echoed these sentiments in a letter to Pietsch. He feared that the Third Republic was being steered along the wrong lines from the very beginning. He wrote:

Wir steuern los auf eine ganz dumme, enge, gemeinplätzig, militärische, eiserne und hölzerne Republik. (86)

And as far as the Paris Commune of 1871 is concerned, their reactions were, again, largely parallel. Neither Flaubert nor Turgenev was in fact very sympathetic towards the communards. But as with their attitudes to socialism, it must be stressed that their criticisms were not made from a right-wing standpoint. They thought rather

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(83) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.148 (1870)

(84) Ibid., p.179 (December 1870)

(85) Ibid. p.154 (1870)

(86) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.172 (1873)

that the declaration of the Commune was a futile action, as it was doomed to failure. And that in any case, this kind of social structure did not correspond to what was currently needed in France. The immediate reaction from both was that it was a great pity for France - still officially occupied by a foreign army - to fall victim to internal strife. Flaubert, however, had seen something like this on the horizon for some time. He had written to his niece Caroline as early as October 5th. 1870:

Dans un mois tout sera fini, c'est-à-dire le premier acte du drame sera fini: le second sera la guerre civile. (87)

The Commune came as more of a shock to Turgenev, and his letters to Mme. Viardot for March 1871 are full of such phrases as "Poor, unhappy France..." and "What is to become of France?" (88) It was, in any case, a disturbing event for him, even though he was far from the scene of action. He wrote to Flaubert of his feelings on the matter in June, when he seemed to be suffering still from the shock of the news of the disturbances. He wrote:

Si je ne vous ai pas répondu plus tôt, c'est que je n'en avais pas le courage. Ces événements de Paris m'ont stupéfié. Je me suis tu comme on se tait en chemin de fer quand on entre dans un tunnel: le tapage infernal vous remplit et vous ébranle la tête. (89)

Of course, just as was the case in 1848, neither Flaubert nor Turgenev took any kind of active part in the political events of 1870-71, and at this point Turgenev makes an interesting reflection on his own and Flaubert's position vis à vis politics. He wrote in pensive mood to

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(87) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.162

(88) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.IX, pp.43 & 50

(89) Ibid., p.104

Flaubert:

Ah, nous avons de rudes moments à passer -  
nous autres, spectateurs nés. (90)

So both writers considered the Commune, as a political action, to be out of place in the Paris of the 1870's. Flaubert's greatest criticism was of its retrospective nature. To him, the very idea of a commune was anachronistic in the extreme, and thus totally irrelevant in the contemporary situation. He lamented in a letter to George Sand:

Quels rétrogrades!...Pauvre France, qui ne se dégagera jamais du moyen âge! qui se traîne encore sur l'idée gothique de la commune, qui n'est autre que le municipe romain! (91)

But if neither Flaubert nor Turgenev had a great deal of sympathy for the cause of the communards, they were both at least horrified by the brutality of their suppressors. Turgenev was filled with indignation at Galiffet's virtual murder of eighty seven communards. (92) Flaubert revealed his disgust at the state of things in Paris in a letter to Turgenev. He spent a week there in June 1871 and wrote of his impressions:

Il y a quelque chose de plus lamentable que ses ruines, c'est l'état mental de ses habitants. On navigue entre le crétinisme et la folie furieuse. (93)

And in Flaubert's view, it was this 'état mental' that would prove to be the greatest danger to the Third Republic. It was because of this state of mind that he feared a short-sighted, right-wing reaction. What he dreaded most was "une forte réaction cléricale et monarchique". (94)

(90) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.IX, p.87.

(91) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.224 (1871)

(92) In a letter to Annenkov of June 8th, 1871 (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.IX, p.101).

(93) Correspondance, supplément vol.II, p.273-4 (1871)

(94) Ibid., vol.VI, p.213



Before the Commune even, Flaubert had seen that there would most likely be a considerable swing to Catholicism after the war. In October 1870 he had written to Claudius Popelin:

...je vous prédís ceci: la France va devenir  
très catholique. Le malheur rend les faibles  
dévots et tout le monde, maintenant, est faible.  
(95)

In view of this, he saw the Franco-Prussian War as the absolute end to the radical tradition that had begun with the French Revolution of 1789. Socialism, being the current torch-bearer of this tradition, had failed to meet the challenge and provide a valid solution to the problems posed by this cataclysmic war. And Flaubert seemed to regret this as he wrote to Mme. Roger des Genettes:

Quant au socialisme, il a raté une occasion  
unique et le voilà mort pour longtemps. (96)

Another interesting point to be made in the context of political views is the lack of popularity of those works of Flaubert and Turgenev which deal with questions of political actuality. It was in fact their refusal to take sides in political questions that prevented both authors from enjoying a full measure of success. In Fathers and Children, for example, Turgenev strove to be scrupulously fair to both generations, but only succeeded in antagonising both. And as already mentioned, Flaubert's strictly non-partisan approach in L'Education sentimentale offended both right and left. And the failure of his play Le Candidat in 1873 can be attributed to the same reason. The particular aim of the play was to hold up to public ridicule the unsatisfactory nature of current electoral procedures, as well as embodying a bitter satire on the bour-

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(95) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.180

(96) Ibid., p.225 (April 1871)

geois way of life. The cast list does not include a single sympathetic character. Flaubert did however foresee the play's lack of success: in the year of its composition he wrote to Feydeau of his

...grande comédie politique...Mais aucun gouvernement ne la laissera jouer, parce que j'y roule tous les partis dans la m....! (97)

If Flaubert and Turgenev saw any hope for the future of politics, it was in a more rational and systematic organisation of the discipline, thus making it more of a 'science'. Besides touching on this idea in Bouvard et Pécuchet, Flaubert was most specific on this subject in his correspondence, declaring as he did in a letter to George Sand:

...la politique sera une éternelle niaiserie tant qu'elle ne sera pas une dépendance de la Science. (98)

This idea recurs frequently in his letters of the 1870's. He felt that if France was to recover, the politicians must set their house in order according to the strictest scientific principles. He wrote to George Sand:

Pour que la France se relève, il faut qu'elle passe de l'inspiration à la Science, qu'elle abandonne toute métaphysique, qu'elle entre dans la critique, c'est-à-dire dans l'examen des choses. (99)

Turgenev was never so explicit as Flaubert on this subject, but broadly parallel ideas emerge from his novel Virgin Soil. Here it is not so much 'Science' itself that is acclaimed, but the implication is made that a more scientific method and systematic approach are what is needed

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(97) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.66 (1873)

(98) Ibid., vol.VI, p.33 (1869)

(99) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.281 (1871)

in solving social and political problems.

In this work, Turgenev portrays the emergent Russian Populist movement and reflects its idea of "going to the people". What the novel shows is that the young radical Nezhdanov's efforts to make contact with the ordinary people and to improve their lot were doomed to failure. And this because his approach was all wrong. Nezhdanov's doctrines and methods were all based on shaky, idealistic foundations, and these with their origin in emotion, rather than sound, 'scientific' reasoning. On the other hand, Solomin demonstrates that a solid basis of organisational work is necessary before any such ambitious project as the idea of "going to the people" can hope to succeed.

So 'scientific' approach seems to have been the only source of hope for the future of politics, as far as Flaubert and Turgenev could see. But the question of whether this transformation of the political scene along scientific lines would actually come about, was a different matter entirely. Politicians, as the two writers saw them in action around them, in France and in Russia, did not inspire in them any faith as to the likelihood of radical change in political structures in the foreseeable future.

So we must leave the political thinking of Flaubert and Turgenev on a pessimistic note, with both of them feeling indignant (100) and disappointed that so many opportunities had been wasted. For as Flaubert wrote to

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(100) Typical was the comment made by Flaubert in a letter to Mme. Roger des Genettes of 1878: "Anacharsis Cloots disait: "Je suis du parti de l'indignation". J'arrive à lui ressembler." (Correspondance, vol.VIII, p.112)

Turgenev on the prospects of the Third Republic only shortly before his death:

...c'est la République qui va devenir le parti de l'ordre! Pourvu qu'elle ne devienne pas celui de la Bêtise! (101)

Thus we see that throughout their careers, neither Flaubert nor Turgenev was politically active, but both were keen observers of the political field. The opinions of neither were in support of any individual party or political doctrine. Neither of them had a 'party mentality'. However, the central idea of liberty remained dear to them throughout their lives, and although they at times attacked those who represented it in the political arena, they remained faithful to the basic truth of the concept. And Pavlovsky's comment à propos of Turgenev could well be applied to Flaubert as well. In his recollections he wrote:

...il était jaloux de passer pour le porte-drapeau des idées libérales. (102)

But on the whole, the changeability of their artistic temperaments foils all attempts to place the two writers in any political category. To judge from the recollections of their contemporaries, this political 'changeability' was a notable feature. Pavlovsky wrote of Turgenev:

Comme tous les artistes, Tourguéneff n'avait à proprement parler pas d'opinions politiques. Nerveux et facile à l'enthousiasme, il appartenait à deux heures d'intervalle aux partis les plus opposés. Indépendant d'ailleurs par principe, il l'était aussi par le fait. (103)

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(101) Correspondance, supplément vol.IV, p.151 (1879)

(102) PAVLOVSKY, op. cit., p.215

(103) Ibid., p.207

The Princess Mathilde's recollections of Flaubert's political views are very similar:

Il n'avait aucune conviction politique. Tantôt il demandait toutes les répressions, tantôt il n'en admettait aucune.

Il était d'ailleurs sans fiel, sans fausses susceptibilités, facile à vivre, et ses brutalités, toutes de langage, tenaient moins à son tempérament sanguin qu'au désir d'étonner.

C'est ainsi qu'un soir à dîner, il nous tint ce propos:

- Je suis un sapeur de tout gouvernement quel qu'il soit, je voudrais tout détruire. (104)

We must agree then that the approach to political matters of Flaubert and Turgenev was one of extreme independence. But it is not really fair to say that this indicates a lack of "conviction politique". For the two writers were far from being indifferent in these matters, and after 1848, there is a certain consistency in their attitude: they were essentially pessimistic as far as politics were concerned, being constantly disillusioned at the current state of affairs in Europe and highly sceptical about the politicians' ability to improve the situation. And in this pessimism they remained steadfast, for Flaubert shared the opinion of Turgenev expressed in a letter to his English translator Ralston:

My conviction is that we stand on the threshold of very dark times...There is nobody who can predict what shall come out of all this. (105)

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(104) Princesse MATHILDE, 'Gustave Flaubert', study published in Gustave Flaubert, Lettres inédites à la Princesse Mathilde, Paris, 1927.

(105) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII (i), p.136 (1877)

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER V

## (26) Дневник лишнего человека:

...рассуждения о предметах возвышенных - мне не под силу, описания окружающего меня быта/даже меня занять не могут. (Соч. V, 178)

## (50) Наши послали

...тех дней, которые такими кровавыми чертами вписаны на скрижалях французской истории...(Соч. XIV, 136)

## (51) Наши послали:

Целый день прошел в несказанной тревоге.

Наступило страшное, мучительное время; кто его не пережил, тот не может составить себе о нем точного понятия. (Соч. XIV, 140)

## (52) Наши послали:

Мне не приходилось драться ни по ту, ни по сю сторону баррикад. (Соч. XIV, 139)

## (54) Человек в серых очках:

- Теперь начало февраля...Месяца не пройдет - и Франция будет республикой.

....

-Да. Но погодите радоваться...если только это вас радует. К концу года Бонапарты будут обладать (он употребил гораздо более сильное выражение) той же самой Францией. (Соч. XIV, 112)

## (55) Человек на серых очках:

Власть...власть...обладать властью - другого счастья на земле нет! (Соч. XIV, 116)

## (56) Человек в серых очках:

Народ - то же, что земля...Она меня носит - а я ее попираю. Правда, иногда она вдруг возьмет да встряхнется, как мокрый пудель, и повалит всё, что мы на ней настроили, <sup>очень</sup> все наши карточные домики...С другой стороны, я <sup>очень</sup> хорошо знаю, что в конце концов она меня поглотит...И народ меня поглотит тоже. Этому помочь нельзя. (Соч. XIV, 123)

(58) Дым:

Всё, мол, будет, будет. В наличности ничего нет, и Русь в целые десять веков ничего своего не быработала... Но постойте, потерпите: всё будет...А потому, что мы, мол, образованные люди, - дрянь, но народ...о, это великий народ! Видите этот армяк? вот откуда всё пойдет. Все другие идола разрушены... (Соч. IX, 170)

(64) В.П.Боткину:

Момент самопознания и критики так же необходим в развитии народной жизни, как и в жизни отдельного лица. (Письма II, 282)

CHAPTER VI - The dark side of life - dreams, the mysterious and the supernatural in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev

The darker, more mysterious side of life certainly has little significance in the development of the mature masterpieces of Flaubert and Turgenev, but if we look rather at their youthful efforts, at works written late in life, closer to death, as well as at short stories and projects for works never completed, we can discover a considerable interest in various aspects of the supernatural on the part of both writers.

If we begin with the earliest literary efforts of Flaubert and Turgenev, it is possible to see their use of the supernatural as a heritage from their reading of Romantic writers, as well as of conventional mystery tales. (1) Turgenev, for example, expanded his first bursts of creative energy on literary fantasies modelled on Pushkin, Gogol, Byron and certain of the French Romantics. During the 1830's the young Turgenev lingered on in the vein of Romantic poetry, although Belinsky had already proclaimed that the future of Russian literature lay in the novel and prose tale. (2) These early works, then, are backward-looking, as far as literary history is concerned, and the intrusion of the supernatural and the dream-like state is much in keeping with the Romantic concept and use of such devices.

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(1) In a diary that Turgenev kept during the spring of 1831, (when he was twelve years old) he describes the reaction: "an indescribable agitation and upheaval in all my insides" that he experienced while reading a mystery story. (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.158)

(2) In a series of articles entitled Literaturnie mechtania, published between September and December 1834 in the review Molva.



In Steno, for example, supernatural elements play a fairly significant rôle. The principal manifestation of the supernatural is in the form of mysterious voices which address the desperate young hero. Sometimes ghostly figures appear as well: in Act II, scene 2, for example, a white, blood-stained figure looms up and calls out faintly to Steno. When the voice is called upon to identify itself, the dialogue runs as follows:

STENO: Who are you?

VOICE: Your demon.

STENO: You...my demon, / And this blood...

VOICE: Yours.

STENO: Mine! (3)

And a little further on, the voice proclaims: "I am your sovereign lord". (4) The whole scene may be undeniably naïve and predictable, but the drama as a whole is interesting as far as future development is concerned, in so far as we see here an evil force - a demon fed on Steno's blood - assuming the rôle of representative of the forces of destiny. Such forces appear to be constantly hovering over the young hero and drive him ultimately to suicide. Steno ends with the demonic voices' description of a dark and gloomy world full of silence and eternal suffering.

The relentlessness, the inscrutable, and even pernicious nature of the forces of destiny are themes which are to be explored further in many of Turgenev's later short stories.

In the spring of 1837, Turgenev wrote in a letter (5) to Nikitenko that he had finished several poems, including two whose titles appear almost certainly to indicate myst-

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(3) Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, p.397

(4) loc. cit.

(5) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.164

erious or supernatural subjects. These are Fantasmagoria on a summer night (6) and Dream. Unfortunately, however, the record of these titles is all that remains to us, the manuscripts having been lost. (7)

Another early work where an interest in death and destruction wrought by strange forces is apparent is the poem Darkness already referred to. (8) The first line of this is interesting in view of Turgenev's interest in the nature of dreams: it hints at a confusion between what we see in dreams and what we see in the real world: "I had a dream...but it was not entirely a dream". This theme was to be taken up again by Turgenev many times in his later work.

Several of Turgenev's poems that have survived to be included in his complete works reveal a marked tendency to dream-like contemplative states and gloomy reflections on the more mysterious aspects of life. The poem Evening of 1837 is perhaps the best example of this. Here the stillness of night arouses "marvellous and strange" (9) thoughts in the young poet. He begins to question what lies behind the façade of life itself. But Nature remains in her "deep hypnotic trance" and the young man concludes that the secrets of existence are unknowable. (10)

(6) There is some slight confusion as to the exact wording of this title: in the text of the letter in Volume I of Pisma it appears as 'summer', but in the notes to Volume I of Sochineny it is referred to as 'moonlit'.

(7) Possibly these papers met the fate that Turgenev describes in a fit of depression in 1857: "Two days ago I did not burn (through fear of appearing to imitate Gogol) but tore up and threw down the watercloset all my rough copies, plans etc." (Letter to Botkin, Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.91).

(8) See Chapter II above.

(9) Pol. sob. soch., vol.I, p.11

(10) This idea of the 'unknowable' is to assume greater significance for Turgenev later: in Faust and the short stories of the 1870's for example.

Also into this 'supernatural' section of Turgenev's early works comes his playlet of the early 1840's The Temptation of Saint Anthony, for devils and demons play a part here too, but this work will be examined more fully in comparison with Flaubert's work of the same name in the following chapter.

As far as Flaubert's early works are concerned, fantasies containing a macabre element also form a significant section of his Oeuvres de jeunesse. Again, much of this is owed to the reading of youth: for example, Flaubert's use of the magician figure in Rêve d'enfer (11) is a mirroring of Goethe's Faust. But material gleaned in this way was also undoubtedly nurtured by the young Gustave's own morbid turn of mind. He describes this retrospectively in a letter of 1853:

Je rêvais le suicide! Je me dévorais de toutes espèces de mélancolies possibles. (12)

These tales of devils, monsters and mysterious happenings were perhaps the result of the kind of pastime that Flaubert refers to in the largely autobiographical Mémoires d'un fou and Novembre. In the former he reveals an early inclination to dreamy contemplation:

Oh! comme mon enfance fut rêveuse...je contemplais de dedans mon berceau la lune sur fond d'azur qui éclairait ma chambre et dessinait des formes étranges sur les murailles; j'avais des extases...(13)

And in Novembre he tells us:

Je me perdais à plaisir dans des songeries sans limites...(14)

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- (11) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.162  
 (12) Correspondance, vol.III, p.146 (L.Colet)  
 (13) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.486  
 (14) Ibid., vol.II, p.182

The combination of these two forces - the influence of reading and a contemplative, even morbid nature - led Flaubert, even at the age of fifteen, to grapple with, in Colling's words:

...[le] problème de l'homme qu'un destin exceptionnel a mis en relation avec les puissances supérieures et placé devant les grands secrets de la vie et de la mort, du bien et du mal, de l'action et du rêve. (15)

This was to be the subject of Rêve d'enfer already mentioned, of the more substantial work Smarh and even to form the basic situation on which La Tentation de Saint Antoine was to be constructed.

So in the earliest works, we find the "diablerie naïve" (16) of Rêve d'enfer with its hero with no mortal soul, monsters in Quidquid volueris (17) which recounts the atrocities and desperation of a creature half human and half ape, and more devils in Smarh, where certain episodes contain clear reflections of Goethe's Walpurgisnacht scenes and parts of Quinet's Ahasvérus. However, by the time Flaubert comes to write Novembre in 1842, he has progressed out of the 'monde des démons' towards a more mature handling of aspects of the supersensory experienced rather through psychological phenomena.

Novembre, whose essence is the attempt to express the "choses indicibles" which form the basis of the young artist's sensibility, consists largely, as Lorenza Maranini has said, of "des jeux avec la folie, une recherche anxieuse et angoissée de quelque chose d'introuvable et d'impossible". (18) The young writer pin-points a very

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(15) COLLING Alfred, Gustave Flaubert, Paris 1947, p.43  
 (16) The phrase is Thibaudet's. (Gustave Flaubert, p.18)  
 (17) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.I, p.204  
 (18) MARANINI Lorenza, 'Novembre', in Bulletin des Amis de Flaubert, No.7, 1955

delicate psychological state, where the adolescent of artistic temperament experiences visions, almost by an act of will. (19) This trance-like mental state emerges in contemplative passages such as the hero's reflection:

...et le tout se confondant, fantôme et corps,  
rêve et réalité, la femme que je venais de  
quitter prit pour moi une proportion synth-  
étique...c'était comme une fatalité qui m'attir-  
ait. (20)

The intensity of his feelings is such that they cannot be satisfied within the normal experiences of human life - relief is possible only through a transposition into image, whether in the form of vision or of artistic creation.

If we look now at the first version of Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint Antoine, composed between 1848 and 1849, it would appear to be backward-looking, in so far as it is a return to the unreal world of devils and fantasy, after the 'real' world of Novembre and L'Education sentimentale. On closer examination, however, it emerges that the shift, that began with these two works, from the demonic horror stories, to an interest in the darker workings of the human mind itself is still much in evidence. Monsters and devils there are in plenty in La Tentation, but their function is a little more sophisticated in the work of 1848 than it was in 1836.

Flaubert's interest in - and indeed experience of - the state of hallucination seems to have been the motivating force behind the composition of La Tentation. Thibaudet has defined this state in Flaubert as:

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(19) This idea was to be developed and explored further in the plans for La Spirale.

(20) Oeuvres de jeunesse, vol.II, p.205

...l'hallucination de la nature sacerdotale et monacale, c'est l'identité qui lui paraissait exister entre sa vie et celle d'un prêtre ou d'un moine, d'un prêtre de l'art et d'un moine hanté de rêves et de visions. (21)

But despite the moments of psychological insight into problems such as solitude and desire, the influence of Romantic literature is still felt - especially that of Faust, Cain and Ahasvérus. This early version of St. Antoine with the significance of the rôle played by allegories, has much more of a mystical quality than the final 1874 version, where the influence of science and of history were far more considerable, and the echoes of Romantic literature faded.

In the many passages of lyrical exuberance in this first Tentation, the mysterious still has a part to play. One of the finest examples is the description in Part III of the state of the world before the appearance of man:

...j'avais des forêts mystérieuses, j'avais des océans démesurés, j'avais des montagnes inaccessibleles. Dans des eaux noires vivaient des bêtes dangereuses, et l'haleine des marécages comme un voile sombre se balançait sur ma figure. (22)

However, the work is extremely diffuse - some say unreadable. Flaubert had progressed perhaps from the "diablerie naïve" of his earliest works, but his attempt to write a 'universal tragedy' of the human mind turned out to be too ambitious a project. Flaubert's transposition into artistic form of his ideas on the importance of hallucination, vision and dream for the creative temperament was not nearly refined enough to ensure the success of such a work. The efforts of another quarter of a cen-

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(21) THIBAUDET, op. cit., p.168

(22) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.457

tury were necessary before Flaubert could achieve a more lucid exposition of the supernatural acting in this way through the psychological make-up of his hero.

