The Evolution of the Theatre d'ANALYSE in France Between 1870-1914.

Kathleen Bordelon Levingston

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IN FRANCE BETWEEN 1870--1914

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by
Kathleen Bordelon Levingston
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ABSTRACT

Though introspection in the purest sense of the word is rare in any literature, the French character seems peculiarly suited to it, and French literature, particularly from the time of Montaigne, has been markedly characterized by some form of self-examination. The skillful use of psychology also seems indigenous to the French literary personality. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, specifically between 1870 and 1914, there developed in dramatic procedures a psychological technique similar to that of the great Classicists, but very different in its concepts. Unlike the Classical method, which applied itself universally to large groups of people, the later one involved the psychology of the individual.

This later dramatic psychology concerned itself with emotional problems, particularly with those arising from irregular love and sex relationships. It probed deeply into the inner mind of the character in search of hidden motives for behavior. Dramatists of the period 1870-1914 studied love, not only as the great motivating passion conceived by Racine two centuries earlier, but also as an emotion which under given conditions would conduct itself in normal or in abnormal fashion. By means of the sex or
triangle play theatrical writers gave expression to the consuming public interest in the behavior of guilty love.

Though the background for the formal psychological drama which developed after 1870 had been prepared in the introspective nature of the French personality and literature of preceding periods, a quite steady evolution of interest in the study of problematical love and the use of psychology in dramatic procedures is obvious from the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The Romantics (such as Musset, Dumas père, and Vigny) made wide use of the love theme with increasing interest in the triangle. Realists (Dumas fils and Augier, for example) made pioneer attempts at analysis of the feminine heart with dramas like La Dame aux camélias in 1852.

It was not until after 1870 that the theme of guilty passion took precedence over all others and became a very strong dramatic appeal. In Victorien Sardou's La Patrie (1869) the love triangle is present but is clearly subordinate to the theme of patriotism. However, in his La Tosca (1887), eighteen years later, there is a decided effort to portray a consuming feminine passion.

Georges de Porto-Riche, with the two one-act plays, La Chance de Françoise (1888) and L'Infidèle (1890), is credited with having introduced the delicate, probing procedures, the Classical power of focus, the overwhelming interest in the problems involved in the love triangle,
and in the inner world of the mind—all of which are basic to the théâtre d'analyse. A new emphasis on a more intellectual and spiritual concept of love had been predicted earlier (in 1852) by Michelet. Contemporary with and following Porto-Riche the symbolists (particularly Maeterlinck) and the Théâtre Libre of André Antoine gave great impetus and refinement to the newly-developed analytical techniques.

The théâtre d'analyse reached its greatest development in the work of Porto-Riche (Amoureuse, 1891), Maurice Donnay (Amants, 1895), and Henri Lavedan (Le Duel, 1905). These dramatists, with supreme interest in the analysis of the emotional problems of their characters, are supported by others of almost equal magnitude (Curel, Lemaitre, and Hervieu, for example) and are followed by a second onslaught of writers whose preoccupation with the psychology of love prolonged the life of the analytical theater. The noticeable interest of these later writers (particularly Bataille and Bernstein) in the physical aspects of sex indicates, if not a beginning decline of delicate psychological drama, a changing emphasis which was to manifest itself more strongly after the war years.
INTRODUCTION

Hugh Allison Smith in his work Main Currents in Modern French Drama\(^1\) insisted that the qualities of French drama which are basically and characteristically French are those of logic, reason, clairvoyance, order and realism. There should not be, he continued, and actually is no marked emphasis on the imaginative world of unreality, mysticism, or truth arrived at symbolically. The psychology dealt with in the drama, if typically French, is a mass psychology, applicable universally to large groups of people. Individual introspection and reaction, according to Smith, are not instinctively French characteristics and are not representative of the best in French drama.

In the main there is no quarrel with Smith's thesis. It has certainly been true that the classical ideal has been paramount in the French theater from its earliest beginnings. Both before and after the peaks reached in the seventeenth century, psychological development has been one of the chief concerns of the drama, and in the tradition of Racine it has met with varying degrees of success. The

\(^{1}\)Hugh Allison Smith, "Introduction," Main Currents in Modern French Drama (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1925), pp. XII-XV.
"tradition of Racine" implies not only the intensely personal introspection required for the attempted resolution of some great inward conflict but also the development of that introspective thinking along the lines of precision, clarity, and logical good sense—in short, according to classical models. It is hardly altogether accurate, however, to speak of classic order and objectivity as being so instinctive and fundamental in French literature as to crowd into a place of little importance the lyric representation of individual human emotions. By 1925, the date of Smith's writing, either not enough time had elapsed to provide a broad perspective, or the outstanding writers of the period directly preceding 1925 (Lavedan, Donnay, Hervieu, Bataille, Porto-Riche, Bernstein, and others) had not written enough to present a definitive trend in the drama at the turn of the century. In any case, at least one ideal directly opposite to classicism characterizes the approach to dramatic psychology after 1870. From that time on French drama, in whatever form it took, has been strongly marked by a winsome, poetical beauty, a mystic wonder, and a fantastic imagination. And if, earlier, the psychological approach to the problems of love and human emotion had been only a chief current in French drama, after 1870 it was the springboard from which the great body of theatrical production was to receive its initial impulse.
Still in Racinian fashion, the conflict in the greatest dramatic pieces of this modern period (after 1870) involves some problematical phase of love at war with some force of human or physical nature or at odds with strong moral or social conventions. The modern théâtre d'analyse, then, is not new and is not peculiar only to the post 1870 theater. Nor can it be considered, as the roman psychologique so often is, a reaction against naturalism. Actually, in the judgment of many English and American audiences, it has a great deal in common with naturalistic writing in that the subject is commonly a frank, even brutal, description of free love. Between the years of the early 1870's and the early 1920's the "decadent" French playwrights seemed obsessed with the idea of love and sex. From the Anglo-Saxon point of view at least, the great interest of Frenchmen in the philosophical exchange and spread of ideas, at its height in the pre-Revolutionary years of the eighteenth century, deteriorated in the latter part of the nineteenth into sordid discussions of sex and free love as motives for human behavior.

It is undeniable that many stage productions in France after 1870 could be termed blanket fashion "sex plays." The differences in interpretations applied to the term, however, are basic. To the Anglo-Saxon mind the frank treatment of sex in literature has traditionally tended to be distasteful and Puritanically immoral, but in the main
French thought considers sex and the complications connected with it as worthy subjects for literary works of art. For a number of years now modern French writing has earned for itself the somewhat superficial criticism that it has placed too much emphasis on the rôle of sex and love in human affairs. That condition, if indeed it exists, is more probably the result of the realistic, logical French mind depicting life as it is lived than a morbid interest in the instinctive drives of human nature.

Barrett H. Clark in his *Contemporary French Dramatists* relates an incident relative to the criticism of modern French drama on the basis of immorality.² In gathering his material Clark had often had occasion to speak with some of the authors, who, on this particular point, were rarely able to understand the average Anglo-Saxon mind. When asked which one of his plays he considered the most typical example of his work, Maurice Donnay answered immediately *Amants*. Clark commented that a translation of *Amants* was not likely to be looked upon as sympathetically as the author had intended and that quite probably it would be criticized for its immorality. He tried to explain further that English and American theater-goers required of their plays that there be in most cases atonement for violation of the social conventions connected with sex relationships. Donnay

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defended his work on the basis of the fact that there was no question of morality or immorality involved. He was not presenting a thesis in *Amants*. He was merely depicting life as he saw it.

Clark quotes François de Curel, when questioned about the matter, as having responded that the French dramatists treat of love because it is the only subject which every member of the audience understands, and a dramatist must of course appeal to the masses. He shrugged his shoulders and only repeated what he had said before when Clark asked why nearly all dramatists persisted in the use of the overworked theme of the love triangle. Clark concludes that the Frenchman is braver and truer to his art than is the American or the Englishman. Illicit love relationships certainly do exist in our land and go unpunished. There certainly are women whose passions run rampant and violate the conventions of moral and social acceptability. But not so frequently as in France are these put on the American or the English stage.

The repeated use of the love theme gives rise to two other flaws pointed out by foreign critics of the modern French stage—that of general ignorance of foreign drama and narrowness in the subject matter employed in the French drama itself. Very likely the ignorance of foreign plays on the part of French playwrights and theater managers is

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a willful ignorance. From earliest times the history of France, politically and artistically, has been colored by strong feelings of patriotic nationalism. The French people have been intensely proud of the homeland, and, more often than not, native talent has been exalted to the near exclusion of things not French. The theater-going public has preferred, in the main, plays depicting life in its own little corner of the world—a section which confines itself largely to Paris. In addition to the absorbing interest in the things of France, there is the matter, more important as far as the drama is concerned, of the confidence that theater-goers have in the sincerity of French playwrights. The failure of foreign dramatists to look squarely at facts and to present frank, uncolored pictures of life has resulted in reluctance on the part of theatrical producers to put large numbers of foreign plays on the French stage.

There is still another explanation for French insistence upon the complications of love as a favorite dramatic theme after 1870. With attention turning more and more to a study of the inward individual, with a psychological, psycho-analytical approach to the problems of people, the French dramatist, inspecting life minutely and without bias, became convinced that the love of a man and a woman is the primary motive for whatever direction their behavior takes. The basic difference between this view and that held by most foreign writers in general is that sex, though a powerful element, is not the only motivating force in life.
Admittedly, the exclusive "national" attitude taken by the French people as a whole and the attraction by a single subject of so large a number of French playwrights do result in narrowness and a certain monotony. But if in this fifty-year period (1870-1920) the plays suffered because of restriction in subject matter and were tiresome with the sameness of the husband-wife lover situation, they gained in other respects. They excelled in concentration upon character. They focused full attention upon minute details of speech, mannerism, dress, facial expression. Carefully treating the particulars in a given phase of life, they produced convincing portraits. Though Clark's reference to them as "all variations of the pièce bien faite" is probably an exaggeration, a close examination of a number of them, which will be made later in this study, will reveal that they are carefully done and beautifully polished to present a singular and striking effect. And best of all, the viewer receives the impression of a genuine vraisemblance—perhaps crude, shocking, and discouraging at times, but as the writer actually sees it.

There are, of course, those critics who refuse to include very many of these dramas of guilty love among the best of the French theater. H. A. Smith, for example,

4Ibid., p. XVII.
5e.g. Smith, op. cit.; Edmond Sée, Le Théâtre français contemporain. (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1950).
refers to the great mass of them as the théâtre à succès, written merely to satisfy popular demand. He further explains them by noting that both in France and elsewhere love and passion have always been the greatest resources of the theater and that the "frankness of French manners and speech allow unusual freedom for the discussion of immoral love and sex problems."

The problem of this study, however, is not to explain or to justify the large number of love plays which appeared between 1870 and 1914. It is, rather, to show that the principal method of attack on the problems of human emotions was becoming an increasingly analytical one and that the method made itself highly apparent in the plays produced during these years. Assuming that the evaluation of drama as a reflection of life is generally accepted, it would be right to say that the physical, mental, moral, and social problems presented in dramatic form on the stage were actual life problems existent in that period.

A popular philosophy of history is the one which conceives of the nations of the world progressing and decaying, stabilizing and changing, moving systematically in the never-ending cycle which leads from barbarism to highly developed civilization and back to barbarism again. There is historical justification for applying the same kind of

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6 op. cit., p. 262.
7 Ibid.
thinking to the arts. The nineteenth century saw the rise, growth, and fading away of various trends in thinking: romanticism; realism; cold, parnassian perfectionism; naturalism; psychological introspection; sentimental idealism; symbolism; and metaphysical mysticism, again akin to the romantic movement of the early part of the century.

It is the period commonly spoken of as the "psychological reaction to naturalism" with which this study is concerned. There is no attempt made here toward an exhaustive study of the writers or the plays of the period. But a real effort is made to show the common thread running through the plays, the single intention of authors to portray the actions of their characters in the light of their inner thoughts and feelings and to show the evolution and development of the analytical approach to drama. Since such an approach has always enjoyed a certain degree of popularity in French literature, there is included here, principally from the time of Montaigne, a brief tracing of what the French call *écrit intime*. The greater portion of the study, however, deals with those writers and plays, roughly between 1870 and 1914, which seem most representative of the introspective, psychological method of working out emotional problems and which most clearly indicate the evolution of that method.
THE CONCEPT OF THE ECRIT INTIME

French literature is peculiarly rich in introspection of the type which involves a mind's objective, impartial investigation of itself. This variety of inner searching may manifest itself in literature such as diary-keeping, meditative day dreams, writing about one's own life, or by representative stage action. Though introspection usually implies self-examination and self-disclosure, by actual definition it can be extended in meaning to include, as does psychology, the study and interpretation of other minds. Since the examples of pure introspection are scarce and the gift of it "does not seem to have been so lavishly distributed among Western Man as is apparently the talent for philosophizing,"¹ the terms "introspection" and "psychology" will be considered to be interchangeable.

If there needs to be a purpose for this probe into the mental processes of people, perhaps a justifiable one would be the search for lessons in the art of living. Such lessons, however, often turn out to be results of the investigation rather than purposes for it. The psychology of the whole matter involves various reactions to and interpretations

¹P. Mansell Jones, French Introspectives from Montaigne to André Gide (London: Cambridge University Press) Preface, p. XI.
of these lessons in life—variations which result from self-evaluation or evaluation of others on the basis of one's own pre-conceived standards. It is indeed the rare piece of writing which excludes the "moi" altogether.

P. Mansell Jones makes a rigid distinction between autobiography, which is the record of a life, and introspective writing, which is a study of the self. Although examples of pure introspection are rare, self-analysis is hardly new to French literature. There are traces of it in the earliest literary pieces. Roland suffers torments of remorse over failure to act promptly or over his inability to overcome the desire to flaunt his own bravery. The feminine characters of Marie de France examine their own reactions to the love situations in which they find themselves. Minute analysis of Perceval's personality reveals his reluctance to inform himself of the facts or to heed the advice of older, wiser people. His subsequent failures are attributed to such weak spots in his nature.

Pure introspection, the deliberate, conscious examination of a mind by itself, more often than not degenerates into a subconscious searching, an analysis of another's thought, or an indulging in various other mental activities: fantasy, dreams, speculation, reverie. Reflective thinking of this latter type is exemplified as early as the medieval dream allegory Le Roman de la rose. In the old French

Ibid., pp. 1-21.
Aucassin et Nicolette the chief dramatic interest lies in the psychological reactions of the two young people to the social and moral pressures under which they must act.

Mansell Jones, in his work already cited, discusses the Essays of Montaigne, Maine de Biran's Journal Intime, Senancour's Obermann, the work and thought of certain Romantic poets (Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Vigny, Maurice de Guérin), and the Journal Intime of Amiel. His discussions serve to point up the fact that, especially from the sixteenth century on, the incidence of introspection in French writing is very high. It is rarely introspection of the purest variety—that kind which is a sincere and purposeful heart searching—if we choose to accept Jones' limiting definition. A tendency toward laziness, natural to the human condition, causes sustained introspective thought to digress into other types of thinking, such as those mentioned above. The results of the digressing, or the "falling off," are as varied as the individuals engaged in it. Some of the most common of those results as they appear in writing are: the obsession or preoccupation with one's own views or with a particular literary form (the journal, the essay, and the like); the justification of one's own or another's opinions or actions; the effort to identify or define one's position; the apology or explanation of the mind in question and its reactions to given circumstances; philosophical meditation; and general moralizing. French writers are reputed to be peculiarly disposed toward precision analysis and to possess
special powers of concentration upon a single point. With
them the important thing is not only to get to the heart of
the matter but to hold sustained attention upon it. To use
very general terms, writers are classified as "classical"
or "romantic," depending upon the degree to which they suc­
cceed in concentrating upon the focused point or digress from
it into rumination, reverie, the day dream, and the like.
Any attempt to categorize the théâtre d'analyse of the late
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (according to this
definition) would certainly place it nearer the Romantic
end of the pole. Yet such classification is to some extent
denied by the classic precision with which characters are
studied.

It is a theater developing naturally from a method
which seems indigenous to the French personality. The six­
teenth and seventeenth centuries produced writers whose
literary works were products of conscious and deliberate
introspection, introspection which usually degenerated, how­
ever, into one or more of the "inferior" types mentioned
above. Pierre Villey speaks of Montaigne's preoccupation
with his own thought as "la peinture du moi."3 Even a cur­
sory study of the Essais shows this "peinture" to be a reve­
elation of the deeds and thoughts of other men as well as a
meditative discussion of Montaigne's own. In spite of

3Pierre Villey, Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais
Montaigne's claim that "je suis moy-mesmes la matière de mon livre," his reader receives the impression that a chief concern of the work is a study of men in relation to their actions, their reactions to circumstances, and their interaction. Montaigne's interest in the deed, the gesture, the facial expression is not in the overt movement itself. He sees the movement as a revelation of inner compulsions. This is the activist attitude, the psychology of a man interpreted through his actions. The attitude is basic for the later théâtre d'analyse.

The penetrating scrutiny of the self as it moves among other beings is the guiding principle for Corneille and Racine. It is not a purposeless examination. The self is always seen in conflict with other forces, or suffering the consequences of action, or torn with indecision. There is inevitably a great moral force at work which complicates the struggle of the self with its environment. Such is the very essence of the great classical drama of the seventeenth century. Such, too, is the stuff of which is made, perhaps with less intensity, the psychological drama of the late eighteen hundreds.

Preoccupation with self-examination, particularly after Montaigne, continued as a strong influence in various literary forms throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Intimate journals, confessions, letters, novels, poems, and dramas built upon "le culte du moi" furnish the
rich background out of which emerged after 1870 the théâtre d'analyse. The analysis engaged in was usually an analysis of a failure, of a moral or intellectual defect, of an inconsistency, or of a weakness native to a personality. Illness seems to be the motivating factor. The lives of the greatest introspective writers (for example Montaigne, Rousseau, Daudet, Baudelaire, George Sand) have been fraught with physical or mental misery. Suffering makes a man think of himself. As long as health persists, he is hardly conscious of his walking, talking, reacting to things around him. Malady and pain force a man to concentrate on himself. His own defects make of him a psychologist. The knowledge which he gains about himself through conscious examination leads him to an understanding, and sometimes a tolerance, of others. When it is a case of moral decadence, analysis often involves a self-pity or remorse over degeneration and failure.

If they did not provide the impetus for the drama which followed, the restless mal du siècle of the Romantic era and the later emphasis on the sordidly real, pathological cases, and moral failures during the period of Naturalistic writing certainly set the dramatic tone which was to establish itself at the turn of the century. Sex had come to be recognized as a causative agent. Love had been dealt with realistically and had been considered a drive of first importance in the actions of people. Theater-goers of the late nineteenth century had had their minds prepared for intimate
analysis of love problems by poets, journalists, and novelists like Musset, Vigny, Baudelaire, Sénancour, Amiel, France, Zola, and others. Though psychological analysis is not new to French literature, there does seem to be a greater interest at this time in the psychology of love—an interest akin to that found in the works of Racine. The reader will note, however, that while their interest is "Racinian," late nineteenth century dramatists not only concentrate, as did Racine, on love as a single, consuming passion, but also treat it from the standpoint of what is normal and what is abnormal about it.

This period of rebirth of interest in the analytical, the most representative dramas of which will be discussed in the main body of this study, was kindled early in the nineteenth century by the Romantic movement and its attendant period of "moral decay." The work of the early Romantics is superficially psychological, it is true, but must be credited with the beginnings of overtones which developed into complete character analyses late in the century. Though we shall concern ourselves mainly with the trend as it appeared in the drama, no complete understanding of its development would fail to note its evolutionary progress through all literary genres.

The author of Obermann, at the very beginning of the nineteenth century strikes, not for the first time of course, the note of melancholia which is to persist in one form or another throughout the century. In this early work of
Sénancour there is none of the penetrating analysis which characterizes later literature—only vague and sentimental reflections. The letters are little personal essays which are reduced at times to autobiography pure and simple. They were almost completely overshadowed in their own time by Chateaubriand's immensely popular *René* and *Atala* and are mentioned here only as early nineteenth century examples of psychological analysis in the making. They typify the century's earliest attempts at introspection in that they wander from one brooding and philosophical speculation to the other. Sénancour fails, actually makes no attempt, to focus attention squarely or to interpret a single impression. Yet the seed of critical analysis is evident—observation, uncontrolled and ruminative still, but directed toward the thought processes and the "inner activity" of a character. Like Montaigne before him, Sénancour's driving purpose was to arrive at an understanding of all men through an understanding of himself. Montaigne's classic disdain and impatience with the mediocrity in human nature becomes with Sénancour, however, a less noble emotion—a vague and restless boredom, a petulant dissatisfaction with his situation.

It is precisely this restlessness which prevents the Romantics of the first half of the century from achieving real heights in character analysis. Invariably they become impressed with the sounds of their own rhetorical constructions or lost in the depths of their own sentimental
attachments. They yield to eloquence. The desire for expansiveness and brooding keeps their lyricism from being a sincere study of their inner thoughts and feelings, a study directed objectively toward a clearer understanding of why and how men and women react to their love situations. Though the stage is certainly set for it, Musset, for example, in his poetry makes no honest attempt at analysis. His affairs of the heart are laid bare, it is true, but the descriptions of his feelings are paramount. They picture the extremes of a violent emotion, and it is inevitably the emotion, not the study of it, which most concerns the poet. Even Alfred de Vigny, the most reserved of the Romanticists, never made real efforts to understand himself or society. He came closest to analytical attempts perhaps in his mémoires "Sur soi-même" (1840) and "De moi-même" (1844). Yet even here he declares:

What is done and what is said by me or others has always been of small importance to me. At the moment when the act is done or the word spoken I am elsewhere, I think of something else; what is dreamed of is everything to me . . .

The better world I wait for and pray for continuously, is there . . .

It takes long to realize one's character and to explain the why and wherefore of oneself . . .

I have long suffered the tyranny of this distraction . . . what I actually say it makes colder and less felt, because I am dreaming of what I would say or of what I should like to hear myself saying in order to be happier.
It is clear that the poet is both looking and not looking at himself. His vital interest is the self, but he rejects a study of it.

Yet an important element of psychological analysis is present in the works of Musset, Vigny, and their contemporaries. Analysis begins with lyricism. There can be no study of the psychological reactions of other people without a first attention to one’s own reactions. In this respect, though the French Romanticists allowed their lyricism to become diverted, they laid the foundation for the more concentrated attention to character interpretation which developed in the last quarter of their century.

S. A. Rhodes divides the modern theater into periods which correspond to the various literary movements in the nineteenth century. This is not an unusual division. The dramatic genre by its very nature reflects, perhaps more than any other, the intellectual and emotional climate of this period. Rhodes’ divisions and a few plays from them are mentioned here primarily to point out the elements in them which contributed to the building of the later théâtre d’analyse and to emphasize the fact that psychological drama reached its heights in a period not dominated strongly by any trend but which represented the culmination of various ones. Contemporary French drama, specifically the drama of

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psychological analysis, is neither romantic, realistic, naturalistic, neoclassical, nor symbolistic. It is strongly marked with elements of all of these ideals without any loss of its own individual, analytical character.

If the poetry of Musset offers little, his sprightly comedies give the first real indication in the nineteenth century of the subtly psychological treatment of love problems. They penetrate acutely, make fine-drawn distinctions, and portray delicacies and niceties of character. They point up, with Romantic overtones, the earlier comédies psychologiques of Marivaux. A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles seems actually to be a nineteenth century version of Marivaux's Jeu de l'amour et du hasard. The plots are airy trifles; there are no grandiloquent speeches or mighty deeds. There is no unity of action, no carefully worked up crisis, no dominant character around which minor characters revolve. The main approach to the dramatic situation in both plays is an analysis of the psychological reactions of the characters, particularly of the women. Neither writer, however, achieves the dramatic focus which is necessary to a deep psychological study. The poetic nonsense with which they handle their situations, the frivolity of the badinage, the light carelessness with which their plays are constructed prevent concentrated analysis.

