



Still life and moving death in Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale*

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In typical, pseudo-Balzacian fashion, the last chapter of *L'Éducation sentimentale* ties up the loose ends concerning the many secondary characters still alive by the novel's conclusion. At best, these desultory details sketch a set of rather banal and unsentimental lives, as it were to preface those of the main protagonists, Frédéric and Deslauriers, whose shared memories, including their visit to la Turque, bring them together full circle to the full stop of the text. It is then not surprising that little critical attention has been paid to the final details of the many secondary lives recorded here, but might these be deceptive in their effacement before the centre stage is given once more to Frédéric and Deslauriers? Might the primary position of secondary characters in the chapter constitute some further comparative or contrastive backing track to the grand themes and narratives of the novel, the making of love and history?

Given the intensity and tension of the pseudo tragic parting of Mme Arnoux and Frédéric in the famous penultimate ending of the novel, the bathos and matter-of-factness of the final chapter bring the text and reader back to the humdrum. Two running threads, however, are immediately striking. The first is the singular lack of any really colourful male character. Those who have played any significant part in the events of 1848 are already spectacularly dead, just as their deaths are spectacles: Dussardier's 'heroic' death for the revolutionary cause and Dambreuse's funeral in all its pomp and circumstance provided two key examples contrasting the orders of political ideas and financial power which were the conflicting dynamics of the revolution and also the novel itself. The only missing link, one directly connecting the penultimate chapter and its ending to this finale, is Arnoux. His death, announced simply by the words 'Mort l'année dernière', is the afterthought to Frédéric's (last) account of Mme Arnoux in the novel (Flaubert, 162).

The momentousness of this revelation, its baldness as epitaph, both underscores and hides the second trail of unfinished narratives in this summation of lives, those of the main female protagonists. Louise Roque, Mme Dambreuse, Marie Arnoux, Rosanette and even Mlle Vatnaz are still very much alive. By being gathered together in the protagonists' final stichomythia, the overwhelming presence of these women demonstrates retrospectively their enormous and active influence throughout. Because the altogether male narrative viewpoint(s) concentrated on the extraordinary events of the revolution, or the substitutions or swapping of these women as trophies, what has in fact fuelled the plot remains largely unvoiced. Throughout and repeatedly, it was the pivotal actions, not the words of these women that instigated and shaped the history to come. Indeed, the final chapter merely repeats in microcosm this motor of the novel, since the micro-narratives provided here for each woman keep them under the aegis of male narration, but as continuous account of their pursuit of a path beyond circumscribed circumstance. Frédéric reports Madame Dambreuse's remarriage to an Englishman¹; Louise Roque, Deslauriers confesses, left him for a singer; and the revelation about Marie's widowhood which makes her therefore 'available', comes on the heels of Frédéric's knowledge that 'Elle doit être à Rome avec son fils, lieutenant de chasseurs' (162), which triggers the final twist for him via Deslauriers's account of his recent meeting with Rosanette, who is also a widow: 'cette bonne Maréchale, tenant à la main un petit garçon adopté. Elle est veuve d'un certain M. Oudry, et très grosse maintenant, énorme. [...]. Elle qui avait autrefois la taille si mince.' (162).² None of these women therefore has retreated into the past for their futures (as do Frédéric and Deslauriers), but make their futures by moving on from dead relationships—literally in the case of the widows Mesdames Dambreuse, Arnoux and Oudry—but perhaps doubly so in Rosanette's case. It is the final, and comparatively lengthy cameo of her life that seems worthy of further analysis since it seems to offer such a strategic vantage point whereby the recollections to come of the visit of Frédéric and Delauriers to la Turque can be re-evaluated.

Throughout *L'Éducation sentimentale* the interchangeability of Marie Arnoux and Rosanette in Frédéric's mind/life is a critical commonplace. The spirit-flesh or Madonna-Whore dichotomy they represent has served a range of sociological, psychoanalytical, and feminist approaches and responses to the text.³ Whether critics are misogynists or feminists, emphasis remains on the side of Mme Arnoux (and largely through the seduction of Frédéric's viewpoint). Rosanette, on the other hand, is the eternal prostitute, indeed omni-available substitute for the unavailable Marie, for it is her very body which circulates (like

Mme Arnoux's famous *coffret*) from male protagonist to male protagonist. The final summation of their lives by the two male protagonists, however, puts paid to the essential differences between the two women. Whether married or not, all women are the goods and chattels of men, subject to their whims, adulteries and vices. It is simply the case that it is harder for prostitutes than to attain social standing and freedom from public censure. Yet it is precisely these social aspirations—social respectability via motherhood—that the indomitable Rosanette achieves by the end of the novel, in spite of Deslauriers's particularly vilifying remark about her vastly increased girth.⁴ Rosanette's doubly remarkable making of her future, and fulfillment of her wishes against the odds, then makes Frédéric's callous inaction, privilege and inability to bring anything to fruition the more wanting.