The completion of La Tentation in 1849 marks for Flaubert a break with this kind of material for a period of almost ten years. (23) There were, it appears, two basic reasons for his abandonment of supernatural subjects at this point. The most immediate was the reaction of his friends Maxime Du Camp and Louis Bouilhet to La Tentation. Not only did they recognize the faults of the work itself - and told Flaubert so in no uncertain terms (24) - but they also realized that such a work was completely out of keeping with current trends in literature, and that if their young friend wanted a career as a writer, he would do much better to stick to more realistic subjects.

The other reason was a more personal one: the haunting memory of the hallucinations he had suffered during his own nervous illness in 1844. The unhappy experience with La Tentation perhaps made him realize that he was still too close to this experience to deal with it properly in art. This certainly seems to be the impression he gives in a letter to Louise Colet in 1853. He writes then of his illness (and this at a distance of almost ten years from the attack) :

...elle m'a fait connaître de curieux phénomènes psychologiques dont personne n'a l'idée, ou plutôt que personne n'a sentis. Je m'en vengerai à

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(23) It is true that Flaubert took up La Tentation de Saint Antoine again in 1856, but the text produced then is rather a re-working of the same material. There is little in the way of a new approach or new ideas.

(24) According to Du Camp's account in his Souvenirs littéraires (Vol.I, p.427 et seq.). But perhaps one should bear in mind that this account was written thirty years after the event.

quelque jour, en l'utilisant dans un livre (ce roman métaphysique et à apparitions, dont je t'ai parlé). Mais comme c'est un sujet qui me fait peur, sanitairement parlant, il faut attendre, et que je sois loin de ces impressions-là pour pouvoir me les donner facilement, idéalement, et dès lors sans danger pour moi ni pour l'oeuvre. (25)

As for Turgenev, the stage of development represented by the break with the supernatural came rather earlier, and as a result of his own consciousness of the way literature was going in Europe. As already mentioned, as the 1840's progressed Turgenev came to see himself as one of the pioneers of realist literature in Russia, and soon began a conscious effort to link all of his literary works very definitely to Russian actuality. (26)

In this context, it is interesting to compare briefly Turgenev's Hunting Sketches, begun in the second half of the 1840's, with Gogol's Dikanka stories, composed some fifteen years earlier. Gogol's stories had, as de Vogüé says, "donné le modèle du genre", (27) for this kind of Dorfgeschichte did not really exist in Russian literature before this time. We know from the article Turgenev wrote for L'Illustration that he admired this work for "la vigueur et le naturel de son coloris" and for "son originalité sincère". And in earlier works, Turgenev might have been influenced by the strong element of magic and the supernatural which is prominent in the Dikanka stories. But at this point, in the late 1840's,

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(25) Correspondance, vol.III, p.146

(26) These, of course, are the ideas he expressed in the article he wrote for L'Illustration of July 19th. 1845.

(27) VOGUE E.M. de, op. cit., p.156



Turgenev, in the interests of realism, has removed almost all trace of such elements from his work. Almost, because there is one of the Hunting Sketches where Turgenev's interest in such subjects is still apparent: this is Bezhin Meadow, where superstition and the supernatural are important elements. The story centres on the conversations of a group of young peasant boys around a camp fire during a starlit summer night. The talk turns on all the various manifestations of the supernatural that have occurred recently in their villages and the surrounding area. There are tales of ghostly apparitions in a paper mill, the attempts of a water nymph to seduce a local man, the curse put on a peasant woman by a water fiend, drownings, premonitions of death etc. The whole is summed up near the end of the story in a comment by the young Pavel - which can be seen as indicative of Turgenev's own attitude : "Well...let come what may...No man can avoid his fate". (28)

But in 1856, Turgenev returns more definitely to the intrusion of the supernatural into human affairs in his short story Faust. This period was not a happy one in Turgenev's life - his illness (a bladder complaint) troubled him, and there had been a crisis in his relationship with Pauline Viardot. The author's melancholy and introspective mood is reflected in his story.

This is really the first story of Turgenev where the 'mysterious' is examined within a psychological framework. For here the strange happenings very definitely have

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(28) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IV, p.111

their roots in the strange workings of the human mind. In Faust, the scene is set for strange events early on: the heroine Vera Nicolaevna's grandfather, Ladanov, is presented as some kind of magician:

...he devoted himself to chemistry, anatomy and magical arts; tried to discover means to prolong human life, fancied he could hold intercourse with spirits and call up the dead. (29)

Her mother was also aware of the supernatural; she is described as being afraid of

...those secret forces on which life rests and which rarely, but so suddenly break out. (30)

The dénouement is brought about by the narrator, Pavel Alexandrovich B., reading to Vera Nicolaevna from Goethe's Faust. This girl had been brought up to believe that all creative works of the imagination were wrong, and at the point at which the story begins, had never read a single novel, poem or play. The readings from Faust have a strange effect on her, for she "believes in apparitions" and "is afraid of everything dark and underground". (31) She makes interesting comments on the characters of Goethe's drama: Mephistopheles, for example, terrifies her, not as the devil, but as "something that may exist in every man". Pavel Alexandrovich feels strangely drawn towards this strange young woman, despite the fact that she is married to a close friend. He describes this strong attraction between them as the result of "some unseen force". In the last section of the story, Turgenev links this experience to the idea of the 'unknown' or 'unknowable'. (32) For

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(29) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.15

(30) Ibid., p.11

(31) Ibid., p.38

(32) We have already noted the birth of Turgenev's interest in such a concept in his poem Evening.

after Vera Nicolaevna's strange and sudden death - occasioned ostensibly by the admission of feelings of love between her and Pavel Alexandrovich. The hero reflects on this unfortunate woman and the secret play of fate:

Who knows what seeds each man living on earth leaves behind him, which are only destined to come up after his death? Who can say by what mysterious bond a man's fate is bound up with his childrens'...how his yearnings are reflected in them, and how they are punished for his errors? (33)

Pavel Alexandrovich concludes - reflecting closely Turgenev's own view: "We must all submit and bow our heads before the Unknown". (34)

As far as Flaubert is concerned in this middle period, traces of a surviving interest in the supernatural can still be found in certain facets of his writing - even if these elements no longer form the central issue of major works. For example, in Salammbô, the action of which takes place in North Africa, Flaubert's interest in the darker aspects of life is revealed mainly in the framework of myth - especially in the mythology of the goddess Tanit - in which the story is set. For as Louis Bertrand has said:

L'Afrique pour lui [Flaubert], c'est, par excellence, le pays mystérieux, la région fabuleuse pleine d'enchantements et de mirages. (35)

Flaubert's continued interest in unusual states of the human mind is also revealed in the psychological make-up of Salammbô herself, in her dreams, her desires as well as her involvement in the mysticism surrounding Tanit. In fact the work could be compared to Turgenev's Faust, in

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(33) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.49

(34) loc. cit.

(35) BERTRAND Louis, L'Orient et L'Afrique dans l'oeuvre de Flaubert, Paris 1912, p.63

so far as the young heroine dies as the result of a strange psychological state,(36) rather than for any physical reason.

The importance Flaubert attached to getting the psychological aspect of Salammbô right, and the trouble he took over it, can be judged from letters he wrote to Ernest Feydeau and others while he was working on the book. In April 1857 he stated his priorities:

Ce qui m'inquiète le plus, c'est le fonds, je veux dire la partie psychologique. (37)

He explained in more detail to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie:

...je suis revenu incidemment à ces études psycho-médicales qui m'avaient tant charmé il y a dix ans, lorsque j'écrivais mon Saint Antoine. A propos de ma Salammbô, je me suis occupé d'hystérie et d'aliénation mentale. Il y a des trésors à découvrir dans tout cela. (38)

The next work to come from Flaubert's pen after Salammbô - his play, or féerie, Le Château des coeurs (39)- is also significant from the point of view of interest in the supernatural. The subject of the play may seem banal: the eternal struggle between good and evil, beauty and ugliness, ideal and matter, but Flaubert's imagination, coloured by his interest in and knowledge of the Orient, has added an extra dimension. Besides peopling the drama with gnomes and fairies, Flaubert returns to his interest in the force of destiny as some mysterious force pursuing the characters. Paul, 'le chevalier de l'idéal', for example, seems always alone and defeated by 'Fate'. And as Canu has said:"le surnaturel...rôde toujours autour de

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(36) In Salammbô's case, this is occasioned by a fatal combination of religious feelings and sexual guilt.

(37) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.175 (Feydeau)

(38) Ibid., vol.IV, p.314 (1859)

(39) Flaubert worked on the play during 1862 and 1863, finishing it in December 1863.

l'action". (40)

Another work which occupied Flaubert during the early 1860's, and which is immensely important in determining the nature of his interest in the supernatural in later years is, of course, La Spirale. (41) Unfortunately, Flaubert never wrote this projected novel in full, and all that remains to us is his plan. Fairly elaborate plans, however, (42) and it is possible to see reasonably clearly what the central theme of the book would have been. Basically, it was to be a study of the state of hallucination, and especially in relation to the artistic temperament. The whole action of the work was to have been dependent on the brain of one man - everything in the book would have turned on the psychological make-up of the central character, a painter who had lived for a long time in the East. There appears to be no intervention by external supernatural forces.

The first part was to deal with the artist's relationship to the drug hashish: he had acquired the habit of using it quite regularly to provoke visions and dream-like states which he found, in turn, conducive to artistic inspiration. Gradually however, he learns to do without the stimulative action of the drug, and yet is still able to experience the visions. In the early stages

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(40) CANU Jean, Flaubert, auteur dramatique, Paris 1946, p.51

(41) The dating of this plan is established by Paul Dimoff in his article 'un projet de roman de Flaubert: "La Spirale"', in R.H.L.F., October -December 1948. He maintains that Flaubert almost certainly had read Baudelaire's Paradis artificiels and Mangeur d'opium, which did not appear until 1860.

(42) See FISCHER E.W., Etudes sur Flaubert inédit, Leipzig, 1908, pp.121-37

of this experiment, he uses just the smell of hashish in a little box in order to provoke a trance, but as time goes by, he is able to induce the state by auto-suggestion. And so the visions - and the state of happiness and creativity associated with them - depend ultimately only on himself and the "exercices spirituels" that he has adopted.

The conclusion of La Spirale would have shown, as Dimoff says, that:

...le bonheur consiste à être fou - au sens où l'entend le commun des hommes - c'est à dire à tenir les visions, que notre imagination tire de la vie réelle pour plus vraies que cette vie elle-même. (43)

The importance of this subject for Flaubert has been stressed by Hélène Frejlich, (44) who sees the projected action of La Spirale as "le symbôle de ce qu'a été Flaubert". As for him, "...la vie véritable serait celle qui se passerait en rêve ou en art".

It is possible to find parallel instances of a confusion between the dream state and real life in many of Turgenev's short stories. This concept is not developed fully until later in his works of the 1870's and 80's, such as Klara Milich. Nevertheless, there are passages in earlier works which indicate an interest on Turgenev's part in the idea of the fusion of dream and life. In the story Jacob Pasinkov of 1855, for example, we read:

What gentle things are dreams, just think! Our whole life is a dream, and what is best in it is still a dream.  
- And poetry?  
- Poetry is also a dream, but a dream of paradise.  
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(43) DIMOFF, art. cit.

(44) FREJLICH Hélène, Flaubert d'après sa correspondance, Paris 1933, p.486

(45) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VI, p.222

In similar vein Turgenev had written in Andrey Kolosov:

What a strange thing a dream is! It does not only renew the body in a certain way, it also renews the soul by returning it to its primitive natural state of simplicity. During the day, we build ourselves up with lies and untrue thoughts...The cold wave of dreaming carries away all these impurities, and when we wake up, for a short time at least it is possible to understand and love truth. (46)

In the same category of unfinished projects as La Spirale comes another work that Flaubert mentions in his correspondence, namely a 'roman flamand'. This presumably would, in theme, have run parallel to La Tentation de Saint Antoine, for Flaubert discloses that the heroine was to have been a "jeune fille qui meurt vierge et mystique". (47)

It is worthwhile to note that Flaubert himself experienced periods of confusion between dream/ vision and reality, the experience usually being associated with the process of artistic creation (indeed as in La Spirale). Flaubert gives a detailed account of this personal experience in two letters he wrote to Hippolyte Taine in 1866.

Taine, who at this time was working on his book De l'Intelligence had written to Flaubert (whom he considered to be hypertrophic) requesting a detailed account of the rôles of imagination, vision and hallucination in the process of artistic creation. The questions and answers run essentially as follows:

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(46) Pol. sob. soch., vol.V, p.33

(47) Correspondance, vol.II, p.253 (1850, to Louis Bouilhet)  
N.B. In 1932 J.A.Marchand published in Candide a previously unknown manuscript of Flaubert entitled Rêve and dated '3 mars 1856'. This described in minute detail an oppressive and obsessive nightmare.

TAINE Quand vous êtes arrivé à vous figurer minutieusement un paysage, un personnage...y-a-t-il des moments où l'imagination intensive puisse être confondue par vous avec l'objet réel?...

FLAUBERT Oui toujours. L'image intéressée est pour moi aussi vraie que la réalité objective des choses, - et ce que la réalité m'a fourni, au bout de très peu de temps ne se distingue plus pour moi des embellissements ou modifications que je lui ai donnés.

TAINE Vous est-il arrivé, ayant imaginé un personnage ou un endroit avec intensité et longtemps, d'en être obsédé, comme par une hallucination, le personnage se reformant de lui-même et faisant tache sur le champ de la vision?

FLAUBERT Les personnages imaginaires m'affolent, me poursuivent... (48)

Flaubert goes on to make distinctions between pathological hallucinations - which he had also experienced during his illness - and artistic vision. Nevertheless, he explains, there are similarities, especially in the early stages of the two states:

D'abord une angoisse indéterminée, un malaise vague, un sentiment d'attente avec douleur, comme il arrive avant l'inspiration poétique, où l'on sent "qu'il va venir quelque chose..."(49)

Another interesting point made by Flaubert - in view of the subject matter of La Spirale - is his comment:

Je crois que la Volonté peut beaucoup sur les hallucinations. J'ai essayé à m'en donner sans y réussir. (50)

He goes on to give another example from his personal experience which would seem to parallel the experience of Turgenev's character Silaev (\*):

Dans ma première jeunesse j'en avais une singulière [hallucination], je voyais toujours des squelettes, à la place des spectateurs, quand

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(48) Flaubert's answers: Correspondance, supplément vol.II, pp.90-96. Taine's questions: ALBALAT A., Flaubert et ses amis, Paris 1927, p.251 et seq.

(49) Ibid.

(50) Ibid.

(\*) The short story Silaev will be discussed shortly.



j'étais dans une salle de théâtre, - ou du moins je pensais à cela si fortement que ça ressemblait à une hallucination car la limite est quelquefois difficile à discerner. (51)

Similarly, one of Flaubert's closing remarks on this subject indicates another parallel experience:

Vous me demandez si elle (l'hallucination artistique) s'emboîte, pour moi, dans la réalité ambiante? non.- La réalité ambiante a disparu. Je ne sais plus ce qu'il y a autour de moi. J'appartiens à cette apparition exclusivement. (52)

If we now continue our chronological survey of super-sensory phenomena in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev, we must turn our attention to Turgenev's short stories of the 1860's. Once again it is the irrational intrusion of the supernatural into the rational world of human existence that occupies him. But, in the two stories in which the supernatural is most in evidence - Phantoms and The Dog - this theme is directly linked to the Russian scene and contemporary problems.

As we have seen Flaubert using a personal and real experience in the studies in hallucination in La Tentation and La Spirale, there are some grounds for believing that Turgenev was drawing partly on his own experiences in Phantoms. In this story, the hero is wafted around Europe by moonlight in order to observe various scenes, and to evoke various spirits - including that of Caesar in the Roman countryside. The parallel in Turgenev's own experience here goes back to his travels in Italy with Stankevich in 1840: on a drive from Albino, the young Turgenev, prompted by the still and eery atmosphere of the evening, had tried to summon up the ghost of Caesar with blood-

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(51) Loc. cit.

(52) loc. cit.

chilling shouts. (53)

These nocturnal travels of Turgenev's hero are effected in the company of a strange female, Ellis, who can be seen as some kind of vampire. It is interesting to look at the way in which love is portrayed here: the way in which it is seen as a supernatural force is a logical development from the situation we saw in Turgenev's Faust, where it was the direct cause of the heroine's death. (54) Love, then, is seen as a supernatural force in so far as it is

ce coup de foudre qui en une seconde affole  
deux êtres l'un de l'autre, voilà du sur-  
naturalisme certain, positif...(55)

We shall have cause to look again at Phantoms when considering Turgenev's pessimism. But the form of the story is interesting in so far as it is a return to the old romantic device of the hero, in the control of the devil or his agent, being wafted around the world to observe various spectacles at differing points in time. The closest literary parallel, of course, are the Walpurgisnacht scenes in Goethe's Faust.

As far as Turgenev's continued efforts to link his work to Russian actuality are concerned, in Phantoms he reveals his uneasiness about the post-emancipation political situation in Russia. We see this during the visit, with Ellis, to the banks of the Volga, where the peasant uprisings of Stepan Razin's time are re-enacted before his eyes.

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(53) This incident is recounted by Yarmolinsky, op. cit., p.46, and is also referred to by Emile Haumant in Ivan Tourguéneff - la vie et l'oeuvre.

(54) This theme is to be explored yet again, of course, in the 1870's in the story The Song of Triumphant Love.

(55) HAUMANT, op. cit., p.

If we look now at the short story The Dog, this is rather more reminiscent of Bezhin Meadow from the Hunting Sketches, for it is based on peasants' tales of mysterious happenings. The central story here is that of a certain Porfiry Kapitonich who was haunted by the spirit of a dog at night, which finally took 'possession' of him. The theme of the intrusion of the supernatural is brought to the reader's attention immediately, for it is admirably summed up in the opening words of the story: a question posed by Anton Stepanich:

But if we accept the possibility of the supernatural, the possibility of its intrusion into real life, we have to ask, after this, what the rôle of plain reason can be? (56)

In The Dog Russia emerges as the domain of darkness and mysterious forces, struggling on under the burden of age-old superstition. The contrast is to be drawn with Western Europe where Turgenev (at this time a resident of Baden Baden) sees the light of reason to be dominant.

From the literary point of view, these two stories (together with the extended prose poem Enough! to which Phantoms is closely related) have little to recommend them. And as far as the use of supernatural elements is concerned, they do not really constitute an advance in technique, for there is little development on the psychological level. But this was a particularly hard period in Turgenev's life, as is clearly mirrored in the black pessimism of Enough! and Phantoms. He had really reached the conclusion that life was just not worth living. His works had been largely misunderstood - especially by

the younger radicals, and as a matter of political expediency, he had been obliged to break contact with his friends in London, and principally with Herzen.

If we compare these two stories, Phantoms and The Dog, with Flaubert's plans for La Spirale, we see that the French writer's explorations of the relationship between supernatural forces and the human mind had progressed further, and were of a more subtle nature than Turgenev's at this point. The Russian writer was soon to make up the lost ground however, for in the 1870's, the supernatural or 'dream' tale became virtually a sub-genre of Turgenev's work.

Indeed, in the 1870's - the decade that preceded death for both writers - Flaubert and Turgenev had in the front of their minds the question of fate and of destiny, in fact of "une volonté fatale" or "une fatalité supérieure". (57) The point of view of both writers can be summed up in Flaubert's own words, as he wrote in a letter to George Sand in 1874: "Mais on ne fait pas sa destinée, on la subit". (58)

Turgenev's last stories deal with the psychological states of human beings closely involved with this 'fatalité supérieure'. That there was a conscious effort to achieve genuine portrayals of such phenomena, dealing with the 'reality' of the supernatural in human life - as opposed to devils and demons - is clear from a letter Turgenev wrote to Ralston, his English translator. He says here

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(57) Correspondance, vol.II, p.68

(58) Ibid., vol.VII, p.122 (The same phrase is repeated in a letter of the following year (1875) vol.VII, p.240)

à propos of his story The Dream :

I have only to say that, in writing this small sketch, I did not feel any itching French desire of touching a rather scandalous matter; I have tried to solve a physiological riddle - which I know to a certain extent from my own experience.  
(59)

The stories that fall into this category are:

Knock...knock...knock... (1871), The Dream (1877), The Song of Triumphant Love (1881), and Klara Milich (1883) as well as certain of the Poems in Prose. It is interesting to note the technique used by Turgenev in these stories, as well as the kind of supernatural element that dominates. His method in these stories is, in fact, to allow the reader to catch a glimpse of a whole world of disturbing, uncertain and threatening phenomena. This technique is well summed up by Hennequin; he refers to Turgenev's 'histoires fantastiques':

...où tout le merveilleux consiste en quelques indications jetées au hasard, en quelques traces fugitives d'une apparition ou d'un mystère. (60)

The common basis of all these stories is, once again, the intervention of a mysterious force into human affairs - a force that is neither specifically benign or malign. By comparison with some of the stories of Guy de Maupassant, E.T.A.Hoffmann or Poe, Turgenev's stories of the supernatural perhaps appear somewhat pale. But it was never his intention to shock ( as clearly stated in the letter to Ralston) nor indeed to terrify his reader. He attempted rather to base his fiction on a controversial theory with a real basis in psycho-medical studies. For

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(59) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII (1), p.62-3 (1877) (It is interesting to note that again there is mention of a personal experience.)

(60) HENNEQUIN Emile, Etudes de critique scientifique - Ecrivains français, Paris 1889, p.94

example, the powers of telepathy and other forms of extra-sensory perception are explored.(61)

Looking first at The Dream, we find that the hero of this story again feels a definite link between the world of dreams and real life: he dreams repeatedly of the father he had never known. He says of this period of his life:

I used to sleep a great deal at all times, and dreams played an important part in my life; I used to have dreams almost every night. I did not forget them, regarded them as fore-warnings, tried to divine their secret meaning... (62)

Then one day in a café, the young man actually sees this figure who has played such an important rôle in his dreams. A conversation with the 'dream father' begins, and although nothing specific is said, it becomes clear that this is indeed the young man's father. But no sooner established, than the contact between the two is broken again: the father disappears and the hero sets out to search through all the town. There follows a dream-like episode where the young man comes across, in an unfamiliar part of the town, the exact setting in which he had originally seen his father in his dreams. A maid tells him that his father has left for America - and this is hard to accept:

I positively could not resign myself to the idea that such a supernatural, mysterious beginning should end in such a senseless, ordinary conclusion,...(63)

In desolation he walks along the beach and suddenly comes upon a corpse - that of his newly found, newly lost

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(61) We have already seen Flaubert referring to his "études psycho-médicales" in connection with Salammbô - he was to turn to them again in the 1870's for the final version of La Tentation de Saint Antoine.

(62) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XI, p.271

(63) Ibid., p.284

father. Then comes the realization:

I had been led since early morning by some unknown forces, that I was in their power...there was nothing in my soul but...dumb horror at the fate that had possession of me. (64)

Subsequently the corpse disappears as mysteriously as it had appeared, and the story ends with a growing feeling of alienation developing between the young man and his mother.