In this study we shall be concerned chiefly with the pre-war theater, the period roughly between 1890 and 1914.
Perhaps the greatest likeness of Musset's shorter plays to the later théâtre d'analyse is their preoccupation with love problems. In Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée and in A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles the attitudes toward love are light, but love as a personification is the real protagonist. There are more serious overtones of morality in On ne badine pas avec l'amour, which promotes the thesis that one cannot trifle with love for fear that other people will be hurt. The dramatic potential in the three plays is good, but the intended psychology is lost in the maze of brilliant dialogue, rapidly moving plot, melodramatic scenes of disguise and mistaken identity.

Though the elements of Romanticism and Melodrama completely overshadow all attempts at careful character analysis, Musset, perhaps accidentally, approaches the psychological vein in his tragic drama Lorenzaccio. The many expressions of personal feelings and private grieves are only, however, revelations of personality. There is little attempt on the part of the characters to examine or to explain their reactions. Musset did an excellent job of fashioning a tragic hero whose single consuming predilection toward evil made him progressively weaker in his personal honor and less resistant toward immorality. The basic element of psychological analysis is present—a recognition of the passion. But the most vital element, a study of the passion, is lacking.
The completely Romantic overtones of Dumas' *Antony* (1831) almost defy its being mentioned as a stepping stone to the more classical play of analysis. Antony is a typical product of the *mal du siècle*. His consuming passion for Adèle, his gloom, his exaggerated ego, his inability to adapt to normal human relationships all prevent an objective study of his own emotions. Yet it is this very violence in the Romantic nature of the hero which provokes the heroine to a more sensible, realistic study of her own situation. As a Romantic heroine the character of Adèle is unsatisfying. She analyzes herself too much. Her innocence is based on ideas of romantic natural love. She has a realistic concern, not for her conscience, but for her reputation. She remains unstable throughout and prey to powerful emotions and uneasy feelings which she herself attempts to evaluate. This is an element basic to the drama of analysis. Though the action of the later drama is more subdued and the psychology more refined and delicate, the pattern is set for it in *Antony*.

In the intensely personal *Chatterton* (1835) Vigny presents a psychological conflict which, except for its extremes of emotion, approaches the concentrated analysis of the dramas in the latter part of the century. Chatterton sees himself as a poet, purer and rarer than the common run. This poetic nature, with its super-fine abilities, puts him out of tune with the coarse, harsh environment in which he finds himself. He indulges in introspective examination of a type
which does not reach the heights of concentrated self-analysis. It reduces itself instead to fatalistic philosophizing. The result is a Romantic hero emotionally related to René, Antony, Hernani, and Didier. Again, however, some of the elements of psychological analysis are present: The plot is classically simple; the conflict is a spiritual and mental one; attention is focused almost entirely upon the reactions of the protagonist to the problems which beset him.

With the development of realism in the French theater the more profound aspects of the psychological approach began to be apparent. The themes were more clearly defined, and attention was focused upon the problems of single individuals in the plays. The situations were real for their times, and much thought was given to the reasons prompting the characters to react to them as they did. It was often the intention of the author (for example, in the thesis plays of Dumas fils and the sociological studies of Augier) that these examinations of the inner personalities of the characters would have a carry-over value to society as a whole, thus helping with the understanding and the alleviation of certain moral and social evils.

The younger Dumas is important to the psychological theater of which he is an immediate predecessor. He is credited with having launched Realistic Social drama with *la Dame aux camélias* in 1852 and having pursued, along with Emile Augier, a serious study of man during the thirty-five years following, (until 1887). Influenced by the positivist
thinking of Auguste Comte and the philosophic determinism of Hippolyte Taine, Dumas sought to understand man as a product of his moral and social environment. He wrote during a period in which the French theater was enjoying its most complete freedom and was at liberty to discuss with a new kind of realistic frankness the problems of humanity. The rise of a wealthy middle class to prominence in the 1840's had turned men's minds to consideration of practical things, and the theater became a vehicle for information and instruction. Dumas used it to reflect contemporary society. His chief emphasis, however, was upon the individual in his society, and his chief purpose was to teach.

The theater of Dumas fils is far too utilitarian to be considered a theater of analysis, but certain of its elements are strongly characteristic of the psychological approach into which it led directly. Such elements are:

- small attention to genre (the play could accomplish its purpose either as a comedy or as a tragedy; as a matter of fact, it often defied classification until the heights of the psychological drama were reached, at which time the tendency leaned more and more heavily in the direction of classical tragedy),
- the evaluation of the individual in relation to his circumstances,
- the theme of irregular or illicit love,
- the dominance of observation over imagination.

So characteristic of the formal psychological dramas are some of Dumas' pieces that several of them have been cited as pioneer attempts to create analysis plays. In l'Ami des
femmes (1864) the reader is not convinced that the psychological study is a sincere one, but the attempts to unearth specific clues to feminine emotions are recognized as such and are quite cleverly done. There is a superficiality about the analyses of the characters in this play, as there is in l'Etrangère (1876), which results perhaps from Dumas' serious attention to a moral purpose.\textsuperscript{7} As early as 1849\textsuperscript{8} with \textit{la Dame aux camélias} Dumas had predicted completely and accurately the trend which the subjects and themes of the later psychological dramas would follow: the magnification of the importance of love and passion in life and the observation of the individuals involved in a particular love situation. Perhaps his greatest contribution to the rising \textit{théâtre d'analyse} was his treatment of immoral love which paved the way for successors to master the triangle play.

\textsuperscript{7}H. A. Smith's evaluation of the play. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 135.

\textsuperscript{8}\textit{La Dame aux camélias} was completed by 1849, but not presented until 1852.
The mastery of the triangle play, as clearly as it had been predicted by Dumas, was not to be accomplished by his immediate successors. As a matter of fact, the thirty-year period immediately following la Dame aux camélias (1850-1880) produced little to rival that play in so far as a study of the emotions is concerned. Such magnification of the importance of love and passion in life as is found in the redemption of the courtesan in this drama gives way to the more practical matters of stage technique, dramatic construction, and pointing up the thesis. Even Dumas took a more moralistic view of "immoral" love in his later plays. Edmond Sée, in a discussion of the general aridity of the French theater of this period, comments concerning the work of Dumas:

Dumas, par exemple, qui, tout de suite après la Dame aux camélias, se consacra à des ouvrages plus laborieusement échafaudés, plus artificiellement habiles et où le dramaturge, le penseur, le théoricien idéologique, le démonstrateur de thèses prenait le pas sur le peintre fidèle des moeurs, l'analyste lucide du coeur, le servant de la grande, de l'éternelle vérité humaine, pour atteindre trop souvent à une vérité apparente, une vérité du théâtre. Oui, l'on a peine à retrouver chez l'auteur de la Princesse Georges, de la Femme de Claude, de la Princesse de Bagdad, l'animateur de la Dame aux camélias.1

1Le Théâtre français contemporain, pp. 11, 12.
Even in the practical years of the pièce bien faite and the realistic social drama, before the liberating influences of the théâtre libre, there were signs of struggle toward a more idealistic theater. Perceptive critics noted in the minglings of elements of the comic, the romanesque, the classically formal a general searching on the part of both the spectator and the playwright for a satisfying genre. In their efforts to please the varied and popular tastes of a prosperous theater-going bourgeoisie, authors produced vast panoramas with many appeals. Though few of these were masterpieces, their great popularity managed to keep the French stage vitally alive, and they were a necessary step in the evolution of a signally high point in French drama. Careful examination of the plays produced between 1870 and 1890 reveals elements which suggest strongly that a whole new emphasis is developing in the theater. Among all of the other appeals in the drama of this period, often subjugated or lost to more dominant ones, is the theme of guilty passion, a theme which rises to such importance later in the théâtre d'analyse that love and sex relationships come to be regarded as primary motivating influences in human behavior.

By 1870 the elements of the analysis play began to be clearly identifiable. The work of Victorien Sardou merits attention in this regard. It covered a span of fifty years (la Taverne des étudiants, 1854—l'Affaire des poisons, 1907), enjoyed huge popularity at times, but has had little
lasting influence on the French stage. One of his earlier plays discussed here points up the fact that interest in psychoanalysis was developing rapidly and that evidence of that interest was making itself felt in much of the drama of the period.

La Patrie, perhaps Sardou's best piece, is an elaborate historical prose drama in five acts presented for the first time in Paris at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin on March 18, 1869. The setting is Brussels slightly past the middle of the sixteenth century (1568), at the time of the Spanish domination. Opening scenes present crowds of Spanish soldiers milling around an old butcher market:

Et quels soldats! l'écume des nations! Napolitains, Suisses, Portugais! tous aventuriers, bandits, gens de sac et de corde, accourus, avec leurs filles de joie et leurs bastards, sous ce drapeau qui leur assure l'impunité du crime! ... ²

The struggle on the part of loyal Flemish countrymen is a struggle for political and religious freedom from the humiliating domination of the Duke of Alba, officer of Spanish King Philip II. Sardou presents a vivid contrast of good and evil: Flemish courage in the face of Spanish cruelty; the compassionate tenderness of the duke's daughter offset by his own scheming brutality. In reality, not many dramatic elements are missing from this play, a characteristic

which probably accounts for the notable successes and long runs of many of Sardou's pieces.

In addition to sharp contrast, there is elaborately staged spectacle: color, music, picturesque but realistic action in the processions of soldiers and prisoners around the walls of the city, the rolling of drums, and the dirge of priests in the death procession. There is sheer melodrama in the mass shootings and the slayings of the innocents. Even touches of comedy, crude and bawdy though they may be, enter into the language of the common people of the streets. The strongest appeals of the drama are the tragic elements of the pathos of parental affection and filial suffering; dramatic scenes of heroic patriotism; extremes of remorse, love, hate, vengeance; and a dénouement of death and suicide. Romantic tastes are satisfied by the historical subject, endless tirades, and personal reminiscing.

Finally, and this observation is of more importance to this study than any of the others, *La Patrie* is a drama of guilty passion. The framework of the triangle play is definite, so definite in this early play (1869) that it leaves no room for the subtlety and intrigue which characterizes the later developments. The triangle involving Rysoor, his young wife Dolores, and his loved and trusted young protégé Karloo is soon made obvious to the audience and to Rysoor as well. There is little psychology employed in the handling of this love situation or little probing into the
personal problems which brought it about. Rather, it seems sufficient simply to admit the existence of the immoral relationship of Dolores and Karloo. Sardou, as a matter of fact, seems to have become involved with a conflict which he is unable to handle realistically. For example, it is a little difficult to conceive of a friendship of an older man for a younger one so strong that the aging husband forgives the illicit love affair of his own wife with the young friend. Rysoor, the husband, reacts logically upon his first realization of the fact that his wife has deceived him:

Rysoor: Quel est cet homme? . . . Vous le direz!
Dolores: Non!

Rysoor: (avec violence, la faisant lever et lui tordant la main) Vous le direz!
Dolores: (épouvantée) Ah! il sait . . . il saura qui . . . et le tuera!

Rysoor: Ah! si je le tuerai! . . . ah! oui, cela! oui! . . . Je vous jure bien que je le tuerai!3

The old man's behavior, though, is abnormal and unconvincing when he discovers that it is his loyal young patriot and protégé who is his wife's lover. The sheer magnitude of his sacrificial forgiveness is weakened by the realization that life is nearly over for him anyway and that he has little to lose by forgiving Karloo and by the fact that it is unrealistic for patriotism to be the natural and commanding

3Ibid. Act II, Scene VII, p. 71.
motive that love is. This reaction of Rysoor to his love situation further emphasizes the fact that La Patrie represents only the beginnings of the love triangle theme which developed to a very high point in the later analysis plays. The principal difference in this respect between this drama and those at the height of the development of the théâtre d'analyse is that in the later plays, love is depicted as being the basic drive, the primary, the most important, and sometimes the only explanation for human behavior patterns. In La Patrie it is clearly a secondary motive.

The treatment of irregular love in this play is elementary in another important aspect: the relationship of the wife and her lover is only described; it is not examined and studied as a possible, or actually primary, motive for their other thoughts and actions. Sardou really does not get to the heart and character of the individual. The husband, wife, and lover emerge purely as types, the necessary trio for a story of infidelity. Dolores reveals herself as the typical wife, jealous of her husband's consuming interest in his country and at the same time justifying her own immorality on the basis of Rysoor's indifference:

Dolores: Dieu m'est témoin que je suis entrée chez vous honnête fille, et résolue à être honnête femme! ... M'y avez-vous aidée? Jamais! ... Vous avez tué ma reconnaissance par l'ennui! ... et ma tendresse par l'indifference!

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4 Rysoor thought of Karloo as his successor to lead his country to freedom from the despised Spanish. (La Patrie, Act IV, Scene VII).
Rysoor: Moi! dont l'amour . . .

Dolores: Votre amour! Ah! parlons de votre amour! Croyez-vous donc que je ne sache pas qui le possède avant moi . . . votre amour? Ah! je la connais, ma rivale! . . . c'est votre Flandre bien-aimée . . . votre Patrie! comme vous dites . . . La voilà, votre vraie femme, votre maîtresse! . . . le voilà, votre amour!

Mais, de bonne foi, Monsieur, voyons . . . quelle vie m'avez-vous faite . . . avec cette folle passion qui vous tient pour ce que je ne sais quoi que vous appelez la Liberté? . . . Et cependant je suis là, moi, qui me dis: 'Il pense à Elle!' . . . qu'est ce que cela me fait, à moi, que les Pays-Bas soient libres? . . . Je suis femme! . . . et ma Patrie à moi, c'est l'amour! Si vous aviez fait pour celle-là le quart de ce que vous faites pour l'autre . . . nous ne serions, ni vous ni moi, où nous en sommes . . .

Sardou obviously had not intended his play to be a drama of passion. The love theme is clearly defined and recognizable, but it is not dominant. As a matter of fact, it is only one theme among many and is certainly subordinate to that of patriotism.

How, then, can La Patrie be cited as contributing to the evolution of the love triangle theme in the théâtre d'analyse? The claim is based on two main points:

The drama does build action around a clearly defined husband-wife-lover triangle, the most popular vehicle for the later studies of irregular relationships;

The bitterness of the emotion and the intensity of the passion, portrayed through the language of the characters, are akin to that felt and revealed by

5 Ibid., pp. 69, 70.
personages when in a later period the théâtre d'analyse was at its height.

By 1887 the trend was well-established. Love interest was emerging as a primary theme, directed toward a purposeful character analysis as well as entertainment. Contrast, for example, Victorien Sardou's La Patrie with his later La Tosca.

La Tosca, a Romantic tragedy in five acts, was presented for the first time at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin on November 24, 1887. The drama is typical of Sardou's flair for great, sweeping panoramas. According to Henri Becque it has everything:

l'imagination, l'observation, la conduite des caractères; l'action et l'intérêt, les grands coups; la tirade et le dialogue, la couleur et l'harmonie générales. . . . et cette belle santé de l'esprit que nous admirons chez les classiques . . .

Commenting further upon Sardou's work in general Becque has said:

Il a fixé des milieux pittoresques et de tous il a extrait un drame qui peut se concilier avec la réalité et la vraisemblance. Il a connu les moeurs qui finissent, et les moeurs qui commencent: il a fait le tour de deux sociétés.

As indicated by Becque, contemporary comedy did not suffice for Sardou. He required a tableau of more vast and colorful proportions, so that he was separated from his times and from the art of his day which tended to become more and more concentrated. If La Tosca is set apart and

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does not fall into the pattern of the trend of the theater as far as form is concerned, it certainly is modern in its treatment of the love theme. From the first through the last scene of the drama there is a steady and increasing effort on the part of the author to depict a consuming passion. Interestingly enough, it is a female passion which predominates and which makes the treatment even truer to its times. Though it will not be found to be consistently so, the greater number of the later analysis plays emphasized the female role in the love situation.

The setting for La Tosca is a historical one (Rome, 1800) with overtones of patriotism similar to those of La Patrie. The struggle, though, of Italian countrymen against the oncoming of General Bonaparte is only a patriotic backdrop for the unfolding of a passionate and tragic love story.

Mario Cavaradossi, painter and son of a patrician Roman father and a Parisian mother, is slightly suspect as much for his careless and cavalier way of living as for the definitely French characteristics of his personality. Engaged to paint some murals in the Eglise Saint-Andréa in Rome, he is permitted a small alcove for living quarters. It is here that he, a generous gentleman who never leaves the place without slipping a few coins into one's hand, leads a bohemian existence which includes a daily rendezvous with the Italian singer Flora Tosca.
The girl had been picked up from the fields, cared for, and educated by the Benedictines of Verona, who were reluctant to deliver her up to the devil when her music teachers insisted she be allowed to perform in public. The pope finally gave her an audience, was thoroughly charmed, and ended by tapping her on the cheek with "Allez en liberté, ma fille, vous attendriez tous les coeurs, comme le mien, vous ferez verser de douces larmes . . ." Sardou has managed to depict Floria Tosca in tones of just such tender pathos.

A cast of twenty-three characters and an action full of intrigue serve to complicate a relatively simple plot. Mario becomes involved with helping Angelotti, a principal in a civil revolt, to escape. Without intending to do so, Floria innocently reveals her lover's complicity in the escape plot, setting the police on the trail of Mario and Angelotti who have retreated to a secret meeting place known formerly only to Mario and Floria. When the police arrive and are unable to find Angelotti, Mario is tortured almost to the point of death in an effort to get Floria to reveal Angelotti's hiding place. Unable to bear Mario's suffering any longer and in an effort to save her lover, Floria does weaken and tells the evil Scarpia where Angelotti is to be found. Police rush to the spot only to find that the rebel has escaped capture through suicide. For their parts in the crime against the state Mario and Floria are separated.

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7Ibid., Scene III, p. 22.
and taken back to the city to be shot. Scarpia, though, offers Floria her life in return for her acceptance of his repulsive attentions. She loathes his touch but cleverly extracts from him a signed safe conduct pass for Mario and Scarpia's order that the firing squad be given pistols loaded with blank shells and that Mario only pretend to be shot. Satisfied that she has saved her lover's life, Floria in a frenzy of disgust with Scarpia's embrace plunges a small dagger into his breast. The extreme happiness which she feels at being free at last to love Mario is short-lived, indeed, for in almost the same moment she learns that Scarpia has actually betrayed her and that her lover has really been shot. In complete despair she leaps from the prison parapet to her own death.

The chief interest in this drama is in the growth of La Tosca's love and the changes that circumstances affect in it. Her relationship with Cavaradossi, though socially irregular, remains an honestly sincere one throughout. The story of her love is the story of its progressive change from a sweet, tender emotion to a wild passion, violent when its security is threatened.

In the beginning Floria reacts in much the same way that any woman reacts when she is in love. As Mario admits to Angelotti, the only thing which troubles their happiness a little is that Floria loves him too much. Her possessiveness is typical of feminine jealousy, and Sardou describes it well:
Mario: Si tu es jalouse aussi des femmes que je peins!

Floria: Et puis, avec quoi fabriquez-vous ces créatures-la? Avec vos souvenirs . . . ou vos désirs! . . .

Des yeux que vous avez beaucoup regardés . . . Des lèvres qui vous ont dit: "Je t'aime!" Ou à qui vous voudriez le faire dire.9

Her love for Mario is completely simple to Floria. She justifies it on the basis of a natural honesty:

Eh bien, je n'ai pas de mari, moi, ni de sigisbée! . . . J'ai un amant que j'aime uniquement et qui est tout pour moi. C'est plus honnête . . .10

However, it is always a matter of concern for her that the relationship is not sanctioned by the church and that Mario is not religious by nature. Her genuine goodness is exposed when she declares sincerely to her lover:

Ah! surtout un impie . . . et j'en suis assez malheureuse. Ce n'est pas faute de prier Dieu de toute mon âme pour le salut de la tienne.11

And the hopelessness of her love is revealed when, faced with choosing between it and the requirements of her religion, she is unable to separate herself from Mario:

Floria: Je suis en état de péché mortel, et si je venais à mourir subitement . . .

Mario: L'Enfer!

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8Ibid., p. 23.
9Ibid., Scene IV, p. 30.
10Ibid., p. 32.
11Ibid., p. 34.
Floria: Encore si c'était avec toi!...

Mario: Bon, qui sait!...

Floria: (rassurée): Oui, je crois que ça s'arrangera...

Mario: Mais, oui!... va...

Floria: Grâce à la Madone, je suis très bien avec la Madone.

Mario: Ah! alors, continuons!¹²

Sardou skilfully allows to be revealed other aspects of the heroine's love. It changes gradually from the simple, honest affection of an innocent girl to a more sensuous emotion. Floria is portrayed as having developed an absorbing interest in Mario physically. In spite of the fact that the moustache her lover wears is a revolutionist insignia, she is unable to bring herself to have him shave it because the whiskers give her such pleasurable sensations when Mario kisses her.¹³ Her jealousy reaches its height, and her invective against her lover is all expressed in vivid physical images:

Un ruffian, qui va de cette créature à moi, de ses bras aux miens, lui arrive tout chaud de mes caresses, et me revient avec de sales baisers qui ont le gout d'une autre!

... 

Ah! miserable! miserable!... Et je l'adore!...
Je ne vis que pour lui... Je ne suis plus moi, je suis lui!... Je l'ai dans l'âme, dans le cœur, dans la chair, dans les veines! La première effron­tée me le vole, et je suis si lâche que je l'aime

¹²Ibid., p. 36.
¹³Ibid., p. 35.
encore; et je sens que j'aurai beau le détester
. . . je l'aimerai toujours . . .

In the same scene Floria's reaction travels rapidly from a mood of extreme despair to one of utterly wreckless joy when she discovers that her "rival" actually is a man. Her love situation had completely motivated her behavior. It had been envious suspicion of another woman which led her to act without thinking and which caused her to betray Mario's hiding place to the police. Later, it was the fear of losing her love which drove her to reveal incriminating information.

From scene III of the fourth act through the end of the play Sardou is occupied with presenting the extremes of hate, love, and physical desire in dramatic scenes, principally between the evil Scarpia and Floria. Scarpia bargains with Floria—Mario's life in return for her love. Floria wavers between yielding to his disgusting advances and repulsing him. The struggle reveals the woman. The reality of her love gives rise to her words, her gestures, her attitudes, her fears. The violence of her love reaches the height of its expression in murder:


14Ibid., Act III, Scene 3, p. 102.
15Ibid., Act IV, Scene 5, p. 147.
There is no development of the love triangle theme in La Tosca except in the minor characters and even here it is not the true triangle. It is, rather, the very practical arrangement of the professional sigisbée, or lover, both chosen and paid by the husband. Explaining the difference between a lover and a cicisbeo, the husband describes the lover as an honorable thief introduced fraudulently into the household, the cicisbeo as a gallant official duly authorized to pay court with measure and discretion. The wise husband, recognizing the inevitability of his wife's infidelity, takes advantage of the sigisbée arrangement in choosing for her the escort whom he himself can control and direct.

In spite of the weakness in the triangle theme and the strong Romantic overtones, frequently exaggerated to the point of melodrama, La Tosca approaches the analytical in both situation and treatment. The real beginnings of the psychological drama, however, must be attributed to Georges de Porto-Riche. His two one-act comedies, La Chance de Françoise and L'In fidèle (1888 and 1890) introduce the théâtre d'analyse.

La Chance de Françoise is a prose comedy presented for the first time in Paris at the Théâtre-Libre on December 10,

\[16\text{Ibid.}, \text{Act II, Scene 1, p. 56.}\]
The arrangement of the four principal characters into two well-balanced pairs of married people typifies the classical precision to which the analysis play is indebted.