If Rosanette has been consigned to the fixed category of prostitute, this is largely thanks to the many scenes in which her activities are the erotic charge to liven up the rather dull male political and economic conspiracies. As object of male desire, her feelings are thus largely ignored. As prostitute, she cannot afford sentimentalism or self-indulgence. Two key scenes, however, mark Rosanette out not only as among the very few working class characters of any depth or breadth in Flaubert's works as J-L Douchin has pointed out,⁵ but also as a sensitive victim of poverty, class and political upheaval, and survivor of life's terrible circumstances. The first is her revelation to Frédéric during the 'idyll' in their relationship, the visit to Fontainebleau, of how she was sold into prostitution by her widowed mother to feed the latter's drink problem, an episode which has attracted a surprising dearth of critical attention.⁶ The second is her immediate reaction to the death of the child she and Frédéric conceived during that honeymoon while the events of 22-25 June 1848 raged in Paris, which is worth quoting at length:

Rosanette fut debout toute la nuit.
Le matin elle alla trouver Frédéric.
— Viens donc voir. Il ne remue plus.

En effet il était mort. Elle le prit, le secoua, l'étreignait en l'appelant des noms les plus doux, le couvrait de baisers et de sanglots, tournait sur elle-même éperdue, s'arrachait les cheveux, poussait des cris; — et se laissa tomber au bord du divan, où elle restait la bouche ouverte, avec un flot de larmes, tombant de ses yeux fixes. Puis une torpeur la gagna, et tout devint tranquille dans l'appartement. Les meubles étaient renversés. Deux ou trois serviettes traînaient. Six heures sonnèrent. La veilleuse s'éteignit.

Frédéric, en regardant tout cela, croyait presque rêver. Son cœur se serrait d'angoisse. Il lui semblait que cette mort n'était qu'un commencement, et qu'il y avait par derrière un malheur plus considérable près de survenir.

Tout à coup Rosanette dit d'une voix tendre:

— Nous le conserverons, n'est-ce pas?

Elle désirait le faire embaumer. Bien des raisons s'y opposaient. La meilleure, selon Frédéric, c'est que la chose était impraticable sur des enfants si jeunes. Un portrait valait mieux. Elle adopta cette idée. Il écrivit un mot à Pellerin. [...] Il dit d'abord:

— Pauvre petit ange! Ah mon Dieu, quel malheur!

Mais, peu à peu (l'artiste en lui l'emportant), il déclara qu'on ne pouvait rien faire avec ces yeux bistrés, cette face livide; que c'était une véritable nature morte; qu'il faudrait beaucoup de talent; et il murmurait:

— Oh! pas commode! pas commode!

— Pourvu qu'il soit ressemblant, objecta Rosanette.

— Eh! je me moque de la ressemblance! A bas le Réalisme! C'est l'esprit qu'on peint! Laissez-moi! Je vais tâcher de me figurer ce que ça devait être. [...]

— Ah! une idée! un pastel! [...]

Il [...] commença à jeter de grands traits [...]. Il vantait les petits saints Jean de Corrège, l'infante Rose de Velasquez, les chairs lactées de Reynolds, la distinction de Lawrence, et surtout l'enfant aux longs cheveux qui est sur les genoux de lady Glower.

— D'ailleurs, peut-on trouver rien de plus charmant que ces crapauds-là! Le type du sublime (Raphaël l'a prouvé par ses madones), c'est peut-être une mère avec son enfant?