In the Song of Triumphant Love, a story set in renaissance Italy - and dedicated to Flaubert - dreams are again seen to have a real effect on the <sup>e</sup>vents of every day life. Here, as in some of Flaubert's works, the Orient is closely linked with the element of mystery. For after drinking a wine brought back from the East, and listening to a haunting oriental love song played on a 'magical' Indian violin, Mucius and Valeria ( married to Mucius's best friend) share the same exotic dream of passionate love. A kind of telepathic attraction develops between the two, and on another occasion, each of them sets off in a trance-like sleep walk towards each other in the moonlit garden. Fabius, the husband and host, discovers the sleep walkers and stabs Mucius in a fit of jealousy. He leaves Mucius for dead, but he is later resuscitated by the mysterious ceremonies, involving incense and serpents, performed over his body by his inscrutable Malay servant. The former friend leaves Fabius's household, and the beautiful Valeria seems much relieved by his departure. Yet some time later, while she is playing the organ, the melody of Mucius's strange and powerful song of love (that which had prompted their first 'dream' encounter) comes involuntarily to her

fingers. At the same time she feels the first movements of the baby she is expecting. Such is the power of dreams....

The story Knock...knock...knock is rather different in tone - Turgenev's approach here is rather one of 'debunking'. The central character, Teglev, is mysterious enough, and he considers himself to be a victim of destiny. And indeed he does have some experiences that could not easily find a rational explanation, for example, the miraculous saving of a dog from the Neva and the guessing of three successive winning cards, as in Pushkin's The Queen of Spades. And although a genuinely mysterious atmosphere is created - the narrator describes how

Objects became blurred, enveloped in mist...It was all clear, and yet confused. We were transported into a fairy-tale country, to the realm of light and shadow, a web of gold and white, where silence is infinite and dreams tangible. And up there the stars were twinkling so mysteriously! We were both silent. The fantastic veil of night had wound itself around us and brought us close to phantasmagoria. (65)

The central 'mysterious' issues which finally drives Teglev to suicide does in fact have a very ordinary explanation if only he had not been too obsessed with the idea of his fate to see it. The knocking that disturbs him so much in the night is no more than a friend's practical joke, and the strange voice he hears calling to him in the darkness, and which he takes to be his sweet-heart calling to him from beyond the grave, is only a peasant girl shouting out to her farm labourer lover, with whom she has a moonlit assignation. Turgenev's message here, then, would appear to be that we are only afraid of what we do not under-



stand. (66)

A basically similar attitude is to be found in Klara Milich. Here, a young man, Yakov Aratov, becomes possessed by the spirit of a dead actress whom he hardly even knew in real life. Typically, Aratov is at first unable to distinguish whether he is seeing Klara in a dream, or whether she is actually there in his room. In any case he feels:

as though something were enfolding him, although he were once again in the power, yes, in the power of another life, another being. (67)

Yakov is afraid because he does not understand what is happening to him. It is indeed a frightening experience to be possessed by the spirit of a dead woman, yet as soon as he realizes and understands the situation, he is no longer afraid. He comes to see that he is united to Klara across the barrier of death by a strong bond of love. He

(66) It is interesting to note Flaubert's reaction to this story. In May 1873 he wrote to Turgenev to tell him of his enthusiasm for the volume of Histoires étranges which he had just read, although in his last letter he had said that he was too busy to read it immediately: "J'ai ouvert votre livre malgré les serments de vertu que je m'étais faits, et je l'ai dévoré.

Quel immense bonhomme vous êtes! Je ne vous parle pas du Roi Lear de la Steppe que je connaissais, mais de Toc... toc... toc... et surtout de l'Abandonnée. Je ne sais pas si jamais vous vous êtes montré plus poète et plus psychologue. C'est une merveille, un chef d'oeuvre. Et quel art! Que de malices d'exécution sous cette apparente franchise!

Voici maintenant ce qui me reste dans la tête.

Dans Toc... toc... toc..., la création de Téglew, l'homme fatal, à la fois poseur et naïf! (Sa lettre! Son album divin!) Et ce brouillard où on le cherche! Le froid vous entre dans les os. Comme ça se voit! Ou mieux, comme ça se sent! Le mystère est suspendu tout le temps, de façon à faire presque peur. Puis l'explication arrive tout naturellement et soulage. (Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.90-91)

(67) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.118

grows calm and is quite content to die in order to be reunited with this girl whom he has only really known in a dream-type situation. For in real life he had only spoken to her once, and then quite rudely and abruptly.

Before leaving this section of Turgenev's work, mention should be made of the unfinished story Silaev. In the eight pages that have survived, the hero emerges as a strange and solitary figure in whose mind dream is constantly confused with reality. He tells the narrator of detailed visions of a big, white house with sparrows playing in the dusty pathway, and of a dream/ real experience in the far north, where he rode in a sleigh drawn by white bears wearing red roses on their heads. Silaev reflects:

I don't know why we say: a dream, I saw it in a dream. Isn't it all the same thing, in a dream or in reality? It is difficult to say...But I see it so clearly...it's all so fresh in my mind. (68)

In 1884, Guy de Maupassant wrote an important article on Turgenev's use of the supernatural in his short stories. (69) It seems worthwhile to quote from it at some length, for the article is a succinct appreciation of technique and content in Turgenev's last stories. It also pinpoints certain aspects that can be compared directly to Flaubert's use of similar material. Maupassant wrote:

Personne plus que le grand romancier russe ne sut faire passer dans l'âme ce frisson de l'inconnu voilé, et, dans la demi-lumière d'un conte étrange, laisser entrevoir tout un monde de choses inquiétantes, incertaines, menaçantes.(70)

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(68) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.322

(69) This was published in Le Figaro of July 25th. 1884. It is reprinted in the Conard edition of Maupassant's complete works in the volume entitled La Petite Roque, p.269 et seq..

(70) Flaubert uses a similar technique in his story La Légende de Saint Julien l'hospitalier.

Avec lui, on la sent bien, la peur vague de l'Invisible, la peur de l'inconnu qui est derrière le mur, derrière la porte, derrière la vie apparente...

Il semble nous montrer parfois la signification de coïncidences bizarres, de rapprochements inattendus... On croit sentir, avec lui, un fil imperceptible qui nous guide d'une façon mystérieuse à travers la vie, comme à travers un rêve nébuleux dont le sens nous échappe sans cesse.

Il n'entre point hardiment dans le surnaturel, comme Edgar Poe ou Hoffmann, il raconte des histoires simples où se mêle seulement quelque chose d'un peu vague et d'un peu troublant. (71)

It remains now to look at two of the last works of Flaubert which reveal further his interest in what is to be found "derrière la vie apparente", namely, La Tentation de Saint Antoine of 1874 and La Légende de Saint Julien l'hospitalier of 1876-7.

To take La Tentation first, this work is of most interest in the present context for the way in which the stranger workings of the human mind are explored. And this is conducted within a closely defined scientific and historical context. Certainly, more fantastic elements still play a part in the work - for example the allegory of the monsters in Part II - but now such episodes also serve to explore the metaphysical problem of the origin and nature of being. (72)

As in the earlier versions, there are still extravagant scenes, but these products of Flaubert's fertile imagination are less relevant to the progress of the central issues of the work. Flaubert's aims, as far as the psychol-

(71) This element of reticence and desire to base the story on a simple situation, revealing thereby a more mysterious world sums up Flaubert's achievement in his treatment of the medieval legend of St. Julien. The same is also true of the spirit of his plans for La Spirale.

(72) Turgenev reveals an interest in similar metaphysical problems in certain of his Prose Poems. In On the sea and The Dog, for example, he reflects on the creation of species and the nature of conscious individuality.

ogy and the supernatural are concerned, in La Tentation are well summed up by Lombard:

Dans la dernière Tentation, Flaubert s'est proposé et il y a réussi, de donner pour fondement à tout le poème une psychologie conforme à la vérité de la science. Vérité même médicale: les premières phases de l'hallucination du saint correspondent rigoureusement à la succession des états pathologiques d'un cas semblable. (73)

Flaubert wanted the supernatural elements to be directly linked to the psychological activity of the central character. It is for this reason that he cut out, as far as possible, the allegorical figures and replaced them with visions.

Thus the saint, as he tries to free himself of the 'illusion' in which he feels trapped, comes to ask himself what constitutes the reality of being and of matter. Antoine succeeds in comprehending the fundamental unity of all things as being part of the same 'life flow'. Here, distinctions between real and unreal, material and immaterial etc. fade away, so that phenomena such as 'la chimère', 'le Phénix', and 'le Basilisk' - all creations of the fantasy - have as much 'being' and significance as 'real' beasts such as the sea-urchin or the dolphin. (74)

Yet Antoine cannot come to terms with the problem of the fundamental mystery of existence. He realizes that beyond what is revealed to him in his visions lies the great domain of the unknown - or rather of the unknow-

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(73) LOMBARD Alfred, Flaubert et Saint Antoine, Paris 1934, p.51

(74) It is basically the same psychological state that we see in Turgenev's short stories of this period. For example, the speeches of Klara Milich and Ellis in Phantoms have as much reality and meaning for the other characters as would those of a normal, living human being.

able. (75) And it is for knowledge of this that the saint is thirsting at the end of the drama. (76)

The last work to be examined is Flaubert's short story St. Julien. As we have seen, saints and mystics had always interested Flaubert, and although in a letter to George Sand he had tried to dismiss this work as "une petite bêtise moyenâgeuse", (77) as in La Tentation the psychology is modern. This last aspect emerges especially in the presentation of Julien's 'blood lust'. Nevertheless, alongside the sophisticated psychology, Flaubert has retained the legend's essential simplicity by including elements of a more naïve folk-tale style, for example, the episode of the 'shower' of dead birds.

It is interesting to look at the progression of the psychological portrayal of Julien, from the incident of the mouse in the church to the dazzling apparition of Christ on earth. The driving force behind this progression is, as Digeon has said: "la croissance de la fatalité divine". (78) This element of fatality is introduced at

(75) We have seen at several points - particularly in the short story Faust and the poem Evening - Turgenev's concern with the 'unknowable': the secrets of existence which lie behind the façade of life. A façade which - as his (and Flaubert's) characters demonstrate - cannot be broken down.

(76) It is possible to judge to some extent Turgenev's concordance with the general themes of Flaubert's Tentation de Saint Antoine from the great interest he showed in its preparation and his fostering of a Russian version.

(77) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.279 (1875)

(78) DIGEON Claude, Le dernier visage de Flaubert, Paris 1946, p.77

the very beginning with two incidents at the moment of Julien's birth: the hermit "glissant sur les rais de la lune" who then disappears into thin air, (79) and the beggar who fades away into the grass. (80) As Julien grows up and begins to hunt, he develops a taste for improbable feats of carnage, which he performs with "la facilité que l'on éprouve dans les rêves". (81) But in revenge, nature itself assumes a 'miraculous' quality, and on one of Julien's more bloody expeditions a great black stag breaks the laws of nature and speaks to the young saint, making a prophecy of parricide.

The notion of destiny returns to the story as this prophecy begins to work itself out. Julien seeks to avoid his fate by running away from it, but he is unable to give up hunting entirely. As he sets out on what is to be his last expedition, the supernatural again takes over. The forest is silent as Julien seeks out beasts for slaughter. As he progresses on his "marche fantastique" the reader can no longer distinguish whether this is a dream or an account of actual events. The whole of nature - animals and plants - seems to be against Julien. The forest

...était embarrassée de lianes; et il coupait avec son sabre quand une fouine glissa brusquement entre ses jambes, une panthère fit un bond par-dessus son épaule, un serpent monta en spirale autour d'un frêne. (82)

The animals defy death - the saint's arrows cannot harm them - and Flaubert states explicitly that it is "un pouvoir supérieur" (83) that has deprived Julien of his

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(79) Trois contes, p.80  
 (80) Ibid. p.81  
 (81) Ibid. p.91  
 (82) Ibid. p.108  
 (83) Ibid.

power over the animals.

Fate proves to be inexorable and Julien murders his parents, but in spite of this and all his adventures, his life continues to be preserved by some kind of charm. A climax is reached at the end of the story by a build-up of supernatural elements: a bell rings out as it had done earlier during the black stage-episode, and the poor leper whom the saint has helped assumes the majesty of a great king. The story ends with Julien's moment of ecstasy-"une abondance de délices, une joie surhumaine...une inondation dans l'âme" (84)- as he is wafted up to heaven.

The ending of the Légende is a clear reflection of Flaubert's taste for the mystical, though this was of course not based on any personal religious conviction. John Fletcher makes an interesting comment on this point:

Flaubert's conclusion[to La Légende] is in line with the intuition expressed elsewhere in his writings (85) that the most intense sensual experience is not erotic but mystical. (86)

So there seems to be a basically parallel development as far as the 'darker' side of life is concerned in the works of Flaubert and Turgenev - and this even if the chronology does not always correspond exactly. As we have seen, this development can be broken down into four basic phases.

Firstly we find a conventional, romantic type of supernatural with demons, ghosts etc. and even bordering on science fiction in places (for example Flaubert's monster Djalioh in Quidquid volueris and Turgenev's poem Darkness).

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(84) Trois contes, p.124

(85) For example, perhaps Emma Bovary kissing the crucifix "avec le plus grand baiser d'amour qu'elle eût jamais donné". (Mme. Bovary, p.446)

(86) FLETCHER John. A critical commentary of Flaubert's Trois

Nonetheless, in some early works, principally of the 1840's,(87) we can detect traces of what is to be developed later, i.e. tentative explorations into the realm of the unknown, the unknowable and the ineffable, as well as hints at an early interest in dreams.

This is followed in the mature period by abandonment in full-scale works of most aspects of the fantastic in the interests of realism. Nonetheless a retention of interest in this kind of subject can still be detected in secondary works, plans, letters etc. .

The final stage, beginning in the 1860's, although not really getting underway until the 1870's, constitutes a return to the supernatural kind of subject in general and a more intensive examination of the darker side of the human mind in particular. Strange psychological states are explored through the medium of visions, telepathy, hallucinations, dream states etc. .And to this is linked a more sophisticated notion of fate and its forces. Turgenev and Flaubert appear to have been always vaguely conscious of such powers, but in their earlier works these found their embodiment in devils and demons, but later they emerge as something acting through the human mind itself.

We have seen, then, that from the departure point of a lively youthful interest in the supernatural, both Flaubert and Turgenev develop later, in their capacity as creative artists, a deep interest in that half-dream, half-hallucinatory state, where visions and the real

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(87) Especially in Turgenev's Andrey Kolosov and Flaubert's Mémoires d'un Fou and Novembre.



world mingle to such an extent that the two become indistinguishable - this being an important key to a fuller understanding of the human mind in general, and perhaps also, they hoped, of the artistic temperament in particular.

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER VI

(3) Стено:

Стено: ...кто ты?

Голос: Твой демон.

Стено: Ты...мой демон,/ И эта кровь...

Голос: Твоя

Стено: Моя!

(4) Голос: Я мвой владыка! (Соч. I, 397)

(28) Бежин луг:

— Ну, ничего, пушай!...своей судьбы не минувешь.

(Соч. IV, 111)

(29) Фауст:

...Ладапов.. занимался химией, анатомией, кабалистикой, хотел продлить жизнь человеческую, воображал, что можно вступать в сношения с духами, вызывать умерших...

(Соч. VII, 15)

(30) Фауст:

...боялась тех тайных сил, на которых построена жизнь и которые изредка, но внезапно пробиваются наружу.

(Соч. VII, 16)

(31) Фауст:

...она боится всего мрачного, подземного... (Соч. VII, 38)

(33) Фауст:

Кто знает, сколько каждый живущий на земле оставляет семян, который суждено войти только после его смерти? Кто скажет, какой таинственной цепью связана судьба человека с судьбой его детей, его потомства... (Соч. VII,

49)

(45) Яков Пасынков:

Экая славная вещь сон, подумаешь! Вся жизнь наша сон, и лучшее в ней опять-таки сон.

—А поэзия?...

—И поэзия сон, только райский. (Соч. VI, 222)

(46) Андрей Колосов:

Удивительное дело – сон! Он не только возобновляет тело, он некоторым образом возобновляет душу, приводит ее к первобытной простоте и естественности. В течение дня вам удалось настроить себя проникнуться ложью, ложными мыслями... Сон своей холодной волной смывает все эти мизерные дрябги, и, проснувшись, вы, по крайней мере на несколько мгновений, способны понимать и любить истину. (Соч. V, 33)

(56) Собака:

Но если допустить возможность сверхъестественного, возможность его вмешательства в действительную жизнь, то позвольте спросить, какую роль <sup>после</sup> этого должен играть здравый рассудок? (Соч. IX, 123)

(62) Сон:

Я вообще спал много – и сны играли в моей жизни значительную роль, я видел сны почти каждую ночь. Я не забывал их, я придавал им значение, считал их предсказаниями, старался разгадать их тайный смысл... (Соч. XI, 271)

(63) Сон:

Я решительно не был в состоянии помириться с мыслью, что к такому сверхъестественному, таинственному началу мог примкнуть такой бессмысленный, такой ординарный конец! (Соч. XI, 284)

(64) Сон:

Тут только я понял, что меня с самого утра водили какие-то неведомые силы, что я в их власти...ничего в моей душе не было, кроме..немного страха перед овладевшей мною судьбой...(Соч. XI, 285)

(65) Стук...стук...стук...:

Всё странно передвинулось, закуталось и смешалось, далекое казалось близким, близкое далеким, большое малым, малое большим... Всё стало светло и неясно. Мы словно перенеслись в сказочное царство, в царство бело-золотистой мглы, тишины глубокой, чуткого сна... И как таинственно, какими серебристыми искорками сквозили сверху звезды! Мы оба умолкли. Фантастический облик этой ночи подействовал на нас: он настроил нас на фантастическое: (Соч. X, 272)

(68) Силаев:

...почему говорят: «Сон. Я это видел во сне.» Не всё ли равно, что во сне, что наяву?...это трудно сказать. Я, по крайней мере, вижу такие ясные, такие определённые сны, что память о них во мне так же свежа... (Соч. XIII, 322)

(67) Клара Милич:

...он немедленно почувствовал, что его как бы кругом что-то охватило, что он опять находится во власти, именно во власти другой жизни, другого существа. (XIII, 118)

CHAPTER VII - The Temptation of Saint Anthony - variations on a theme

Both Flaubert and Turgenev were tempted by this theme in the 1840's - at a comparable stage in their development therefore. Turgenev produced his version in 1842, when he was twenty four, and Flaubert worked on the subject during 1848 when he was twenty seven. (1) Neither of the young writers had had anything published at this stage.

But this is not all they have in common at this point. Another factual detail of significance in this context is that both of them had recently returned from travels in Italy. Turgenev had travelled extensively in that country in 1840 - Mazon describes him at this period as "voyageur enthousiaste, riche d'impressions". (2) These impressions were to show themselves in the Temptation of Saint Anthony in those scenes which have an Italian Renaissance setting. It is also possible that he saw paintings by Bosch and Breugel associated with the St. Anthony subject, but there is no evidence of his reactions to them. Flaubert visited Italy in 1845; he did see Breugel's Temptation of Saint Anthony in the Balbi gallery at Genoa, and his reaction to it is clearly recorded in a letter to Alfred Le Poittevin:

J'ai vu un tableau de Breughel représentant la Tentation de Saint-Antoine, qui m'a fait penser à arranger pour le théâtre La Tentation de Saint-Antoine. (3)

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(1) In the first section of this chapter, all references will be to the first (1848-9) version of La Tentation. (La Tentation de Saint Antoine, Appendice I, pp.205-496)

(2) MAZON André, 'La Tentation de Saint Antoine d'Ivan Turgenev', Revue des Etudes slaves, vol.XXX, (1953).

(3) Correspondance, vol.I, p.173 (1845)

And indeed both writers did choose to present the story in dramatic form - but whether they ever considered the practicality of theatrical production for their works is another matter. It would be virtually impossible in both cases.

These details aside, however, the most significant asset that Flaubert and Turgenev shared as they set about the writing of their St. Anthonys was their common literary heritage. For at this stage in their development, both young men were very much under the influence of all that they had read during the process of growing up. Seznec, for example, has said of Flaubert at the time he was working on his first Saint Antoine:

...il a pu y faire confluer toutes ses lectures, tout son "acquis" antérieur; tout ce qu'il avait accumulé non pas depuis trois ans seulement, mais depuis son adolescence. (4)

Directly parallel is the situation of Turgenev vis à vis his Saint Anthony, as summed up by Mazon:

Il est visible qu'Ivan Sergeevic se trouve alors comme au carrefour de lectures et d'influences diverses. (5)

And a substantial part of this reading and these influences were common to both.

Saint Anthony, then, is a subject that both Flaubert and Turgenev treated before they had 'found' themselves as writers. Although they had already written a great deal, neither had yet found definitively the mode and style of his mature masterpieces. And so The Temptation of Saint Anthony served as a means of exploration - not only of the situation of the hermit, but also of themselves,

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(4) SEZNEC Jean, Les sources de l'épisode des Dieux dans la Tentation de Saint Antoine, Paris 1940, p.16

(5) MAZON, art. cit.

their minds and their attitudes. Thus these works can be seen as a fair guide to their intellectual and emotional development at this time.

If we deal first with the question of influences, it is of course to Goethe and to Byron that the greatest debts are owed, and this constitutes the bulk of the common ground between Flaubert's and Turgenev's St. Anthonys, as far as literary influences are concerned - although Spinoza should not be forgotten.

Of the reading which they did not share, undoubtedly Quinet's Ahasvérus is the most significant as far as Flaubert is concerned, although this work of course has its own relationship with Faust. And for Turgenev, the most significant of other influences was probably Mérimée. Mazon, in the study referred to above, makes much of Turgenev's debt to Mérimée's playlet Une femme est un diable ou la tentation de Saint Antoine from his Théâtre de Clara Gazul collection. But the debt is surely in one respect only: that suggested in Mérimée's title - the temptation of a holy man by the devil incarnate in the form of a beautiful woman. For Mérimée has not really concerned himself with the traditional St. Anthony figure at all: the whole is transposed into a framework of the Spanish Inquisition in the eighteenth century. And although Turgenev does include in his work transpositions in time and space in the dream/vision episodes of his Temptation, he has retained the traditional figure of the hermit in the desert.