Marcel's true source of happiness is his knowledge that his wife is a faithful soul who loves only him. This happiness is marred, however, if the wife grows sad, becomes distressed, or weeps over the extra-marital affairs of her husband. Marcel insists that Françoise stay in high good spirits so that he can enjoy his mistresses and escapades without pangs of conscience. Françoise, mature in her love for her husband, tries very hard to conceal her own jealousy so that he can be happy. Convinced that her own happiness is to be found in such self-sacrifice, she resigns herself to it. She is peculiarly tormented by the fact that in this way she can be the source of her husband's happiness but not the source of his pleasure.

A former friend of Marcel is victim of the same set of circumstances: his unfaithful wife continues to deceive him with one lover after another. When Guérin discovers some old letters from Marcel to his wife, he becomes insanely jealous and resolves to kill his friend. Mme Guérin, still a little tender toward her former lover, goes ahead of her husband to warn Marcel of the intentions against his life.

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17 Subsequent presentations were at the Gymnase-Dramatique, February 6, 1889; Comédie Française, December 15, 1891; Théâtre des Mathurins, February 9, 1904; Comédie-Française, May 17, 1906.
Marcel, enchanted to see her again after so long an interval, attempts to involve her in a new intimacy. His pride is struck its fatal blow, however, when, almost yielding, she changes her mind, commenting that Marcel is aging and that she has a rendez-vous to keep with a new and younger lover. His pursuit of her to the place of her rendez-vous is met all along the way with rebuff and insult.

In the meantime Guérin appears in Marcel's home and meets Françoise for the first time. She confides her troubles to him in order to seek advice. Through her sweetness, sincere love for her husband, and frank loyalty he begins to understand his own rôle. For the sake of Françoise he decides to spare Marcel. She has managed to reveal to him that his own chance for happiness lies in loyalty to the wife he loves, indiscreet and unfaithful though she may be.

Rebuffed, favor unrequited, Marcel returns at last to the security of Françoise's love. It is the "luck" of Françoise that things never work out between her husband and his mistresses. Basking in the renewed attentions of her husband and fortified by Guérin's interest in her, her character reverses itself. There is piquancy and triumph in her remark to her husband, "Tu vieillis, Lovelace, sa femme t'a trompé . . .

18Georges de Porto-Riche, La Chance de Françoise. Théâtre d'Amour, première série (Paris: Librairie Ollendorff, 1921), Scene VI, p. 50.
A later play, the one-act verse comedy *L'Infidèle*, first presented in Paris on April 19, 1890, at the Théâtre d'Application, has its setting in Venice in the middle of the sixteenth century. Lured away from her parents, Vanina has sacrificed her virtue for her young lover Renato. Renato, as secretary to the Spanish Doge Loredan, has been commissioned to accompany Loredan's daughter to Spain, but vows loyal devotion to his mistress and promises to return. Lazzaro, a pagan and a drunkard, approaches Vanina and convinces her that Renato has written verses of love, not only for her, but also for the Spanish princess. Not yet certain that her lover has been unfaithful, she resists Lazzaro's attempts at seduction. The more ardent his insistence becomes the more her confidence is shaken. She refuses to yield, however. Lazzaro is forced to leave, but with the determination to make a cuckold of his friend Renato.

Doubtful now of Renato's devotion, Vanina schemes to keep him from taking the voyage with the princess. She leads him to believe that if he leaves she will take another lover, accuses him of greater desire for glory and fame than for her love, and angrily casts to the floor his gift of flowers. Renato struggles with indecision as to whether to go and risk Vanina's infidelity or to stay and risk his employer's displeasure. Lazzaro, who is anxious to be left in Venice with Vanina, assures his friend that his mistress is faithful. He paints enticing pictures of the delights of love.
and women in the far-away places and describes the charms of the Spanish princess in such glowing terms that Renato decides in favor of the voyage.

After an unsuccessful attempt to get Lazzaro to sing beneath her window so that Renato will be jealous, Vanina threatens to go into the streets and entice other lovers. Lazzaro strikes the fatal blow when he declares that she is too young, inexperienced, and bourgeoise to attract real lovers and that his friend Renato, though accomplished and devoted to his work, is not capable of giving real pleasure in love.

The conclusion of the play involves a disguise and recognition scene in which Vanina, disguised as a young boy, is fatally wounded by her own Renato as they fight with swords. Recognition comes when the mask falls off and the moon lights up Vanina's face and hair, and the tragic realization of himself as the infidel who has deprived himself of a faithful mistress falls full upon Renato. Lazzaro philosophizes that such is the way of life: men are made to lie to the mouths of women, and happiness in love is at best short-lived.

How can these two short plays be said to have introduced the théâtre d'analyse? Their chief claim to this distinction lies in the fact that they typify their author's treatment of love. George de Porto-Riche studied passion for itself without concerning himself with its social effects. He dealt
with an emotion which is irresistible and fatal, the delights of which are divine and the pain exquisite, but it is not love such as the Romantics described. It is more delicate, more concentrated, more secret; it has more subtle joy and more ingenuous suffering. Porto-Riche studied the sentimental psychology of love with something of real depth and sorrow.

For these two short pieces, as for the later and more important dramas, he chose a single theme: love, the old theme of Racine, Marivaux, and Musset. Concerning love, he attempted to study it, not in its heroic, dramatic, superior forms, but in its smallness, its banality, and its commonplaceness. In such ordinary human emotion he looked for the not so ordinary complications. Unlike that of the symbolists, his study of love did not result in mental gymnastics or confusing exercises in metaphysics. He touched only lightly upon explanations involving either the heredity or the deep subconscious of a character. He studied the soul, but as with the great Classicists, it was a lucid soul, one which was understood to have fallen prey to the contradictions and cruelties of love only through its own will or even at its own suggestion. The world of the mind with which Porto-Riche dealt was not really a furtive, incomprehensible region. Rather, it was a place where reasonable explanations for overt behavior could be found. And the "contradictions and cruelties" of love were not des êtres
cachés. They were clearly recognizable as pleasure, temptation, and passion.

The real power of the so-called psychological drama depends upon two elements: a penetrating character analysis and a direct approach. These are the outstanding elements of both *La Chance de Françoise* and *L’Infidèle* and, actually, of Porto-Riche's dramatic work in general. In spite of all that has been said about love, his characters seem to reveal to the reader secrets of the heart which have either not occurred to him before or seem somehow different. The thing of greatest importance to his work is the reasonableness and the verisimilitude with which these secrets are revealed. Having lived during the periods of realism and naturalism and having admired Guy de Maupassant and Flaubert, Porto-Riche developed the taste for a direct truth, for an expression of life which was unencumbered with the old dramatic conventions. He probed the hearts of his people with the merciless zeal of a surgeon looking for a physical malady. And the answers which he invariably discovered seemed just as believable. He exposed the bitter truths about love. He described it with its lyricism and its appearances of devotion; then he revealed it in its prosaic reality, showing it to be a base emotion, often no more than an exaltation of the personal ego.

Marcel is a Don Juan type, who in his eternal conquests is seeking, not the meaning of love nor the understanding of
human unhappiness, but simply his own pleasure and the experi­
encing of that pleasure again and again. With such a pessi-
mistic bent, the theater of Porto-Riche might have resulted
in a brutal, naturalistic, tranche de vie presentation. But
the author knew how to handle his subject lightly, how to
depict an ugly situation with a delicacy and subtleness, which,
though realistic, made his analysis harmonious and satisfy­
ing to the reader rather than raucous and disturbing. Fur­
ther, he softens the effect by making a conscientious effort
not to depict all of life, but to select carefully only those
phases which are pertinent, thus eliminating many aspects
which are both unpleasant and unnecessary. His art depends,
then, upon choice, simplicity, and strength of focus.

The balance of characters in L'Infidèle illustrates the
point: Renato, the man of letters, skilled in poetic arti­
face, infatuated with Vanina but incapable of loving her;
Vanina, the passionate female filled with pure affection for
her lover, intellectually inferior, but completely adequate
in natural love. Throughout the play the emphasis is placed
upon the actions and expressions of these two characters in
relation to the ways in which their personalities contradict
each other. The reader is of course aware of Renato's pro­
miscuous infidelity, but it is never the important thing.
Interest is chiefly in the thrust and counter-thrust with
which the lovers defy each other and defend themselves.
Renato is a great deal like the husband of Françoise in the first play. He is a curious combination of fatuousness and simple good sense. He wavers between falsehood and truth, self-indulgence and tender concern for his mistress. He considers himself absolved from all his wrongdoings by the sincere desire not to harm anyone and by persuading himself that nothing which one does is voluntary and that nothing is of any lasting importance in this world of blind struggles against strange phenomena.

Knowing full well the extent of Vanina's passion for him, Renato attempts to take advantage of her. "Ta vie est dans mes mains," he says to her when she wants to prevent him from carrying out his superior's order to escort the princess on her voyage. She is torn between the desire to keep him all to herself and the need to trust him to remain faithful:

\[
\text{Je vis de ton premier à ton dernier baiser. . . .} \\
\text{L'Infante est belle et tu me trahiras.}^{20}
\]

The speech reveals a perfectly normal feminine jealousy, but colored with such a sweet winsomeness that, momentarily at least, Renato is unable to resist:

\[
\text{O petite Nina, si petite en mes bras! . . .} \\
\text{L'art seul m'occupe, enfant . . .} \\
\text{Les femmes n'ont jamais embrasé ma pensée;}
\]

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20 \textit{Ibid.}
Et près d'elles souvent, maître de mon cerveau,
En divisant d'amour, je cherche un vers nouveau.  

Because Vanina is not a fool or because she lacks the courage to suffer the consequences of insisting upon having her way, she adopts a docile attitude of complete trust: "Tu ne me trahis pas; je comprends: tu travailles." Renato, charmed to have such an understanding mistress and with the condescension of a man who knows himself adored, carelessly brushes the whole affair aside. He is apparently, or perhaps wilfully, unaware of the subtlety with which he is being handled.

An important element in many of the love plays of this period is that of the male ego. Porto-Riche handles it remarkably well in the character of Lazzaro, the raisonneur. Ordinarily philosophical and objective, Lazzaro displays a sensitive nature in face of Vanina's accusation that he is nothing more than an intellectual drinker of wine whose mouth is not kissable, that Renato is by far the more tempting. His answer is an angry, egotistic attempt to hurt Vanina and to insult her lover:

Femme au rire moqueur,
Je n'ai pas son talent, mais il n'a pas mon coeur.
Même au lit, ce n'est pas à la maîtresse aimée
Que pensent les rimeurs, c'est à la renommée.
Vous n'êtes, ô beautés! sous leurs embrassements,
Que matière à sonnets et que chair à romans.
Vos paroles d'amour sont vites ramassées,

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., p. 59.
Ce sont les chiffonniers de toutes vos pensées. Vous ôtez votre robe, ils ôtent leur pourpoint; Mais quand vous soupir ez, ils ne soupirer ont point. Conviens - en, toi qui sais comme le tien manoeuvre, Il faut toute la nuit parler de leurs chefs—

d'oeuvre,
Et le plus amoureux de ces faiseurs de vers,
Pour mendier deux mots de l'Aretin pervers,
A l'heure de berger vous fausse compagnie.
Prenez-moi des gaillards qui n'ont pas de génie,
Mais une âme brulante et des jarrets d'acier.
Les gringalets pareils à ton écrivassier,
Quand vous voulez marcher, se plaignent d'une étorse.
Tous ceux que j'ai connus étaient des gens sans force.22

The picture which Lazzaro gives is of the lover poet who describes love without experiencing it himself. One feels almost that the author is attempting to analyze, not a theatrical personage, but himself. The artist must keep himself aloof from love if he is to study it and portray it in other people. His own emotion must necessarily be rather lonely and detached. He must not allow it to be simple and compassionate, but must make it an intellectual emotion, one which knows a great many things about the art of making love: when to caress one's mistress, what to say to calm her fears, and the like. Except for the seriousness of the situation and the depth of the feeling, the poet's love would always be reduced to artifice. His demonstrations of tenderness and passion actually become so real to him that there is little difference between loving and acting as though he were in love.

22 op. cit., Act I, Scene 2, p. 72.
Porto-Riche implies in his portrayal of Renato that such students of the grand passion are more successful than simple men who enter into it with complete abandon. Every move, every word is carefully planned to produce the most satisfactory effects. It is quite clear that in spite of Renato's egotism and literary fatuousness in love Vanina prefers him and his poetry to the less refined, more natural love of Lazzaro.

It is this subtlety, this psychology of emotion, this intellectual curiosity concerning love which becomes the all important dramatic theme at the turn of the century. Georges de Porto-Riche's *La Chance de Françoise* (1888) and *L'Infidèle* (1890) are typical first examples of the wide use of this theme in the théâtre d'analyse.

This interest in the grand passion was predicted earlier in the century. According to Jules Lemaitre, Michelet wrote *L'Amour* in 1858 because France was ill, because one no longer knew how to love, and because the statistics on marriages and births were deplorable. Michelet's work actually represents the general reaction against a thirty or forty year period of Romantic melancholia and unrestrained passion. The popular attitude toward love had been that men are the dupes of women and that at best it is a painful experience which often enslaves one during his most productive years.

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Most views concerning love during the Romantic period and the years immediately following, though pessimistic, were liberal, and most writers on the subject, though they admitted certain perversities in their own affairs of the heart, considered themselves quite capable of the most subtle analyses of love situations. More often than not the "analysis" directed attention to the complexity of the feminine nature and, by implication, to the profound simplicity of the male.

During the several decades before 1870 writers concerned themselves with a love of the physical senses. They treated it at all of its many levels which varied in degree from simple debauchery to passionate madness. At this latter stage the emotion was the grand amour which could, and invariably did, lead one to idiocy, murder, or suicide. Such great love invariably based itself on a principle of hate. The object of one's love became everything to him. She made him indifferent to the rest of the world. His instinct for possession was frustrated at the thought of having to share her. He loved her as his prey, as a source of pleasure unique with him. He wanted to be for her what she was to him; if not, a furious jealousy took hold and, though desiring her, he hated her.

The prominent naturalistic writers of the 1870's and 1880's continued to make little distinction between love which loves and love which produces a curious spine-tingling
sensation of the nerves. Michelet's earlier work, however, predicted the more intellectual interpretation which was given at the turn of the century. To Michelet, to love is to give of oneself more than one expects to have in return; it is to give of one's heart, mind, and soul. The gift of love is made to another heart, or mind, or soul of which a beautiful or desirable body is only a wrapping or a sign.

There is steady progress of that concept, which at the height of the spiritual and intellectual reaction to the brutal rawness of naturalism reaches a fine point of development in the work of novelists such as Paul Bourget and playwrights such as Porto-Riche and Maeterlinck. It is a recurrence of the Platonic concept that the passions are great to the degree that one has mental power. The idea is that the passions are only feelings and thoughts which belong purely to the realm of the mind. Love, then, is an intellectual thing. Every desire is an idea which may be renewed again and again according to the depth and originality of the imagination. Much of the drama of the théâtre d'analyse becomes increasingly marked with this interpretation of human love as an exercise of the intelligence and the will.

According to Richard Hovey there are three ways of looking at the world, and every individual adopts one of these three ways predominantly. There are those who see the material appearance only (the realists); those to whom the
impression of the sensible object is faint, the important thing being the idea or the general principle (the symbolists); those who concern themselves mainly with people, who have a tendency to think of even inanimate objects as having personality (the poetic, the dramatic). Art can more or less be divided into the same general classes. The body and the emotions can express with their own language, but for ideas and abstractions artificial correspondences, symbols, and allegories have to be invented.

The growing emphasis on the mental produced a drift in art which began to manifest itself wherever the arts flourished. The drift was toward just such invention of symbols to express abstract ideas. It is hardly logical to speak of a Symbolist school since there were no specific rules or principles to serve as standards for artistic measurement. Rather, it is more appropriate to point out that a distinguishing feature of the symbolists is the fact that they were almost entirely unschooled. At the end of the nineteenth century symbol and allegory certainly did not emerge as elements new to French literature. They are as old as the literature itself. However, the use they were put to by dramatists such as Maeterlinck and Claudel gave a quality to the symbolism of this period that made it different from

that of preceding periods. These writers do not necessarily make their symbols complete nor their allegory consistent. Their personages, events, and language imply rather than state meaning. Behind every scene, every phrase one is aware of greater, deeper things. One is given an impression of the thing symbolized rather than a formulation of it. This technique may be said to overburden the symbol, but it leaves the reader free to infuse his own allegory, his own impressions into the symbol. Such freedom would demand that the allegory be extraordinary, not made to order as in simple personification. It would be necessarily a suggestive allegory, one for which symbols really do not need to be invented because certain things, people, and phrases are found to be symbolic.

The real drama of analysis began to come into full fruition about 1890 and reached its highest peak during the succeeding fifteen-year period. This peak period does not depend upon, though it is peculiarly related to, the trend toward symbolistic writing. As a matter of fact, it is specifically related to a number of trends (the "school of silence," to cite one example) all of which are in one form or another expressions of the mental and the spiritual. A new kind of psychology was involved. Authors concerned themselves with the hidden reasons for actions. They tried to penetrate the mysteries of the inner being. One approach might, for example, attempt to portray a woman who forsakes
her earthly lover whom she loves deeply for her God whom she loves even more deeply. She resigns herself to the fact that to give oneself unreservedly to another of flesh and blood is to steal from God. Her contentment, even happiness, in this life stems from the knowledge that her sacrifice is pleasing to the Creator, and she is able to enjoy a curious peace of mind. But a more profound analysis might seek to probe to the depths of the monde caché, the "inside soul," and find turbulence and frustration. These obscure conflicts and cruel longings of the hidden regions of the soul, often not apparent even to the individual involved, express themselves in her dreams, in sudden, involuntary actions, in fleeting hopes or desires. In the end she dies, ravaged by her inner conflicts, not really knowing whether by her sacrifice she has been a saint, a dupe, or simply a victim of confused emotional loyalties.

Theatrical expression of this new psychology is a little more encumbered than is the medium of poetry or the novel in that the theater lends itself much less easily to suggestion and meditation than do the other forms. Perhaps this disadvantage accounts in part for the fact that the dramas outstanding enough to be discussed in this regard are not numerous. Few can be cited as truly great literary masterpieces. Multiple attempts have been made, however, and some few have emerged as outstanding psychological studies. Examples of these successes will be used in the remainder
of this study to indicate the increasing importance of psychological treatment in the drama.

One of the most fortunate in his attempts to develop plays by the use of subtle character analysis is Maurice Maeterlinck. Two elements mark the work of Maeterlinck as strangely different: the limitation of his emotional range and the peculiarity of his technique. For him the essential inspiration is the sentiment of mystery which pervades all of human life, the lack of balance between the terrible powers which hold sway in life and the helpless creatures who struggle in the shadows. Antoine Benoist quotes Maeterlinck as having described the spectacle which the world offers us:

D'un côté une mort indifférente et inexorable, aveugle, tâtonnant à peu près au hasard, emportant de préférence les plus jeunes et les moins malheureux; de l'autre de petits êtres fragiles, grelottants, passivement pensifs; et les paroles prononcées, les larmes répandues, ne prennent d'importance que de ce qu'elles tombent dans le gouffre au bord duquel se joue le drame, et y retentissent d'une certaine façon qui donne à croire que l'abîme est très vaste parce que tout ce qui va s'y perdre et fait un bruit confus et assourdi.25

Thus, the customary proportion between dramatic elements is significantly altered in Maeterlinck's theater so that fatality occupies a dominant place. His is fundamentally a drama of passive human will. The commanding element is mystery,

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and the master tone is terror—terror of the darkness, the church-yard, and the sepulchre. From the first scene his dramas are overlaid with the sense of impending catastrophe. Disaster is inevitable and ferocious. The unsuspecting victims can only wait, anguished and tormented, for destiny to have its way. Such obscure fatality does not affect things only, nor is it found only in the indifference and cruelty of nature. It directs even, and especially, the workings of the inner soul. One's hidden being, ignorant of the emotions of other hidden beings, is often unaware of his own condition in the physical world about him. Mélisande, heroine of Pélleas et Mélisande, is unconcerned about who she is, where she came from, her age, and the like. She lives in a strange dream, in turn delightful and sinister, which leads her along without her understanding what is happening to her. All of Maeterlinck's personages are subject to something stronger than they are, something which they cannot identify but which suddenly seizes and annihilates them.

The psychology employed probes the subconscious but makes little effort to explain the actions of the characters. In this respect Maeterlinck is almost unique among the other writers of analysis plays. His genius lies, not in helping the reader to understand what motivates a Maleine, a Mélisande, or a Pélleas, but in giving a lucid, transparent quality to their souls, in making them seem so fragile
as to shatter if one handles them enough to examine them closely. His people are painted in delicate, poetic language. The colors are dark, the tone is somber, and the mood is always one of strange, unexplained sadness.

The dramas of Maeterlinck involve mysteries because they evoke obscure destinies of which the poet knows nothing except that they are obscure and pathetic. Though the work of Claudel is distinctly drama of the subconscious and is discussed, therefore, with that of Maeterlinck, it is essentially different. Obscurity in Claudel's writing is simply a thing which the reader must penetrate. His symbols are at least fairly obvious images, if not explanations, of metaphysical truths. They are intended for instruction and serve to reveal to us inevitable certainties and divine reasons. To accomplish these purposes Claudel's personages, like those of Maeterlinck, must experience the misery, the anguish, the temptations of common life. Though outwardly more clearly drawn than Maleine and Mélisande, the motivations of their behavior are conceived in shadowy lines. They are human and lifelike in their expressions of love, hate, and jealousy, yet the lasting impression is one of curious unreality, of strange other-worldness. In spite of the mystery which invariably clouds them, however, Claudel's people, unlike Maeterlinck's, are fairly easy to define, and their purposes are usually obvious.
A theater of character analysis is necessarily classic in form and at best only superficially realistic. In real life the succession of events is complex and confused, so that situations occur in unplanned fashion, at times without much relation to one another, and often lacking in color and interest. Dramatic art must always be selective and must always attempt to restrict real life at the same time that it attempts to describe it in order to fit its situations into the space and time requirements of the theater. Especially is this true of the drama of analysis, since interest is channeled in only one direction. The life situations of an individual which have no bearing upon his reactions to a given situation are ignored. Thus the nearer the drama comes to being a psychological analysis of its characters the more precise is its focus and the more classical is its form.

For *La Princesse Maleine* (1889) Maeterlinck chose a familiar theme and wove it into an old-fashioned plot. Only the treatment is modern. Anne, deposed Queen of Jutland, takes refuge in King Hjalmar's court in Holland. She brings with her a daughter to whom she is determined to marry the king's son, Prince Hjalmar. In her hands the old king becomes an object of pity, unable to stave off her attempts to thwart the love of the young prince for Princess Maleine, daughter of the ruler of another kingdom in Holland. Anne is the evil influence in the household. She has openly
lived in concubinage with old Hjalmar and exerts complete control over his decisions. After finally coercing the unwilling king to share with her the guilt in the murder of Maleine, she slowly poisons, then strangles the girl. Anguished, Prince Hjalmar slays the criminal and takes his own life. Filled with belated sympathy for Maleine and remorse for his own sins, the old king becomes mad.

To write a play for the theater, Maeterlinck had to have a plot. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that the action of the play was of the slightest importance to the writer. It represented, rather, a concession to theatrical conventions which he was willing to make in order to present a picture of life from a superior point of view. The tawdry comings and goings of his characters are of little significance. Of real importance are the confusions which they get themselves into, their ineffective struggles against powerful forces always ready to crush them. The minute, furtive little actions need to be noted with as much attention as one usually gives to the large, overt acts. The tiny movements reveal the real personality and often interrupt the principal plot to create scenes which have little rapport with the main action. For example, after Maleine and her nurse are imprisoned in a deserted tower, they escape. The reader is not made aware of how this superhuman feat is accomplished. Following the escape the two women wander aimlessly through the dark forest searching for familiar
ground. They encounter all sorts of people: three poor men from whom they are able to learn nothing of King Marcellus; some peasants who stare at them curiously; a shepherd, who announces that since the weather is so hot he is on his way to bathe in the river; an old woman, who runs on stage with the news that some drunkards have been arguing noisily and now have begun to fight each other in a nearby tavern.