Rosanette qui suffoquait, sortit. (153-54)

While the blunt words, 'En effet il était mort' in fact prefigure the same hard-hitting epitaph for Arnoux, continuing the series of deaths which pile up in mock-tragic fashion (the 'qu'il y avait par derrière un malheur plus considérable près de survenir' is surely also mocking of Frédéric's hazy casting of himself as hero puppet of the Fates), what is more unusual is the overt recording of Rosanette's desires and preferences which at all stages here contrast strikingly with Frédéric's habitual indecisiveness. While her extreme physical responses of disbelief, grief, agony, devastation, and exhaustion could also be gendered (as foil of Frédéric's non-plussed paternity), the ultimate insult to the real injury to her motherhood is Pellerin's callous insinuations about her 'ange', that he is indeed a 'crapaud'. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder in this passage, but spearheads the delicious deflation of Pellerin's pompous aesthetic name-dropping and self-agrandisement as artist. Unlike parvenus such as Homais in *Madame Bovary*, Rosanette is not the butt of Flaubert's criticism of bad taste here, since embalming was a vogue of the times. Rather, it is Pellerin's grotesque still life of a child (whose life has been stilled definitively), because it bears no relation to the sentimental reality of the child's mother, that takes the aesthetic debates running through the novel much further. Rosanette's unspoken responses, moreover, make it quite clear that the model, even if dead, is much

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larger than life, and that a still life is an altogether moving death since infant mortality does not prevent the mother's fantasies for the future of her child. While her dreams, reported just after this scene, smack of the most banal career path for him, they only the more clearly demonstrate Rosanette's desires, not only that his future will be legitimate and attainable (and the diametric opposite of her own damaged life), but that this will then restore her own legitimate social standing.⁷ Indeed the sentimental education Rosanette received at the hands of the rich Lyonnais is completed here in the arguably worse blow to her person as good mother to Frédéric's child. And when the resulting nature morte/pastel is produced for Frédéric's inspection and unsentimental reaction, there is again something in Rosanette's unwavering devotion and religious respect for her sick and dead child, that has a touching, childlike and supremely emotional tone, even though the effect is a kitsch creation:

Elle alla chercher le portrait. Le rouge, le jaune, le vert et l'indigo s'y heurtaient par taches violentes, en faisant une chose hideuse, presque dérisoire.

D'ailleurs, le petit mort était méconnaissable maintenant. Le ton violacé de ses lèvres augmentait la blancheur de sa peau; les narines étaient encore plus minces, les yeux plus caves; et sa tête reposait sur un oreiller de taffetas bleu, entre des pétales de camélias, des roses d'automne et des violettes; c'était une idée de la femme de chambre; elles l'avaient ainsi arrangé toutes les deux, dévotement. La cheminée, couverte d'une housse en guipure, supportait des flambeaux de vermeil espacés par des bouquets de buis bénit; aux coins, dans les deux vases, des pastilles du sérail brûlaient; tout cela formait avec le berceau une manière de reposoir; et Frédéric se rappela sa veillée près de M. Dambreuse.

Tous les quarts d'heure, à peu près, Rosanette ouvrait les rideaux pour contempler son enfant. Elle l'apercevait, dans quelques mois d'ici, commençant à marcher, puis au collège, au milieu de la cour, jouant aux barres; puis à vingt ans, jeune homme; et toutes ces images, qu'elle se créait, lui faisaient comme autant de fils qu'elle aurait perdus, — l'excès de douleur multipliant sa maternité.

Frédéric, immobile dans un autre fauteuil, pensait à Mme Arnoux. (155-56)

If this reposoir smacks of, or rather prefigures, Félicité's gift of the mouldy Loulou on the reposoir of the Corpus Christi processions in *Un Coeur simple*, Frédéric's callousness is only the more cruel and inhuman, by contrast, especially as it is he who has just attended M. Dambreuse's funeral. Careful rereading of this earlier episode only underscores it, in typical Flaubertian irony, as a magnification of all the elements recast in miniature and at the hands of working-class women here. To name but three such links: the flower petals on the dead child's 'reposoir' are a *pars pro toto* of the sea of flowers in the market outside the Madeleine church as Dambreuse's 'reposoir'; the 'flambeaux de vermeil' and burning 'pastilles du sérail' reflect in domestic (and ironic) form

both the choir of the Madeleine church with 'Aux deux angles, sur des candélabres, des flammes d'esprit-de-vin brûlaient' (146), and Frédéric's contemplation of the paintings depicting the story of the Madeleine (the sanctified prostitute) with running commentary by Pellerin. The grotesque funerary monuments at Père Lachaise cemetery when Dambreuse's cortège arrives there (147) are in no less good or bad taste than Rosanette's little alcove.