As far as factual sources are concerned, Flaubert

most certainly had the upper hand over Turgenev. He spent several years researching in great depth and detail for this work, reading tomes such as Kreutzer's Religions de l'antiquité. (6) And during the Eastern trip which followed the completion of La Tentation Flaubert wrote in a letter to his mother that his travels in this part of the world brought back to him "toute ma vieille érudition de Saint Antoine". (7) As for Turgenev, his factual knowledge of the St. Anthony story probably came from one source only: from one or other of the editions of Saint Athanasius's Vita Antonii. (8)

Before going on to discuss the common influences in more detail, perhaps something should be said about the essential difference in scale and scope of the two versions. Flaubert's is a far more ambitious work - enormous in length (almost five hundred pages), a vast range of characters, carefully documented, and based on actual theological arguments. Turgenev's work, on the contrary, is little more than a fragment: an unfinished one-Act drama occupying only thirty pages in the complete works.

We have already seen in an earlier chapter the extent and general significance of the influence of Byron and Goethe for Flaubert and Turgenev. If we look now at their handling of the temptation of Saint Anthony in particular, it is possible to find once more echoes of these two masters both in general situation and attitude as well as in specific incidents.

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(6) Flaubert mentions this work in a letter to Maxime Du Camp of April 1848. (Correspondance, vol. II, p.81)

(7) Correspondance, vol.II, p.145

(8) See Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.458



The basic problem in Goethe's Faust and the two versions of The Temptation is essentially the same: the metaphysical anguish of the hero. And of course besides the question of influence, there is also something of a personal element here, for there is a reflection of the young writers' own frustrations and aspirations in their saints' search for a solution to this problem. For both Saint Anthonys - as well as Faust - have been engaged in the quest for a perfect understanding of existence, which will bring with it the fulfilment to which the hero aspires. Both Flaubert's Saint Antoine and Goethe's Faust realize the limitations of traditional learning as far as achieving this is concerned, and both wish for a new approach that would enable them to comprehend the primeval substance of nature. Faust for example, in his first monologue expresses the desire:

Daß ich erkenne, was die Welt  
Im Innersten zusammenhält,  
Schau' alle Wirkenskraft und Samen,  
Und tu' nicht mehr in Worten kramen. (9)

Parallel are the sentiments of Antoine's aspiration, expressed at the end of Part II of La Tentation:

...je voudrais me développer comme les plantes,  
me modeler sous toutes les formes, entrer dans  
chaque atome, circuler dans la matière, être la  
matière moi-même pour savoir ce qu'elle pense.(10)

Less is made of this kind of aspiration in Turgenev's smaller scale work, but nonetheless, it is clearly stated that a parallel quest constituted one of Antonio's prime motives for going into the desert. Looking back on his former life he says:

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(9) GOETHE J.W. von, Faust, Part I, ll.382-5

(10) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.409

I wished for fulfilment and Knowledge. (11)

And at the end of the play there is further indication that Antonio has long been searching ~~after~~ some ideal or absolute, which he seems unable to define. He says to his temptress:

...why was I going off so quickly into the distance, always into the distance...What was I searching for? Towards what was I striving? (12)

It is also possible to establish parallels between the three tempter figures: Goethe's Mephistopheles, Flaubert's 'diable' and Turgenev's Karlo Spada. Their psychology and reasonings are very similar. Mephisto and Karlo both use the same tactic of offering rejuvenation to their victim, (13) and this with essentially the same aim: to use a woman and the power of love in the hope that this will bring about the downfall of Faust and Antonio. Flaubert's Antoine, although not offered rejuvenation, is also repeatedly tempted by means of female attraction. And in his case, as with Faust, the devil fails to achieve his aim in this way. It is impossible to say what the outcome of Turgenev's Antonio's relationship with Annunziata would have been, as the work is left unfinished, abandoned at a critical point in the discussion between the two characters.

Of course the three tempters also have another important tactic in common: the ability to waft the hero away through time and space, thus tempting him through an extension of experience. (14) In Flaubert's Tentation,

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(11) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.269 (The word 'Knowledge' has a capital in the original.)

(12) Ibid. p.275

(13) Or perhaps it is more accurate to say the illusion of restored youth in the case of Turgenev's Antonio.

(14) This experience of course is also shared by Byron's Cain, Quinet's Ahasvérus and Flaubert's Smarh, who was in many ways a precursor of Saint Antoine.

this device is used mainly in Part III as Antoine is wafted further and further into space in his efforts to perceive the mystery of reality and being. The closest parallel to this scene in Goethe's work is the episode of the classical Walpurgisnacht in Faust II. Because of the limited scale of Turgenev's version, we necessarily find much less diversity of experience. Here the transposition in time and space is linked directly to the temptation through love: Antonio is taken back to the Bolognese court where he spent part of his youth.

Other more minor parallels include similarity between Flaubert's "Sept péchés capitaux" and the spirits summoned up to tempt Faust in Part II of Goethe's work. Also the circumstances of Karlo's arrival in Antonio's cell are reminiscent of those concerning Mephisto's arrival in Faust's study: in both cases the hero was alone and pensive in a melancholy frame of mind, as the tempter appeared in the guise of a traveller.

If we turn now to Byron - apart from influence of a general nature, i.e. the colour, extravagance and ostentatious romanticism of the two Temptations (15) - his influence is most obvious in the number of characteristics typical of the 'Byronic hero' that emerge in the characters of the two St. Anthonys.

Firstly, there is their undeniable individualism: their satisfaction in separating themselves from the multitude, for both have fled the world of men to live as

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(15) This is essentially true of the Italian scenes in Turgenev's version, with their vision of bachannales, desperate young courtiers and the mysterious Annunziata.

hermits in the desert, in the hope that they will thereby become self-sufficient. Following on from this, we see that in typical Byronic fashion, they have come to hold a low opinion of 'pleasure', yet without having liberated themselves from 'desire'. This emerges if we compare the two hermits' self-confessed reasons for going into the desert. In the third scene of Turgenev's drama, Antonio looking back over his life says:

I was tormented by terrible fits of passion,  
I never knew your bliss...  
I ran away...But I was young then,  
And all the passions and former anxieties  
Did not leave me in the desert. (16)

And Flaubert's Antoine declares in the first scene of

La Tentation :

Il est vrai, j'ai pensé que le coeur s'abîme  
aux vanités de l'esprit, et je suis venu au  
désert afin d'éviter les troubles de la vie,  
les chagrins qui damnent, le rire pétillant  
que les femmes...ont...(17)

and later, more bitterly, concerning desire:

...le bonheur, je le sais, n'est pas dans ce  
qu'on rêve. Comme une flèche lancée contre un  
mur, toujours le désir échappe, rebondit sur  
vous et vous traverse l'âme. (18)

Thirdly, and this principally as far as Flaubert is concerned, there is the question of the relationship between the hero and nature. Nature is the only refuge for the Byronic hero in the face of the emptiness of illusions and beliefs. Through identification with Nature and her abundance, he can find some kind of solace and arrive at some kind of "sentiment de l'infini". (19)

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(16) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.269

(17) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.211

(18) Ibid., p.427

(19) This phrase is Estève's .Byron et le romantisme français, p.14

In this context, it is interesting to compare Saint Antoine's fleeting moments of pantheistic extasy with certain passages from Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Byron writes in Canto III for example:

And, when, at length, the mind shall be all free  
 From what it hates in this degraded form,  
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be  
 Existent happier in the fly and worm -  
 When Elements to Elements conform,  
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not  
 Feel all I see less dazzling but more warm?  
 The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?  
 Of which, even now, I share at times the  
 immortal lot?

Are not the mountains, waves and skies, a part  
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them?  
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
 With a pure passion?... (20)

Antoine's sentiments are similar as he experiences a pure sensation of his 'self' identified with the material universe, as he is wafted through creation by the devil.(21)

As far as Turgenev's Temptation is concerned, there is not really any evidence of pantheism, but rather of a primitive form of animism: the attribution of an independent existence to natural forces. For example, clouds and a chorus of waves address Antonio, the latter offering advice and encouragement. (22)

Before leaving the question of influences, mention must be made of Spinoza. Flaubert was certainly very interested in the Spinozist system,(23) and his knowledge of it emerges in Part III of La Tentation. Here, the devil,

(20) Childe Harold, Canto III, stanzas 74 & 75

(21) c.f. "Il est vrai, souvent j'ai senti que quelque chose de plus large que moi se mêlait à mon être; petit à petit je m'en allais dans la verdure des prés et dans le courant des fleuves, que je regardais passer; et je ne savais plus où se trouvait mon âme, tant elle était diffuse, universelle, épandue!" (La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.418)

(22) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.271

(23) The extent of Flaubert's knowledge of Spinoza's philosophy has been admirably demonstrated by Jean BARRON in her thesis Gustave Flaubert in quest of the absolute, Ph.D., London,(1957).

as he reveals more and more of the universe to Antoine, gives a remarkable summing up of Spinoza's philosophy of the unity of matter and spirit. (24) And although there is nothing like such a philosophical exposition in Turgenev's version, it is interesting to note that he was in fact studying Spinoza at about the same time that he was working on his Saint Anthony. It is clear from some of his letters to the Bakunins that he was writing this during the month of April 1842. (25) While in another letter to them, dated April 3rd. he wrote:

...and I am working - working a lot. Yesterday, for example, I mastered Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz in one fell swoop. (26)

It is just possible that the animism of The Temptation (aptly described by Mazon as a "drame fantastique auquel les forces de la nature sont associées" (27) ) was vaguely inspired by the Spinozist notion of a 'chain of being'. This idea certainly appealed to Flaubert's 'diable' who explains to Antoine:

N'y a-t-il pas des existences inanimées, des choses inertes qui paraissent animales, des âmes végétatives, des statues qui rêvent et des paysages qui pensent? chaîne sans bout et sans fin. (28)

Leaving aside now the question of common literary heritage and influences, there are several other aspects in which Flaubert's and Turgenev's versions of the Saint Anthony story can be compared.

For example, an element of sexual fantasy can be found in both works. For Annunziata, who tempts Turgenev's

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- (24) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, pp.413-422  
 (25) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.224-5 & p.226  
 (26) Ibid., p.222  
 (27) MAZON, art. cit.  
 (28) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.418

Antonio to sin, is the devil's mistress, while the first temptation that Flaubert's saint has to grapple with is the 'voice's' highly provocative proposal that he should make love to the statue of the Virgin Mary which he admires so much. (29) In a subsequent temptation, it is the sensual Queen of Sheba who attempts to seduce him. In fact both saints are tempted by 'lust': Flaubert's by an incarnation of this sin, Turgenev's by means of the visions of Annunziata, although he is also encouraged along these lines by Karlo Spada. And this emerges as a physical, material force, leading to the denial of spirit and the triumph of matter. Perhaps once more this could be seen as indicative of the author's own situation and feelings of frustration at this period, for at the time of writing, neither Flaubert nor Turgenev had achieved a satisfactory or lasting sexual relationship.

Another feature common to both works is a tendency, on the part of the two hermits, to confuse dream and reality, as we have already seen other characters of Flaubert and Turgenev do. In the latter's version, Antonio shows this tendency in his encounter with Annunziata. We see that he is on the verge of confusing dream and real experience as he says to her:

I had such a strange dream...but no, no - I remember the sea coast, I remember those long, long years. (30)

Annunziata is quick to encourage him in this illusion of having returned to his youth. She says:

You saw in a dream that you were an old man? a

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(29) *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*, pp.208-211

(30) *Pol. sob. soch.*, vol.III, p.274

hermit? that you lived for twenty years in a cave, cut off from men? What a foolish dream! No, Antonio, you are young, young...(31)

Antonio tries to resist, declaring: "I young...what an absurd dream!" Yet from the rest of his speech, it is clear that he is in fact none too sure as to what his situation in time and place is, for he proposes to Annunziata that they go for a walk in sunny Bologna, along the river. And later, after Annunziata's song, he asks her a question which directly links the past to the present, or rather confuses the two :

But Marcellina,(32) tell me about yesterday...or no, when did we last go for a walk outside the town together? But it's all the same...(33)

Flaubert's Antoine reveals a similar confusion after his encounter with the Queen of Sheba. He is forced to ask himself:

Suis-je éveillé? il me semble que ma tête, séparée de mon corps, sautille au hasard...  
Oh! tout ce que j'ai vu, comment faire pour savoir si je l'ai pensé ou si je l'ai vu vraiment? Quelle est la limite du rêve et de la réalité? (34)

As far as the choice of the subject of the Temptation of Saint Anthony by Flaubert and Turgenev is concerned, it is perhaps curious that these two young men, neither of whom had any religious faith of his own, either at that time or at any later period, should choose to write about a saint or hermit at all. Dumesnil's comment on Flaubert's work could well be applied to both. He wrote of La Tentation :

...on y voit un mystique qui pourtant ne croit en rien. (35)

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(31) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.274

(32) Marcellina was the girl whom Antonio loved before deciding to become a hermit. He is being tempted in such a way that he believes Annunziata to be her.

(33) Pol. sob. soch., vol.III, p.275

(34) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.392-3

(35) DUMESNIL R. and DEMOREST, Bibliographie de Gustave Flau-



But apart from the attraction of the romantic aspects of the story, the choice of this subject can also be seen as another early indication of the interest in the mystical, mysterious and supernatural type of subject examined in the last chapter.

As far as technique is concerned, it is interesting to look at the way in which the visions are handled by Flaubert and Turgenev. For the method Turgenev uses to show the temptations of the saint is perhaps closer to the method used by Flaubert in his 1874 version of La Tentation, than to the one nearest in chronology. For in his 1849 version, Flaubert shows the saint being tempted by actual incarnations of abstract concepts - the seven deadly sins, for example - and by monsters and gods. In his subsequent reworking of the subject, he preferred to let the temptations come through the medium of dreams and hallucinations. And this is the way in which Turgenev presents Antonio's encounter with Marcellina/Annunziata.

So these two versions of the Temptation of Saint Anthony, despite the differences of length and scope, are comparable in several respects: the situation of the author at the time of writing, common literary influences, as well as the essential aspirations of the hero, and the treatment of certain aspects of his temptation. Perhaps the essential quality of these two works, and their relationship to the personality of their authors, can best be summed up by applying to both of them Descharnes's evaluation of Flaubert's Tentation. He writes:

...il n'écoute...dans La Tentation...que son amour de la couleur, du fantastique...il écrit un livre où se révèlent plutôt les qualités et les défauts de son tempérament que la vision vraie d'une époque historique. (36)

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But the rôle of 'St. Anthony' as a link between Flaubert and Turgenev does not end there in the 1840's. Although, as far as we know, Turgenev never reworked, or even thought of reworking his version of The Temptation, Flaubert could not bring himself to abandon this subject to which he had devoted so much time and careful study, and indeed into which he had put so much of himself - his aspirations and frustrations. He looked at it again in 1856, and this time a few extracts were published in a review.(37) In the early 1870's, however, Flaubert determined to come to terms with the subject of St. Anthony once and for all, and this time with a view to publication.

By this stage, of course, Flaubert and Turgenev were personally acquainted and firm friends. It is hardly surprising then, that when Turgenev learnt that Flaubert was working on a book called La Tentation de Saint Antoine, he should be most interested in the work's progress, be keen to see the manuscript, and even to make suggestions. We have no evidence at all to suggest that Turgenev ever confessed to his friend that he himself once wrote a Temptation of Saint Anthony. But bearing in mind the un-

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(36) DESCHARMES R., Flaubert avant 1857, Paris 1909, p.527

(37) In L'Artiste which was directed by Théophile Gautier. Fragments appeared in the numbers dated 21st. and 28th. Decmber 1856, and January 11th. and February 1st. 1857. These extracts were not well received by the reading public.

finished, fragmentary state of this youthful work on the one hand, and on the other the enormous admiration he felt for Flaubert's Tentation - in a letter to Ralston he once described it as "one of the most striking things I ever read" (38) - his silence is perhaps not so surprising.

Let us then look at the correspondence between Flaubert and Turgenev during the early 1870's and see to what extent Saint Antoine was to act as a cementing bond in their relationship.

From the beginning of 1870 onwards, Turgenev was always keen to know how work on Saint Antoine was going, and repeatedly offered encouragement. In fact, if we look at all the letters he wrote to Flaubert between January 1870 and the publication of the work in 1874, we find a reference, however brief, to Saint Antoine in almost every one. (39) The following extracts from his letters are typical.

On January 30th. 1870, presumably shortly after Turgenev first heard of Flaubert's project, he wrote:

Donnez-moi de vos nouvelles. Travaillez-vous ferme? Votre "Antoine" me revient souvent à l'esprit. (40)

And three weeks later, referring to the largely unfavour-

(38) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.218

(39) Turgenev refers to Saint Antoine in the following letters Pol. sob. pisem:

Volume VIII	p.174 (January 30th. 1870)
	p.189 (February 20th. " )
Volume IX	p.86 (May 6th. 1871)
	p.104 (June 13th. 1871)
	p.119 (August 14th. " )
	p.165 (November 27th. 1871)
	p.166 (November 28th. " )
	p.288 (June 26th. 1872)
	p.304 (July 30th. " )
	p.330 (October 7th. " )
	p.357 (October 27th. 1872)
Volume X	p.17 (November 8th. " )
	p.133 (August 6th. 1873)
	p.179 (November 19th. " )

(40) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VIII, p.175

able reception of L'Education sentimentale, he wrote encouragingly:

Oui, certainement, on a été injuste envers vous, mais c'est le moment de se raidir et de jeter à la tête des lecteurs un chef d'oeuvre. Votre "Antoine" peut être ce pavé-là. Ne vous y attardez pas trop: c'est mon refrain. (41)

The following year, 1871, Turgenev's interest was far from having waned, for on May 6th. he asked "Que fait Antoine? Il s'est incrusté dans mon esprit". (42) Subsequent letters are full of similar questions, and more encouragements: "Il ne faut pas que St. Antoine se décourage. Qu'il aille vaillamment jusqu'au bout".(43)

Flaubert, for his part, kept his correspondent informed of progress, and sometimes lack of it, as in February 1870, when he wrote:

Les études sur le bon M.Antoine (dont vous vous inquiétez) ont été suspendues pendant quinze jours. (44)

And in return for Turgenev's encouragement, he invited him frequently to come to Croisset or to his Paris flat for readings to see how "le bon ermite" was progressing. And from these letters of invitation, we can see how keen Flaubert was to 'share' La Tentation with Turgenev. In August 1871, for example, he wrote:

Comme je serai content de vous voir! Comme j'ai envie de vous lire la première moitié de Saint Antoine! (45)

And a year later in similar vein:

...et je compte vous ramener ici, pour vous

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(41) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VIII, p.189

(42) Ibid., vol.IX, p.87

(43) Ibid. ,p.289

(44) Correspondance, supplément vol.II, p.219

(45) Ibid., p.281

promener un peu aux environs et vous lire la fin de Saint Antoine, lequel commence à m'ennuyer et surtout à m'inquiéter. J'ai peur que tout cela ne soit de la déclamation. (46)

But the most significant indication of the extent to which Flaubert valued Turgenev's patient interest and encouragement - even advice - concerning La Tentation, is to be found in a letter to George Sand. In January 1872 he wrote to her:

J'ai passé hier une bonne journée avec Turgeneff, à qui j'ai lu les 115 pages de Saint Antoine qui sont écrites... Quel auditeur! et quel critique! Il m'a ébloui par la profondeur et la netteté de son jugement. Ah! si tous ceux qui se mêlent de juger les livres avaient pu l'entendre, quelle leçon! Rien ne lui échappe. Au bout d'une pièce de cent vers, il se rappelle une épithète faible; il m'a donné pour Saint Antoine deux ou trois conseils exquis. (47)

So much then for Turgenev's interest in La Tentation before its publication. But the completion of the work only spurred him on to greater enthusiasm, as he spared no efforts to try and ensure a favourable reception for Saint Antoine. He got Flaubert's publisher to send copies of the book to all the reviewers and critics personally known to him in Germany, Austria and England. Turgenev then backed this up by writing to each one of them himself, stressing the great merit of the work and his own high opinion of it, and of course encouraging them to write an enthusiastic review. (48)

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(46) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.33-4 (1872)

(47) Ibid., vol.VI, p.347

(48) On April 2nd. 1874 Turgenev wrote to the following critics in this way: Paul Heyse, Paul Lindau, Ludwig Pietsch, Julian Schmidt, Heinrich Laube, Ludwig Friedländer and William Ralston (in this letter he requested the names of other English critics whom he might approach). (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, pp.215-220)

Turgenev naturally also had extensive plans for launching Saint Antoine in Russia. Even before the work had appeared in France, he wrote the first of a series of letters to Stasyulevich making arrangements for its serialisation in Vestnik Evropy. (49) In these letters, besides dealing with practical matters concerning the translation etc., Turgenev also promised to write various studies of Flaubert and Saint Antoine. (50) But none of these plans were to come to fruition, for as early as February 1874 it became fairly clear that the Imperial Censor would take exception to the work. Towards the end of that month, the proofs were returned to Flaubert from St. Petersburg; he wrote to Caroline informing her of the bad news:

Autre histoire. La Censure de S.M.l'Empereur de toutes les Russies a arrêté la traduction de Saint Antoine comme attentatoire à la religion, et interdit même la vente de l'édition française, ce qui me fait perdre 2.000 francs que m'aurait donné la Revue de Saint-Petersbourg et peut-être encore 2 ou 3.000 que j'aurais eus tant de la traduction en volume que de l'édition française. (51)

And Stasyulevich wrote to Turgenev on February 28th. to tell him that he had decided not to publish La Tentation after all because of censorship problems. (52)

But as late as June 1874 Turgenev seemed strangely anxious to protect Flaubert from the bitter truth concerning the non-event of Antoine's reception in Russia.