What has all of this to do with the idea that Princess Maleine has been cruelly treated and has had her lover charmed away from her? Actually nothing. This is precisely the point with Maeterlinck, however. The life of an individual is filled with many irrelevant details, with senseless frustrations which keep him from the thing which gives meaning to his life. It is a pre-existentialist view of a man's existing at the same time on two levels. The one is purely physical on which the objective, sensible things have importance for him. The other is a superior mental plane onto which he must lift himself to experience a kind of soul freedom which is impossible at the lower level. The real self is the one which exists on this higher spiritual plane. One frees himself from physical hindrance and suffering to the extent that he is able to live above the objective world, actually to live within his own little realm of the mind.

To be sure, characters like Maleine indicate at best only the pre-development of existentialist thought. Maleine
never learns actually to exist beyond her physical circum­
stances. She escapes only momentarily into that freer, men­
tal world and lives the greater part of the time in tormented
conflict between her objective environment and her subjective
"self." Even at its height at the turn of the century the
theater of character analysis failed to resolve such con­
flicts. It is rather with temporary mental escapes that
psychological drama becomes increasingly concerned.

Both to establish the tone of mystery and to provide
physical media for passage into the spheres of the mind and
the soul Maeterlinck made skilfull use of recurrent themes:
darkness; a dense forest; a graveyard; the contrast of
black with white; water (a pool, a lake, or a fountain);
heavenly bodies (a comet, stars, the moon); sick people;
persistent knocking. Maleine's lost love was an established
fact until the shadows of a dense, dark forest allowed her
to slip out of the world of physical truth into one which
recaptured for her some of the delights and satisfactions
of soul not experienced in a world encumbered with purpose­
less frustration.

Maeterlinck's artistic power would not permit this
"recapturing" to be accomplished only through pure flights
of fancy or unrestrained imagination. True enough, the
world of the mind which he pictures is a dream world where
things are real only because one wants them to be. But the
poet must make an imagined truth a real truth. There must
be a carry-over into the finite thinking of the reader or spectator so that he becomes convinced that Maleine has regained her love, not only in her own imagination, but in reality.

To effect such an accomplishment Maeterlinck sets the scene for a rendez-vous between Hjalmar and Maleine in the depths of a forest. Actually, Hjalmar, deceived by the evil queen into thinking that Maleine is dead, arranges to meet his new fiancée, Uglyane. A fortunate turn of events enables Maleine to intercept his invitation, so that it is she, instead of the colorless daughter of the queen, who is waiting for him when he arrives at the appointed place in the forest. Night has fallen, and it is so dark that during the greater part of the scene Hjalmar does not notice that the girl with whom he speaks is not the one whom he has expected to meet:

Maleine: Où êtes-vous, seigneur?
Hjalmar: Ici.
Maleine: Où donc? Je ne vous vois pas.
Maleine: Oui.—J'ai peur! Ah! Je vous ai trouvé!
Hjalmar: Pourquoi tremblez-vous?
Maleine: Je ne tremble pas.
Hjalmar: Je ne vous vois pas.—Venez ici, il fait un peu clair, et renversez la tête un peu
vers le ciel.—Vous êtes étrange aussi ce soir!—On dirait que mes yeux se sont ouverts ce soir.—Mais je crois que vous êtes vraiment belle! Mais vous êtes étrangement belle, Uglyane!—Il me semble que je ne vous ai jamais regardée jusqu'ici!—Mais je crois que vous êtes étrangement belle! Il y a quelque chose autour de vous ce soir!—Allons ailleurs, à la lumière! Venez!26

To describe the atmosphere as "strange" is an understatement indeed. The night, the forest, the noise of the wind in the trees set the mood for eerie, supernatural action. Maleine shivers, not from love, but from fright at the thought of being discovered and provoking her lover's anger. Her sudden nosebleed, which covers her clothing with blood stain, is both unexpected and unexplained, but adds to the air of mystery which envelops the whole situation. Nothing in the setting is more strange than the fact that the forest is light enough for Hjalmar to perceive that the girl is more beautiful than he had ever thought her before but too dark for him to realize that it is Maleine and not Uglyane whom he is holding in his arms.

The strangeness is a deliberate creation of the author. By making it so important to the scene, he clouds the issue. Thus verisimilitude becomes of less moment than the prospect of regained love. With the usual conventions of reality removed in this way for him, one is more able to probe with Maeterlinck into the inner heart of the character. The

26 Maeterlinck, La Princesse Maleine, Act II, Scene VI.
artist further reduces the need for reality and heightens the unusual in his scenes by use of a special dialogue technique involving iteration of word or phrase. Though to the prosaic reader or spectator the repetitions often seem bothersome or unnecessary, they also add greatly to the musical dreaminess of the scenes and become powerful instruments to express the shadow-lands of human emotion:

Hjalmar: A quoi songez-vous?
Maleine: Je suis triste.
Hjalmar: Etes-vous triste? A quoi songez-vous, Uglyane?
Maleine: Je songe à la princesse Maleine.
Hjalmar: Vous dites?
Maleine: Je songe à la princesse Maleine.
Hjalmar: Vous connaissez la princesse Maleine?
Maleine: Je suis la princesse Maleine.27

The joys of rediscovery are short-lived. As the lovers cling to each other, a stream of water from a near-by fountain bubbles briefly, "sobs" a little, and dies. Maleine, seized with an unreasoning fear, is jerked back to the reality of her situation. The ordinary poet would have capitalized on such a setting to write amorous dialogue, but Maeterlinck uses both setting and symbol to give readers a momentary glimpse into the subconscious of his personages. He is not so interested in the sentiments and ideas which

27Ibid.
they may express as he is in the vain apprehensions and longings of soul which remain unexpressed. The symbol, such as the jet of water, is the medium by which the inner heart of a character is revealed or by means of which a Maleine or a Mélisande travels from the objective to the subjective world and back again.

There is no effort on the part of Maeterlinck to conceive an original conclusion for his drama. The innocent victim, poisoned and strangled by the evil queen; the hesitant, fearful, and remorseful king; the raging of the night's storm; the scraping of branches and rattling of windows all over the old castle—these are all clearly melodramatic and recognized as popular Shakespearean or Poesque themes.

The importance of the drama lies in the concept of a transcendent love. It is a love which is out of place in a world of factual circumstances and which must and does exist on a higher plane. It is a love which dwells in the minds of the two young people and which, therefore, is able to separate itself from all of the tortures of its physical surroundings. The death of Maleine is predicted early in the play and is skilfully prepared for: expressions with double meanings which the queen lets slip as if by chance; fears with no apparent cause; the sinister visions with which the princess is besieged; gloomy circulars distributed among the people, announcing some untimely event; anguished cries
from sick people; black-robed nuns chanting mournful hymns; the swamp and the forest all around where crows squawk and bats beat their wings in the dark. A Poesque mood of tragic horror overhangs the death scene itself. Yet, sinister though the effects may be, the final feeling is one of triumph. Maleine's body is full of pain, and she is sensitive to impending physical danger. But her mind is filled with the knowledge of her love, and when death comes, it serves her as a great releasing agent. Hjalmar's subsequent suicide results in the final joining of the two into a spiritual union which had been impossible in the finite world.

Such a concept of human love perhaps stretches idealism beyond all the bounds of human intelligence. To provide the balance needed as a check rein on the reader's imagination and to keep at least a semblance of vraisemblance, Maeterlinck has characteristically diverted attention from the unfamiliar to the familiar. In the personage of the old king he depicts human intelligence at its lower and more readily understood extreme. Maleine symbolizes the spiritual heights to which a pure love might lift a soul. The disillusioned king, by way of contrast, exemplifies the ultimate destruction of the human will under the influence of a senile and a guilty passion.

Mention has already been made of Paul Claudel in connection with the development of symbolism. Though he made little contribution to psychological drama, it would be
not to comment on his work. Even if they are superficially treated and almost lost in the mysticism of religious ideology, the characteristics of the analysis play are present in such dramas as Tête d'or and L'Annonce faite à Marie. Claudel's symbolism, unlike that of Maeterlinck, is obvious. This does not mean that his purpose is always clear. As a matter of fact, because more importance is attached to the symbols themselves than to the world which they represent, the reader is often left with a beautiful idea beautifully clothed in symbolic language, but unrelated—at least in the reader's mind—to any dominant thread of thought. Perhaps the following evaluation of Claudel's theater by Denis Saurat is a bit extreme, but it represents a typical non-Catholic reaction:

Claudel began with an epic drama: Tête d'or. No one ever discovered what it was about. Unfortu-nately that applies to Claudel's best efforts in this line: L'Annonce faite à Marie and L'Otage. Those give opportunities to good actors, but the public goes home, even as the reader goes to bed, not knowing what he has been told, yet feeling it is of course his fault. Le Soulier de satin has some good comic scenes. Unfortunately one does not feel sure always that Claudel meant them to be comic.28

It is true that in Claudel's work there is little real drama from the point of view of action, psychology, character development, great moments, or stirring scenes. However, one must acknowledge his extreme popularity and the

almost reverent respect which so many of his readers accorded him. The glorified presentations of Catholic ideology were fresh and tender reassurances in the Faith to many in a world of confusion born of scientific doubt and liberal, naturalistic thinking. On Claudel Edmond Sée comments:

There is a major difference between the obscurity of Maeterlinck's symbolism and that of Claudel. The mystery in Maeterlinck's drama is intangible and difficult to fathom for the simple reason that his symbols call forth ideas and destinies which the author either knew little about himself

29 Sée, op. cit., pp. 86, 87.
or felt it entirely unnecessary to explain. This was not
the case with Claudel. The symbols used are intended to
explain, or at least to present images of, metaphysical
truths about which there is no uncertainty in the author's
mind. One such "truth," the only one of any importance to
the theater of analysis, seems to be that everything, even
human love, has its origin and its existence in necessity.
The reader receives the impression of shallowness in Clau­
del's handling of the physical attraction of the sexes or
the mutual "natural love" of a man and a woman. One feels
that he treats them at all only because they are necessary
to the Divine plan of continuous propagation.

In the first act of Tête d'or the mood of serene accept­
ance of Divine will prepares for the great transforming mir­
acles which occur later and for the symbolic presence of
the Holy Virgin and the Christ. The purity of these per­
fekt figures is the goal, though impossible to reach, toward
which man must strive. The degree of one's happiness in
this earthly life is in proportion to the degree to which
he succeeds in attaining this goal of purity. There are
many deterrents. Since man is endowed with his natural
senses and the power of free choice, he finds himself daily
in conflict with the disciplines which lead directly to the
Christ. He brings upon himself the temptations, anguish,
fears, and jealousies which he experiences. Even his love
is a selfish satisfaction of his own desires. The human
condition would be a hopeless one indeed were it not for the ever-present aim of Pure Grace toward which man is so strongly attracted.

To describe this struggle of man toward Divinity is, in this writer's opinion, Claudel's sole purpose for writing drama. Whatever commonplace matters he deals with he regards as necessary vehicles to explain or describe the Catholic faith. One such matter is the love of Simon Agnel for his prostitute wife. Even though their love was finally an honest one, her life was tainted with sin, and the only logical result was destruction of the defiled body by death. Claudel's lack of concern with the things of the world is obvious in his depiction of Simon. Simon had travelled widely, had lived much, had experienced love, shame, success, and failure. Instead of being moved to grief and self-pity at the loss of his love, he concerns himself with the very practical matter of getting her buried:

Simon: Ma fortune féminine! Mon amour plus doux que le duvet que s'arrache le cygne polaire de dessous les ailes! Va-t'en dans la fosse!

Cébès: Veux-tu que je t'aide à l'ensevelir?

Simon: Oui. Je le veux. Fais cela avec moi; et que cela ne soit pas oublié! Je la prendrai par les épaules, toi par les pieds. Pas ainsi! qu'elle repose la face contre le fond.

Cébès: Qu'elle repose.

Simon: Va dans la fosse où tu ne recevras pas la pluie! À même dans la terre, tout de suite, là où tu n'entendes plus et ne vois plus, la bouche contre le sol, comme quand, le
ventre sur le matelas, nous nous ruons vers le sommeil! Reçois la terre sur ton corps!  

Simon is Claudel's raisonneur. He philosophically accepts the fact of Divine planning. A woman impure must be removed to make room for another, purer love. He attempts to explain to the young Cébès that earthly attachments are meaningless: "si elle meurt et que nous la voyions s'enfuir comme un corps fait de sable . . . Pah! songes idiots!"  

Actually, it is difficult to imagine that Claudel is concerned very much at all with the problems of human emotion. The major theme, leaving little space for analysis of human characters, is the sequence of birth, life, and death and the inevitability of man's struggle toward greater spirituality: 

Simon: Vois, nous sommes enfants à la Mort! Pensées, actions qui dorment, comme les nouveau-nés ramènent les cuisses vers le ventre, se reconquissent au moule maternel. Lentement, lentement on meurt! Le malade regarde et ne peut plus se réveiller, tant le choie le cinéraire! D'anciens souvenirs soufflent dans la mémoire hâbété. Une paresse de mort. Alors la vie se décolore comme les bluets. A cette promenade de mourants fut appris le sourire.  

The psychological method is slightly more apparent in the two succeeding dramas L'Annonce faite à Marie and L'Otage.  

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30 Paul Claudel, Théâtre (Paris: Mercure de France), Tete d'or (première version), Partie I, p. 17.  
31 Ibid., p. 21.  
32 Ibid., p. 19.
They appeared more than a decade later by which time Clau
del's thought had very possibly felt the influence of the
movement, then at its height, to make a precision analysis
of a character's emotional reactions. Neither drama,
however, can be said to belong to a théâtre d'analyse.
There is more psychology employed, more character analysis,
and the theme of the love triangle is present, but all of
these are completely subordinated to Claudel's religious
purpose.

L'Annonce faite à Marie is essentially inspired by
Christian dogma and is intended, not to move the reader dra-
matically, but to put him into a "state of grace." The
chief idea of the drama is that of the communion of the
saints and the powers of the "elect of God" to restore
earthly health and to live in a mental world which lifts
them above whatever suffering they are called upon to bear
in this life. There are three such "saints" in the play:
Anne Vercors, Pierre Craon, and Violaine. Each has his own
private struggle with himself, and it is in the portrayal
of these conflicts, particularly in the case of Violaine,
that Claudel approaches the analysis play.

"La douce Violaine," gentle and kind, is married by her
father to a simple laborer, Jacques Hury. The only deterrent
to the happiness of the marriage is Mara. Mara is the third

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33Tête d'or, 1889; L'Annonce faite à Marie, revised
1912; L'Otage, 1912.
side of the triangle, Violaine's jealous, scheming sister who determines to have Jacques for herself. Real tragedy strikes, however, when Violaine out of sheer pity and tenderness kisses the leper Pierre Craon innocently on the forehead. She contracts leprosy herself, and, through Mara's evil efforts, Violaine's husband refuses to believe that his wife's relationship with the leper had been a pure and honest one. The remainder of the play is the story of Violaine's banishment from "clean" society, her conflict in the wilderness with her physical and mental anguish, and her ultimate return home, dying but glorified in her saintliness. The description of the struggles of the innocent young woman to understand the rejection of her husband's love comes as close as Claudel ever does to probing into mental reactions to earthly situations. But, typical of Claudel, Violaine's problems are resolved, not in terms of what she has been able to work out for herself, but in terms of God's preconceived plan for her. There is no need for her to justify her own behavior to God or to her fellowman. Ultimately Divine purpose accomplished this complete justification for her. Violaine emerges finally, not at all the most unfortunate and despised of women, but one blessed with the highest of favors, one "elected" by God. Because of this obvious religious purpose in Claudel's work, to the subjugation of all other purposes, his theater does not appear sufficiently significant in the continuing development of the technique of analysis to merit further treatment in this study.
However, mention must be made of the Théâtre Libre. It is not merely a coincidence that the date of the début of André Antoine's Théâtre Libre should be so close to the dates already cited as representing the first real beginnings of the théâtre d'analyse. 34 Perhaps nothing gave more impetus to the developing trend toward analytical treatment of character than did Antoine's heroic shedding of theatrical conventions. He opened the door to free and frank discussions of sex; he made it possible to focus a reader's attention if need be on the mind of a single individual, without regard for plot, scene, sequence, and the like. Truly, the "play was the thing" to Antoine, and his theater attracted the efforts of the outstanding dramatists of the time. It is likewise no coincidence that the plays of Brioux, Lavedan, Porto-Riche, Lemaitre, Donnay, and others of like magnitude were produced by Antoine. He provided them with the freedom which they needed to pursue, unencumbered, a line of attack or a trend of thought which depended for development upon such freedom.

Adolphe Thalasso, a conscientious historian of Antoine's enterprise, outlines four essential periods of the Théâtre Libre:

1. Débuts du Théâtre Libre, du 30 mars 1887 au 15 juin 1888.


34 La Chance de Françoise, 1888; L'Infidèle, 1890.
3. Commencement de la décadence (Direction Antoine), 8 novembre 1893—26 avril 1894.

4. Fin de la décadence et mort du Théâtre Libre (Direction Larochelle), du 14 février 1895 au 27 avril 1896.35

Edmond Sée, in his chapter "Le Théâtre Libre, son rôle et ses conséquences," presents a record of the development and decline of the Théâtre Libre and its specific contributions to drama during the "grande période" (1888-1893) and in the years immediately following.36 To Antoine he accords a place of real importance for his influence upon the dramatic production of his time. He saw the director of the Théâtre Libre as an "animateur . . . qui, par sa foi, son activité, son ingénuité passionnée, son eclectisme tumultueux, son ardent amour du théâtre, le servit magnifiquement." According to Edmond Sée, one of Antoine's most valuable contributions was the abolishing of the disassociation that had been established between the theater and literature. For forty years before the Théâtre Libre directors, critics, and even the public thought of professional actors as keepers of secrets or mysterious formulas, like priests of a cult having its rules, its laws, its fixed requirements. And these rules and requirements were considered to be different ones from those which men of letters (particularly novelists or poets) observed. The theater was one thing, literature another,

35Sée, op. cit., p. 17.
36Ibid., pp. 13-29.
and the two were irreconcilable. Sée calls attention to the numerous novelists and conteurs (Balzac, Zola, Daudet, et al.) who failed as dramatists because they were unable to correlate the formulas for successful literature with the formulas for successful drama.

But the Théâtre Libre developed a new dramatic aesthetic which closed the gap between the two arts, replacing, according to Adolphe Thalasso, the theater of "la vie par le mouvement" with "mouvement par la vie." 37

Sée's summary evaluation of the contributions of the Théâtre Libre to all succeeding drama will indicate also its importance to the drama of analysis:

Les caractères deviennent essentiels, immuables . . . et . . . on admet fort bien le mélange des genres cher aux romantiques: vision, tout ensemble tragique et ironique, de la vie. De plus, différents poncifs (dénoeument optimiste, personnages sympathiques, raisonneurs, tirades moralisatrices, esprit à tout prix, et souvent pour pas cher, honnêteté finale et quasi obligatoire des vierges, des épouses tentées seulement, mais s'arrêtant au bord de la faute, etc.) sont battus en brèche, cédant, il est vrai, la place à d'autres poncifs: pessimisme méthodique des dénouements, immoralité a priori des personnages, etc. Néanmoins, . . . l'apport du Théâtre Libre demeure considérable. Grâce à cet apport, bien et habilement administré, les écrivains dramatiques de 1894 à 1914 vécurent une ère prospère, régénèrent fructueusement sur le public et manifestèrent dans tous les genres une exceptionnelle activité. On peut affirmer que, pendant les vingt années qui succédèrent à la disparition du Théâtre Libre, jamais l'art dramatique n'eut un tel éclat, une telle diversité, un tel rayonnement glorieux! 38

37 Ibid., p. 28.
38 Ibid., p. 29.
A number of the young dramatists of the times (1887-1893), a few years later to become leading lights in psychological drama, first won recognition at the Théâtre Libre. Eugène Brieux was one of them. Actually, according to Brieux himself, the Théâtre Libre discovered him. In 1890 his Ménages d'artistes was played there. For the preceding ten years his plays had been rejected by all the theater managers of Paris. After 1890 Brieux flooded the stage with dozens of plays, all of which are usually grouped under the term "social drama" and few of which are of much importance to this study. Some of the best known and most successful are: Blanchette, 1892; Les Trois filles de M. Dupont, 1897; La Robe rouge, 1900; Les Remplaçantes, 1901; Les Avariés, 1901; Maternité, 1903; Les Hannetons, 1906; La Femme seule, 1913; Les Américains chez nous, 1919.

Brieux initiated neither the utility nor the thesis play. Both genres were invented, expounded upon at length, and mastered by Dumas and Augier before him. He might be said to have represented the Théâtre Libre in its desire to present stark realism, but Brieux's sentiment and tender sympathy for the people of his plays give a superficial quality to his naturalism. H. A. Smith comments that in at least ten of Brieux's plays pity and sympathy for the child, 39

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39 These statements are made by Brieux as part of the tribute paid to Antoine in the preface to the French edition of Blanchette, 1892.
or the children, form the dominating motive:

This making the child a center for his plays and also his corresponding criticism of parents who spoil or who meddle with the lives of their children are practically idées fixes in Brieux. He is not at all a consistent defender of the sanctity of marriage. In fact, in the problems of marriage and divorce, the child seems to be his only real concern.40

Such concern prevents Brieux from judging his situations with a completely unprejudiced and impersonal eye. Though he has employed a wide variety of social themes, perhaps his greatest strength, the sentimental, moralistic treatment which he has given them places his plays only upon the fringes of the developing psychological trend. In them there is very little attempt at psychology as such. The love triangle is given little or no importance, and emotional frustrations or reactions are subordinate to the social results of divorce, filial disloyalty, and the like.

But space is given here to Brieux because of his themes, not the treatment of them. Many of his subjects were subjects which also claimed the attention of other writers who were able to handle them with the delicate, probing, analytical procedures in which this study is interested. A number of Brieux's plays dealt with social problems resulting from confused human emotions, whether he attempted to analyze the emotions or not: social diseases, Avariés; illegitimacy and birth control, Maternité and La Petite amie; divorce and

40 Smith, op. cit., p. 224.
infidelity, Le Berceau, La Déserteuse, Suzette, Simone; immoral love, Les Hannetons. Such themes seem to fit hand-in-glove with the problems of human love relationships. But the reader must understand that Brieux was too much a product of the generation which had been brought up on the humanitarian sentimentalism of Hugo's Les Misérables, where society as a whole is brought to account for the weaknesses and distractions of the individual. As aware as he was of the problem, he could not bring himself to lay it at the individual's door and to study coldly, impartially, and psychologically the individual's part in it.