But there are other ironies in this little cameo scene of the still lives and moving deaths in *L'Éducation sentimentale*. The first is the attention to measurable time as a gauge of its impossible slow passing in times of pain. Rosanette's emotional trauma and grief, measured 'tous les quarts d'heure', is proleptic of the tediously slow movement of the hands of the clock in Frédéric's rooms when the fifteen minute intervals drag interminably until Marie Arnoux's departure. The second and much more wrenching detail is Rosanette's deeply human emotional responses to this 'chose hideuse', a recalling of the other unnamable horror which was her rape at the hands of the rich Lyonnais and her retelling of it to Frédéric in the Fontainebleau episode (128). In his close genetic analyses, Eric Le Calvez has returned to this scene in Flaubert's brouillons, quoting its 'détails hideux', but never connecting them to the actual use Flaubert then makes of the word 'hideuse' in the child's death scene (see Le Calvez, 1997, 50 and 2002, 197). These details, however, richly connect the hidden lives of the novel, especially Rosanette's. If the scene of Dambreuse's funeral allowed the reader to connect the symbolic Madeleine with Rosanette, her rape and the agony of its circumstances are also replicated here in other ways, too, and perhaps laid to rest. If her own mother was the pimp in her prostitution, Rosanette's maternity has offered solace even if her child has now died. When she had her first and negative sexual encounter, the furniture of the room which she vividly recounted to Frédéric at Fontainebleau—'les tentures des murailles, en soie bleue, faisaient ressembler tout l'appartement à une alcôve [...]. Le seul siège qu'il y eût était un divan contre la table' (128)—finds its direct parallels with the site and fabrics of the dead child's 'reposoir'. With no small irony, the garish painting of her child, resembling nothing, is as obscene for the sensitive reader as the 'album' containing 'des images obscènes' she discovered prior to her rape.

The death of Rosanette's child is then more than an ironic symbol of the failed revolution of 1848 although it is certainly that.⁸ And Rosanette's grief is more than an echo in working class key of Mme Dambreuse's.⁹ It is her real human response that allows her to have almost biblical stature that makes mockery of Frédéric's at Dambreuse's wake and then funeral. Of the three male deaths that conclude the direct aftermath of the revolution of 1848 and

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culminate the anti-penultimate chapter of the novel, Rosanette's dead child is the most important even though the shortest lived. Not only was this son conceived as a fruit of the revolution and dead in its last gasps through illness, this death forms the central focus of what is a triptych on the theme of bastardy and legitimacy, not least of the 1848 revolution itself. On each side, to mark two generations equally brought to nought, are the deaths of Dussardier and Dambreuse. Dussardier (also specifically described as a 'bâtard' (66)), dies at the hands of the fanatical Sénécal at the end of the chapter where Rosanette's child dies, as if to underscore the doubly ignoble ends of revolutionary zeal. But the death ironically legitimizing the others is Dambreuse's. Thwarting his rapacious wife, his inheritance goes in totality to his *female* love child, Cécile, whose wealth and marriage thence transcend her illegitimacy.¹⁰

Moreover, Frédéric's failure to be moved at all by the death of Rosanette's child in this episode is both analeptic and proleptic within the structural patterning of the novel. The last line of the quotation above connects this scene directly to Frédéric's earlier failed assignation with Mme Arnoux at the start of the revolution because of the sickness of the latter's son, and the cruel substitution of Rosanette for Marie in his love nest. His callousness will be a hallmark of all his intimate relations with women to come. More importantly, the scene of Rosanette's all-night attention to her sick child not only contrasts with the hypocrisy of Frédéric's attendance at Dambreuse's wake, it also emphasizes her care for the sick and infirm, child and elderly, with motherly devotion.¹¹

I have already made the case to reread *L'Éducation sentimentale* to piece together the details of the alternative and bi-sexual love-story that unfolds in tandem within it (Orr, 1992). Rosanette's parallel story of her sentimental education in its two 'chapters'—her rape and the loss of her illegitimate child—is threaded no less equally into the story of the 1848 revolution. It is the poignant account of a woman's history standing for women's history of revolution or war: her spoiled infancy as daughter of an unemployed canut in Lyons (where the first stirrings of the 1848 revolution began) does nonetheless recount her necessary tale of survival through and beyond events. The real failure of the revolution and the novel as narrated through a viewpoint very similar to Frédéric's is to countenance the place let alone the rights, equal or otherwise, of women. If the interventions of sick children are the prime movers of Frédéric's life adrift between women, career options and assertive (male) decision-making of any kind, especially political and public, the death of Rosanette's child provides *her* with the end of a dead relationship going nowhere, ever the pragmatic realist forced back into gritty survival in the face of terrible circumstance.