(49) The first was written in November 1873 ( Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.169)

(50) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.190 (January 1874)

(51) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.120. Flaubert conveyed the news in similar terms to Mme. Roger des Genettes and George Sand. (Ibid. pp.121-2)

(52) Details of this correspondence between Turgenev and Stasyulevich are given in the notes to volume X of Pol. sob. pisem. (p.582)

He wrote to Zola:

Le public russe n'a pas voulu mordre à son  
"Antoine" qui n'a pas même été défendu! Il  
ne faut pas qu'il sache cette particularité.(53)

So Turgenev's proposed studies and introductions to the work were never finished. But if we look at the fragments of a review that have survived, we can find - not surprisingly - further evidence of his high opinion of the work. He introduces Saint Antoine as a 'long-awaited' and 'remarkable' work. It cannot, he tells us, be labelled as a novel, or a 'story'; the description he attaches to it is that of 'fantastic poem in prose'. Turgenev also makes reference to the long standing friendship that links him to the author of this work. He goes on to say that in order to appreciate La Tentation to the full, the reader must have attained a certain cultural level and possess a sound aesthetic sense. This stems from Turgenev's conviction that Saint Antoine - and works like it - could never appeal to 'le gros public'. The fragment ends with a confident statement that all those who are truly interested in the progress and development of the human mind cannot but rejoice at the appearance of this work. (54)

Turgenev's efforts "to make Europe Saint Antoine conscious" (55) were, then, largely unproductive. The work never got off the ground in Russia, and despite Turgenev's personal recommendations to his literary friends, the reception of the book in the rest of Europe was largely cool. But Turgenev still tried to present as optimistic a

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(53) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.244

(54) The fragments of the rough draft of this review (dated April 1st. 1874 - Saint Antoine's publication day in France) are preserved with the rest of Turgenev's 'Manuscripts parisiens' at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Part of this is reproduced in Volume XIV of Pol. sob. soch. (p.306)

(55) This phrase is Walter STRAUSS's in 'Turgenev in the rôle of publicity agent for Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint Antoine'. in Harvard Library Bulletin. vol.II. no.3 (1948).

picture as possible to Flaubert, and sent him copies of reviews that were favourable. We see Flaubert's appreciation of this gesture in a letter he wrote to Turgenev on June 1st. 1874:

Que de kilomètres nous séparent! Mais le dicton est juste: "Loin des yeux, près du coeur". J'en ai eu la preuve par la gentille attention que vous avez eue en m'adressant un aimable feuillet sur Saint Antoine. (56)

But even Turgenev eventually felt obliged to admit to Flaubert himself the lack of success of Antoine in Russia. In one letter, for example, he attempts to explain this by reference to the fact that La Tentation's appeal is to an élite only:

'Antoine' n'est décidément pas pour le gros public: les lecteurs ordinaires reculent épouvantés - même en Russie. Je ne croyais pas mes compatriotes si mièvres que cela. Tant pis! Mais "Antoine" - malgré tout - est un livre qui restera. (57)

It is worth quoting Flaubert's reply to this letter, for here, despite an obvious disappointment, we see that Turgenev's opinion is of great value to him:

Vous me parlez de Saint Antoine et vous me dites que le gros public n'est pas pour lui. Je le savais d'avance, mais je croyais être plus largement compris du public d'élite...Tant pis! à la grâce de Dieu; ce qui est fait est fait et puis, du moment que vous aimez cette oeuvre-là, je suis payé. (58)

So, in spite of all obstacles, and the lack of enthusiasm of others, Turgenev had remained faithful to the cause of Flaubert's Saint Antoine for a period of more than four and a half years. And the encouragement Flaubert

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(56) Correspondance, supplément vol.III, p.126 (The review referred to appeared in the Nationalzeitung in Berlin on May 13th. 1874.)

(57) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.244

(58) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.159 (July 2nd. 1874)



received from his Russian friend - from the early days of work on the book in 1870 to the last reference to it as "un livre qui restera" - obviously meant much to him.

This common bond of interest in the subject of the temptation of Saint Anthony - which, as we have seen, had its roots in Flaubert's and Turgenev's formative years as writers - certainly contributed much to the closeness and permanence of the personal relationship between the two men.

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER VII

(11)Искушение святого Антония:

Я полноты и Знания хотел... (Соч.III, 269)

(12)Искушение святого Антония

...отчего я шел так скоро всё вдаль, вдаль...  
Чего я искал? Куда стремился? (Соч.III, 275)

(16)Искушение святого Антония:

Меня томили грозные порывы,  
Не признавал я вашего блаженства -  
...  
Я убежал...Но был тогда я молод,  
И страсти все, все прежние тревоги  
В пустыне не покинули меня. (Соч.III, 269)

(26)Алексей и Александру Бакуниным:

...и работаю - много работаю. Например, вчера съел  
за один присест Декарта, Спинозу и Лейбница  
(Письма I, 222)

(31)Искушение святого Антония:

Ты видел во сне, что ты старик? что ты отшельник?  
что жил 20 лет в одной пещере и не знался с людьми?  
Какой глупый сон! Нет, Антонио, нет - ты молод,  
молод....(Соч. III, 274)

(33)Искушение святого Антония:

Но Марцеллина, скажи мне, отчего вчера.. или нет -  
когда мы с тобой в последний раз ходили за город? Ну,  
все равно.... (Соч. III, 275)

(30)Искушение святого Антония:

...какой я видел странный сон...или нет...нет - я  
помню морской берег, помню долгие, долгие годы...  
(Соч. III, 274)

CHAPTER VIII - Pessimism - The Novels of Futility and Failure

"...il [Turgenev] se rencontrait avec Flaubert..dans un pessimisme appuyé sur le pressentiment de l'inutilité de l'effort moderne." P. BOURGET \*

It would be totally unrealistic to think of either Flaubert or Turgenev as a 'happy' man. Although happiness was something they explored a good deal in their works, and sought after even desperately at times in their own lives, they were, for the most part, obliged to conclude that this ideal was unobtainable, not only for themselves, but for mankind in general, and this in both the private and public spheres of existence. And as life progressed, these sentiments were to become intensified and to crystallize into a pessimism which they were to take with them to their graves. It will be our aim in this chapter to examine the origins and nature of this personal pessimism and its reflection in the literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev.

In the preceding chapters, we have seen some of the major factors which contributed inevitably to the building up of a pessimistic view of life on the part of the two writers. We saw, for example, in Flaubert's and Turgenev's contact with Romantic literature an early encounter with melancholy heroes pursued by fate and the omnipresence of death in works such as Byron's Giaour. Both of them had found Nature to be cold and hostile - thus there was to be no pastoral consolation for the sorrows of the world. Both had been disappointed in love at an early

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(\*) BOURGET Paul, Nouveaux essais de psychologie contemporaine, Paris 1886, p.212

age, and as we have seen, neither ever succeeded in finding real and lasting happiness in this domain. And with the passing of the years, each became progressively more disillusioned with the political life of the day.

Although there are these constant tendencies building up throughout the course of their lives to a generally pessimistic outlook, it is nonetheless possible to pick out for each of them a period of crisis after which no real optimism was possible. For Turgenev, the crisis began in 1852 with the appearance of his first published volume and the difficulties he experienced with the Russian censorship, and culminated in the outpouring of his blackest sentiments in Enough! of 1862. In fact it was Turgenev's obituary notice on Gogol that provided the excuse for his arrest, imprisonment and subsequent exile, but undoubtedly the underlying reason for this was the 'threat' to Russian society that the Hunting Sketches were deemed to constitute. Indeed the censor who passed the work for publication was promptly dismissed. It is ironical that the Sketches, this politically most optimistic of Turgenev's works, where he looks forward hopefully to the liberation of the serfs, should be directly responsible for the intellectual and emotional crisis brought about by the period of exile at Spasskoie.

As early as October 1852, at the beginning of his exile, he wrote to Pauline Viardot:

Je sens ma vie qui s'enfuit goutte à goutte  
comme l'eau d'un robinet à demi fermé; je ne la  
regrette pas; qu'elle s'épuise...qu'en ferais-  
je? (1)

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(1) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.69

And this gloomy outlook is of course reflected in the literary works of this period: as we saw earlier, Jakov Pasynkov, A Correspondence and Faust (all of 1855) present a very pessimistic view of human relationships, and Journey into the Forest is based on an extreme view of the hostility of Nature to man. And with Rudin, also written in 1855, comes Turgenev's finest and perhaps most moving portrait of the type of the superfluous man.

The second half of the decade was not to prove any happier for Turgenev, for when he finally obtained permission to travel abroad again in 1856, he returned to France and the Viardots, hoping desperately that some of the former magic of his relationship with Pauline could be recaptured. And things started well: the autumn of that year, spent at Courtavenel, certainly seems to have been a happy period for Turgenev, but Pauline's attitude changed suddenly at the end of the year and she broke off virtually all contact with him. Turgenev sank into a mood of deep depression, and even considered giving up writing, as we see from a letter to Botkin of March 1st. 1857:

I will not talk to you of myself, for I am being liquidated - totally; there is nothing to talk about. I cannot help feeling like garbage that they have forgotten to sweep away...Not another line by me will be printed (or written) till the end of time...I give in. And believe me, this is not a fit of disappointment, it is the expression, or result, of slowly nurtured convictions. (2)

And Turgenev did not get over this quickly: in December of the same year he wrote to the Countess Lambert of the cruelty of fate and the harsh blow it had dealt him, say-

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(2) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.91-2

ing that he would return to Russia "very shaken and beaten" by his experiences. (3)

The effects of this pessimism on the novels of the following years - Home of the gentry, On the Eve and Fathers and Children - will be examined in detail shortly, but before we leave the personal aspects of Turgenev's pessimism at this stage of his life, mention must be made of Enough! which was to be the most intense and intensely personal expression of the bleak sentiments we have seen building up during this decade. The work occupied Turgenev for about two years between 1862 and 1864 - the stormy period which followed the publication of Fathers and Children. By this time, Turgenev certainly knew at least the principal tenets of Schopenhauer's philosophy, (4) and this probably helped him to formulate more precisely his analogous personal feelings.

Enough! falls into two sections: the first (fragments I-XII) is highly subjective and in part autobiographical, and the second (fragments XIII-XVIII) deals with wider philosophical issues. In the first part, the artist addresses his melancholy memories of the past to a female friend and evokes their love. He had foolishly thought that his passion could make him forget the cruel fate of mankind. But he is now disabused, he has seen the reality of life and self-deception is no longer possible.

The basis for the philosophical pessimism which

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(3) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.179

(4) The first mention of Schopenhauer's name in letters extant occurs in one written by Turgenev to Herzen in November 1862. The latter had written a description of the degeneration of the western world in Schopenhauerian terms. This earned him the following comment from Turgenev: "Schopenhauer, brother, you need to read rather more diligently." (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.V, p.65) From which we can deduce that he himself already had rather more than a superficial knowledge of this philosopher.

comes to the fore in the second part of Enough! is a view of nature as supremely hostile - a development from the sentiments already expressed in Journey into the Forest. The artist's greatest reproach to nature is that she is eternal and self-renewing, whereas man's life is only transient - like a dance of flies in the sunlight. Turgenev also presents a very pessimistic view of human nature. He regrets man's inability to progress by learning from his mistakes or to profit from the models and lessons of literature: two thousand years ago Aristophanes chided man for the same faults we see committed today, and the lessons of such figures as Hamlet and King Lear seem to have had no salutary effect.

Turgenev is forced to the conclusion that there is no point in deceiving oneself - the world is like this and so all things are futile: life, art and all human aspirations. Thus there is little point in creative writing - here we see the sense of the sub-title of the piece 'Fragments from the notes of a dead artist': a conscious withdrawal from art and its perishable images once the veil of self-deception has been lifted. The concluding fragment consists of a single, bleak sentence in English:

The rest is silence....(5)

If we turn now to the period of crisis in Flaubert's life, it must surely be the years from the family tragedies of 1846 to the trial of Mme. Bovary in 1857 which sealed his fate as a pessimist. Although even Flaubert's earliest

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(5) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.122

writings show little in the way of youthful optimism - he had a marked taste for mournful subjects as is shown by works such as Rêve d'enfer and Smarh (which has been described as an attempted "épopée de la misère humaine" (6)) - it was during the period referred to above that the harsh realities of life struck out at Flaubert on a more personal level. It is possible to see the excessive blackness of the Oeuvres de jeunesse as something of a pose in the Romantic manner, but the pessimism revealed from this period onwards has a more genuine and personal intensity.

The death of Flaubert's father in January 1846 was followed closely by that of his beloved sister Caroline only two months later, and this came as a tragic blow to Flaubert, who was himself only just recovered from the shattering experience of his own nervous illness. The intensity of his emotion at the funeral of his sister is recorded in a detailed and moving letter which he sent to Maxime Du Camp. At the end of the letter we see the effect of these bereavements on his state of mind:

Je suis accablé, abruti; j'aurais besoin de reprendre ma vie calme, car j'étouffe d'ennui et d'agacement. Quand retrouverai-je ma pauvre vie d'art tranquille...Je ris de pitié sur la vanité de la volonté humaine...(7)

Only two years after this, Flaubert was to lose one of his closest friends, Alfred Le Poittevin, who died in April 1848. Flaubert had been at his bedside and saw death as a liberation for Alfred who had suffered horribly. But the effect of yet another loss on Flaubert himself was more sombre as he tells Ernest Chevalier in a letter written

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(6) DESCHARMES René, Flaubert avant 1857, Paris 1909, p.91

(7) Correspondance, vol.I, p.198 (1846)



shortly after the funeral:

Tout tombe autour de moi. Il me semble parfois que je suis bien vieux. (8) A chaque malheur qui vous arrive, on semble défier le sort de vous en donner plus, et à peine on a le temps de croire que c'était impossible qu'il en arrive de nouveaux, auxquels on ne s'attendait pas; et toujours, et toujours...(9)

During the two years separating this last bereavement from the first two, Flaubert had of course been having an affair with Louise Colet, and as we have seen, this liaison was not destined to bring happiness. The correspondence with Louise, even in the early days of the affair, reveals an underlying pessimism which prevented Flaubert from being carried away on a tide of pleasant emotion. For it was at this period that his views on fatality crystallized. In fact he gave this belief formal expression in one of his first letters to Louise:

Tout cela est arrivé parce que cela devait arriver. Moque-toi de mon fatalisme, ajoute que je suis arriéré d'être Turc. Le fatalisme est la Providence du mal; c'est celle qu'on voit, j'y crois. (10)

And the notion of 'fatalisme' or 'fatalité' recurs with the frequency of a leitmotif in Flaubert's correspondence of subsequent years. (11)

As far as politics are concerned during these years, the abortive revolution and the coup d'état only served to heighten Flaubert's disillusionment with this aspect of the world.

If we look now at Flaubert's literary activity during this period, nothing in this domain succeeded in

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(8) In fact both Flaubert and Turgenev felt old before their time. Flaubert was only 27 at this point, and certainly in their 30's both considered themselves to be old men. Flaubert died before his 60th. birthday and Turgenev at the not too advanced age of 64, but from their correspondence, one gets the impression that they were much older than this.

(9) Correspondance, vol.II, p.84 (1848)

(10) Ibid., vol.I, p.240 (1846)

(11) See CARLUT, op. cit., pp.784-6

changing his gloomy outlook. In 1848 he had worked with great enthusiasm on La Tentation de Saint Antoine and had tried to communicate this enthusiasm to his friends in his energetic reading of the text, only to meet with a cold and discouraging reaction. Then in 1856 when the labour of producing Mme. Bovary was over and the work serialized in La Revue de Paris, Flaubert faced a scandal and charges of offending public and religious morality. He was tried in January 1857. Certainly, this succès de scandale was not entirely a bad thing for Flaubert: he received a great many letters of support for his novel - some from famous men such as Lamartine - and this he greatly appreciated.<sup>(12)</sup> And of course Flaubert's acquittal was a triumph, but nonetheless, the business of the trial left its scars, and like Turgenev, he thought he would give up writing for ever. In February 1857 he wrote to Maurice Schlésinger:

Merci de votre lettre. J'y répondrai brièvement, car il m'est resté de tout cela un tel épuisement de corps et d'esprit que je n'ai pas la force de faire un pas ni de tenir une plume...

Mais je suis fâché de ce procès en somme. Cela dévie le succès et je n'aime pas, autour de l'Art, des choses étrangères. C'est à un tel point que tout ce tapage me dégoûte profondément et j'hésite à mettre mon roman en volume. J'ai envie de rentrer, et pour toujours, dans la solitude et le mutisme dont je suis sorti, de ne rien publier... Car il me paraît impossible par le temps qui court de rien dire, l'hypocrisie sociale est tellement féroce!!!<sup>(13)</sup>

Thus by the 1860's, we find both Turgenev and Flaubert reasonably firmly entrenched in a pessimistic view of life. Let us now see how this attitude is reflected in their literary works.

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(12) He expressed this appreciation in a letter to Dr. Cloquet written just before the trial. (January 23rd. 1857, Correspondance, vol.IV, p.155)

(13) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.159-60

If we take the major novels of the two writers, a failure to find real or lasting happiness could be said to be a constant characteristic of their heroes and heroines. Hardly ever do we find anything positive achieved by the end of their novels, and how many major characters die a premature and futile death with their yearnings unfulfilled? Emma Bovary, Rudin, Insarov, Salammbô, Bazarov, Nejdánov...

Let us begin our examination with Rudin and Mme. Bovary, which date from roughly the same period, (14) and both can be seen as novels of personal failure. Rudin was a young man who wanted so much out of life, who had so many grand designs for improving the world, as Turgenev tells us shortly after the hero is introduced:

All Rudin's thoughts seemed focussed on the future;...it seemed his lips themselves were saying something exalted, something unexpected even to himself. Rudin was talking about what gives permanent meaning to the transient life of man. (15)

Rudin longed to surrender his whole self "avidly, completely" to some cause. But although he had doubts about his ability to achieve this, he would not give up his ideal and thus turned his back on the one genuine offered to him during his lifetime: the real love of a pure young girl, Natalya. It had to be the hard lessons of life - as he wasted his days in a muddy hovel trying to make some distant river navigable - that taught him that his ambitions were nothing but illusions. And after a useless life - Rudin himself is forced to admit: "Nothing was done!" (16) - ~~and~~ he dies his inglorious death in Paris in 1848.

(14) Flaubert worked on Mme. Bovary between 1851 and 1856, Rudin was written during 1855.

(15) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VI, p.269

(16) Ibid., p.364

Mme. Bovary is in many ways a very different kind of book - it is much longer and wider in scope - but nonetheless, there are certain parallels to be drawn between the situation of Emma and that of Rudin, for both lived in a world of illusion and frustrated ambition. She was just as much a misfit in the society of Yonville-l'Abbaye as Rudin was in the world of Daria Mikhailovna and her friends. Flaubert's heroine also had great aspirations, although these were all self-centered, as Emma was concerned only with improving her own personal world. She too wished to surrender herself completely to an ideal - that of romantic love - and this was what she tried to achieve in her two adulterous affairs with Rodolphe and Léon. She also had preferred to stake all on a grandiose aspiration, for in taking a lover, she had rejected the simple but genuine affection of her husband Charles. The reality of life proves Emma's ambition to be a romantic heroine equally unobtainable, as she wearies her lovers and slips further and further into debt. Her painful and sordid suicide was not the dramatic ending she had hoped for, but a death just as futile as Rudin's martyrdom.

Turgenev's second novel, Home of the Gentry (1858) , also shows the impossibility of achieving happiness through love, but this work is more elegiac than pessimistic in tone, resignation and withdrawal being the key issues here. On the Eve, written in 1859, is not a pessimistic novel on the political level: there is no reason to suppose that the group of young <sup>Bulgarian</sup> ~~Serb~~ patriots to which Insarov belongs, will not eventually achieve their aim of liberating their home-

land from the Turks, and Insarov is not a superfluous man. Indeed he is presented as "a man with a lot of character... a man of iron". But it is fatality and death that prevent this work from being a positive or optimistic novel. For the irony is that it is Insarov, the committed and dynamic hero - and not Shubin, the dilettante artist - who is cut down in the prime of life by disease and death. But fate and death are strong forces in the book even before Insarov's demise. Elena is conscious of the workings of fate while she is still at home with her family, for we read in her diary:

Some hidden power holds me and oppresses me. It is as though I were in prison, and the walls about to fall in on me...(17)

And Shubin comments to the newly married pair shortly before their departure to begin work on their mission:

"We must accept our fate, and remember the past with a good will."  
...at that moment in that room, the past was dying..the past of all who were gathered there. Maybe it was dying in order to give birth to a new life - but nevertheless, it was dying. (18)

Later, as Elena sees her husband dying during their stay in Venice, melancholy reflections on the futility of life and death abound, and the phrase "Morir si giovane" from Verdi's opera La Traviata recurs in her musings.

In the final chapter, the author himself reflects on the presence of death in life:

But death is like a fisherman who, having caught a fish in his net, leaves it in the water for a time; the fish continues to swim about, but all the time the net encircles it, and the fisherman

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(17) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.79

(18) Ibid., p.147

will pull it out in his own good time. (19)

Like On the Eve, Fathers and Children begins with a situation full of promise - this vested in a hard working and educated young man who wants to change the world. Bazarov is this young medical student who takes himself so seriously - but the more we see of him, the more we discover that he is unable even to stick to his own principles. For having condemned romance and emotion as having no place in his nihilistic view of things, he promptly falls in love with the beautiful Mme. Odintsova. But it is not love which is destined to leave Bazarov's potential unfulfilled: as with Insarov, death cuts off his life even before he has completed his studies. Again the situation is full of tragic irony, as the early part of the book is full of references to the brilliant future in store for Bazarov. On his death bed, he himself is aware of the grotesqueness of his situation, as he says to Anna Sergeyevna:

...make the most of life while there is time.  
Take a good look at this hideous spectacle: a  
worm, half crushed but writhing still...(20)

But the harshness of Bazarov's fate is somewhat mitigated at the very end of the book with the elegiac description of his tomb lovingly tended by his ageing parents. Their selfless devotion is presented as a power working for the good.

If we turn now to Flaubert's work of the same period, we find him similarly occupied with questions of fate and

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(19) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.166

(Fate and death were not of course new themes to Turgenev's work at this stage. Apart from the romantic inheritance of his very early works, the Hunting Sketches, despite their progressive outlook on the political level, contain many gloomy references to the workings of fate and the inevitability of death. We meet these themes in Kasyan of the Fair Lands (Pol. sob. soch., vol.IV, p.134), A Country Doctor, (Ibid., p.50), and in My Neighbour Radilov, the fragility of human life is stressed. (Ibid., p.63)

(20) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.395-6

death in Salammbô, on which he worked between the summer of 1858 and the spring of 1862. It was in a depressed state of mind that Flaubert took up this subject in the first place. He wrote to his friend Feydeau on this choice of subject:

Peu de gens devineront combien il a fallu être triste pour entreprendre de ressusciter Carthage! C'est là une Thébàïde où le dégoût de la vie moderne m'a poussé. (21)

Salammbô, for all that she is a symbol, does suffer in the novel, and in a way similar to Emma Bovary, for this young Carthaginian also desires that which she cannot possess. Unrequited passion is responsible for her death in the same way that it led to Emma's suicide. Mâtho also, of course, suffers from suppressed desires and unfulfilled aspirations. The critic Richard has an interesting view of the basic pessimism of Flaubert's exotic novels. In Littérature et sensation, referring to the traditional reaction to these works he writes:

L'on comprend dès lors combien furent mal avisés tous les critiques qui reprochèrent à Flaubert le vide de ses romans exotiques, Salammbô et Hérodias. C'est que tout ici doit sonner creux. L'Orient est un vaste bazar sur fond de néant. Races, civilisations, traditions s'y côtoient dans l'incohérence et l'hostilité. (22)

And indeed in the story of Salammbô and Mâthoswe do see blind instinct combine with the forces of fatality to bring about cruel suffering and bloody death. In fact the events of the story are so brutal that the only possible belief that the mercenaries can cling to is "au destin et à la mort".