With Henri Lavedan the case is entirely different. He too is a painter of contemporary manners and a moralist. But at this point he parts company with Brieux. Lavedan can look beneath the surfaces of things for the underlying motives, and can, and usually does, emerge with some kind of explanation. Whatever weaknesses in dramatic construction or uncertainties in style there are in his work are compensated for by interest in its psychological penetration. Where Brieux condemns a whole social situation, Lavedan paints a concentrated portrait. It is his supreme gift. Society is not interesting to him unless it provides him with the opportunity to sketch a personality, to depict a character. And character drawing is basic to psychological analysis. Barrett Clark said of him in this regard:

When we think of the bulk of his work, we forget the weak plots of some of his plays, the faulty technique
of many of them, and think only of the three or four commanding figures for which he will be remembered: Le Prince d'Aurec, Le Marquis de Priola, and Paul Costard.41

Denis Saurat, in his typical negative fashion, classes Lavedan with a large group of others (e.g., Curel, Hervieu, Brieux, Mirbeau, Bataille, Bernstein, Donnay, Capus, Tristan Bernard, Porto-Riche) who "are now mere names, which will soon be forgotten."42 Perhaps Saurat's evaluation has not been far wrong if one considers names in the whole of the French theater. But even a cursory examination of the best of Lavedan's pieces will indicate his extreme importance to the théâtre d'analyse. H. A. Smith's observation that "What is best in Lavedan is keen psychological analysis; what he lacks is a corresponding power of synthesis and composition"43 is a valid one as will be borne out later in considering Lavedan's most successful dramas: Le Prince d'Aurec, Le Marquis de Priola, and Le Duel.

Because most of his dramatic efforts before 1892 resulted in a loosely constructed framework of scenes strung together one after the other or a series of related dialogues, Lavedan was unable to attract much favorable notice from critics of the theater. But even in these early pieces his commanding interest in the psychology of the individual

41 Clark, op. cit., p. 69.
42 Saurat, op. cit., p. 75.
43 Smith, op. cit., p. 265.
is outstanding. The théâtre d'analyse is again indebted to Antoine and the Théâtre Libre for recognizing dramatic quality in the little dialogues of Lavedan and for first presenting him to the theatrical world. His first drama, La Famille, played by the Comédie Française in 1891, is hardly more than skilfully strung together conversations. However, interest is held throughout, and already there is the attention to character analysis so important to the later work. In the apparently casual conversation between a young girl and her brother an incidental remark or an involuntary gesture will reveal a deeper thought or a hidden motive. The skill with which Lavedan presents his characters in this way increases steadily until it reaches its high point in Le Duel (1904).

Perhaps the best of these early efforts from the standpoint of literary merit is Le Nouveau Jeu. Call it what you will—comedy, for the lightness and trivial artificiality with which the subject is treated; tragedy, for the dismal facts of the action—it is a highly important piece of work as far as the psychological treatment of love problems is concerned.

In the first place, the theme essential to the théâtre d'analyse, the love triangle, is present. It is not only present; it is the theme. There is no other, not even a subordinate one. Paul Costard, to get revenge on his mistress, marries an honest girl, then proceeds to return to
his mistress. His infidelity discovered, the wife takes a lover and is also discovered in her illicit affair with him. A court of justice finds Costard and his wife equally guilty. That is all. There is no more to the plot than that.

But there is a great deal more to the play than that. Utter simplicity of action with few characters is basic to psychological drama. Situation, incident, and scene are completely subordinate to the mental attitudes toward them on the part of Costard and Alice. His cryptic remarks concerning love and the institution of marriage, his philosophical acceptance of his own shortcomings, even his somewhat twisted sense of loyalty to a mistress, his Figaro-like antics all serve to focus attention upon a personality. The primary interest is in why Costard's behavior is what it is, not in serving judgment upon it. The character of Alice is studied in similar detail, with similar results. She emerges in the mind of the reader an original individual, one who analyzes her situation and reacts in a way which seems to promise the most pleasure and the least hurt.

The théâtre d'analyse had at last arrived. The threads of the psychological play, discernible but loose in many earlier dramatic genres, join firmly together to create a genre in their own right. It is the genre of keen analysis drama. It deals with questions relating to problems which torture the individual and render troublous the relation of one human being to another. Such problems are always limited
in this genre to those which pertain to love or sex. That preoccupation with sex as subject-matter for their plays has always been of interest to the French is unquestionable. But with the théâtre d'analyse there was no other interest. Love and sex were treated from every conceivable point of view: the gentle, honorable affection; the facile, cheap exploitation of physical attraction; rampant, uncontrolled passion; abnormal desire; sex as a social necessity; love as the commanding motive for human conduct. Whatever slant a writer chose to give to it and regardless of how much of his own personality he put into it, the theme was love, and the treatment was a careful, penetrating, psychological study of the characters involved.

The following chapter of this study will be devoted to a consideration of those writers and plays which are most representative of this high point in the development of dramatic psychology: such writers as Porto-Riche, Lavedan, Curel, Maeterlinck, Bataille, Capus, Bernstein, DeFlers and DeCaillavert, Donnay, Lemaitre, and Hervieu.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DRAMA 1890--1914

The assertion was made earlier in this investigation that the use of psychology in the treatment of a love theme is not new in French literature, that it has changed emphasis variously in accordance with the mood and thought of a particular period, and that the psychology employed by the théâtre d'analyse at its height was a peculiar combination of a number of emphases. Since the theater of this period was first a theater of analysis of love problems and second a servant of form, mood, and manner, it is natural that a writer should feel free to pursue whatever course best served his purpose. Only those plays which have seemed most representative of the development of a more searching analytical drama have been selected for discussion. Not one of them can be conveniently placed into a specific category to be classed as romantic, classic, realistic, symbolistic, naturalistic, or the like. Yet nearly every one of the dramas can be said to contain elements of all of these movements.

It is the inner world of the mind and how it affects the outer actions with which our theater is concerned, not the manner in which these things are presented. Dramatic psychology had always had the same concerns but had limited
itself to the narrow confines of an accepted form or, and this too is subservience, had dedicated itself (during the movement of Romanticism, for example) to a certain freedom from form. Neither classic nor romantic psychology had supposed that everything is clear in the human soul. The Princess of Clèves cannot explain even to herself why she does not love her husband but loves M. de Nemours instead; Saint-Preux and Julie d'Etange struggle with two souls, the one virtuous and reasonable, the other weak and impassioned. With both the Classicists and the Romantics the great psychological struggle of a character with himself or with his situation was of extreme dramatic importance. But nearly always the struggle was trimmed and treated to fit the requirements of the day. For example, Phèdre knows that in a sane mind she cannot admit her violent and guilty passion for Hippolyte without bringing about his hate and condemnation. To surmount this problem, she is taken with an illness which renders her slightly demented momentarily, allowing time for an admission of love which would otherwise have been impossible. With an artistic hand Racine gives a proper impression of Phèdre's demented condition and delivers her declaration of love with such ordered logic and eloquence that it assumes the proportions, not of an improper and uncontrolled passion, but of a rhetorical oration. Great romantic protagonists (Antony, Ruy Blas, Hernani, and others) were transformed into similar states of irresponsibility by
indulgence in frenzies of anger, despondency, hate, despair, or wild manifestations of love. With the Romantics these are "accidents" brought about by the tensions of the situation and the over-wrought nerves of the character and pardoned on this basis. Thus they satisfy both the demands of a psychological study and the tastes of the most ardent Romanticist.

Such logically explained psychology became more complicated with the realists and the naturalists. With them man no longer becomes what he wants to be or acts according to his own will. Matter acts upon him constantly. He must submit to the influences of climate, his physical and moral environment, and to the requirements of his own body. These things have the power to confound logic and to alter the individual temperament. Heredity, the basis of Zola's psychology, can combine in one individual the alcoholism of a father, the neurosis of a mother, the health problem of a grandmother, the good judgment of a grandfather. Any organic resistance to such environmental and hereditary influences was dismissed as a psychological phenomenon. The study of the individual was confined to the consideration of him only in relation to his "race," his "moment," his "milieu."¹

To the writers of the théâtre d'analyse all of these methods are either hampering or insufficient. It is

¹A favorite expression of Hippolyte Taine in his study of the importance of heredity, time, and place in the behavior of man.
impossible for them to deny the obscure, confusing influences which body and soul exert one upon the other. The study of the individual, his *monde caché* and his overt actions, is the thing of consuming interest. The psychology of the individual is important, not the method used in explaining him. As a matter of fact, his behavior may or may not be explained. If it is explained, no effort is made to serve a method—classic, romantic, realistic, naturalistic, or symbolistic. Rather, a method, or a combination of methods, is employed to serve the psychological study. Dramatic analysis of this period, then, is unique, both in non-preoccupation with a prevailing form and in power gained from attention concentrated on the analysis itself.

These observations are made, of course, upon considering certain of the plays in retrospect. Even contemporary, or near contemporary, critics, however, were aware of the change and the newness in character analysis, of the broad, free, uninhibiting eclecticism with which a psychological study was conducted. Daniel Mornet comments:

*Du réalisme au naturalisme et de la poésie parnassienne au symbolisme, à l'intuition, à la pensée et à la poésie pure il y a dans la pensée et la littérature française un grand effort de renouvellement. Il est trop tôt pour dire exactement ce qui restera de ces tentatives et ce qui ne sera qu'un bref épisode historique. Mais il semble certain que ceci ne tuera pas cela. Dans leur moyenne, les formes de la pensée et de l'art français ont été*
influencées... par les conceptions nouvelles de
la psychologie...  

Chacun à leur façon, nos poètes, un très grand nom-
bre de nos romanciers et dramaturges ont été artistes
pour être artistes. Si l'on voulait être juste, il
faudrait reprendre... l'étude de presque tous ceux
que nous avons étudiés jusqu'ici: naturalistes,
symbolistes, analystes de la subsconscience; et à
plus forte raison de ceux que nous avons appelés des
humanistes.

Mornet further substantiates his observations with
references to G. Dumas' *Traité de psychologie* (1923) and G.
Bohn's *La Naissance de l'intelligence* (1909), Paulhan's
*L'Activité mentale* (1899), and Pierre Janet's *L'Automatisme
psychologique* (1889) in which all of those writers describe
a new psychology:

G. Dumas constate d'ailleurs que ses collaborateurs
tendent, plus ou moins, vers trois conceptions de
la psychologie rationaliste, analogue à celle de
Renouvier et qui mène à l'idéalisme dont nous avons
parlé; il y a dans l'âme un principe rationnel
permanent, indépendant de l'univers matériel et qui
lui est supérieur;—une psychologie associationniste
... , qui est celui de Taine, a été abandonné et
remplacé par un "associationnisme systématique... dynamique." Les éléments de la pensée ne s'associent
pas passivement, mécaniquement. Ils obéissent à des
sortes de forces créatrices qui suscitent des élé-
ments analogues, écartent les éléments nuisibles.
De plus en plus la psychologie remplace le principe
d'association passive d'images, par celui de direc-
tion, de tendances. Enfin beaucoup de psychologues
font appel à l'intuition bergsonienne qui cherche
t't expliquer l'esprit en débarrassant la psychologie
des habitudes et du langage trompeur de la réflexion

2Daniel Mornet, *Histoire de la littérature et de la
pensée françaises contemporaines, 1870-1925* (Paris: Librai-
rie Larousse, 1927), p. 121.

3Ibid., p. 166.
It is appropriate to begin any discussion of love analysis plays with the work of Georges de Porto-Riche. In spite of Saurat's curt dismissal of this writer as "a mere name, which will soon be forgotten," no student of French drama would fail to accord to Porto-Riche a place in the front rank among the dramatists of his generation. If we spoke of a "school" of psychological or love drama, which we do not do for reasons indicated earlier, Porto-Riche would undoubtedly be recognized as the chief. His sensitive nature, his delicate touch, his genius for analysis of the feminine soul make him a perfect natural for handling the intangibles connected with the subject of love. And the subject of love is his only subject. He observed love, he studied it, he revelled and delighted in it. He mastered the art of portraying nuances of feeling and the not so ordinary complications of a very ordinary human emotion. Add to these a real sense of the dramatic, skill with stage technique, the gift of a simple and direct style, the ability to construct an intriguing, swift-moving story, and the result is a dramatist of first importance—of first importance to the kind of drama to which he dedicated himself, if not to the drama of all times.

4 Ibid., pp. 248, 249.
5 Saurat, op. cit., p. 75.
An entire volume by Edmond Sée dedicated to the work of Porto-Riche will attest to that critic's estimate of the dramatist. In his *Le Théâtre français contemporain* Sée says of Henri Becque and Porto-Riche:

Tous deux peuvent, doivent, je crois être classés parmi ceux que je me plus, ailleurs (Henry Becque ou Servitude et grandeur dramatique) à nommer "les grands réservistes de l'art dramatique," c'est-à-dire des hommes ayant "fait leur temps," accompli à différentes reprises des périodes dans le génie, et qui, ensuite, se turent, stoiques, car ils avaient conquis sur l'ennemi, c'est-à-dire sur le public, les directeurs et les critiques, des drapeaux où l'on pouvait lire le nom de victoires si belles qu'ils hésitèrent à combattre de nouveau.

After *La Chance de Françoise* and *L'Infidèle* the most important play of Porto-Riche, the one upon which his fame rests and, with Donnay's *Amants*, the most representative of the théâtre d'analyse is *Amoureuse*. The popularity of this drama is understandable. Unlike many before and after it, it is written in simple, direct, rapid-moving style. The plot is entirely uncomplicated; as a matter of fact, it is almost non-existent. Interest is wholly in an idea and is maintained through suggestive dialogue. The speeches of the characters are brief, staccato, and charged with meaning. There are only three characters, and of these only one is of real importance. Porto-Riche has developed to an amazing degree in this play the classic ability to prune away the fringes and to focus attention throughout upon his single

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6Sée, op. cit., "La Comédie psychologique; la Comédie de moeurs et de caractère," p. 33.
theme, unequal married love. The theme is timely and realistic. It presents a common problem, and many readers see for the first time laid bare on the stage the truths of their own unpleasant circumstances. Because of their extensive contribution to the development of a genuinely analytical technique this play and Donnay's *Amants* will be examined in some detail.

_Amoureuse_ is a comedy in three acts presented for the first time at the Odéon, April 25, 1891. The setting is contemporary Paris. There is the barest sketch of a plot. Etienne Féralaud, a typical "ladies' man" as well as a successful doctor, finds himself married to a young woman whose passionate love for him bores, stifles, and restricts him in his work. There is a quarrel during which Etienne attempts to explain to his wife the manner in which she smothers him with her love and even suggests, only half seriously, that Germaine take a lover. When she follows his suggestion and enters into a momentary love affair with her husband's trusted friend, Etienne discovers that, after all, he must have her for his own.

This is the story of an oversexed woman, one who lives on love and delights in the torments of jealousy. The theme

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7 Subsequent presentations were: Odéon, November 25, 1891; Vaudeville, March 24, 1896; Vaudeville, October 21, 1898 and June 1, 1899; Renaissance, April 28, 1904; Comédie-Française, June 5, 1908; Porte-Saint-Martin, October 10, 1913; Comédie-Française, November 4, 1918. By 1925 _Amoureuse_ had been presented twenty-two times and had enjoyed unusually long runs each time.
of the ménage à trois—husband, wife, and lover—is suggested immediately in the opening conversation between the lover and the maid of the household:

Pascal: Monsieur est rentré?
Madeleine: Pas encore.
Pascal: Et Madame?
Madeleine: Madame est là.
Pascal: Seule?
Madeleine: Avec Madame de Vitry.
Pascal: (d'un ton bourru) Toujours du monde. 8

From the very first appearance of Germaine the reader is prepared for her rôle of the wife who loves too much. She enters, looking for her husband, and asks tenderly "Tu es là?" Her disappointment at finding Pascal instead is obvious, but she adopts easily the friendly, bantering tone one uses with a close family friend. Even that casual conversation soon concerns itself with the husband-wife problem which is the theme of the play. In only thirteen short speeches Porto-Riche reveals the major points of contention between Germaine and Etienne. Actually, the whole play is presented in brief in these speeches; the remainder of the action only serves to develop these points into a painfully realistic picture for the reader. Germaine is unsuccessful

8 Georges de Porto-Riche, Amoureuse. Théâtre d'amour (Paris: Librairie Ollendorff, 1921), Act I, scene 1, p. 121.
as a wife for the following major reasons: (1) she restricts Etienne's liberty by insisting that he never leave her alone and by having him account meticulously for every minute which he spends away from home; (2) her love is a jealous, selfish emotion which she refuses to share even with Etienne's work; (3) after eight years of marriage she still attempts to be mistress rather than wife to her husband. Her frustration is heightened by the fact that she realizes these things about herself, is willing to admit them but is unable to control her desires. All of this, plus the suggestion of the later infidelity, is presented early in the second scene of the play:

Pascal: Quand votre mari rentrera, j'empêcherai qu'on vous avertisse . . . À quelle heure s'en va-t-il?


Pascal: Singulière idée, nous lâcher ainsi!

Germaine: Depuis huit ans que nous sommes mariés, c'est la première fois que nous nous quittons!

Pascal: Depuis quinze ans, je ne suis pas resté un seul jour sans le voir!

Germaine: Il paraît que ce voyage est nécessaire à ses travaux.

Pascal: Qu'est-ce que ça peut nous faire, ses travaux?

Germaine: Pauvre garçon, je le persécute, je le tourmente. Il n'est pas fâché de prendre un peu de liberté.
Pascal: Entre nous, ma chère, vous devenez insupportable.

Germaine: Je le sais bien. Que voulez-vous? Les pendules d'une maison ne sont pas toutes réglées sur la même heure; quand l'une avance, l'autre retarde.

Pascal: Et elles ne sonnent jamais en même temps.

Germaine: Quelle force de ne pas aimer son mari! Si je n'adorais pas le mien, les choses iraient beaucoup mieux.

Pascal: Le fait est que tout va de travers chez vous. On se dispute, on mange mal... Si ça continue, je ne fiche plus les pieds ici.9

The theme launched thus in the earliest scenes of the play, Porto-Riche proceeds to develop it from every angle. All succeeding speeches, even those having to do with the affairs of Pascal and his mistress, serve to further the theme and to shed more light upon the marriage difficulties and how they are being handled. Germaine shows an amazingly clear head in her summary of Pascal's troubles. In the objective reasonableness with which she is able to examine his situation there is skilfully suggested a workable solution to her own problems. She is able to see that Pascal does not love his mistress but is suffering from her infidelity as though he did love her. However, she is unable to see the parallel with her own situation. When Pascal comments that "l'amour est aveugle" and "Elle me

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9Ibid., scene 2, pp. 125-127.
martyrise,"\textsuperscript{10} Germaine fails to conceive of herself as blind in her oppressive affection for her husband or of Etienne as a martyr. In like manner, she does not realize that she too is, as Pascal says of Madame Brissot, "assommante avec sa dévotion."\textsuperscript{11}

There is no relief from Germaine's preoccupation with her love. Throughout the play every scene in which she appears with Etienne is tense with anxiety resulting from their reaction to each other. The tenseness may take the form of gentle reprimand, excuses and explanations, or it may break into a veritable storm of accusations and threats during which tempers flare and tears flow:

\textit{Upon Etienne's returning home a few minutes late:}

Germaine: \ldots d'ou viens-tu?
Etienne: Je sors de l'Académie.
Germaine: Il n'y a pas eu séance aujourd'hui.
Etienne: Je présidais une commission.
Germaine: Je te crois, moi.
Etienne: Je suis en retard, parce que je suis revenu à pied.
Germaine: Un amoureux aurait pris une voiture.
Etienne: J'ai voulu prendre le tramway. \ldots Mais il fallait attendre trop longtemps, j'ai perdu patience. \ldots Ce numéro que

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 128.
\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 129.
Concerning Etienne's chained existence with Germaine:

Germaine: (avec amour) ... quoi que je fasse, quoi que tu fasses, je resterai là, dans ton existence, dans ma maison, dans ta maison, à tes côtés, toujours, quand même, comme un petit crampon.

Etienne: Tu es terrible.

Germaine: Eternellement nous vivrons ensemble.

Pascal: Et on t'enterrera avec elle.

Etienne: Ah! ça non, par exemple, je veux être seul là-bas.

Germaine: Pourtant, là-bas, je ne te gênerais pas beaucoup.

Etienne: Non, je ne veux pas... je vieillis... heureusement... j'attends l'âge où le cœur est apaisé. Quelle joie de veillir!

...  

Germaine: (tristement) Encore vingt ans d'amour, mon pauvre ami. Du courage.

Etienne: Pardonne-moi. Je dis des choses que je ne pense pas.

Concerning Germaine's consuming love for her husband:

Etienne: Tu t'en vas pour ne pas entendre de choses désagréables, n'est-ce pas?

Germaine: Dame!

Etienne: Tu te sauves, selon ton habitude, au lieu de répondre. Voilà tes arguments.

12 Ibid., scene 3, pp. 131, 132.

13 Ibid., pp. 143-145.
Germaine: Tu sors? . . . Tu ne dînes pas avec moi?


. . .

Germaine: Ah! ta bonté ne dure pas longtemps . . . Toujours la même histoire! ça commence par la pitié, puis c'est de la contrainte, et finalement de l'exaspération . . . Tu n'as pas honte d'être aussi méchant après avoir été aussi caressant tout à l'heure? Tu as la mémoire courte, toi.

. . .

Etienne: (avec impatience) Aimons-nous, mais n'en parlons plus, sacré nom de chien! Il n'y a pas que l'amour au monde, il y a le travail, la famille, les enfants . . .

. . .

Germaine: Je suis trop ta maîtresse pour être une bonne mère, c'est là ce que tu veux dire? . . . (avec rage) Ah! quelle misère d'aimer!

Etienne: (avec désespoir) Ah! quel supplice d'être aimé!

Even such swift-moving action would fail to maintain interest in what might seem to be tiresome repetition of the same idea were it not for the skill with which Porto-Riche presents his idea, adds to it up to the point of expected catastrophe, then lets the details gently resolve themselves into a very natural conclusion. The feat is accomplished by

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14Ibid., Act II, scene 1, pp. 192-195.
impressing the reader both with Germaine's ever-increasing taste for love and Etienne's steadily growing distaste for it. Attention, then, is shifted from the problem of unequal love itself to the changes in the feelings of the principal characters.

Germaine's dedication to love is apparent from the beginning. Though action for the entire play requires only a few days, the reader receives the impression of a progressive development of her passion which took place over quite a long period of time. The writer presents first a simple, romantic emotion natural to young brides and allows one by one the characteristics of an all-consuming love, a selfish and a jealous passion to reveal themselves.

A girlish excitement about love is revealed by Germaine's fancy for the "histoires d'amour." Etienne accuses her, half jokingly, of an abnormal interest in adultery as he reads off such titles as Un Coeur de femme, Notre Coeur Leur Coeur, Trois Coeurs. "Mais trompe-moi donc une bonne fois, puisque tu es si curieuse," he suggests, and the reader feels that he really is not joking at all with this remark. Germaine's explanation for her reading tastes is that she reads what she understands best.

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\(^{15}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ Act I, scene 3, pp. 140, 141.}\)

\(^{16}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 141.}\)
Her love interest reveals a more naturalistic bent in scene five in her comments concerning Pascal's proposed marriage:

Germaine: Ah! les fiançailles!
Etienne: Le meilleur moment du mariage.
Germaine: (avec gaminerie) Moi, je trouve que le meilleur moment, c'est . . .
Pascal: C'est après.
Germaine: Je n'osais pas le dire. 17

In spite of a feigned timidity, Germaine's preoccupation with sex is apparent. It becomes increasingly so in the next scene when she pleads with her husband for one more kiss, one more embrace. Her persistence continues even after numerous rejections by Etienne on the grounds that he must get to work, that he will miss his train, even that the subject of love is at present boring and that the conversation should be changed. 18 As she talks, demands for love become more intense. She observes with real bitterness that daylight is her enemy, that with its appearance Etienne recovers his reason and his cruelty. The night comes to an end and with it her power and prestige. She is left, not with a lover, but with a stranger whom she is not sure of reconquering. This speech, the nearest thing to a tirade in the entire play, launches into anguished questions as to why

17 Ibid., p. 156.
18 Ibid., pp. 166-169.
the charming moment during which half of her husband really belongs to her must be so fleeting, why minds must have different thoughts when bodies experience like sensations, why after such experience two people become complete opposites, even adversaries. 19

Love is ruined for Etienne. His reactions to his wife's smothering attentions are mainly negative to begin with, but the spectator is allowed to see them become entirely so and even aggressive. At first he makes excuses for his "improper" behavior. He wavers between tender understanding of Germaine's feelings and complete lack of concern for them. He is pictured as a man who desired marriage to a faithful, adoring wife in order to escape the torments of infidelity in a mistress, but who finds the responsibilities of such a marriage far more distasteful than he had imagined. Not free to devote the necessary time to his work and feeling his personal liberty slipping away little by little, Etienne finally sees his situation as completely unbearable. His obsession to rid himself of love becomes as strong as Germaine's determination to have it. The result is complete lack of interest in women, even in a potential mistress. His response to Madame de Chazal's suggestion that he take a mistress is a weary "oh . . . ! je

19 Ibid., p. 173.
vous en prie . . . pour qu'on me laisse tranquille." In desperation Etienne asks:

Est-ce que tu crois que cette passion durera toujours? . . . Alors, jusqu'à la fin de tes jours, ton mari sera ton unique occupation?20

His questions and her answer that "Même vieille, en cheveux blancs, je n'aurai que ce souci-là. Résigne-toi, mon pauvre ami. Je t'ai dans le sang,"21 indicate the opposite extremes to which the two have been driven.