The detail we learn at the end of the novel is that a M. Oudry has married and hence legitimized her by erasing her Lyonnaise name 'Bron' altogether. But the fabric of this story of bitter moments is literalised. The blue silk in the maison de passe, the blue taffeta she choose to enfold her child, operate as a counterfoil to the blue aura with which Frédéric surrounded the pseudo-virginal Marie Arnoux when he first meets her. Prostitute and virgin are one and none in the sharing of blue. Both debunk the false romantic mysticism and aesthetics of Frédéric. In the end, it is the more virtuous Rosanette who perhaps outdoes her married arch-rival in Frédéric's affections, for she at least has enjoyed sexual congress with him, borne his child and buried it, and moved on and up in society whereas all he can report are his failed ventures in the penultimate and final chapter.

But the coda is the rereading of *L'Éducation sentimentale* to discover the role and part of M. also known as *le Père Oudry* in the lives of Arnoux, Frédéric and Rosanette. In the first part of the novel, chapter 5, we meet M (and Mme Oudry) as Arnoux's neighbours, invited to Marie Arnoux's birthday party. While mocked by Sombaz as a descendant of a painter of dogs 'car la bosse des animaux était visible sur son front' (38), it is his wealth that makes Arnoux so in his thrall. In the first chapter of the second part of the novel, this is made clear. A description of Frédéric's renewed visit to the Arnoux's home—Arnoux is now a marchand de faïences—with Marie in a 'robe de chambre en mérinos gros bleu' (47) dandling their son confirms the downturn in Arnoux's fortunes, but constancy in his philandering. The main part of the chapter describes Rosanette's party (and how she wins her epithet 'la Maréchale') and the men present, including Oudry:

Entre deux quadrilles, Rosanette se dirigea vers la cheminée, où était installé, dans un fauteuil, un petit vieillard replet, en habit marron à boutons d'or. Malgré ses joues flétries qui tombaient sur sa haute cravate blanche, ses cheveux encore blonds, et frisés naturellement comme les poils d'un caniche, lui donnaient quelque chose de folâtre.

Elle l'écouta, penchée vers son visage. Ensuite, elle lui acommoda un verre de sirop; et rien n'était mignon comme ses mains sous leurs manches de dentelles qui dépassaient les parements de l'habit vert. Quand le bonhomme eut bu, il les baisa.

— Mais, c'est M. Oudry, le voisin d'Arnoux! (51)

All Arnoux can say to Frédéric's probing when they leave is 'Il est riche le vieux gredin'. By the third chapter, it becomes clear that Oudry has financed a ménage à trois involving Rosanette and Arnoux. Although Rosanette for a time puts up with Arnoux's empty promises, she cannily has her other string to her bow

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— Ah! Il [Arnoux] m'embête, à la fin! J'en ai assez! Ma foi, tant pis, j'en trouverai un autre!

Frédéric croyait 'l'autre' déjà trouvé et qu'il s'appelait M. Oudry. [...]

Il [Arnoux] lui avait même promis un quart de ses bénéfices dans les fameuses mines de kaolin; aucun bénéfice ne se montrait, pas plus que le cachemire dont il la leurrait depuis six mois. (61)

The outcome of this little exchange is clear if we return to the frame of the death of Rosanette's baby, which comes on the heels of her victory over Arnoux regarding his shares in these kaolin mines. Here, as through her life, the real and the practical outweigh the symbolic: life can only be understood in the heights and depths of making and losing love and money, not by running away from these, or living in limbo between myriad options, as do Frédéric and the other young men of the revolution of 1848. Her unequivocal status as extremely rich widow with a son in tow at the end of the novel makes Rosanette's victory then a doubly remarkable one, because it has been against such odds regarding her social class and status and, of course, her sex. She, of all the protagonists, has not had a still life, but an upwardly mobile and moving one in all senses. By leaving behind both Arnoux's attitude to her as prostitute, and Frédéric's similar fault but also failed paternal responsibility for their child, Rosanette's victory over circumstance is her life out of the death of her child by the adoption of another boy and the legitimizing name, 'Oudry'. She therefore speaks indirectly but no less deeply into the female lot of the novel, regardless of class or the particular colour of the politics around her. Indeed, because both traumatic moments in her sentimental education are the direct outcomes of a revolution to give the franchise to working men (the uprising of the canuts in 1831 of which her father was one), her life in the novel speaks volumes about the real cost to women but especially those from that same working class.