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(21) Correspondance, vol.IV, p.348 (1859)

(22) RICHARD J.-P., Littérature et sensation, Paris 1954, p.178

Chronologically, the next work to be considered is Turgenev's novel Smoke, published in 1867, but this is rather different. The hero, Litvinov, certainly passes through a period of intense pessimism after his adulterous liaison with Irina. This has its culmination in the famous scene in the railway carriage, where human life is compared to smoke. Litvinov reflects:

Smoke, smoke... and it suddenly seemed to him that everything was smoke: everything - his own life, Russian life, everything human, especially everything Russian. All is vapour and smoke...all seems to change continually, everywhere new forms appear, events follow upon events, but basically all is the same; everything hurries, hastens somewhere - and everything disappears without a trace, attaining nothing; the wind changes - and everything rushes in the opposite direction, and there the same interminable, restless and futile game begins anew. (23)

But subsequently, Litvinov does succeed in expiating his 'crime', and the ending of the novel is less black than the passage quoted above might suggest. The means by which a gloomy ending is avoided will be examined in the next chapter.

However, with Flaubert's third novel - L'Education sentimentale, on which he was occupied between 1864 and 1869 - the links between the pessimism of the two writers become again more clearly defined. And this through the concept of the 'superfluous man', if we take as a broad definition of this type the introspective character who is doomed to lead a futile life ending in the failure of all his hopes, because he has proved unable to find any meaning for his life, or to integrate himself in a meaningful way into the world around him. This kind of figure had become a major type in Russian literature in the early part of the



nineteenth century, having been first embodied in Griboyedov's hero Chatsky, (24) and developed further with Pushkin's Eugene Onegin and Lermontov's Pechorin. (25) The same basic type was taken up and explored by Turgenev in very many of his early works. Rudin is probably the best and most complete portrait of this type, but its general characteristics were to become firmly embodied in his creative repertoire. The tradition of the superfluous man is continued through the more general notion of becoming a 'shadow' of what one aspired to; Bazarov, Lavretsky and Litvinov all fit into this category. And we have only to look at the hero of Turgenev's last novel, Nejdánov in Virgin Soil, to see that the problems of being 'superfluous' remained of interest to him. Indeed, despite his desperate efforts, Nejdánov remains superfluous on two levels: he fails to engage himself meaningfully in the political mission which had once seemed so important to him, and on the personal level, he feels incapable of achieving a real union with Mariana, although she has declared that she returns his love. And so the life of yet another promising young intellectual (and Russia had none to spare at this stage) ends in a futile death, for Nejdánov shoots himself just as arrangements are being made for his clandestine marriage to Mariana.

Returning now to L'Education sentimentale, it emerges that its hero, Frédéric Moreau, is indeed a first cousin of the Russian superfluous man, and R. Freeborn's description of the career of Rudin as an "inglorious saga

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(24) In the play 'Tis folly to be wise of 1823.

(25) In the novel A Hero of our time of 1839-40

of lost opportunities and failed hopes" could equally well be applied to that of Frédéric. (26)

Of course, the hero as failure was not an entirely new idea to French literature in 1869. For example, Lucien de Rubempré's career in Balzac's Illusions perdues and Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes is hardly a success story. But nonetheless, there are aspects of Flaubert's work which distinguish it from many of its precursors in French literature, and which on the contrary, establish a link with Turgenev's novels. The key to this can be found in the distinction which Poulet makes between Balzac and Flaubert. He labels the former as "romancier du déterminant" and the latter as "romancier du déterminé"; (27) i.e. Balzac deals with formative forces, or influences that have some effect (for example in Rubempré's case money, the city, society), whereas in Flaubert's work the character of Frédéric (and this applies equally well to Emma Bovary of course) does not evolve - in so far as he does not learn from the experiences of life. And it is this preclusion of the possibility of improvement which makes Flaubert's novels so fundamentally pessimistic. This determinism is perhaps best summed up in one of Flaubert's own letters to George Sand:

Chacun suit sa voie, en dépit de sa propre volonté. (28)

And this is of course what happens to Frédéric, and incidentally, exactly what happened to Rudin, Insarov and Bazarov:

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(26) In his introduction to his translation of Home of the Gentry, Penguin Books, London 1970, p.9

(27) POULET Georges, Etudes sur le temps humain, Paris 1950, p.349

(28) Correspondance, vol.VII, p;294 (1876)

despite their will to be positive and change the world, they were 'fated' to failure or unavoidable and premature death. And Frédéric certainly had ambitions, whatever his life may show the reader, he himself was certainly no 'absurdist' hero who muses on the futility of life and effort. Indeed he was tempted by the idea of becoming a great lover (in the early days of his relationship with Mme. Arnoux), tempted by a career in politics (he stood as a candidate in the elections of April 1848), and by the prospect of a career in business (in his involvement with the Dambreuse family).

Judging from the title of Flaubert's novel - L'Education sentimentale - one might be tempted to suppose that this is a Bildungsroman, but in fact it proves to be just the opposite. For as Baldensperger has pointed out:

...c'est ici moins un "apprentissage" qu'une déformation, et comme une dissolution de toute énergie et de toute ambition, qui laisse Frédéric Moreau, après ses expériences de Paris, désabusé, veule et las. (29)

For indeed the 'forces' that Frédéric comes into contact with (love, politics, finance) only serve to highlight his inability to achieve anything positive and even make his dilemma worse. André Vial has defined Moreau's problem as "la dissociation du vouloir et du pouvoir, de la pensée et de l'action". (30) And indeed the book shows that for men like Frédéric, the greater the desire, the greater is the impossibility to act. For Frédéric knows that his passion for Mme. Arnoux can come to nothing, he knows that his

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(29) BALDENSBERGER Fernand, Goethe en France, Paris 1904, p.184 (The general outline of this statement is equally applicable to Turgenev's Nejdanov.)

(30) VIAL André, 'De Volupté à L'Education sentimentale ' R.H.L.F., January-March 1957. (The dilemma is again parallel to Nejdanov's - especially in his relationship with Mariana.)

liaison with Rosanette can lead to nothing good. He also knows that Louise Roque is a nice girl and would make a good wife, and equally that marriage to Mme. Dambreuse would be a good thing for his career. But he is totally unable to act in accordance with this knowledge.

As far as other elements of pessimism in the book are concerned, the language is striking in the exceptional number of suggestions of 'pesanteur' or 'accablement', for they reflect the pressures of the process of disintegration through which we see Frédéric passing. As his life becomes more and more of a futile imbroglio, he feels himself to be perched on the edge of an abyss, contemplating the void. (31) For example, after a visit to a common dance hall on the Champs Elysées, Frédéric pauses on a bridge over the Seine on his way home:

Alors, il se ressouvint de ce soir de l'autre hiver...il lui avait fallu s'arrêter, tant son coeur battait vite sous l'étreinte de ses espérances. Toutes étaient mortes maintenant! Des nues sombres couraient sur la face de la lune. Il la contempla, en rêvant à la grandeur des espaces, à la misère de la vie, au néant de tout. (32)

He thinks of committing suicide, but the reason for his not doing so is revealing: "ce fut par lassitude qu'il n'essaya pas" - so even this would be too much of an effort.

Towards the end of the novel, we see Frédéric "perdu dans les décombres de ses rêves, malade, plein de douleur et de découragement; et en haine du milieu factice où il avait tant souffert". (33) But even after all this he does nothing to improve his lot, and the ending is

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(31) Phrases such as "un abîme qui se creuse", "tourbillonnement vers le fond d'un gouffre", "descendre dans quelque chose de profond" abound.

(32) *L'Education sentimentale*, p.110

(33) *Ibid.*, p.596

equally pessimistic: not because it ends with Frédéric's death or suicide - no, that would be too positive an ending. Flaubert leaves his hero leading the life of a reasonably comfortable petit bourgeois, but with the final reflection on Frédéric's part that the best and most genuine thing in his life was a visit to the brothel run by 'la Turque' in Nogent sur Seine, when he was only fifteen years old.

And so, at the end of this catalogue of failures and missed opportunities, we are left to conclude, with Zola, that L'Education sentimentale "est un temple de marbre magnifique élevé à l'impuissance". (34)

We have already seen the failure of the aspirations of so many heroes in the novels of Flaubert and Turgenev, but in Bouvard et Pécuchet, we find the blackest picture of all of failed aspirations. The central theme of the work is the two characters' constant searching after intellectual progress. And in a book which has been described as "l'im-passe de la pensée" (35) they are doomed to failure.

In Bouvard et Pécuchet, two distinct aspects of Flaubert's pessimism are revealed: on the one hand, his horror and condemnation of 'la bêtise humaine' which is responsible for much of the humour in the book, for example, the fate of the "arbre de la liberté" at Chavignolles. (36) But the other aspect of Flaubert's pessimism in this work, i.e. the agony of the intellectual life, is a much more serious one, and despite the at times amusing activities of the "deux bonshommes", we can be certain, by virtue of their

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(34) ZOLA Emile, Les Romanciers naturalistes, 1881, Paris, p.147

(35) The phrase is Christophe CALMY's in his article 'Flaubert et le nihilisme de gauche', Esprit, February 1963.

(36) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.191 & 210-11

involvement with this theme, that Flaubert never intended Bouvard and Pécuchet to appear to the reader as fantoches or imbeciles as is sometimes supposed. Flaubert involves the two characters in his demonstration of the essential link between the process of thought and suffering at an early stage in the novel. We read of the consequences of their search for knowledge:

Par cette curiosité, leur intelligence se développa...Et ayant plus d'idées, ils eurent plus de souffrances. (37)

Here perhaps, we should pause to look at the possible origins of this theme and to point out the parallel current in Turgenev's thought. Although this idea receives its most forceful expression in Bouvard et Pécuchet, it was not new to Flaubert at this stage. We need only look at a letter he wrote to Louise Colet in 1853 to see that such thoughts had been with him for some time. He wrote:

Souffrir et penser seraient-ils donc même chose? Le génie, après tout, n'est peut-être qu'un raffinement de la douleur, c'est à dire une plus complète et intense pénétration de l'objectif à travers notre âme. (38)

Apart from the lessons of his own experience of life, which were probably the most significant factor in the development of this theme, it is quite possible that Flaubert's first contact with this kind of idea in literature came through Byron. For the ideas expressed in Bouvard et Pécuchet are in fact akin to Byron's thought that:

Sorrow is knowledge:  
They who know the most  
Must mourn the deepest  
O'er the fatal truth,  
The Tree of Knowledge  
Is not that of Life. (39)

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(37) Bouvard et Pécuchet, p.12-13

(38) Correspondance, vol.III, p.358

(39) It is of course equally probable that Turgenev's first contact with this idea came from his reading of Byron. In fact his very first hero - Steno - experiences the 'agonies' on the intellectual life.

Besides his own unfortunate personal experiences of the early 1870's - the financial ruin of his niece's husband which put Flaubert in financial difficulties for the first time, the upheaval of the Franco-Prussian War and then the failure of his play Le Candidat in 1874 - it is possible that Flaubert's pessimism was reinforced from a philosophical source at this stage. For he would have found echoes of his own long held views on the evil of the world and the imbecility of human nature in the philosophy of Schopenhauer. There is evidence that Flaubert definitely knew Schopenhauer's work, and found his ideas to be in reasonable concordance with his own. For he wrote to Mme. Roger des Genettes:

Connaissez-vous Schopenhauer? J'en lis deux livres.  
Idéaliste et pessimiste, ou plutôt bouddhiste.  
Ça me va. (40)

The relationship between thinking and suffering was also well known to Turgenev. Like Schopenhauer, he believed that as mental activity increases, so the 'pain of existence' is also inevitably intensified. We see Turgenev's interest in this theme in his frequent use of the Hamlet figure. And in his philosophical essay Hamlet and Don Quixote, we see that his sympathy with Hamlet is based essentially on this character's suffering-through-thought. He writes:

We should not be too severe with Hamlet. He suffers, and his sufferings are more painful and more intense than Don Quixote's...Hamlet also wears a sword: and this is the double-edged blade of analysis. (41)

And the idea that thought increases suffering recurs with

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(40) Correspondance, vol.VIII, p.272 (1879)  
(41) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VIII, p.176

the frequency of a leitmotif in Turgenev's works of fiction. In his excellent article 'Turgenev and Schopenhauer' (42) A. Walicki has made an interesting compilation of some of the references Turgenev makes to this idea:

How good it is to get rid at last of the tormenting consciousness of life...only a man who does not think too much about life is not cheated by it...I am afraid of myself because I have begun to think too much...Better not to think at all! That's what the peasants tell us. (43)

To return now to Bouvard et Pécuchet, we find that the frustrated ambitions and wasted efforts that had marred the careers of not only Emma and Frédéric, but also Rudin, Bazarov, Insarov and Nejdanov, abound here as the two characters explore progressively a fantastic range of subjects. By the end of the novel, they have laboured through the following branches of learning:

Agriculture, arboriculture and formal gardening.  
Chemistry, medicine, astronomy, archaeology and geology.  
Prehistory, history, philosophy of history.  
Politics.  
Gymnastics.  
Mesmerism, magnetism, spiritualism.  
Metaphysics, Christianity, Buddhism.  
Pedagogy. (44)

The novel has been aptly described by Thorlby as "an immensely complex and comprehensive mathematical formula which makes everything equal zero". (45) And this effect is achieved by the eternal new beginnings that Bouvard and Pécuchet make in their researches: their successive infatuations with new subjects, their enthusiasm and their hard work end, without exception, in failure.

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(42) WALICKI A. 'Turgenev and Schopenhauer', Oxford Slavonic Papers, 1962

(43) WALICKI. p.9

(44) This list is based on the one established by Hugh KENNER in Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett, the stoic comedians, London 1964, p.8.

(45) THORLBY A., Gustave Flaubert and the art of realism, London, 1956, p.55



Let us leave the novels of futility and failure by Flaubert and Turgenev with a statement made by Remy de Gourmont à propos of Bouvard et Pécuchet, but in fact the application of this judgement can be widened to embrace virtually all of the major novels of our two writers:

Son pessimisme ironique ne détourne ni de la vie ni de l'action. Seulement il prévient les hommes que, si beaux que soient leurs désirs, ils sont presque toujours irréalisables...(46)

It now remains to look at the pessimism of the last period of Flaubert's and Turgenev's lives from a more personal angle: i.e. the kind of views they expressed in their last letters or in works they did not publish.

Pauline Viardot described Turgenev towards the end of his life as "the saddest of men", (47) and indeed we need look no further than the last of his letters to Flaubert to see that she was right. Turgenev suffered a good deal from his various illnesses - especially gout - during the last decade of his life, and this obliged him to sit back and accept old age and the fact that life was running out. In 1877 he wrote to Flaubert of the life of old men:

Après quarante ans, il n'y a qu'un seul mot qui compose le fond de la vie: Renoncer. (48)

So he too, like his heroes, had been obliged by the harshness of life to abandon as unattainable his dreams and aspirations. On another occasion - in fact as early as 1872 - Turgenev had written to Flaubert of the power of old age to dominate life:

Mon cher ami, la vieillesse est un gros nuage blafard qui s'étend sur l'avenir, le présent et jusque sur le passé qu'il attriste en craquelant ses souvenirs. (49)

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(46) DE GOURMONT R., Promenades littéraires, 4<sup>e</sup> série, p.174  
 (47) Quoted from FITZLYON, op. cit., p.387  
 (48) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII (i), p.199  
 (49) Ibid., vol.IX, p.289

But perhaps the saddest picture Turgenev gives of himself in his old age comes in a letter he wrote to Flaubert in the winter of 1879. He is more conscious than ever of the futility of life as he waits for death:

Quel triste hiver! Il n'y a pas de taupe qui mène une vie plus retirée que moi. Etre seul, tout seul, et ne rien faire, cela vous donne le goût et l'avant-goût de votre inutilité. (50)

We also see that he had retained his views on fatality, as he wrote to Flaubert: "Le vin (quel vin!) est tiré, il faut le boire". (51)

As for an expression in literature of this pessimism of Turgenev's last years, we find this in the pieces which he called his Senilia, but which were later published as 'Poems in prose'. (52) As we have seen, Turgenev already knew the work of Schopenhauer in the early 1860's, but in fact his closest echoing of this philosopher's brand of pessimism comes in this last period of his life. In the Senilia, composed between 1877 and 1882, the deep and fundamental melancholy of old age was to find its most complete expression. The pessimism of these pieces is virtually unrelieved, the most recurrent theme running through these eighty odd pieces being the essential fragility of human life and the vanity of our activity when measured against the reality of death. As Mazon says in his introduction to his edition of the 'poems' :

No matter what he [Turgenev] contemplates - a vulture, a shot from a sportsman's rifle, an insect with a poisonous sting - one presence is everywhere apparent to him - death, which is always there, waiting to pounce upon its prey. (53)

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(50) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.XII (ii), p.13

(51) Ibid. p.193

(52) During his lifetime, Turgenev published only 50 of these, the other 33 were not published until 1930.

(53) MAZON André, Ivan Turgenev, Poems in Prose, Oxford 1951, p.12

Besides being intensely personal (for example When I am no more...) this collection is possibly the most 'intellectually' pessimistic of Turgenev's works. And the form he chose to give his thoughts is in part responsible: as he was not here limited by considerations of plot or character, or even rhyme and metre, he was able to give free rein to the development of his ideas.

On the whole, the themes of these 'poems' are further explorations of the ideas already expressed in some form or another in his novels. But here, the brighter side of life is not given a chance, and Turgenev's pessimistic thoughts are pushed to their logical conclusion. In the piece entitled Pity, for example, this pity that the poet feels for all human beings - indeed all forms of conscious life - "makes life unliveable".(54) And this pushes him down into a state of intense boredom: the lowest depth to which a man can sink. Turgenev is forced to admit that he even envies stones, for they have no consciousness, so therefore no feeling. In The Hourglass, we see the poet's awareness that life is constantly trickling away

...in a smooth unbroken flow like the sand in the hourglass which the figure of Death holds in his bony hand. (55)

And in The Old Woman, we see that Turgenev is still haunted by the idea of fate pursuing man. Here it is symbolized for him in the figure of a "small and bent old woman" who follows him relentlessly, but it is not alms that she is seeking. The poet realizes:

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(54) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.200-1

(55) Ibid., p.210

Ah...this old woman is my fate. The fate from which there is no escape for man!... And whichever way I run, doubling like a hunted hare...it's always the same, the same. (56)

And the final line states simply the inevitable conclusion:

"No escape!"

If we turn now to the last period of Flaubert's life, there is ample evidence in his correspondence that his basically pessimistic view of life did not undergo any significant change in these years. His gloomy reflections abound, and especially, perhaps, in the letters he wrote to the Princess Mathilde during the 1870's. Here we read for example:

misères...La vie, d'ailleurs, ne se compose pas d'autres choses...(57)  
Ma vie s'est passée à vouloir saisir des chimères; j'y renonce. (58)  
Mais pour qui donc la vie est-elle bonne? (59)

And he had absolutely no expectations from what was left of his life. He wrote to Mme. Roger des Genettes and Mme. Brainne of the future:

Quant à l'avenir, c'est la nuit noire. (60)  
...l'avenir...un incurable cancer qui me ronge.(61)

But during the very last year or so of his life, although Flaubert was certainly very exhausted, suffering from failing eyesight, and indeed frequent fits of depression - as we can see from a letter he wrote to Maxime Du Camp towards the end of 1879:

La mienne [vieille carcasse] a subi depuis quelques années, et l'hiver dernier principalement, tant de rudes assauts, que je m'étonne de n'en être pas crevé ou devenu fou. Les coupes d'amertume m'ont été largement distribuées, et j'en suis considérablement vieilli, au dedans et au dehors. (62)

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(56) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.147  
(57) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.361 (1876)  
(58) Ibid., vol.VIII, p.143 (1878)  
(59) Ibid., p.320 (1879)  
(60) Ibid., supplément vol.III, p.204 (1875)  
(61) Ibid., p.229 (1875)  
(62) Ibid., supplément vol. IV, p.273

he was not ill in the way that Turgenev was. In fact his death came quite suddenly, and even at this late stage he had managed to maintain enough enthusiasm for Bouvard et Pécuchet to keep him active in planning the second volume until the very end.

But if we look at this material left behind by Flaubert, we find perhaps the blackest of all of his portraits of human nature. For what is to be found among the Rouen manuscripts is an enormous collection of material on the subject of "la bêtise humaine", (63) destined in part - we presume - for a sottisier, a collection of quotations revealing the most ludicrous of ideas and which would have formed the second volume of Bouvard et Pécuchet, thus constituting their 'copie'. And the rest would be destined for Le Dictionnaire des idées reçues or Catalogue des opinions chics, which was a project that Flaubert had had in mind

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(63) Perhaps we should mention here that 'la bêtise humaine' was a subject that did not leave Turgenev unmoved. In July 1849, for example, he wrote to Pauline Viardot of an encounter with some of the 'neighbours' of Courtavenel:

"J'ai déjeuné hier chez M. Fougoux...vers la fin du déjeuner tout le monde parlait à la fois avec beaucoup de chaleur et avec cette espèce de fièvre de répéter des choses parfaitement insignifiantes, qui s'empare d'une réunion de personnes. Chacun secoue son sac à lieux communs, ce qui produit beaucoup de poussière." (Pol. sob. pisem, vol.I, p.354)

And a few days later we read after Turgenev had had a further encounter with the same Fougoux: "Pourquoi se donne-t-on tant de peine d'être bête?" (Pisem I, p.361)

And the compassion we have seen Turgenev feeling for the plight of humanity was sometimes hardened into contempt for the ludicrous way man has organized his world. In the story Phantoms, for example, as the hero is wafted over Russia by the spirit/woman Ellis, he is overtaken by a feeling of "sadness and indifferent dreariness" at the spectacle of "these human flies, a thousand times paltrier than flies" in "their comic struggle". (Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.106) And in Smoke, in the delineation of the minor characters, there is evidence that Turgenev "se moque des sots". (The phrase is HUBER NOODT's in L'occidentalisme d'Ivan Tourgueneff.)

for a long time. In fact the first mention of compiling a dictionary was made as early as 1850 in a letter to Louis Bouilhet. (64) And one need only look at Carlut's index to Flaubert's correspondence to see just how preoccupied he was with the notion of 'bêtise'.