Without a reconciliation of the extremes action would have reached a stalemate, preventing a natural ending to the drama. Tension mounts to fever pitch. There are total and uninhibited outbursts of emotion by means of which both lay bare pent-up feelings and thoughts long held in check. Subsequently Porto-Riche very skilfully draws the two characters together by causing each to analyze his own position and empathetically to see himself as the other sees him. For example, even as Etienne states his case, the logic in Germaine's defense of her position, or the very little which she does to defend herself, allowing him to talk on and on, confounds his own reasoning and leads to a more objective evaluation of his situation:

Etienne: (se levant avec rage) Il y a que j'en ai assez, que je suis à bout et que je me révolte. Oui, je le suis de la tendresse absorbante, exagérée, de ton despotisme

20Ibid., scene 5, p. 160.
21Ibid., scene 6, p. 177.
d'être faible, de tes persécutions sentimentales. J'étouffe moralement et matériellement, je veux être libre.

Germaine: Tu es libre.

Etienne: Non... Ma liberté, je ne l'ai pas, je la prends, je la vole. Hélas! j'ai toujours l'air coupable quand je suis content. Mes plaisirs ressemblent à de mauvaises actions.

... 

Ma vie se passe à vouloir t'échapper, la tienne à vouloir me prendre. Que t'importent mes ambitions et mes rêves, tu n'y comprends rien. Quand puis-je travailler ici? Toutes nos heures sont dévorées par des disputes et des réconciliations. Et pourtant mes mensonges écartent bien des tempêtes.

Germaine: Tes mensonges?

Etienne: Qui, je mens souvent, je dissimule, j'altère un tas de choses... C'est ta faute. Grâce à ta nature soupçonneuse, le mensonge est maintenant installé dans mon existence, et cela de telle façon que, si demain je prenais une maîtresse, je n'aurai rien à changer à mes habitudes.

Germaine: Ah! tu es le plus malheureux des hommes, je le reconnais...

Etienne: ... ce qui est grave, ce n'est pas ce que je dis, c'est ce qui est.

Germaine: Oui, c'est ce qui est.

Germaine listens attentively to her husband's suggestions that she would make a more interesting bed partner if she were not always the one who desired love first, if she did not lower the value of it by being so anxious for his attentions or by yielding so quickly to his desires. Her
reactions to these accusations show more resistance but are
cooly calculated to cause him to admit the error of his
own ways:

Germaine: Mais, misérable, tu savais que je t'aimais,
il ne fallait pas m'épouser.

Etienne: J'ai eu tort.

Germaine: Tu avais plus de trente ans, j'en avais
vingt. On réfléchit, surtout quand on
doit être aussi implacable. Je t'ai dit
que je t'adorais, pourquoi m'as-tu prise?
Pourquoi as-tu été bon et faible? Pour-
quoi m'as-tu laissée croire à ton amour?
Pourquoi m'as-tu menti, trompée? Pourquoi
n'as-tu pas été cruel tout de suite?
Pourquoi as-tu si longtemps attendu pour
m'apprendre la vérité?

Etienne: J'ai eu tort.

Germaine: Mais voilà. Tu n'es qu'un vaniteux au
fond, un homme à femmes. Tu voulais être
aimé.

Etienne: Oui, mais pas tant que ça!

Germaine: Je t'ai donné plus que tu ne demandais?

Etienne: Justement.

Germaine: Pauvre homme! Je t'aime trop et tu ne
m'aimes pas assez, voilà mon crime.

Etienne: Voilà notre misère.

With his defenses somewhat shaken, Germaine hastens to take
typical feminine advantage by reminding him that he has for-
feited the right to reproach her since he both encouraged
and shared in the love which he now no longer wants. A reluc-
tant admission of this fact encourages Germaine to press her
point. She insists that since Etienne admits his share in
their love, she alone is not guilty and enumerates all of
the ways in which she has devoted herself and her energies to the welfare of her husband and his household. The bitter complaint continues with the lament that young girls are not instructed early that love and marriage are two different things which do not go together. There is no course open to Etienne except to respond in resignation, "Tu as raison, tu as raison. . . . C'est dommage." Though later action seems to deny it and though his words are chosen with sarcastic intent, Etienne's eyes are opened, as Germaine's have been, to a fuller responsibility and to a more realistic concept of the marriage relationship:

Je suis ton mari, tu es ma femme, je devrais m'incliner. Je n'aurai jamais le courage de te quitter . . . Je me connais; alors à quoi bon? autant me résigner tout de suite. Je t'appartiens . . . Ma fortune, mon nom, mes amitiés, mes haines, tout cela est à nous deux ici . . .

The play closes on an optimistic note. When Etienne prevents Germaine from leaving the house, she warns him to reflect, to realize that he will be unhappy if she stays. His immediate "Qu'est-ce que ça fait!" indicates the psychological reaction of a man who loves his wife in spite of himself and resigns himself to an acceptance of life as it is.

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22 Ibid., Act II, scene 6, pp. 222-228.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
This drama concerns itself indeed with the psychology of love. It is not the emotion in general which is of interest here, but a specific sentiment, the interesting and powerful drive of egoism in love. It is a drive which surpasses in strength, at least in this play, the drives of ambition, vanity, revenge. Its consuming interest is in the one loved, but that is not enough. The loved one must be consumed also by a similar drive toward the one offering his love. The primary motive is both to possess and to be possessed. Porto-Riche has studied the sentiment with a rare intensity. He has shown under what conditions such love is bearable or unbearable, delightful or odious. He has dealt with the chief problem of egotistic love, the one which occurs when there is an imbalance, when the partners do not love equally. The chain binding the two together does not become unpleasant as long as balance in affection is maintained. But when one does not feel quite so deeply as the other, the presence of the chain is felt, hindering and fettering.

There is no thesis here. The reader is impressed, not with the author's moralistic intent, but with his attempt to depict and study a marriage problem which is quite common. Jules Lemaitre in his Impressions de théâtre evaluates Amoureuse:

Avec ses défauts, — . . . qui sont même intéressants par l'espèce de nervosité dont ils témoignent chez l'auteur, — la comédie de M. de Porto-Riche est, à
This evaluation of the play is a valid one. Rarely had a dramatist before Porto-Riche achieved such classic concentration of focus upon a single idea. Rarely had a love problem so completely monopolized every minute of the action, and not often (at least not in the preceding twenty-five years) had the psychology of the individual been of such keen importance both to the action and to the denouement of the drama. In these respects Porto-Riche really is ahead of his times by four or five years. In spite of the tremendous success of *Amoureuse* in 1891, it was not until Maurice Donnay's *Amants* in 1895 that the théâtre d'analyse reached its peak period.

Two plays contemporary with *Amoureuse*, however, are not without interest in the still-developing techniques of analysis. They are Jules Lemaitre's *le Député Leveau*, a comedy in four acts, presented at the Vaudeville, October 20, 1890 and *Mariage Blanc* presented at the Comédie-Française, March 23, 1891. Like *Amoureuse* they are concerned with specific sentiments: the one studies ambitious, the other charitable love. Unlike *Amoureuse*, however, attention is divided between at least two ideas. In both of Lemaitre's plays the love triangle theme shares a place of equal

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26Lemaitre, op. cit., p. 322.
importance with the problems of ambition or charity in love. Not so with *Amoureuse*; the *ménage à trois* is clearly subordinate, even a *deus ex machina*, to the theme of unequal love. In *le Député Leveau*, though, it is difficult to decide whether the author intended the major conflict to be the struggle of the wife and daughter against Leveau and his mistress, the struggle of Leveau for revenge on the marquise, or the uncontrolled ambition of both Leveau and his grasping mistress. The same lack of focus is true of *Mariage Blanc*. What is the principal idea in this play? Is it that kindness and pity, however well-intentioned, are improper motives for marriage? Is it that illness and death are not to be trifled with, are in themselves natural means of weeding out those physically and mentally unsuited for marriage? Or is it that one major act of charity is not sufficient to render one genuinely good, that one will invariably revert to the baser level from which he rose only superficially and temporarily?

Lemaitre compensates for his confusion of theme, however, and contributes considerably to the development of the *théâtre d'analyse* with his character analysis. It is true that the psychology of the marquis and the marquise, of M. and Mme Leveau is an elementary one and not nearly so concentrated and penetrating as is that employed in the study of Germaine. Yet it is the psychological reaction to a situation, and the likely reasons for it, not the situation itself, in which Lemaitre is interested.
Each character is a separate little study, sufficiently interesting to furnish a writer like Porto-Riche or Donnay material for a whole drama. One does not really know whether the marquise loves her husband or Leveau, or, as a matter of fact, whether she loves anyone at all. And certainly one does not know in what way she loves or how much. Only one thing is the reader sure of: the marquise loves for two reasons, money and social position. Her friendly compatibility with the marquis is obvious, as well as the pride with which she bears his name. It would be wrong to judge her as completely evil. One must admit on her behalf a decided reluctance to give herself to Leveau; it is simply the only way she can control him. And the commanding drive of the marquise is to dominate in order to have from society the things she desires. She is a simple type, motivated more by ambition than by love or by the adventure of conquest.

The psychology of Leveau is equally elementary. He is presented as a man with certain naïveté, a man completely taken in by the flimsy promises of a woman more experienced than he in the art of love. He is motivated to his actions by drives that are ordinary, to be expected, and certainly not difficult to comprehend: sensual attraction, vanity, desire of the petit bourgeois to raise his class level. As a matter of fact, his motives are so simple and so normal that in the judgment of the reader Leveau emerges as very guilty but not at all wicked.
The action of Madame Leveau contradicts her personality. She is the small-town provincial type, moral, popular, traditional. That such a good and sympathetic woman should stoop to the abominable act of writing anonymously to the marquis concerning his wife's behavior is difficult to explain if not on the grounds that she is overcome with despair and temporarily not responsible for what she does. Though it was undoubtedly not intended to be so, this slight complication in the character of the wife actually renders her the most interesting study of the drama.

The strength of Mariage Blanc is also in the examination of motives. The plot is simple. Jacques de Thièvres, through sympathy, curiosity, the spontaneous desire to do an act of charity, or the vain hope of justifying a life of questionable deeds with one truly good one—the motive is really not clear—marries a poor girl ill with consumption whose only desire in life is to experience love and marriage before she dies. Simone's sister accuses her of taking Jacques from her, which unpleasantness brings about an attack of the illness. While she is confined to her bed, Jacques, reverting to his old ways, arranges a rendezvous with the sister. Simone overhears their conversation, is severely smitten, and dies of grief.

Chief interest is in the study of Jacques: first, the chain of thoughts, the mental and emotional activity which leads him to his marriage; the struggle which he has to be
to his wife both what he originally intended to be, a protective older brother, and what Simone desires him to be, a husband-lover; the motives for his ultimate infidelity. Lemaitre intrigues the reader also with Simone. Marriage transforms and revitalizes her, gives her a self-assurance which the reader watches grow into the terrible, but perhaps pardonable, egoism of the invalid.

Georges Pellissier pays tribute to Lemaitre's penchant for character study. It is a well-deserved tribute, and valid, though one might question his observation concerning the complexity of the dramatic personages. If they are complex at all, they are certainly not subtly so. Their very simplicity, their ordinary, readily understandable characteristics are the things which make them real. Nevertheless, Mr. Pellissier's comments will attest to the fact that, beginning with Révoltée in 1899, Lemaitre used a method of psychological probing in presenting his characters and his theme:

On reproche à M. Lemaitre soit de représenter parfois des personnages d'une complexité bien subtile, soit de ne pas serrer assez sa composition, soit d'être plutôt un moraliste qu'un "homme de théâtre." Mais ces critiques peuvent se tourner en éloges. Si les personnages de M. Lemaitre sont complexes, c'est par là même qu'ils sont intéressants, ou, mieux encore, qu'ils sont vrais. Si l'action de ses comédies n'affecte pas une rectitude géométrique, laissons s'en plaindre ceux qui veulent qu'une comédie ait la forme d'une théorème. Enfin, s'il donne beaucoup de place aux analyses, ces analyses font justement le mérite supérieur de son théâtre. . . . Nous avons des pièces plus fortes
An important concern of the théâtre d'analyse is the struggle of the moral conscience against immorality. There are elements of this concern in most analysis plays, but in the dramas of François de Curel it is the chief interest. Curel seems to have reflected rather than to have examined or observed. The speeches in the dialogues are long, at times heavy with philosophy, and more to be read and pondered than to be heard. His concept of the theater is an idealistic one, even haughty. He is repulsed by vulgarity and is intrigued particularly by the uncommon soul. L'Envers d'une sainte is purely an intellectual duel between two women who had loved the same man; Les Fossiles depicts the conflict between the dying pride of noble heritage and personal love and the moral obligations to each; La Nouvelle idole ponders the soul-searching problem of whether or not it is right to sacrifice the life of one human being to scientific research in order that other lives may be saved; La Fille sauvage is a study of the dire effects on a young girl of transferring her from her native savage environment to a highly civilized one; La Danse devant le miroir exposes

27 Georges Pellissier, Anthologie du théâtre français contemporain (prose et vers), 1850 à nos jours, third edition. (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1923), p. 309. Pellissier is referring in his comments to the following plays by Lemaitre: Révoltée, 1889; Le Député Leveau, 1890; Mariage Blanc, 1891; Flipoté, 1893; l'âge difficile, 1895; Le Pardon, 1895; la Bonne Hélène, 1896; La Massièrè, 1905; Bertrade, 1906.
the tragedy resulting when two people act, not as they really are, but as each believes the other to be.

If the dramas of Curel are cases of conscience and if they are somewhat preoccupied with the abnormal and the unusual, they are also serious and pungent analyses of motives. They are too philosophical to have been really popular and too ambitious to have accomplished the desired purposes. Curel has tried to pursue the fields of religion, superstition, socialism, rationalistic doubt, moral decadence, and other such inexhaustible areas with the result that his work lacks singleness of effect. Yet there is no denying his use of the principle of psychological analysis in his theater. It is delicate and penetrating. It causes the reader to be ever-watchful for the not so obvious reasons for action as well as the obvious ones. It is inescapable in Curel's depiction of character, scene, and idea.

The first Curel drama of any importance, L'Envers d'une sainte, was presented in Paris at the Théâtre-Libre on January 25, 1892. It was not a great popular success perhaps because of its unattractive subject and the lack of drama in its scenes and language, but the keen and realistic study of character drew unusual praise from the critics. In his Historique of this drama Curel quotes some of these:

Bauer: Un écrivain s'est produit qui, tout de suite, a affirmé sa maîtrise, non par la notation plus ou moins réelle des faits, mais en nous disant la vérité sur une âme, en
Henri Fouquier: L'œuvre, à mon sens, est tout à fait supérieure, non pas comme pièce de théâtre, mais comme étude de psychologie. Les gens qui vont au théâtre pour être amusés ou pour être émus par de gros incidents dramatiques ne seront pas ici à leur affaire. Pour quoter L'Envers d'une sainte il faut être de ceux qui trouvent que les Liaisons dangereuses sont un des plus beaux livres du monde. Son amertume vient de l'avenir intérieur, d'une âme tourmentée de passion et qui, par deux fois, se donne à Dieu et se reprend à Lui.

Henri Céard: La comédie de M. François de Curel témoigne d'une rare délicatesse d'esprit, d'une perspicacité psychologique tout à fait originale.

Jean Jullien: On ne peut contester l'étude des caractères si vivants et si vrais.

Réné Doumic: Il reste que l'Envers d'une sainte se recommande par les qualités les plus rares: une belle curiosité des secrets de la vie intérieure, une hardiesse à mener jusqu'au bout l'étude d'un cas de psychologie, une vigueur d'analyse poussée à fond.

28  L'Echo de Paris, February 4, 1892.
29  Le Figaro, February 3, 1892.
30  L'Événement, February 4, 1892.
31  Le Paris, February 4, 1892.
32  Le Moniteur Universel, February 8, 1892.
Georges Jamati, discussing the rise and fall of various dramatic moods, says of the theater of this time: "Il mettra l'accent sur la pensée jusqu'à tomber dans l'idéologie ... Le dialectique et le didactisme risqueront de le stériliser, à moins que l'absence d'analyse et d'équilibre n'en viennent à priver de consistance." Jamati implies a necessity for a dramatic equilibrium between pure analytical reason and uncontrolled sensibility. Such balance between the real and the imagined, between the natural and the supernatural provides the element of stability which permits the character, in a play like *L'Envers d'une sainte*, for example, to abandon himself to the tyranny of metaphysical or moral torment without forfeiting altogether his logical good sense. He can indulge in idealistic thought and then return to the world of reason. Curel accomplishes this balance in the character of Julie Renaudin. She is both a saint and the opposite of one. Her human soul is in constant conflict with that obscure, magnificent, elusive one which seeks always to secure release for a woman bound by natural emotions.

René Lalou refers to *L'Envers d'une sainte* as "une implacable peinture d'une criminelle inconsciente, sacrifiée et passionnée, réclamée par l'homme et confisquée par Dieu."  

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He is correct in that the play is a picture of a "criminelle inconsciente," but such a limited evaluation hardly does justice to the perceptive analysis of character which Curel has accomplished in this play. The study of Julie is a psychological study of penetrating depth. Her story is a love story, but it is not really presented as such. It is stripped of romance, and the love element, even for French audiences, has no legitimate appeal of its own. This is the morbid story of a woman who—denied the man she loved—attempted to kill his pregnant wife, failed, spent eighteen years of her youth in a convent, and at his death returned home to take her place among her old mother, the grieving widow, and the daughter of her former lover.

The play opens at the point of Julie's return and proceeds in an atmosphere of impending doom to describe the struggle of her moral and religious conscience against the natural desires for revenge on the susceptible Jeanne and her young daughter Christine. Julie is bolstered by the discovery (Henri had confided in Madame Renaudin and his daughter before he died) that Henri had not been "cured" of the love he had had for her. Triumph is short-lived, however, when Jeanne, in a frenzy of despair and confession, admits that finally she had revealed to Henri the secret she had tried to keep, that of Julie's intent to murder. This, plus the new discovery that Henri had counseled his daughter to depend upon Julie for direction and advice, determines the jealous
nature of the woman to have revenge by setting daughter against mother, by depriving Jeanne of her only remaining source of happiness.

It is with this extreme jealousy in love, this envy which is pernicious and evil, that Curel is concerned. His entire purpose is to understand the psychology of a bitter woman whose youth has wasted away without love and whose deep desires to compensate for her treacherous crime lead her into the service of religion. Even in the solitudes of the convent the two personalities of the woman struggle, each seeking supremacy over the other. The evil nature, yearning for love, exerts a jealous, authoritative possessiveness over her pupils. Yet in her own mind such possessiveness is prompted by a sincere love for them, an honest concern for the welfare of their immortal souls. It is only after eighteen years and the death of Henri, with desires for him and for vengeance upon his widow still strong in her mind, that she realizes that her motives toward God have been wrong ones. She says with hopeless resignation, realizing that even in her love for the Faith she has been a failure: "C'est précisément parce que ma vie intérieure n'était pas conforme à ma vocation que j'ai demandé à être relevée de mes voeux."35

Jealousy is the commanding motive for all of Julie's behavior. Though it is understood that her overt reactions to Jeanne stem from the unsuccessful love for Jeanne's husband and though this is the chief interest in the play, in addition Curel makes a consistent effort, somewhat tiresomely at times, to trace every negative thought to an innately envious personality. Julie is preoccupied with the fear of being replaced—in her mother's attention, in the affection of her students, even in favor with God. This fear leads to a fierce desire to dominate, so that she conceives diabolical schemes to control the innocent Christine, and to alienate her from her mother. Then, of course, the greatest torment of all is that of sharing the memory of her lover with his wife.

It is an ugly picture. If this were all of it, the drama would be a distasteful piece indeed. But the author has known how to probe beyond this rather obvious feminine psychology—admittedly Julie's is the abnormal extreme of feminine vengeance—into the deeper recesses of the woman's soul in search of even more elementary drives. Envy determines Julie's behavior, but what basic, primary motive prompts the envy? Results of the probe place the woman in more favorable light, if only slightly so, and effect a clearer understanding of her behavior. Curel is not a moralist. He is not asking the reader to condemn, to condone, or even simply to regard Julie's behavior sympathetically;
he insists only that one try to understand. Daniel Mornet says of the writer:

François de Curel a toujours protesté vivement contre la tendance des critiques à tenir ses pièces pour des pièces à thèses ou même pour des pièces d'idées. . . . Plus clairement encore, si les pièces de Curel mettent en scène des idées, elles ne soutiennent pas de thèse; car en posant les problèmes, elles ne donnent pas la solution. . . . (in reference to Le Repas du lion) Ce n'est pas, dit Curel, une "pièce sociale," c'est une pièce psychologique; et il corrige, pour la vérité psychologique et non pour la vérité sociale. . . . C'est ainsi que les thèses touchent Curel. Elles l'intéressent quand elles sont de la passion, quand elles se prolongent en émotions. Ses pièces seront donc des pièces de passions.36

When the reader understands, for example, that even in the convent Julie could not lose her desires to be a woman, it is with more kindness that he watches her grasp frantically after a normal fulfillment of those desires. What is more natural and warmly feminine than to devote oneself to children? What can be more heart-rending, then, for a lonely woman than, having loved a child, to have the parents suddenly take it away? A revelation of what has really taken place in the heart of such a woman will tend to make the reader forgive, or at least forget temporarily, the wickedness of what she has done:


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36 Mornet, op. cit., p. 224.
vouée de toute mon âme. Mais la famille en les reprenant me brisait le coeur ... On m'appelait "ma mère" et j'étais bien réellement mère, toujours en deuil de quelque fille ... Voyez-vous, je n'ai jamais pu renoncer à être femme, douloureusement et humainement femme, parmi des anges qui ne me comprenaient pas.37

Or it is with genuine compassion that one listens to:

Julie: Croyez-moi, il y a une aridité d'âme qui ne se guérit pas ... Je suis une récluse ... L'habitude est prise de me renfermer en moi-même ... Comprenez aussi que je dois, de mon mieux, continuer dans le monde une existence de religieuse.38

... 