In the light of Rosanette's arrival as grande dame, and by contrast with it, we can begin to articulate why Frédéric's pseudo-harmonious existence at the end of novel is so disappointing. His living death of illusion remains, whereas in love and circumstance for both the men and the women in the novel, Rosanette has movingly overcome, especially the enormity of both her rape and the death of her child. She even manages to make for herself a wealthier marriage than either of the other women bastards of the novel, Louise Roque and Cécile Dambreuse, or Madame Dambreuse a second time.¹² What remains at the end, then, is not only the nostalgic chorus sung by Deslauriers and Frédéric to the vainglory of men's failed revolutions, but the unsung history of women survivors under patriarchy whatever its political form. As widow and mother of a male child (whether by procreation or adoption), Rosanette is on

the same footing as Marie Arnoux, but has not had to move from Paris to escape debt collectors in the process. Against all the odds, it is Rosanette's very body which remains the politics of the text to its end. If its effect on former lovers is of the same order of shock effect as Marie Arnoux's locks of white hair when she removed her hat in the penultimate ending, Rosanette's bodily transformation into bourgeois solidity and overcoming presence transcends once and for all the terrible attractiveness that landed her in prostitution in the first place. Her story is of the redeemed prostitute whose narratives of still lives and moving deaths make of her a modern Magdalene in the flesh, as opposed to Marie Arnoux's shadowy value as a fake Mary the Virgin Mother.

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NOTES

¹ This detail may have some significance in the final résumé of female lives in *L'Éducation sentimentale*. Given the financial themes spearheaded as much by Madame as Monsieur Dambreuse, the entry in Flaubert's *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* for 'Anglais' as 'Tous riches' is noteworthy. And by comparison with Frédéric's travels, which are summed up in the text by 'Il voyagea' (160), the exoticism of new destinations or new partners in each woman's life by the novel's dénouement is particularly striking.

² Anne Green is the only critic to comment on Rosanette's ultimate status, but in an open question which connects Cécile Dambreuse and the protagonist in Bouilhet's play, *Hélène Peyron*, with the question of adoption.

³ See as an example Annie Goldmann, especially 57-58.

⁴ Various critics mention these aspirations but in rather vague terms, while also failing to note that Rosanette actually achieves them. In his otherwise sensitive reading of the irony of the title of the novel in respect of Rosanette's rape, Steve Murphy (18) for example avers that 'la maternité lui [Rosanette] reste, seule possibilité d'être acceptée autrement que comme prostituée.'

⁵ 'Rosanette est l'un des très rares personnages flaubertiens issus du prolétariat urbain' (140), and in note 2 on the same page, 'son patronyme "Bron" (toponyme de la banlieue lyonnaise) illustre son origine. [...] Que Flaubert ait fait de Rosanette la fille d'un canut n'est pas un choix gratuit: le soulèvement de novembre 1831 demeure présent à l'horizon des mémoires.'

⁶ The scene is mentioned en passant by Fairlie (85) with regard to Flaubert's use of details for dramatic impact as recorded in his letter to Duplan and by Le Calvez (1997 and 2002) with regard to Flaubert's notes and manuscripts. I have recently drawn attention to the importance of this scene as essential to Flaubert's post mortem of his age (Orr, 2004, 115).

⁷ Frédéric's dreams for his son, expressed just after Dambreuse's funeral earlier in the chapter, are no less clichéd: 'Il se le figurait jeune homme, il en ferait son compagnon; mais ce serait peut-être un sot, un malheureux à coup sûr. L'illégalité de sa naissance l'opprimerait toujours; mieux aurait valu pour lui ne pas naître, et Frédéric murmurait: 'Pauvre enfant!' le coeur gonflé d'une incompréhensible tristesse' (149).

⁸ As, for example, Peter Smith has pointed out: 'Now that we have gained some idea of the importance of children to the allegory, it should come as no surprise that the death of Rosanette's baby signals the fall of the Second Republic. So far as Flaubert was concerned, the short-lived government which was the fruit of 1848 could indeed be suitably represented by a whore, and we get ample warning of the fact when we see one of her colleagues striking a pose at the storming of the Tuileries [of the Statue of Liberty] (54).'

⁹ As Victor Brombert contests: 'With bitter irony Flaubert describes the 'maison de santé et d'accouchement', where Rosanette vices birth of a sickly offspring [...] And when the sickly child soon after dies, Rosanette's grief coincides with the grief of Mme Dambreuse as she realizes that her husband has left all his wealth to someone else' (138).

¹⁰ At the end of part 1 chapter 5, Louise Roque's status is legalised by her father's marriage.

¹¹ In this she again prefigures Félicité in Flaubert's *Un Coeur simple*.

¹² In the light of note 1, Oudrey's wealth may then be seen arguably to be quantifiably the greater, thus making Rosanette the richest widow of them all at the end of the novel.