But what was Flaubert's real intention in compiling this work ? He had always believed that it would be possible to amuse the reader with ideas just as well as with facts, (65) thus producing a book based on what Geneviève Bollème has called "le comique d'idées". But the notion of 'le comique' needs to be qualified, for Flaubert's crusade against 'bêtise' was a serious one, as we can see from a letter to Raoul-Duval of 1879:

Vous me parlez de la bêtise générale, mon cher ami, ah! je la connais, je l'étudie. C'est là l'ennemi, et même il n'y a pas d'autre ennemi. Je m'acharne dessus dans la mesure de mes moyens. (66)

The kind of 'comique' that Flaubert had in mind for his Dictionnaire was presumably that which he had outlined as "ce qui me fait le plus envie comme écrivain" in a letter to Louise many years earlier, i.e. "le comique arrivé à l'extrême, le comique qui ne fait pas rire". (67)

So in this massive compilation, we would have, as Digeon has pointed out:

...au lieu de personnages bêtes, la Bêtise elle-même, au lieu d'individus représentant un certain type de sottise, la quintessence de leur sottise. (68)

And such a work could not be undertaken by a writer who did not have a profoundly pessimistic view of the mass of

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(64) Correspondance, vol.II, p.237

(65) See letter to Louise Colet of November 22nd. 1852 (Correspondance, vol.III, p.51-5.)

(66) Correspondance, supplément vol.IV, p.170

(67) Ibid., vol.II, p.407 (1852)

(68) DIGEON Claude, 'Flaubert et le Dictionnaire des idées reçues', Annales Universitatatis Saraviensis, No.4 (1953)

humanity surrounding him and of the organisation of contemporary society.

Thus an examination of the work of Flaubert and Turgenev reveals the continued expression of a profound and ever deepening pessimism. In both cases there is a recurrence of the same ideas and themes - the transience of life, the omnipresence of death which creates a sense of the 'uselessness' of all things, the subjection of men's lives to the forces of fatality and the inevitability of suffering in all forms of conscious existence. Once again the parallel between the two writers is striking.

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER VIII

(2) В.П.Боткину:

О себе тебе говорить не стану: обанкрутился человек — и полно; толковать нечего. Я постоянно чувствую себя сором, который вабнли вынести... ни одной моей строки никогда напечатано (да и написано) не будет до окончания века. ...— в отставку! Это не вспышка досады, поверь мне — это выражение или плод медленно созревших убеждений. (Письма III, 91-2)

(15) Рудин:

Все мысли Рудина казались обращенными в будущее,... казалось, его устами говорило что-то высшее, для него самого неожиданное... Рудин говорил о том, что придает вечное значение временной жизни человека. (Соч. VI, 269)

(17) Накануне:

Какая-то рука лежит на мне и давит меня. Точно я в тюрьме, и вот-вот сейчас на меня повалятся стены. (Соч. VIII, 79)

(18) Накануне:

Покоримся велениям судьбы, помянем прошлое добром... а в это мгновение, в этой комнате, умирало то прошлое, о котором он упомянул, прошлое людей собравшихся в нее. Оно умирало для возрождения к новой жизни, положим...но все-таки умирало. (Соч. VIII, 147)

(19) Накануне:

Смерть, как рыбак, который поймал рыбу в свою сеть и оставляет ее на время в воде: рыба еще плавает, но сеть на ней, и рыбак выхватит ее — когда захочет. (Соч. VIII, 166)

(20) Отцы и дети:

...и пользуйтесь, пока время. Вы посмотрите, что за безобразное зрелище: червяк полураздавленный, а еще торопится. (Соч. VIII, 395-6)

(23) Дым:

Дым, дым... и всё вдруг показалось ему дымом, всё, собственная жизнь, русская жизнь — всё людское,



особенно всё русское. Всё дым и пар... всё как будто беспрестанно меняется, всюду новые образы, явления бегут за явлениями, а в сущности всё то же да то же; всё торопится, спешит куда-то — и всё исчезает бесследно, ничего не достигая, другой ветер подул — и бросилось всё в противоположную сторону, и там опять та же безустанная, тревожная и — ненужная игра. (Соч. IX, 315)

(41) Гамлет и Дон-Кихот:

Но не будем слишком строги к Гамлету: он страдает — и его страдания и больнее и язвительнее страданий Дон-Кихота. Гамлет сам наносит себе раны, сам себя терзает; в его руках тоже меч: обоюдоострый меч анализа. (Соч. VIII, 176)

(55) Песочные часы:

Сыплется она ровно и гладко, как песок в тех часах, которые держит в костлявой руке фигура Смерти. (Соч. XIII, 21)

(56) Старуха:

Ах! ...эта старуха — моя судьба. На судьба, от которой не уйти человеку!

....  
И куда я ни мечусь, как ваяц на угонках... всё то же, то же! (Соч. XIII, 147)

# CHAPTER IX - Work as salvation

"C'est à force de travail que j'arrive  
à faire taire ma mélancolie native."  
FLAUBERT \*

In the face of unhappiness, fate and the apparent futility of life, Flaubert and Turgenev both realized that if man's existence is to have any value or significance at all, he must find one positive sphere of activity. And for both writers, this one possible source of salvation turned out to be work or effort - in the broadest sense. (1) This may perhaps seem cold comfort, especially in view of the gloomy outlook we have seen in the last chapter. And certainly neither had illusions about work being the end of all ills, a magic charm or elixir. Indeed the rider Flaubert adds to the sentence we have taken as our epigraph:

Mais le vieux fond réparait souvent, le vieux fond que personne ne connaît, la plaie profonde toujours cachée. (2)

shows that he realized that work could not remove such fundamental evils as the spectre of death or the forces of fate, or indeed even make him happy. But at least work could represent one positive achievement in an otherwise negative world, and thus prevent life from becoming totally meaningless and him from sinking into a pit of black introspection.

We shall consider two different aspects of this question of work as it affected Flaubert and Turgenev.

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(\*) Correspondance, vol.V, p.158 (to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, 1864)

(1) Baldensperger's definition is perhaps the most applicable here: "...l'action opposée à l'égoïsme de la passion et à celui de la pensée solitaire, opposée à la speculation.. l'action enfin, soit qu'elle s'exerce dans les devoirs positifs de la vie pratique soit dans la culture esthétique et scientifique de l'esprit." (Goethe en France, p.236)

(2) Correspondance, vol.V, p.158

Firstly we shall look at the general notion of the value of human effort as expressed and reflected in the correspondence and works of the two writers. And secondly, we shall look more specifically at Flaubert's and Turgenev's ideas on the intrinsic value of the effort of artistic creation and craftsmanship.

From a careful study of Flaubert's correspondence, we can see clearly that the lessons of work had been assimilated into his own experience of life at a fairly early stage; and echoes of these same ideas are to be found in his literary works, especially those of later years. Turgenev was also supremely conscious of the value of work: reference is made to this in nearly all his major novels, and in some it plays a determining rôle. But although we see Turgenev's awareness of the necessity for work at an early stage, the putting into practice of this idea is perhaps less well demonstrated in Turgenev's personal life than it is in Flaubert's. For Turgenev could not accept so readily the rôle of a hard-working ascetic, as he could not bring himself to renounce completely his quest for happiness through love until a fairly late stage in life.

Again it is probable that the two writers' first contact with the idea of the value of work came from a literary source - and of course the most striking example of this emphasis in their common reading is to be found in Goethe's Faust. For here we see the hero's constant aspirations towards "reine Tätigkeit" and his confident assertion to the devil:

Werd' ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen,  
So sei es gleich um mich getan! (3)

Flaubert incorporates a very similar situation to that in Faust into his own work at a fairly early stage. The most striking example is Smarh (1839), in which we find a tenacious refusal to succumb to despair in the hero's repeated efforts to give meaning and direction to his life through activity. Despite all the misery of life that he sees during his travels through space in the company of Satan, Smarh can still nurture an ambition to become a creative artist, or to lead in battle. But at this stage, this sort of idea must be seen as emulation, rather than something that Flaubert had learnt from his own experience.

By the mid 1840's, however, we can see that Flaubert had already suffered sufficiently in a personal way to be no longer able to believe in happiness in the conventional sense. He was discovering that the real wisdom of life lay in resignation, not in sitting around moping as a consequence of this, but rather in what Demorest has described as "une résignation réfléchie et active". (4) The realization of this by Flaubert is perhaps most clearly evident for the first time in the 'confessional' letters he wrote to Alfred Le Poittevin during the summer of 1845. We read:

J'ai passé vraiment une amère jeunesse, et par laquelle je ne voudrais pas revenir; mais ma vie maintenant me semble arrangée d'une façon régulière. Elle a des horizons moins larges...Voilà devant moi mes livres sur ma table...(5)

And only a little later, we see that Flaubert, at the age

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(3) GOETHE J.W. von, Faust I, ll.1692-3

(4) In L'expression figurée et symbolique dans l'oeuvre de Gustave Flaubert.

(5) Correspondance, vol.I, p.185

of twenty three, and having offered nothing for publication, was already conscious that his personal salvation from the nothingness of life would lie in 'working' as a writer. He wrote in encouragement to Alfred, who must have been passing through a period of depression at this stage:

Travaille, travaille, écris, écris tant que tu pourras...La lassitude de l'existence ne nous pèse pas aux épaules quand nous composons...  
..je continue mon oeuvre lente comme le bon ouvrier qui, les bras retroussés et les cheveux en sueur, tape sur son enclume sans s'inquiéter s'il pleut ou s'il vente...Je n'étais pas comme cela autrefois. Ce changement s'est fait naturellement. (6)

In fact Flaubert rather liked to link the functions of writer and workman at this stage, for on another occasion he wrote again to Alfred:

Pense, travaille, écris, relève ta chemise jusqu'à l'aisselle et taille ton marbre, comme le bon ouvrier qui ne détourne pas la tête et qui sue, en riant, sur sa tâche. (7)

And indeed for some critics - notably Anatole France - this view of Flaubert as an "ouvrier de lettres" is of prime importance. (8)

And once Flaubert had learnt the lesson of work for himself, he was keen to pass on advice on this subject to others. He used to urge his correspondents (especially Louise Colet and Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie) to follow his example and work hard if they wanted to get over their 'chagrin' and 'désœuvrement'. (9)

As for Turgenev, in the early part of his career he

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(6) Correspondance, vol.I, p.191 (1845)

(7) Ibid., p.172

(8) In his essays La Vie Littéraire (2<sup>e</sup> série) France makes frequent references to this aspect of Flaubert's career, eg. his "travail obstiné" and "le sacrifice méthodique de sa vie entière". He describes him as "laborieux" and "travaillant quatorze heures par jour".

(9) In a similar way, Turgenev, in his letters to his daughter, while she was living with the Viardots in Paris, was constantly exhorting her to hard work. (See SEMENOFF, La vie douloureuse d'Ivan Tourguéneff, pp.36-8.)

used to turn to his work for solace whenever his relationship with Pauline Viardot was going through a difficult patch. For example, during the unhappy period of his exile he wrote to her:

Que me reste-t-il? Je crois vous l'avoir dit plus d'une fois: le travail et les souvenirs.(10)

Even so, before this, there is some feeling for the value of effort in Turgenev's early writings, although this is perhaps not yet precisely formulated. In the Diary of a superfluous man of 1850, for example, where the hero, after a futile and unhappy life is lying on his death-bed waiting for the end, there is nonetheless the feeling that the effort of writing it all down in diary form does have some salutary effect, and that this at least constitutes one positive achievement.

But the view of work expressed at the end of his short story Faust - written in 1855 after the harsh experience of exile - is already a relatively hardened one. On the last page of the work Turgenev points the moral in no uncertain terms:

In conclusion I say to you - one conviction I have gained from the experience of the last years...life is hard labour. Renunciation, continual renunciation - that is its secret meaning, its solution. Not the fulfilment of cherished dreams and aspirations, however lofty they may be - the fulfilment of duty, that is what must be the aim of man. Without putting himself in chains, he cannot reach the end of his career without a fall.. it is shameful to delude oneself when the stern face of truth has looked one in the eyes at last.  
(11)

If we move on now to the period 1859-63, which as we have seen, was an intensely bleak period for Turgenev on

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(10) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.68 (October 1852)

(11) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.50

both the emotional and intellectual levels, we find that it was also one of the most productive phases of his life. He tried to shut everything else out and bury himself in his work, and indeed during these years he produced Home of the gentry, On the Eve, First Love, Fathers and Children and conceived the basic plan for Smoke. We can see from the letters which he wrote from Courtavenel during the summer of 1859 just how absorbed he was in his work. In July, for example, he wrote to the Countess Lambert:

I am now busy with a long story\*, in which I intend to put all that is left within me...The Lord only knows if it will be a success...I am constantly preoccupied with my characters - I see them even in my dreams. (12)

And later in the same vein:

I have a little study in the outbuildings, and I am working hard on my new novel. This work distracts my thoughts from everything else...(13)

During these years, it is possible to see much more of a note of resignation creeping into Turgenev's attitude to life. For in December 1860 (again writing to the Countess) he says that he is trying to build up around himself a hard outer crust of icy numbness under which his grief can slowly melt away. And in the same paragraph, he refers to his life continuing calmly, for he is working very hard on a book.(14)

If Turgenev was only just coming to terms with the idea of salvation through work in his own life, certainly his novels, from Home of the gentry onwards, reveal that deep down he knew that this was 'the right way'. (15)

(12) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.III, p.322 (\* Turgenev seems to have been hesitant to call his works novels.)

(13) Ibid., p.330

(14) Ibid, vol.IV, p.166(The book referred to is Fathers and Children)

(15) Turgenev is of course not the only Russian writer of the 19th. century in whose works we find the theme of the importance of work: two other notable examples of this are Chernyshevsky (What is to be done?) and Chekhov (Three Sisters and The Cherry Orchard).

Home of the gentry was the first product of this really intense period of activity, and it is the work in which Turgenev expresses most forcefully and at greatest length his views on the value and salutary effect of plain hard work. Indeed the novel reflects something of its author's own situation at this time: for the central character, Lavretsky, has also been let down in love, and he turns to work to give some meaning to his empty existence. As he arrives home in Russia from Paris where he has abandoned his broken marriage he reflects:

My best years have been wasted on a woman's love! Well then, let the dullness here sober me and calm me down; let it educate me into being able to work like others. (16)

He is encouraged in his efforts by the example of Mikhalevich, who has himself been "purified in the furnace of misfortune", and he warns Lavretsky to be active, for "Death does not tarry, and life ought not to tarry either". But Lavretsky has to pay for his wasted time and energy with a double dose of misfortune. But finally he comes to terms with the impossibility of happiness, and realizes that there is only one way out. He determines:

I have seen close at hand, I have almost grasped the possibility of a life-long happiness - and then it suddenly disappeared. It is the same as in a lottery...If it is not to be, it is not to be, and all is over. I will set about my work with grim determination, and I will force myself to be silent, and I shall succeed, for this will not be the first time that I have taken myself in hand...(17)

And as Turgenev tells us at the end of the book, this life of hard work did not bring happiness to Lavretsky, for we know that this is an illusion, but it did bring him a quiet

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(16) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.190

(17) Ibid.,p.269



and settled old age. Indeed Turgenev affirms that this kind of calm existence is only really deserved by those who have learnt the lessons of work:

Contentment in old age is deserved only by the man who has not lost his faith in what is good, in constancy of will, his desire for active employment. And Lavretsky did deserve to be contented: he had really become a good landlord, he had really learnt how to till the soil, and he had laboured not for himself alone...(18)

Turgenev's other novels of this period - On the Eve and Fathers and Children - although they dwell less explicitly on this theme, still contain reflections of the same idea. Indeed in On the Eve, we see that it is precisely Insarov's ability for real, hard work that makes him such a positive character in the eyes of his friends. One of them reflects:

The reason that D. [Dmitry Insarov] is always so calm is because he gives himself up entirely to his work and his ideals. What has he got to worry about? Whoever gives himself up utterly to something...doesn't need to worry...Then it is not what he wants, but what the cause demands. (19)

And then in Fathers and Children, we find Bazarov reflecting on the increasing importance of work in Russian society:

The time has come now - and thank God for it! - when each one of us must secure his sustenance by the work of his own hands; it is no use relying on others - one must labour oneself. (20)

If we look now for further examples of Flaubert's growing awareness of the significance of work in the struggle of life, La Tentation de Saint Antoine of 1849 constitutes perhaps the first literary reflection of a more personal view of this subject. On the third page of this work, we see that the Saint too has already learnt the

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(18) Pol. sob. soch., vol.VII, p.293

(19) Ibid., vol.VIII, p.83

(20) Ibid., p.318

value of activity in making his existence tolerable. In his long initial monologue, Saint Antoine tells of the period of terrible inactivity that overtook him in his early days as a hermit:

...peu à peu cependant une langueur a surgi: c'était une impuissance désespérante à rap-  
peler ma pensée, qui m'échappait malgré les  
chaînes dont je l'attachais; comme un éléphant  
qui s'emporte, elle courait sous moi avec des  
hennissements sauvages; parfois je me rejetais  
en arrière, tant elle m'épouvantait...je me re-  
levais brisé, perdu...(21)

But then came a revelation, and Saint Antoine learnt that his life could be improved. Contrasting with the exuberance of the imagery quoted above comes the simple ending of the passage, reflecting the saint's calm moment of realization:

Un jour j'entendis une voix qui me disait: Trav-  
aille! et depuis lors je m'acharne à ces occu-  
pations niaises qui me servent à vivre...(22)

And this idea of "occupations...qui servent à vivre" is one that is to be developed further in Flaubert's own experience, and in his work, especially in Bouvard et Pécuchet, as we shall see.

It was during the 1850's that Flaubert developed his notion of what Demorest has described as the "sacerdoce de l'écrivain". This idea recurs as a leitmotif in the correspondence of his mature years. In 1852, for example, he wrote to Louise Colet:

J'aime mon travail d'un amour frénétique et per-  
verti, comme un ascète le cilice qui lui gratte  
le ventre. (23)

and twenty years later to George Sand:

Il y a en moi un fond d'ecclésiastique qu'on ne  
connaît pas. (24)

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(21) La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p.207

(22) Ibid.

(23) Correspondance, vol.II, p.394

(24) Ibid., vol.VI, p.442 (Many other references to this same idea are listed in CARLUT, op. cit., p.675 et seq.)

And Turgenev also was not entirely without feeling for this way of life, for in 1867 he wrote to Pauline Viardot of his "vie exemplaire, une vie d'ascète, de saint Jean-Baptiste". (25)

An interesting sideline on this interest in 'fruitful labour' is to look at the two writers' view of industrial development in this context. Turgenev seems to have had<sup>m</sup> particularly in his earlier years, an optimistic view of the potential of industrial progress. He wrote to Pauline of the value of this kind of work to civilisation:

...il n'y a plus de grand mouvement général, excepté peut-être celui de l'industrie, qui, considérée sous le point de vue de la soumission progressive des éléments de la nature au génie de l'homme, deviendra peut-être la libératrice, la régénératrice du genre humain. Aussi, à mon avis, les plus grands poètes contemporains sont les Américains qui vont percer l'isthme de Panama et parlent d'établir un télégraphe...à travers l'océan...vive la nouvelle littérature! (26)

On the whole, Flaubert's view of industrial society was rather a bleak one, and he did not think that real progress could be achieved in this way. But nevertheless, there is evidence that he did have some regard for human achievement in this domain, for at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, he seems to have regretted the material destruction as much as the moral defeat of France. In July 1870 he wrote to George Sand on this subject:

Je pleure les ponts coupés, les tunnels défoncés, tout ce travail humain perdu, enfin une négation si radicale! (27)

Turning now to Flaubert's and Turgenev's literary work of the second half of the 1860's, it is interesting, in the context of the theme of work, to draw a contrast

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(25) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VI, p.202-3

(26) Ibid., vol.I, p.282 (1847)

(27) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.135

between Litvinov, the hero of Turgenev's Smoke, and Frédéric Moreau of L'Education sentimentale. As we saw in the last chapter, this latter work demonstrates forcefully the futility of Moreau's career, the key to his 'superfluous' condition being the dissociation of the will to act and the ability to act. Frédéric never becomes seriously involved in any sustained or meaningful activity - any new venture (none of them really deserves the name work) is soon cast aside in a fit of boredom with the idea. He wastes his time and effort in fruitless and futile pursuits, and this is why there can be no salvation, and why, on the contrary, at the end of the book "Frédéric demeure dans la morne grisaille d'un horizon terrestre qu'aucune lumière n'éclaire désormais". (28) In Smoke, Litvinov also wastes a good part of his life: with the dilettante intellectuals of Baden and in his infatuation with Irina, the femme fatale. Indeed during their affair, even Irina seems to see more clearly into his problem than Litvinov himself, for she warns him:

But I ask myself, can man live by love alone?  
Won't he tire of it in the end, won't he long  
for activity and blame that which drew him  
away from it? (29)

But he does not learn as easily as this; he loses the love of his fiancée Tatyana and eventually, of course, there comes a break with Irina. And like Lavretsky, he arrives home on his Russian estate broken and dejected. But as in Home of the gentry, plain hard work is seen to have a salutary effect. Three years labour on the land go a good way towards curing Litvinov's depression. But again Turgenev

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(28) This description is Castex's. (CASTEX P.-G., L'Education sentimentale, Paris 1962, p.30)

(29) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.302

warns us that helpful as work might be, it is never a complete cure. He writes of his hero towards the end of the book:

And he grew stronger in spirit too; he was more like his former self. True, a deeply hidden feeling of sadness never left him...(30)

Looking now at Turgenev's last novel, Virgin Soil, the question of work or activity appears on various levels. If recognition of the importance of work is to be any kind of yardstick, then it is Solomin who must be seen as the hero as far as this theme is concerned. For as we have seen, Nejdánov suffers from the same kind of problems as Frédéric Moreau. Indeed Herschowitz has described Solomin as "the first proletarian hero in Russian literature", and it is true that for him work is a tool of progress. In his view, any advance or improvement in society must be carefully planned and worked for in a methodical way.

On another level, work also reappears as a cure for unsuccessful love in Virgin Soil. This is in the case of Markelov, for when he had lost all hope of Mariana's love:

It seemed that he no longer cared for anything, and was only eager to get to work, to enter the field of action as soon as possible...(31)

And on yet another level, the rather grotesque episodes of the antiquated world of Fomishka and Fimishka serve as a warning of what is likely to happen to human beings if they allow themselves to stagnate in a world of inactivity.

In the year that Turgenev's Virgin Soil appeared - 1876 - Flaubert composed his short story La Légende de Saint Julien. Here we find a combination of Flaubert's interest

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(30) Pol. sob. soch., vol.IX, p.319

(31) Ibid., vol.XII, p.77-8

in the figure of the anchorite, and the idea of salvation through work. We see this latter idea in the way that Julien expiates the murder of his mother and father: after leaving his château and leading the useless life of a beggar for some time, he comes upon an old boat at a dangerous river crossing. He decides to become a ferryman, and in this way "employer son existence au service des autres". (32) And by working in this manner, he does indeed find redemption, for at the end of the story, we see him "face à face avec Notre-Seigneur Jésus, qui l'emportait dans le ciel".(33)

Turning now to his last work, Bouvard et Pécuchet, as far as the value of work/effort is concerned, we find that another literary influence is especially relevant here: Voltaire's Candide with the moral of its ending: "Cela est bien dit...mais il faut cultiver notre jardin".