Qu'on me laisse mourir en paix, ce sera la meilleure façon d'avoir pitié de moi! Maman, elle avait raison, notre petite sainte. Il ne faut pas ramener son regard sur la terre après avoir pendant des années contemplé le ciel.39

The problem of Curel is to study the opposing natures of this woman. Julie depends upon the Faith to strengthen her toward good, yet fills Christine's head with mysticism purely as a means of gaining personal power over the girl. She desires to be truthful but lies without recognizing her own falsehoods. She prays for forgiveness of her evil deeds yet feels no pangs of conscience for having committed them. Even in conclusion when Julie renounces her sinister intentions concerning Christine and Jeanne, the writer is unable

37 L'Envers d'une sainte, op. cit., Act I, scene 4, pp. 62, 63.
38 Ibid., p. 67.
39 Ibid., Act II, scene 1, p. 83.
to reconcile the good and the evil of her soul. She turns back to God, not for service and devotion to Him, but as an escape for herself. In spite of her implications that the memory of Henry is no longer a threat to her moral behavior, her concluding remark is a contradiction: "Ah s'il n'y avait pas l'autre vie! . . ."40

L'Envers d'une sainte does not by any means represent a high point in Curel's theater. As a matter of fact, along with Les Fossiles and L'Invitée it represents the early period of his work, which, though it clearly lacked the power of the later drama, is important for the thoroughness of psychological analysis employed in the study of character. The peak period is from 1897 to 1902 during which time Le Repas du lion, La Nouvelle idole, and La Fille sauvage were produced. These plays are of little interest to this study. The trend with which Curel began his work, the analytical study of the minds and hearts of his personages, has been subdued here by an interest in the development of great ideas in the realm of social problems, modern science, or philosophy. Some attention will be given later to one of the last plays, La Danse devant le miroir, in which the writer seems to have become interested again in a study of emotion.

A contemporary critic of French literature, André Billy of the Académie Goncourt, has written a very fine and

40Ibid., Act III, scene 5, p. 133.
detailed account of the literary epoch in France between 1885 and 1905. He does not deal specifically with the théâtre d'analyse, but speaks of "la nouvelle école qui pointait à l'horizon, celle des psychologues." His description of the popular preoccupation with love will indicate the turn that literature in general was taking during that period:

Aux alentours de 1900, il y eut en art et en littérature une sorte d'émulation érotique. Emulation qu'on retrouve partout jusqu'après 1900: sur les affiches, dans les illustrations des petits journaux et dans la peinture elle-même. Le vieux fonds gaulois et frondeur y trouvait une double satisfaction. Un auteur poursuivi devant les tribunaux pour attentat à la morale faisait prime. Toute une presse s'était spécialisée dans le genre galant, voire graveleux. Le Gil Blas, le Courrier Français, et le Fin de Siècle ne se contentaient pas d'un public de collégiens, de demi-mondaines et de vivateurs sur le retour; comme l'Echo de Paris ils s'honoraient de signatures célèbres. Les meilleurs écrivains sacrifiaient à cette mode, et avec d'autant plus de complaisance que c'était un moyen sûr d'atteindre un vaste public. (as for love) . . . Le plaisir physique demeurait sa loi, ne connaissant d'autres limites que la satiété. L'adultère constituait son élément tragique ou comique, suivant les circonstances et malgré la loi du divorce. La sensibilité des écrivains d'une génération se ressent toujours de leur origine. . . . L'initiation sexuelle de ses enfants s'y faisait en général dans une brasserie de femmes, une maison close ou avec une de ces professionnelles qui fréquentaient les cafés d'étudiants. . . .

As René Lalou does of Maurice Donnay, Billy speaks of the best writers of the period "sacrificing" themselves to

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42 Ibid., p. 47.
43 Ibid., pp. 47, 48.
popular taste. It should be suggested that the "sacrifice" was more a literary attempt to represent faithfully the life of the period than simply a yielding to public pressure. Love was in the temper of the times. The best of art is usually an improvement over nature in that it seizes upon the real, shapes it and poetizes it until the result is a beautiful refinement of the raw natural product. So it was with drama as the théâtre d'analyse worked with the problems of love. The problems were real ones and furnished dramatic themes in which the public was immensely interested at the turn of the century. But dramatists handled them carefully. They looked into the psychology of love and sex, studied the fine points of emotion, and often upon rather crude foundations built delicate analyses of human behavior.

Even the symbolists, whose primary emphasis lay in another direction, felt the influence of such a society. Maurice Maeterlinck's Pélélas et Mélisande in 1892 (two years later than his earlier La Princesse Maleine) was already placing more importance on love than on fate. The characters are still over-simplified, far-away, and mysterious, but there is a reality of passion between them that is more clearly human than is Maleine's for her lover. Even though, to use Smith's expressions, Maeterlinck is working in this play with "pure marble" without any of the "clay of material
life,\(^{44}\) his figures are more life-like and there is real, as well as mystical, beauty in the scenes and dialogue.

The story is of extreme simplicity. Méliande is a young woman married to an older man whom she does not love and allows herself to fall in love with her young brother-in-law. Golaud suspects them, has them spied upon, and ends by killing Péléeas and wounding Méliande. The young woman dies either from the wound, or grief, or premature childbirth. In the last scenes before her death Golaud wavers between begging her forgiveness and angrily accusing her of infidelity.

The same symbols are present in this play and with interpretations not so different from those in La Princesse Maleine: the old castle, the spots of blood, the water, the dark forest, the fountain, the contrast of black with white. In much the same way as they do in the earlier play certain events presage evil and warn of impending disaster: ships sailing out to sea even as the storm is brewing; Méliande’s losing her ring in the fountain at the stroke of noon, exactly at the same time that Golaud suffers a fall from his horse; the old man’s repeated insistence that Péléeas not leave the country as he had planned, thus throwing the two young people together and into the very path of tragedy.

\(^{44}\)Smith, op. cit., p. 295.
As in the other Maeterlinck plays the atmosphere is one of strange, ethereal beauty, of a kind of void between the spiritual and the physical world, and the characters are guided by a Destiny which they are powerless to alter. But in Péléeas et Mélisande the poetic is tempered with the prosaic, and the presence of Fate is not so strong. Love is really the compelling force, compelling as it is in the actual, physical world of most men and women. The triangle is as obvious here as it is later in Amants. There is as much deceit in the plan of Péléeas to go with Mélisande into the grotto so as to be able to describe its surroundings to Golaud as there is in any love intrigue. Golaud's sending the child to spy on his wife and her lover reveals jealousy and suspicion which are perfectly normal for the deceived husband. And the problem of who is responsible for Mélisande's pregnancy is certainly a suitable one for the théâtre d'analyse.

Though Fate continues to play a prominent rôle in the dramas of Maeterlinck, there seems to be some wavering in the later plays between the characteristic mystic, symbolic yielding to an overpowering Destiny and a more direct approach which depends on the practical rather than on the

45 Other than the two plays already dealt with the most important dramas are: L'Intruse, 1891; Les Aveugles, 1891; Alladines et Palomides, 1894; Intérieur, 1894; La Mort de Tintagiles, 1894; Aglavaïne et Sélysette, 1896; Ariane et Barbe Bleue, 1901; Soeur Béatrice, 1901; Monna Vanna, 1902; L'Oiseau bleu, 1908.
idealistic realities. Joyzelle, for example, champions love. The importance of Fate is considered, but it is not triumphant in this play. There exists a triangle similar to the one in Pénélope et Médéa, but in Joyzelle the love of the young people is victorious over all of its trials of Fate. Monna Vanna in 1902 is quite non-Maeterlinckean in both theme and style. It is a historical romance with very little of the symbolism which is so characteristic of its author. Long philosophical speeches detract from the usual whimsical and delicate beauty of Maeterlinck's work, but this drama further serves to support the fact that love interest and observation with Maeterlinck are strong enough to justify his position of importance to dramatic analysis.

Reference has already been made to Henri Lavedan as a product of his times. H. A. Smith, a critic contemporary with Lavedan, speaks of him as being "certainly the most versatile of those contemporary dramatists who have made a specialty of psychological love drama and character analysis." Smith has undoubtedly based his comment on the fact that a number of such tendencies are apparent in Lavedan's plays. He varies from the melodramatic evil-punished and virtue-rewarded theme of Catherine to the obviously moralistic Le Marquis de Priola to the soul struggles of Le Duel to the piquancy and realism of Le Nouveau Jeu. Versatility, however, is not the strong point with Lavedan. As

46 Smith, op. cit., p. 263.
a matter of fact, it becomes a real weakness when he applies it to his dramatic construction and composition. Though he compares quite favorably with Porto-Riche and Donnay as far as psychological analysis is concerned, he has been unable to achieve either the synthesis and unity of the one or the power of the other.

Before 1892 Lavedan produced some half-dozen plays, of which perhaps the most worthy of mention are Le Nouveau Jeu and Le Vieux Marcheur.\(^{47}\) In 1892 Le Prince d'Aurec, his "finest character creation,"\(^{48}\) was presented. This marked the beginning of Lavedan's most successful period during which the two "grandes comédies,"\(^{49}\) Le Marquis de Friola (1902) and Le Duel (1904) were presented. These latter two will be given some attention in a later discussion of the psychological drama after 1895.

The only concern of Le Prince d'Aurec is a character analysis of the prince. In presenting a vivid picture of this figure Lavedan has done a masterful job. In scene after scene he lays bare the vices and the virtues of his protagonist. Actually the character reveals himself by his overt mannerisms, his language, his expressed attitudes. The weakness of the analysis is that the reader merely sees

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\(^{47}\) Other plays in this early period are: Une Famille; Viveurs; Sire; Servir; Catherine.

\(^{48}\) Clark, op. cit., p. 49.

\(^{49}\) Sée, op. cit., p. 49.
all of these things about the prince; Lavedan has failed to summarize them into a whole personality. Even in character portrayal he lacks the unifying focus of Porto-Riche and Donnay.

Lavedan does manage, however, to explain the dominant motive for the prince's action. It is the theme of his drama—the pathetic failure to accept the passing away of the Ancien Régime, the struggle of the dying nobility to maintain its divine right against the crass vulgarities of the practical, commercial bourgeoisie. The prince is both a pitiful snob in his pride and arrogant superiority and a man to be admired for his staunch and steady principle. The chief conflict is a social one rather than one involving a love problem, for which reason *Le Prince d'Aurec* does not quite belong to the théâtre d'analyse. It is mentioned here for its power of analysis, but it is left to *Le Marquis de Priola* and *Le Duel* to earn for Lavedan his rightful place among the dramatic psychologists of his time.

Those dramatists already cited in this chapter on the period 1890-1914—Porto-Riche, Lemaitre, Curel, Maeterlinck, Lavedan—accomplished a veritable renaissance which enjoyed its greatest brilliance in the nine year span between 1891 and 1900. The high point in that span of years as far as analysis drama is concerned is represented by an author and a work not yet dealt with—Maurice Donnay and *Amants* (1895). There are others, most of whom were propelled into theatrical
success by the Théâtre-Libre. For example, Edmond Sée includes as most important to what he calls la comédie psychologique during these years such names as Abel Hermant, Albert Guinon, Pierre Wolff, Gustaves Guiches, Octave Mirbeau, Anatole France, Paul Bourget, Marcel Prévost, Lucien Descaves, and even Henri Becque and Eugène Brieux.  

For reasons explained earlier the work of Brieux will not be considered in this study of a developing psychological trend. Becque, as Sée suggests, might be classed among those writers who can be called "les grands réservistes de l'art dramatique, c'est-à-dire des hommes ayant 'fait leur temps,'" but he is both too naturalistic and too early to be of prime importance to a theater of subtle analysis.  

Most of the others names by Sée are first novelists and then dramatists. They write with a keenly analytical intelligence, and their comedies of character both concentrate upon problematical love and treat it with delicacy and penetration. They are, as the critic points out, entirely of their times and should be recognized as further indications of the "sacrée manie de nous analyser" which had become the chief emphasis of French literature in general. Since, however,

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50 Sée, op. cit., pp. 32-56.
51 Ibid., p. 33.
52 Les Corbeaux was presented at the Comédie-Française in 1878; La Parisienne was written between 1882 and 1884 and presented at the Renaissance in 1885.
except for Guinon and Wolff, they do not belong primarily to the stage, their valuable contributions to the psychological drama will only be acknowledged in this study of that genre.

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to noting the continuing trend toward dramatic analysis, particularly as it is indicated in the work of Maurice Donnay; in other plays (subsequent to 1895) by Porto-Riche, Lavedan, and Curel; and in the drama of a second group of writers popular mainly between 1900 and 1914. This latter group represents a kind of "second onslaught" of the group referred to above and includes such names as Henry Bataille, Henry Bernstein, Emile Fabre, Romain Coolus, Jules Renard, and Paul Hervieu. Representative pieces from this group will be noted.

Maurice Donnay's *Amants* was presented for the first time at the Théâtre de la Renaissance on November 6, 1895. It is Donnay's best-known and finest play, and, like his others, it champions love. To Donnay the purpose of art seems to have been to explore love and sex attraction wherever they occur, and rarely, if one is to judge from his plays, are they to be found within the bounds of a legitimate marriage. Even with this emphasis, however, conjugal infidelity in itself is not of prime interest. It is purely, and always, only the foundation upon which the writer builds his character analysis.
Modern critics accept the dramatic contributions of Donnay with somewhat less enthusiasm than did those a little closer to the writer's own period. Hugh Allison Smith, for example, says of him:

Maurice Donnay is probably the most artistic of the contemporary realistic dramatists who furnish the Parisians their daily—or rather nightly—bread, the love play. . . . The popularity of Donnay with the Parisians is legitimate. His work offers an almost perfect blend—not a mixture like Sardou's—of the qualities they most appreciate in life and literature: wit, satire, sentiment and good sense, made with admirable taste and presented in a style of almost Grecian beauty. . . . The word his drama most suggests is exquisite.54

But a quarter of a century later René Lalou tends to minimize Donnay's importance even to the psychological theater:

Toutes les œuvres de Donnay sont limitées par ce perpetual sacrifice à l'actualité, par sa préoccupation de plaire immédiatement à un public momentané . . . Les pièces de ceux qui pourraient être, après Porto-Riche, les représentants du théâtre psychologique, ne semblent point réussir à secouer cette tyrannie de l'actualité sans tomber dans la pièce à thèse. Cette faiblesse n'a jamais permis à Maurice Donnay de dépasser la comédie fantastiste dont son Education de Prince reste le type.55

In so far as it implies small contribution on Donnay's part to the théâtre d'analyse, one must take exception to Mr. Lalou's evaluation of the dramatist. Actually, the real strength of Donnay's work is found in his preoccupation with

54 Smith, op. cit., pp. 266, 267. Smith's work was copyrighted in 1925, twenty-eight years before the publishing date of René Lalou's work.

and his skill in handling the very stuff of which the psychological theater is made: the theme of irregular love and the probing analysis of emotion. With Donnay love is the only important element of life; it is the consuming drive; it has a supreme right to existence regardless of the consequences. He is as preoccupied with it as were the romantics, but without the violence or the tragedy of the latter. There is no vulgarity and none of the brute rawness of naturalism. It is a powerful emotion, but sensitive and delicate, given to much suffering and doubtful happiness, tinged, one might say, with a slight pessimism. The crowning feature of Donnay's love is that he analyzes it from every point of view. His characters concern themselves with trying to see their own situations and understand their own motives with precision-like clearness. Mornet says of him: "Il étudie des âmes inquiètes ou troubles, mais toujours appliquées à comprendre leurs inquiétudes, à voir clair dans leurs troubles, et qui perdent à ce jeu la naïveté du bonheur."56 His zeal for analysis reveals many little side roads of a personality, reaches out into so many dark corners of the soul and into so many different directions that his work often becomes quite complex. It is this complexity, though, according to Mornet, which gives Donnay's drama its original character and its harmony.57

56 Mornet, op. cit., p. 151.
57 Ibid.
One must admit with Lalou a certain narrowness in the work of Donnay, but must observe also that it is an intentionally classical one. Attention riveted on one subject, one theme, gives an essential unity to his art; there is no bitterness in the satire; the behavior of the characters is never crude or improper, but always polished, restrained, and measured. The sentiment may result in tears, but never in sentimental melodrama; rather does it contain, with the language which expresses it, a portion of wit and artfulness reminiscent of Racine. As a matter of fact, Edmond Sée speaks of Amants as a play in which there is "une Bérénice, une 'Bérécinette,' du Demi-monde (le mot est de Jules Lemaitre)." 58 If Donnay's plays enjoyed the popularity of which Lalou "accuses" them, they did so because they reflected the great public interest in both the complex subject of love and the introspective examination of it. The immediate and ultimate success of Amants, La Douloureuse, L'Autre danger, and L'Affranchie deny the implication that they were "sacrificed" to popular taste like the theatrical failures of a mercenary Balzac. A more logical conclusion is that both the work of Donnay and popular demand attest to an art trend which, as has been indicated, had been developing steadily and which, particularly with Amants, had reached its peak.

58 Sée, op. cit., p. 48.
Amants is typical of its author in every respect. First of all, it expounds from the beginning his philosophy of the right to love. Though it is suggested earlier in the minor personality of Madame Jamine, the theme of the play is not apparent until Claudine and Vétheuil have their extended conversation in the sixth scene of the first act. This is a somewhat slower development of the subject than there is in Amoureuse, but Donnay has concerned himself far more with analysis than did Porto-Riche. With Porto-Riche love, or the love problem, is paramount; the analysis, subtle and penetrating as it is, is simply an interesting method of understanding the problem. With Donnay also the love theme is basic and primary, but it must be analyzed. The problem in Amants shares a place of equal importance with its psychology.

Amants is a curious mixture of lyricism, realism, and fantasy. The lovers delight in dreaming, even when they know that in reality their dreams are impossible. They create little spaces in time, apart from routine affairs, in which their love is indulged with complete abandon, but from which they invariably return to the practical matters of a reasonable world. Claudine's logical good sense and her maternal duty to her daughter are always triumphant over her passion regardless of how strong it may be. Though the distinguishing mark of this and other Donnay dramas is the unrelenting probe into the hearts and minds of the characters, there is
here as the writer saw it a faithful representation of French life at the end of the nineteenth century. If there are complications and contradictions, it is because Donnay saw these in the thought, action, and language of the people with whom he concerned himself. Laughter, smiles, tears, spectacle, passion—these are all realities in life, and Donnay dealt with them, perhaps in poetic fashion and with the fantasy of an idealist, but with results that are reasonable. As Mornet observes, Donnay's is a "true fantasy."⁵⁹

The plot of Amants, like that of Amoureuse, is advanced and held together by a series of conversations between the two principal characters. It is the story of a woman who deceives her "legitimate" lover by living with another one, but whose moments of absolute ecstasy in the irregular relationship with Vétheuil are overshadowed by the fear that her reputation, if damaged, will hurt her daughter's chances of a good marriage. This concern for the purely practical welfare of her child is the restraining element which causes the soul conflict between emotion and reason. The subject of infidelity, indeed the entire drama, serves as an instrument for analyzing a guilty, commanding passion.

This purpose is made clear early in the first act. Vétheuil speaks of the popular mania for self-analysis, which prevents happiness and unhappiness from being the simple

emotions that they really are. Life consists of a complicated maze of roads, and living is a matter of trying to decide which road will lead to the desired destination. Confusion, insecurity, and frustration are inevitable since few know where they want to go, some desire the things which several roads offer, and many simply become hopelessly entangled and lost in the maze. Claudine explains her decision to remain still and calm so as not to have a road to choose. When she describes the security which she has in "un ami très sur, tres dévoué et pour lequel j'ai une profonde affection," Vétheuil declares that she is attempting to convince herself, not him, and that "c'est de la psychologie." He concludes that one cannot live in the vacuous calm of which Caludine speaks, that for its very existence the soul requires emotion, trouble, anguish, joy, and even suffering.60

Throughout the play, almost to the exclusion of every other purpose, the dialogue is preoccupied with analyzing personalities or with the psychology of love. Claudine and Vétheuil make discoveries about themselves before they enter into an "agreement" to love each other:

Vétheuil: Qu'est-ce que vous croyez?

Claudine: Je crois que vous avez le désir de me plaire et vous faites tout ce qu'il faut pour ça, mais c'est dans votre nature;

60 Maurice Donnay, Amants (Albin Michel, n.d.), Act I, scene 6, pp. 53-56.
vous seriez auprès d'une autre femme, ça serait absolument la même chose. Vous voyez, moi, je ne suis pas coquette avec vous, et la plus femme de nous deux, . . . c'est vous.

Vétheuil: Vous me croyez incapable d'un sentiment véritable et profond, parce que j'ai toujours l'air de me moquer de moi-même . . . mais ce n'est pas une raison.

Claudine: Oh! je sais bien . . . je suis persuadée qu'avec vos airs de bon blagueur vous devez être parfois très tendre, très petite fleur bleue. N'est-ce pas, vous êtes très sentimentale?

Vétheuil: Comme les étoiles.

Claudine: Et avec tout votre scepticisme, vous devez être très jaloux?

Vétheuil: C'est-à-dire que d'instinct, je suis jaloux; mais je me corrige par le raisonnement . . . c'est-à-dire que je peux être très jaloux, sans raison, et m'en rendre compte, mais alors je ne le fais pas voir.

Claudine: Et quand vous avez des raisons de l'être?

Vétheuil: Alors, je suis insupportable, je prends en grippe le genre humain et si je me trouve dans une partie joyeuse, je suis celui dont les femmes disent: "tu n'inviteras plus ton ami."

Claudine: (riant) Je ris parce que je me reconnais, je suis aussi ridiculement sentimentale et jalouse. D'ailleurs vous m'avez dit tout à l'heure des choses que je pense souvent . . . c'est étonnant ce que nous nous ressemblons . . .

The remainder of the first act is spent in somewhat more serious discussions of love, marriage, and fidelity. There is sheer pessimism in Claudine's conclusion that love, with

61Ibid., scene VIII, pp. 64-66.
its treason, its tears, its sleepless nights, its desires for vengeance, is treacherous and foolish, invariably ends in separation, and altogether is simply too much to suffer. Vétheuil agrees that the only victory in love is flight from it. Relief from such a melancholy atmosphere is provided in the personality of the minor character the Comte de Ruyseux, Claudine's recognized lover and the father of her child. There is both humor and a certain suave intelligence in his philosophical acceptance of his "wife's" behavior. He realizes the limits of his rights in their relationship ("Je veux dire que vous saurez m'éviter le scandale et le ridicule, et c'est la seule chose qu'on ait le droit d'exiger") and, in spite of Claudine's objection that such is not in the French character, regrets only that he had not had from adolescence "des exercices et des méditations sur le cocuage." 62

Act Two, scene three is a bedroom scene between the count and Claudine. It serves as background for the contrast of the two men in the woman's mind: Vétheuil, elusive, attractive, something of the handsome rascal with a great deal of savoir faire; the count, gullible, kind, "un vieux bonhomme." She permits Ruyseux to help her undress and even to kiss her lightly on the cheek, but then, with the typical excuses ("il faut avoir pitié d'une pauvre femme qui a eu

62Ibid., pp. 84, 85.
quinze personnes à diner et autant après. Je suis énervée, brisée . . . et puis ma fille est souffrante . . . et puis on est de vieux amis") denies him the pleasure he most desires. Typical, too, of even the most respectable man who, taken with a woman, can be a brute at times, the count, because "Je t'ai déshabillée, senti ton odeur," loses control and seizes her: "ce que je voudrais, c'est un peu de ta chaleur à toi, de la chaleur de ton corps adoré." It is a scene of crude sensuality. It reveals very subtly, however, the psychology of two people, one overcome by lustful passion, the other by pity, whose cold reason regains control over emotion temporarily out of hand. Ruyseux sees himself for what he really is to Claudine:

Oui, mon tort, vois-tu, c'est de t'aimer toujours, de t'adorer . . . Je sais bien que je n'ai plus l'éttoffe d'un amant, que je suis un vieux bonhomme. . . . je n'ai pas le droit d'être jaloux . . . Est-ce que je suis ridicule?63

Claudine's response "Tu es très bon. Pauvre homme" indicates sincere pity for him, but it is not a commanding enough emotion to prevent her keeping the prearranged rendezvous with Vetheuil, who even then is standing outside in the cold waiting his turn in the bedroom.64

Donnay has drawn his principal characters very skilfully by depicting an ascending jealousy in Claudine, a

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63Ibid., pp. 105-107.
64Ibid.
descending one in Vétheuil. Claudine realizes that she is losing ground by allowing her lover to see her growing envy but is unable to control herself at the prospect of his attentions to other women:

Vétheuil: Ce n'est pas ma faute si les femmes . . .