Voltaire's rejection of speculation in favour of activity was an idea that Flaubert considered highly, as we see from his correspondence. For example, in a letter to Edmond de Goncourt he states categorically:

La fin de Candide: "Cultivons notre jardin" est la plus grande leçon de morale qui existe. (34)

And similarly in a letter to Ernest Feydeau of 1859:

La vie est courte et l'Art long! Et puis, à quoi bon? N'importe, "il faut cultiver notre jardin". (35)

So in what way does Bouvard et Pécuchet reflect this 'morale' that interested Flaubert so much? We have seen, taking an over-all view, that the novel must be considered a pessimistic work, and especially, bearing in mind the

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(32) Trois Contes, p.118

(33) Ibid., p.125

(34) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.203 (1874)

(35) Ibid., vol.IV, p.349

rôle which Flaubert himself wanted this book to fulfil. During its composition he wrote: "j'espère cracher là-dedans le fiel qui m'étouffe". (36) But Flaubert's scepticism is not sterile: Bouvard et Pécuchet has its positive side, and this is precisely because of the way in which the question of 'effort' is treated. Indeed, Flaubert hoped that the writing of this book would have a positive effect on him personally: i.e. that the activity of putting all this down on paper would help to 'cleanse' him of many of his venomous feelings. He wrote of Bouvard et Pécuchet: "j'espère par ce moyen me purger". (37) In fact it was precisely the effort of working on this book that kept him going during the last years of his life. The very last letters are full of accounts of the work's progress, and hopeful estimations as to when it might be finished.

One way of bringing out the positive aspects of Bouvard et Pécuchet is to compare this work with another pessimistic novel of the same period. If we compare Flaubert's two protagonists with the hero of Huysmans' A Rebours, we find that they are much less unhappy or wretched than the neurotic decadent Des Esseintes. For in the kind of situation in which Huysmans' hero finds himself, the ultimate decision must be, as Barbey d'Aurevilly said, to "choisir entre le pied de la croix ou la bouche d'un pistolet". (38) But to console themselves for their disappointments, Bouvard and Pécuchet choose work (in the same way that Lavretsky and Litvinov did ).(39) And in this, their view coincides

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(36) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.459 (George Sand, 1872)

(37) Ibid.

(38) BARBEY D'AUREVILLY, article in Le Constitutionnel of July 28th. 1885

(39) Basically the same contrast as we have drawn between Des Esseintes and Bouvard and Pécuchet could be made between Nejdánov (who does in fact choose the muzzle of a pistol) and Solomin, who prefers humdrum but satisfying work.

with that of their author who wrote to Mme. Brainne about Guy de Maupassant in 1878:

S'il travaillait plus, il s'ennuierait moins. La vie est quelque chose de si abominable qu'il faut la déguiser pour l'avaler. (40)

The book leads us to assume that there is nothing more unbearable than being idle. However disappointed or disgusted the 'deux bonshommes' might be with the occupation of the moment - be it agriculture or metaphysics - they are obliged to seek another. This need to find an activity is linked to the same idea of "occupations qui servent à vivre" which we found in La Tentation de Saint Antoine, for Flaubert gives as the reason for Bouvard and Pécuchet's constant indulgence in work:

...leur esprit ayant besoin d'un travail, leur existence d'un but. (41)

The critic Laumet has pointed out the parallel with Candide here:

Comme Saint Antoine, ils [Bouvard et Pécuchet] ne peuvent retrouver la paix qu'en "cultivant leur jardin". A la fin Saint Antoine se remet en prières, Bouvard et Pécuchet se préparent à copier. (42)

For like Voltaire's hero, these characters also abandon emotional, political, philosophical and theological wrangling in favour of good honest work. So if at the end of the book Bouvard and Pécuchet prepare to return to their former occupation of copy clerks - only this time 'self-employed', or rather purely for their own satisfaction - it is, as Dumesnil has said, "plus par dépit que par lassitude". (43)

Thus despite the obvious elements of despair and

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(40) Correspondance, supplément vol.IV, p.105

(42) LAUMET Lucien, La sensibilité de Flaubert, Alençon 1951, p.214

(41) Bouvard et Pécuchet

(43) DUMESNIL René, En Marge de Flaubert, p.45



futility in the book, this positive side of Bouvard et Pécuchet does enable us at least to agree with Guillemin that this work was indeed "l'ultime effort de Flaubert pour surmonter le malheur du monde". (44)

In the 1870's, Turgenev's view of the kind of work necessary to overcome the 'malheur du monde' also seems to have evolved so as to be closer to Voltaire's Candide than to the idealism of Goethe's Faust. For in 1874 we find him writing to Anna Filosofova stressing the value of mundane work:

Times have changed; Bazarovs are no longer needed. For the social involvement that lies ahead special talents are not necessary, nor even is any particular kind of intellect - nothing outstanding, special or too individualistic; what is necessary is hard work and endurance...one must not shun the small, dismal or base task. (45)

So, as we have seen, by the 1870's, the idea of the importance of work had become a firmly entrenched element in the values of both writers. Indeed it had become indispensable, for without "l'exigence de chaque jour" (46) life would be unbearable. We need only look at Flaubert's attitude to work during the period of the Franco-Prussian War for confirmation of this. In July 1868 Turgenev had written to him:

Portez-vous bien et travaillez avec appétit et tranquillité - c'est la meilleure façon. (47)

And his own letters of the following four years show that he most certainly followed this advice; for here Flaubert reveals a determined wish to hide his head in his work, so as not to have to think about the awful situation in the world around him. At the end of April 1871, for example, he

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(44) GUILLEMIN Henri, Flaubert devant la vie et devant Dieu, Paris, n.d., p.159

(45) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.295

(46) This was a motto of Goethe's for which Flaubert revealed a particular fondness. (eg. Corresp., vol.III, pp.102 & 184)

(47) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.VII, p.196

wrote to his friend Feydeau:

Me voilà revenu à Croisset, depuis quinze jours,  
et j'y retravaille pour ne plus songer aux charog-  
neries contemporaines. (48)

And a little later he wrote in the same vein to Mme.

Schlésinger:

Ah! c'est que j'ai souffert depuis dix mois, hor-  
riblement - souffert à devenir fou et à me tuer!  
Je me suis remis au travail cependant; je tâche  
de me griser avec de l'encre, comme d'autres se  
grisent avec de l'eau-de-vie, afin d'oublier les  
malheurs publics et mes tristesses particulières.  
(49)

And over a year later, Flaubert wrote to Turgenev of his  
exasperation and depression at the state of things around  
him, but he stresses the fact that being engaged in work  
for a book is having a salutary effect, holding him back  
from the brink of despair:

Je ne me laisse donc pas abattre, comme vous  
voyez. Si je ne travaillais pas, je n'aurais plus  
qu'à piquer une tête dans la rivière avec une  
pierre au cou. (50)

So the concept of work as a means of shutting out  
some of the evil of life is an idea which adds further  
cement to the bond uniting the thought of Flaubert and  
Turgenev. The latter was certainly aware that his friend  
shared his faith in this respect. In 1873 he wrote, at first  
seeming to offer advice, but then realizing that this was  
a lesson that Flaubert had already learnt:

Travaillez - non, on n'a pas besoin de vous le  
dire - vous êtes laborieux comme une fourmi. (51)

But this view of work as simply as an attempt to ex-  
clude evil or melancholy - is basically a negative view of  
its potential. For the positive side of Flaubert's and Tur-

(48) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.230

(49) Ibid., p.238 (Flaubert seems to have liked this idea of  
becoming intoxicated on ink: he had used the same image many  
years earlier in a letter to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie. (See  
Correspondance, vol.IV, p.356 (1859) )

(50) Ibid.; supplément vol.III, p.62 (1872)

(51) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.X, p.109

genev's views on work, we must turn to the idea of the craft of the artist as meaningful effort.

Let us begin by looking briefly at the actual working methods of the two writers. Much has been written about Flaubert's method of working, (52) and it is well-known that his devotion to the task of composition was total and selfless. The research he undertook for works such as Salammbô and Bouvard et Pécuchet was enormous in volume and extremely time consuming. And he spared nothing in the way of time and effort in his grapplings with "les affres du style" - the actual putting together of his sentences. No sacrifice was too great in order to achieve just the right effect.

Turgenev was also a painstaking and methodical worker; Mazon contrasts his quiet organisation of his work "en homme...d'ordre, aux habitudes régulières" (53) with the hasty, feverish composition of Balzac or Dostoevsky. Turgenev was also obviously resigned to the idea of reworking something many times until satisfied with it; in 1855 he wrote to his friend Aksakov:

If Pushkin and Gogol had to start their work afresh ten times, how many times will we mediocre souls have to re-do ours? (54)

And later he wrote: "Putting the finish on our works, correcting them, was to us a pleasure". (55) Turgenev may have composed his works in a shorter space of time than Flaubert, but nevertheless, what we know of his method reveals that

(52) Especially by René DUMESNIL in Flaubert, son hérité, son milieu, sa méthode, Paris 1906, and Emile BESCH in 'L'Imagination et l'intuition chez Gustave Flaubert - l'esthétique du roman' in Revue Philosophique, 1906.

(53) MAZON André, Manuscrits parisiens, p.11

(54) Pol. sob. pisem, vol.II, p.305

(55) Quoted from HAUMANT, Ivan Tourguénev, p.126

he was also "un ouvrier qui connaît et aime et respecte son métier". (56)

It is also possible to compare, in a general sense, the basic tools which the two writers used in the composition of their novels. We can see from Flaubert's rough drafts and plans (57) that he built up his works from two basic items: firstly a list of characters with notes on both physical and psychological traits, and secondly, the rough plan which he called his 'scénario' and this was to serve as an 'aide-mémoire' or 'aide-imagination'. (58)

As far as Turgenev is concerned, the Paris manuscripts show that his point of departure in the composition of a novel was very similar. He too began with a list of characters which was followed by more detailed portraits of the protagonists. Then came the development of plot (*φασύνα*) in a very rough draft which Mazon calls the 'canevas'. But on the whole, this planning was less detailed and more schematic than Flaubert's.

Let us now try to determine the value which the two writers attached to this methodical work of literary composition. Two months after the completion of La Légende de Saint Julien, Flaubert wrote an interesting letter to George Sand on the intrinsic value of the artistry or craftsmanship of a literary work:

Eh bien! je me demande si un livre, indépendamment de ce qu'il dit, ne peut pas produire le même effet. Dans la précision des assemblages, la rareté des éléments, le poli de la surface, l'harmonie de l'ensemble, n'y a-t-il pas une vertu intrinsèque? (59)

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(56) MAZON, op. cit., p.34

(57) This technique is especially clear in the plans for Mme. Bovary included in the Conard edition.

(58) These descriptions are BESCH's (art. cit.).

(59) Correspondance, vol.VII, p.294 (1876)

In this echo of the old theme of the writer as workman, we see that the subject of a book, for Flaubert, was not necessarily the most important thing: form and style can have a value of their own. Thus the artist's work can itself be considered "comme une étude positive", (60) in its own right. Even, then, if a book says nothing, the craftsmanship of its composition could stand alone, on its own merit, as a worthwhile achievement.

It is interesting to compare this with the sentiments expressed by Turgenev in one of his prose poems. In The Cup, written in January 1878, we see that in his view also, form and style can be as important to the writer as ideas:

My feelings are all gloom and desolation. And yet I go out of my way to give polish and beauty to them; I search for images and comparisons; I like my phrases to be well constructed and take a special pleasure in the ring and harmony of words. As zealously as any sculptor or goldsmith I fashion, carve and adorn to the best of my ability the very cup which holds the poison which I give myself. (61)

Here again, then, it is the careful work of the artist - the arrangement, the polishing which goes into his piece, which is emphasized - and this seems to have some positive value, even if the ideas expressed are nothing but gloomy desolation.

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So despite the fundamental pessimism of Flaubert's and Turgenev's world view, there is one glimmer of a hope of salvation from the miseries of life. This does not lie

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(60) This is the phrase which Henri GRAPPIN uses to describe Flaubert's view of the work of the artist in his article 'La Science dans l'esthétique de Flaubert', in the Revue du Mois (1908) .

(61) Pol. sob. soch., vol.XIII, p.205

in divine contemplation at the foot of a cross (an idea which both rejected at an early age), but rather in the achievement of a well ordered and hard-working life. And as we have seen, the sense of achievement will be all the greater if the work embarked on is artistic creation. For in a world where happiness cannot exist, this can bring at least the closest approximation that man can hope to aspire to. Flaubert can perhaps be said to be speaking for both of them when he wrote:

Non, je ne crois pas le bonheur possible, mais bien la tranquillité. (62)

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(62) Correspondance, vol.VI, p.441 (G.Sand, 1872)

RUSSIAN QUOTATIONS FOR CHAPTER IX

(11) Фауст:

Кончая, скажу тебе:

Одно убеждение внес я из опыта последних годов:  
жизнь не шутка и не забава, жизнь даже не наслаждение...  
жизнь тяжелый труд. Отречение, отречение постоянное  
— вот ее тайный смысл, ее разгадка: не исполнение  
любимых мыслей и мечтаний, как бы они возвышенны  
ни были, — исполнение долга, вот о чем следует  
заботиться человеку; не наложив на себя цепей,  
железных цепей долга, не может он дойти, не падая,  
до конца своего поприща... но стыдно мешаться обманом,  
когда суровое лицо истины глянуло наконец тебе  
в глаза. (Соч. VII, 50)

(12) Е.Е.Ламберт:

Я теперь занят большою повестью, в которую намерен  
положить всё, что у меня осталось в душе... Бог знает,  
удастся ли? Я беспрестанно вожусь с моими лицами —  
даже во сне их вижу. (Письма III, 322)

(13) Е.Е.Ламберт:

У меня отдельная комнатка в отдельном флигеле, и я  
много работаю над новым моим романом. Эта работа  
отвлекает мои мысли ото всего другого... (Письма III, 330)

(16) Дворянское гнездо:

На женскую любовь ушли мои лучшие года. ...пусть же  
вытрезвит меня здесь скука, пусть успокоит меня,  
подготовит к тому, чтобы и я умел не спеша делать  
дело. (Соч. VII, 190)

(17) Дворянское гнездо:

...увидал вблизи, в руках почти держал возможность  
счастья на всю жизнь — оно вдруг исчезло; да ведь и  
в лотерее... Не бывать, так не бывать — и кончено.  
Возьмусь за дело, стиснув зубы, да и велю себе молчать,  
благо, мне не в первый раз брать себя в руки. (Соч. VII,  
269)

(18) Дворянское гнездо:

...тот уже может быть доволен, кто не утратил веры  
в добро, постоянства воли, охоты к деятельности.  
Лаврецкий имел право быть довольным: он сделался

действительно хорошим хозяином, действительно  
внучился пахать землю и трудился не для одного себя...  
(Соч. VII, 293)

(19) Накануне:

Мне кажется, что у Д. (Инсаров) оттого так ясно на  
душе, что он весь отдался своему делу, своей мечте.  
Из чего ему волноваться? Кто отдался весь...весь...  
весь.. тому горя мало...Не я хочу: то хочет.  
(Соч. VIII, 83)

(20) Отцы и дети:

Теперь настало такое время, - да и слава богу! -  
что каждый должен собственными руками пропитание себе  
доставать, на других нечего надеяться: надо трудиться  
самому. (Соч. VIII, 318)

(29) Дым:

... а я спрашиваю себя, может ли мужчина жить одною  
любовью? Не прискучит ли она ему наконец, не захочет  
ли он деятельности и не будет ли он пенять на то, что  
его от нее отвлекло? (Соч. IX, 302)

(30) Дым:

И дух в нем окреп: он снова стал походить на  
прежнего Литвинова. Правда, грустное, глубоко  
затаенное чувство не покидало его никогда...(Соч. IX, 319)

(31) Новь:

Казалось, что, потеряв всякую надежду на взаимность  
со стороны Марианны, он уже ничего не жалел, а только  
думал о том, как бы приняться поскорей «за дело».  
(Соч. XII, 77-8)

(45) А.П.Филосововой:

Времена переменились; теперь Базаровы не нужны. Для  
предстоящей общественной деятельности не нужно ни  
особенных талантов, ни даже особенного ума - ничего  
крупного, выдающегося, слишком индивидуального, нужно



трудолюбие, терпение,...нужно...не гнушаться мелкой и темной и даже низменной работы. (Письма X, 295)

(54) С.Т.Аксакову:

Коли Пушкины и Гоголи трудились и переделывали десять раз свои вещи, так уж нам, маленьким людям, сам бог велел. (Письма II, 305)

(61) Кубок:

...горестны и безотрадны мои чувства. И между тем я стараюсь придать им блеск и красоту, я ищу образов и сравнений; я округляю мою речь, тешусь звоном и созвучием слов.

Я, как ваятель, как золотых дел мастер, старательно леплю и вырезаю и всячески украшаю тот кубок, в котором я сам же подношу себе отраву. (Соч. XIII, 205)

CHAPTER X - Conclusion

"L'ineptie consiste à vouloir conclure."  
FLAUBERT \*

"...entre deux hommes, il ne peut y  
avoir amitié étroite et solidarité  
qu'alors que leurs intelligences ont  
pris le contact." DE VOGUE \*\*

That the friendship of Flaubert and Turgenev was close and meaningful is abundantly clear from the letters they exchanged over a period of nearly twenty years. Their 'solidarity' as writers stems from the common ground of their literary aesthetic: a mutual desire to base their work on the same principles of impartiality and objectivity.

The friendship of the two writers was founded, then, on the deep understanding between two men of the same generation who have undergone essentially comparable aesthetic experiences. Both Flaubert and Turgenev began their literary careers under a strong Romantic influence, later moving in the direction of realism, yet neither was to renounce his love of form and style and of 'the Beautiful'. So close were their views on literary and artistic matters, that as Digeon has said

Flaubert avait le sentiment, en écoutant parler  
"le Moscove", d'entendre enfin un homme de la  
même race que lui. (1)

That the two men were easily able to make contact on an intellectual level when they met in the 1860's is not surprising in view of the common experiences of their first forty years of life. As they grew up, they had read

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(\*) Correspondance, vol.II, p.239 (Louis Bouilhet 1850)

(\*\*) Le roman russe, p.vii

(1) DIGEON Claude, Le dernier visage de Flaubert, Paris 1946, p.60

avidly the same authors, not only Byron and the Romantics, but they had also made contact with the profound and universal genius of Shakespeare and Goethe. And although they were both fascinated by the colour and exoticism of Romanticism, it was the darker side, the suicides, the forces of destiny and the gloomy atmosphere that held the real attraction.

For the general pattern that emerges from an examination of the experiences of Flaubert and Turgenev is one of a gradual process of disillusionment, culminating in the formation of a pessimistic philosophy. And this process has its roots in the very earliest period of their development as writers: that of literary imitation. But the transition from books to the experiences of real life seems to have done little to reverse the trend towards pessimism. Neither young writer could find - as some of their literary predecessors had done - a source of consolation and hope in the world of nature, which turned out to be, in their experience, at best cold, and at worst positively hostile. Both young men hoped that experience of love and intense involvement with their respective 'ideal' of womanhood might bring happiness. But at an early age, they were forced into the realization that this was indeed a vain hope. The literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev mirror this pessimistic view of love, and deny the possibility of it being a source of happiness.

Neither writer found a sense of purpose in commitment to a particular political party or ideology. Although

as young men they had been keenly interested in the events of 1848 in particular and the development of liberalism in general, only disappointment and disillusionment were to follow with the events of ensuing years. And although both Flaubert and Turgenev - as their correspondences show - kept abreast of the political affairs of their day, their pessimistic view of this aspect of human activity continued unrelieved. Their inability to place their faith in any one political doctrine can perhaps be best described as 'political atheism'.

And as with their attitudes to nature, love and politics, so too with that towards spiritual phenomena. The work of both writers reveals a certain interest in the mysterious or supernatural. But neither Flaubert nor Turgenev did more than simply flirt with these aspects of human experience, as they did not expect a solution to man's problems to come from extra-terrestrial sources. For both had rejected religion as a source of help at an early stage. It was rather the darker or more mysterious workings of the human mind itself that they sought to understand more fully.

The culmination of these experiences comes in the expression of an unrelenting pessimism in their major novels, where we see the hopes and aspirations of one hero after another dashed to pieces by the trials of life. Happiness has little place in the literary works of Flaubert and Turgenev, except as an elusive ideal, ever to be striven after, yet never to be possessed in full.

Yet the philosophy of life of Flaubert and Turgenev, as expressed in their works and letters, is not a completely negative one. There is one pale glimmer of hope: a hope not of achieving happiness, but of reaching a certain tranquillity. And this one way to salvation in the view of both writers lay along the path of hard work. An ordered and industrious existence seemed to be the only way of making some kind of sense of life. And the 'work' in question need not necessarily be manual labour, the writer's craft would do just as well.

Although Flaubert and Turgenev were first and foremost creative artists, and shunned the idea of writing 'romans à thèse', it is in this wealth of ideas, skilfully woven into the fabric of their novels, that the greatest parallels between the two writers lie. (2)

We may agree in principle with Sainte-Beuve's assertion in his novel Volupté:

Plus les choses écrites retracent avec fidélité un fait réel, un cas individuel de la vie, et plus elles ont chance par là-même de ressembler à mille autres faits presque pareils que recèlent les humaines existences. (3)

implying that a realist novel - by virtue of its very realism - will be less original, and therefore likely to resemble many other accounts of similar events. For indeed Flaubert and Turgenev can be seen to trace the events of real life in a manner largely parallel to that of many other contemporary novelists. But they manifestly transcend

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(2) cf. DE Vogüé: "Les idées ne passent que dissimulées dans les mailles souples de la fiction; mais là elles passent toutes; et la fiction qui les abrite prend l'importance d'un traité doctrinal." (Le Roman russe, p.xi)

(3) Quoted from André VIAL, 'De Volupté à L'Education sentimentale, vie et avatars de thèmes romanesques', R.H.L.F., January-March (1957) pp.45-65.

this category of general resemblances to be found between all realist writers. The very number of instances in which we can establish a coincidence of view and experience on the part of Flaubert and Turgenev must surely make them something of a special case in the field of comparative literature. The points of contact which contribute to the affinity of the minds of these two men were listed precisely and accurately by Guy de Maupassant. So let us leave this question of the close intellectual relationship between Flaubert and Turgenev with the conclusion of this mutual friend:

Des affinités de talent, de philosophie et d'esprit, des similitudes de goûts, de vie et de rêves, une conformité de tendances littéraires, d'idéalisme exalté, d'admiration et d'érudition, mettaient entre eux tant de points de contact incessant. (4)

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(4) MAUPASSANT Guy de, 'Souvenirs d'un après midi chez Gustave Flaubert', Le Gaulois, August 23rd. 1880.

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