Claudine: Avec ça . . . Tu t'intéresses à leurs aventures, tu les provoques aux confidences, tu prends des airs de confesseur, de psychologue, tu regardes dans les yeux, tu lis dans leur coeur, tu leur fais le grand jeu . . . Monsieur Prudence, va! Non, c'est vrai, ça me met en colère. Je sais bien que je ne devrais pas te dire ça . . . c'est bête, c'est maladroit, c'est autant de terrain que je perds, mais c'est plus fort que moi . . . Ah! suis-je bête, mon Dieu, suis-je bête! . . . Oh! toi, tu n'es pas jaloux!

Vétheuil: Non? mais si, je suis jaloux, seulement je reste logique. Je ne te fais pas de scènes . . . inutiles . . . et je ne vais pas chercher dans le passé; il n'est pas à moi le passé, il n'est même plus à toi.65

Donnay makes a concentrated study of love in the third act.66 Vétheuil refuses to admit any personal suffering from being in love: "Je suis même heureux, car je suis libre! . . . voyez-vous, c'est ça qui me pesait le plus: l'esclavage. . . . oui, c'est bon . . . de vivre sa vie enfin."

To allow a woman to invade the domain of one's thought, one's heart, one's occupation is to fetter oneself unnecessarily.

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65Ibid., Act II, scene 5, pp. 121, 122.
66Ibid., scenes 3, 4; pp. 159-182.
A man finds himself in better circumstances when he exercises complete ownership of a number of women as, for example, in a harem. In that situation a woman's giving herself to her lover is recognized for its real, its absolute value; there are none of the complications of gallantry, courtship, jealousy, libertinage, and the like—all of which cause undue pain and require a tremendous amount of time.

Vétheuil considers these observations about love only to deny them on the grounds that love is an art, a science. Though most amorous adventures lead to adultery, it is useless to hold them in disdain. Some men are born lovers and must love just as some are born musicians, painters, or poets and are compelled to create music, art, or literature. Feelings and emotions are all-important. There are memories that one cannot escape and that one does not evoke with words, like "paysages de bonheur que l'on revoit dans le silence de soi-même; ... un air que l'on entend, un parfum que l'on respire, et voilà que vous reviviez avec leur intensité les heures de jadis, et que vous retrouvez l'âme que vous aviez à ces heures-là ..." Those who pretend to have no power to love in reality have no power to be loved. However, just as a soul requires for existence a great passion, the passion cannot in its intensity continue to live without a change. Hence, the need for infidelity. Vétheuil concludes his analysis with the decision that love is necessary to man and that infidelity is both natural and necessary to love.
Scene six in Act Three and most of Act Four are concerned with the study, not of l'amour in general, but of the situation of Vétheuil and Claudine in particular. A peculiar brand of real honor begins to show through the superficiality of their guilty passion for each other. Vétheuil discovers, almost to his horror, that his feeling for Claudine is a genuine one. He is reluctant now to continue the deception of the count, desires a love without any more lies, and ends by presenting Claudine with the impossible choice: Ruyseux or him. Claudine likewise yields to reason and duty. She finds herself unable to leave a man who has never been anything except good to her and for whom she has nothing to reproach. An analysis of her plight reveals to her that there are circumstances from which she cannot turn away. Her recompense must come from the experience of honorable self-sacrifice. Hypocrisy, though it has been necessary, has become as distasteful to her as it has to Vétheuil. Claudine is sincere when she declares to him that "je t'ai dans mon coeur et dans ma chair, et je t'aime." But she is equally sincere when she observes that passion excuses everything only among brutes, that there certainly are women who have left everything for their lovers, but that there are others "dont le coeur a été brisé, meurtri pour suivre leur devoir et qui n'ont rien dit."

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67 Ibid., pp. 184-217.
Donnay brings about the "change" which Vétheuil has declared so necessary to a great passion. An analysis of their situation makes him logical. He realizes that love cannot continue to exist under the present conditions:

"... nous avons été des Amants, c'est ce que nous voulions: avoir un mois de bonheur absolu, nous l'avons eu, et maintenant, il faut payer." Vétheuil very wisely concludes that it is better to end their love reasonably, while each still has feelings of warmth and respect for the other. He suggests that they will be "cured" of their love. They will leave each other, but not because either has deceived the other or because they are tired of one another. There are not between them any of the habitual lies or infamies which poison the wounds of love and make incurable sores. They are leaving each other because there is between them a daughter and a friend, tender obstacles. Guilty in their passion, they are acting upon the best of motives, the dictates of honor and duty. With Amants Donnay undoubtedly attained the heights of a theater which was to continue its trend even after the war years and to influence dramatists of that later period.68

68 For example, Paul Géraldy's is a theater of analysis—and the analysis of love. His construction is classic; his action is simple; and he concerns himself, not with the exterior personage and his milieu, but with his interior life. It is a théâtre mondain in which the delicacies of conscience are paramount and the study of love is the raison d'être of the drama. Géraldy's most important pieces were all produced after 1918: Aimer, 1921; les Grands Garçons, 1922; Robert et Marianne, 1925.
It was indicated earlier that Henri Lavedan's name should be considered with that of Porto-Riche and Donnay in the development of the théâtre d'analyse and that his claim to this position rests on two plays: *Le Marquis de Priola* and *Le Duel*. Unlike the earlier *Le Prince d'Aurec* these plays belong entirely to the psychological drama. For what they lack in unity of construction they make up in character portrayal, depth of feeling, and forceful, though poetic and beautiful, scenes.

True to the théâtre d'analyse both plays are concerned with the problematical love theme. Lavedan's concept of love differs somewhat from that of either Porto-Riche or Donnay. It is emotion on the grand scale; the problem must be a great, sweeping one, at times with the scope and proportions of an involved philosophical idea. This is particularly true of *Le Duel*. *Amoureuse* dealt with a common, true-to-life marriage situation; *Amants* was concerned with simple adulterous love; but the problem in *Le Duel* is no less than the soul-shattering struggle of the spiritual mind against the human heart. It is a far graver problem than the one posed by the two earlier dramas and a problem which is less realistic and tinged a little more with poetry and imagination.

*Le Duel*, a drama in three acts, was presented for the first time at the Théâtre de la Comédie Française, April 17, 1905. It is the story of the duel between two brothers for
the love of a woman. This would not be an unusual theme except that Daniel is a priest whose struggles for the woman are spiritual ones designed to keep her soul pure and to protect her from an adulterous relationship with his brother, the Doctor Morey. The Duchess of Chailles had met the doctor during the months in which he cared for her invalid husband. Lavedan has chosen and depicted the perfect type for the rôle he wishes her to play. She is beautiful, titled, and wealthy. She has been disillusioned in love enough to make her resist it; yet she is woman enough to desire it. She is weak in the Faith but relies upon it to allay her fears, real or imagined. Her struggle is between the conflicting ideals of divine and human love.

Such magnitude in the conflict is extremely impressive until Lavedan weakens it with an unconvincing, hatched-up denouement designed to make everything work out right and to have the lovers "live happily ever after." It is disappointing to have been led through an intense study of psychology on a high plane and then, instead of the intellectually or emotionally inspired solution for which one is prepared, to have the husband simply die, removing all obstacles to the lovers' happiness. One has the feeling, too, that Lavedan somehow misses the point in his concept of his own problem. The soul conflict, which is so admirably described until the last scene of the play, is a conflict between divine goodness and erring human passion. It is not the kind of passion
which should result in marriage. Such a conclusion reduces
an otherwise powerful psychological drama to the proportions
of the bedtime fairy tale which always has a happy ending.

However, this study is not primarily concerned with
Lavedan's plot or construction, but with his use of psy-
chology in the love theme. From this point of view Le Duel
deserves a great deal of attention. The theme is made appar-
ent very early in the play, in the second scene of the first
act, when the duchess asks the doctor whether she should
hope for or fear her husband's cure. It develops rapidly
in this scene by means of a lengthy discussion between the
doctor and the duchess. Their common disillusionments with
life, and with love in particular, form the basis from which
an uncontrollable passion for each other is to develop.

The study which the duchess makes of her own situation
in this early part of the play is hardly an analysis. It is
rather a melodramatic recitation of a miserable childhood
and a disappointing marriage. Her doleful description of
what love has been to her reveals a completely pessimistic
concept of human emotion. For the duchess religion offers
no more security than does love. One must respect only the
human laws of honor, duty, safety, and pride.

The doctor's attitude holds life generally in somewhat
brighter prospect. He is a combination of the libre pen-
seur, the nineteenth century concept of the man of science,
and the sensitive soul capable of being touched by human
feeling. One should remain the master of one's mind and heart, but it is the individual's duty to grasp happiness even if it is fleeting and temporary. And happiness is synonymous with love. If love is the source of all man's ills, it is also the only cure for them. It is at this point that Lavedan sets up the idea which is to conflict later with his denouement. The doctor is not eulogizing married love. His entire philosophy is contradictory to the very weak conclusion of the play:

Le Docteur: Parce que je pensais qu'un soldat, un marin, tous ceux qui sont appelés à combattre, et, à plus forte raison, le médecin, qui combat chaque jour, doivent appartenir à tous et n'être à personne. Une femme rend paresseux pour se lever la nuit et quand on a des enfants, on ne sait même pas les soigner.69

Lavedan has done an exceptionally good job of predicting later action, of setting a mood, or of depicting a personality simply by using a casual, suggestive remark. A strong suggestion of the unpleasant relationship which is to exist between the doctor and the duke is made in the doctor's comment early in the play that his presence is painful to the duke. The four descriptive words used by the doctor in the first act to evaluate the duchess are the keys to her personality: "C'est l'être de courage, de douleur, d'intelligence et de sensibilité le plus noble que

The duchess is motivated to action according to these personality traits. The evaluation is complete except for the possible omission of "imagination," which certainly figures in the behavior pattern of the duchess. Actually, the whole theme of adultery is made apparent in the brief conversation between the bishop and the doctor concerning the duchess:

Le Docteur: J'ai la plus grande admiration pour elle.

L'Évêque: (parfaitement naturel) Est-ce qu'elle a un amant?

Le Docteur: Elle! Que dites-vous là? C'est la plus irréprochable des femmes.

L'Évêque: Tout de bon? Vous pensez que je lui fais injure en lui prêtant...

Le Docteur: Un amant? Certes! Not only is the later action of the duchess predicted, but the doctor's ready defense of her suggests his own implication in her action.

An effective technique employed by dramatic psychologists involves determining a character's inner motives and reactions by meticulous observation of his outer manifestations. Lavedan frankly reveals this method when the bishop analyzes the doctor's thoughts:

Tout, cher ami. Votre attitude. Vous avez la convoitise de cette femme. Devant elle, vous n'êtes

70 Ibid., scene 4, p. 38.
71 Ibid., pp. 38, 39.
plus gardien de vos pensées, qui, du fond de vous-même, se ruent à la surface de ce visage et s'y impriment couramment. On les lit—comme une affiche. Le regard pétille, la voix frémit. Si l'on appliquait le sphygmomètre sur votre artère radiale, quand la duchesse est là, il marquerait au moins quinze pulsations de plus ... Voulez-vous en faire l'expérience? Lorsque, tout à l'heure, elle a, dans un mouvement de grâce et de bonté charmante, porté ma main à ses levres, cela vous a choqué. (Faible geste de dénégation) Je l'ai du coin, et un peu de jalousie et de dégout se sont combinés-là ... (Il désigne sa lèvre) en un amer sourire. A peine l'idole avait-elle franchi la porte, vous l'exaltiez!72

In the same way the bishop is certain that the duchess, though she has professed otherwise, is a believer. There are certain outward signs which indicate her faith:

Madame la duchesse de Chailles a des yeux, une façon de les porter haut, de les lever pardessus nous qui indique la direction du ciel; elle a une bouche par où passe, fréquemment, la prière et des mains qui ont pour habitude de se joindre ... 73

With the bishop's analyses of the doctor and the duchess Lavedan skilfully sets up the "duel" of the drama, the conflict between divine and human love. Doctor Morey accuses the church of the persecution of love, of seeing it as a mortal sin.74 The conflict is furthered later in the act by the impassioned argument between the two brothers. The doctor speaks of his struggle to heal physical illness and sorrow as being a worthy struggle for a man but ridicules

72 Ibid., pp. 39, 40.
73 Ibid., p. 42.
74 Ibid., p. 43.
the idea of "une jeune et belle force comme la tienne qui se gache à confesser des cuisinières."75 Brother Daniel counters that at the end of a year in the confessional a simple priest knows more about humanity than all the philosophers added together, that the doctor's duels are only children's games compared with his, and that in a poor little deserted church he sees and hears a thousand times more of life than does the doctor in his well-filled hospitals and salons.76

The real struggle of the drama is exposed when this same argument centers upon what is to be done with the duchess. The priest accepts as his personal responsibility the prevention of this penitent woman from falling into adultery. Insisting that he is not preventing, but only retarding, love, the doctor maintains that desire will triumph in a moment of the woman's spiritual weakness, that human love is inevitable, that all men and all women sooner or later fall prey to that devouring—and necessary—flame.77 The remainder of the drama consists in an analysis of the duchess' mind and heart as she attempts to reconcile the two ideals within herself. Desiring human love, she resists it. Clinging to divine faith for strength to resist, she finds it insufficient. Such is the magnitude of the problem for

75Ibid., scene 6, p. 74.
76Ibid., pp. 74, 75.
77Ibid., pp. 76-79.
which Lavedan has no more challenging or dramatic a solution
than that the bothersome husband should die, leaving the way
open for the guilty passion to become an honorable, married
one and resolving the conflict with the church.

However, it is the study of the conflict up to the
point of conclusion which makes this play important to the
psychological drama. From the first actual love scene\textsuperscript{78} to
the end of the play the analysis of emotion is poignant and
detailed. Extreme melancholia takes over in the mind of the
duchess when she realizes that cure for her husband's ill-
ness is hopeless, frustration, not because of love for the
duke, but because the struggle for his health was the thing
which had sustained her. It had provided the outlet for her
solitude and the distraction from her guilty passion. The
doctor's frank evaluation of their situation reveals the lie
which they are living and demands the truth—at least a
realistic admission to each other of their feelings. Such
admission, however, affords more pain than relief for the
duchess. In acknowledging a lover she loses a friend. She
exhibits here a typically feminine contradiction: she
yearns for love from a man whom she upbraids for paying court
only to her intelligence; yet her chief criticism of the doc-
tor is that by revealing his love for her he deprives her of

\textsuperscript{78}\textit{Ibid.}, Act I, scene 7.
the comforting privilege of holding purely intellectual and philosophical discussions with him.

In Le Duel the lovers seem less preoccupied with the emotion itself than with the analysis of it. Love varies according to the woman involved in it. The woman herself is the deciding factor as to the kind of love which she inspires. Love—indeed, life—is impossible without suffering and conflict. "La souffrance est la respiration des sentiments." Life, however, is possible without either love or Faith. Lacking these, one exists on desire, the desire for a human or a divine passion. Desire without fulfillment, to be thirsty without drinking, is the worst kind of suffering. But love without desire, "mourir de sécheresse et de désillusion près de la fontaine où l'on brulait de s'abreuver," is the worst kind of love.

Though the duchess is the principal figure in a passionate drama, the second act devotes much time to the study of male jealousy. The doctor is as envious of the faith of the duchess as he might have been of her lover. "Vous me faisiez gratuitement des déclarations d'athéisme et ce faux étalage d'indépendance ne servait qu'à masquer de pauvres petites pratiques religieuses expédiées dans l'ombre, en tremblant, comme une mauvaise action!" He accuses her of

79 Ibid., p. 93.
80 Ibid., p. 95.
81 Ibid., Act II, scene 3, p. 121.
playing a double-game, of confiding all of their confidences to a man of the church or to God. Actually, the doctor is jealous of a God whose existence he denies. A more normal jealousy is portrayed in that existing between the two brothers. Again the conflict is between two ideals of love, the chief prize being the duchess. The doctor insists that it is not a question of morals and duty and the Christian mass, but of a man's love for a woman. And it is not love such as the priest imagines—the caprice of a seducer, the carnal passion of a day—, but a noble, a deep, a lasting emotion. The strength of each brother lies in his humiliation of the other, the doctor ridiculing a religion which denies a man the privilege of love, the priest insulting the honorable intentions of the scientific ideal of life and love.

The psychology of the male approach to a woman also makes an interesting study in this play. The doctor makes all of the familiar appeals to feminine beauty, nobility of soul, generosity of heart, and the like before launching into more insistent demands. Virtue and scruples belong to old age; love and life are the elements of youth. Failing still to convince, he resorts to pungent accusations: you have no pity for me; you have neither faith nor the desire for it, only a mystic perversity; you enjoy talking about sin, imagining yourself guilty of it so as to have a valid excuse to call upon your God for deliverance; your faith is
not a sincere one, but only an outlet for an overactive imagination. "Je croirai que la femme est dupe de la pénitente." 82

In a final frenzy of emotion the duchess' analysis of her situation makes her feelings crystal clear:

Au nom de l'amour humain et divin, ces deux hommes de devoir et de foi contradictoires, ces deux passionnés implacables... se disputaient en une sorte d'inceste, mon corps, mon âme, mon bonheur... Ils m'écartelaient! Et c'était moi-même qui m'étais mise dans leurs mains! J'aimais l'un, je respectais l'autre. Je les estimais différemment, j'en avais un égal effroi, je ne pouvais pas plus me passer de celui qui m'étourdissait par les artifices de l'amour que de celui qui m'initiait aux voluptés du renoncement. Je trouvais qu'ils avaient tous les deux raison, tous les deux tort, et je me sentais à jamais leur prisonnière, leur victime, leur obligée. Je fus terrifiée. 83

Escape from such a psychological dilemma seems incredible, yet Lavedan provides it. The duke, in a fit of madness, commits suicide; the duchess, free to marry her lover, loses no time in making her choice between the doctor and the church:

Noir ou blanc, le voile n'est pas pour moi! ...
Non! Je ne suis décidément pas une détachée des choses de ce monde. Je ne suis qu'une femme! rien que cela! tout cela! ... une femme attachée à ses sens et à son coeur, et glorieuse de l'être! 84

Though the earlier Le Marquis de Priola contributes decidedly to love analysis drama, as a keen psychological

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82 Ibid., scene 4, pp. 127-133.
84 Ibid., scene 6, p. 216.
study it falls somewhat short of *Le Duel*. This prose play in three acts was presented for the first time at the Comédie-Française, February 7, 1902. It is a Don Juan play and presents a careful delineation of the Don Juan personality in the character of Priola, a connoisseur in the art of seduction. The work suffers from the lack of an original treatment of the famous subject. The reader must listen to the marquis' recital of one conquest after the other without being challenged very strongly to understand the psychology of his behavior. The weakness of the character analysis in this play lies in the fact that the character is revealed simply by his own account of his exploits. Priola "tells" about his dilettantism, his trifling with the hearts of women, his many successful seductions, and the like. From the telling, however, emerges the Don Juan, not so much a tragic or evil figure, but one with something of the sinister about him and a great deal of the obnoxious and the disagreeable. There is the conviction on the part of the reader that Lavedan's Don Juan is not really the irresistible arch-demon which he considers himself to be, and certainly there is not to be found in his situations either the magnitude or the psychological depth of the problems in *Le Duel*.

However, there is poignant realism in Priola's concept of his own behavior. His summary of what is attractive to him about love and the feminine heart probes beneath the
surface of his actions to reveal something of the psychology of his type:

Car c'est ce qui m'attire, moi, c'est de jouer la difficulté. Je suis un dilettante, un grand curieux... qui se donne avidement le spectacle des hésitations, des troubles, des fièvres et des angoisses du cœur féminin. C'est ma divine comédie; je vois rire, pleurer, mentir, souffrir, sous mes yeux, à ma voix, dans mes bras, et j'y goute une joie profonde, pourvu toutefois que ces sourires, ces baisers, et ces pleurs soient d'exécution brillante et toujours en beauté.85

The dilettante's descriptions of his ruthless onslaughts reveal a cruelty that is typical and a skill in the art of love that can result only from an excellent knowledge of the female nature:

Bientôt arrive l'exquise minute, tant désirée, où je sens palpiter d'abord, puis fléchir ma proie, reconnaissante et abattue, sans que l'on puisse démêler bien exactement dans son dernier regard si c'est qu'elle redoute le coup de grâce ou qu'elle l'implore... Instant suave et décisif! Non!... Voyez-vous, cette première chute qui précède la seconde, il n'y a que cela d'exaltant et de passionnant dans l'amour! Le reste, c'est la prise de possession, l'entrée en jouissance, le pillage et le butin de la conquête. Ce sont d'autres passe-temps.

... Moi qui me pique d'être un raffiné, je ne vous cache pas qu'il m'a plu quelquefois, pas toujours, de m'en tenir à cette victoire, toute morale. En même temps que j'évitais ainsi, avec beaucoup de sagesse, une désillusion possible, je m'accordais cette vengeance permise, d'infliger au monstrueux amour-propre de la femme le plus terrible des affronts, celui qu'elle ne pardonne pas, et je me repaissais avec délices des inutiles éclats de sa fureur et de sa honte.

Elle s'arrangeait pour tout écouter. — Sous l'imper­tinence de ses propos j'ai parfaitement deviné la démangeaison de son désir. Elle cédaît en refusant. Ses yeux hardis la démentaient. C'est elle la maladroite, qui, sous forme de badinage, m'a proposé de venir ici. Elle a une envie folle de moi. Tant pis pour elle, il ne fallait pas aller si vite. Elle s'est trop pressée. Je sais bien pourquoi. Sa situation est critique, elle a eu déjà plusieurs amants, médiocres et sans portée, elle a besoin aujourd'hui d'une vedette, il lui faut le Richelieu de sa vie, et elle a compté sur moi pour lui servir de piédestal et l'ériger dans le monde; elle me fait vraiment de l'honneur . . .

Lavedan has accomplished admirably the task of presenting Priola, proud and conceited, as the "Richelieu" in the lives of women starved for exciting, demanding adventures in love.

In 1914 Frank Wadleigh Chandler completed his work *The Contemporary French Drama of France*. The book, published in 1920 deals with the French theater for three decades, from the opening of the Théâtre-Libre of Antoine to the conclusion of the first World War. Chandler, like a number of his contemporaries, attempts a classification of the leading dramatists of the time. That placing them into more or less fixed categories is particularly difficult in this period is attested by the fact that rarely do two critics agree as to

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88 *For example, H. A. Smith, op. cit.; Barrett H. Clark, op. cit.; Antoine Benoist, *Le Théâtre d'aujourd'hui*; Émile Faguet, *Propos de théâtre*; Charles E. Young, *The Marriage Question in Modern French Drama*; Daniel Mornet, op. cit.*
how even the major writers should be classified. Chandler speaks of Porto-Riche, Donnay, Bataille, Coolus, Wolff, and de Croisset as the "laureates of love," omitting from this category even Lavedan and Capus. These, along with Lemaitre, he terms "ironic realists." Maeterlinck is referred to as a "romancer," Curel and Hervieu as "moralists." Smith places Lavedan with Porto-Riche and Donnay in what he calls a théâtre à succès, a theater expressing the "astonishing vogue" for triangle plays. Both Smith and Joseph Borgerhoff consider Curel a philosopher, and Hervieu's work is spoken of variously as being thesis drama, Classical, rationalistic, and philosophical.

One might speculate as to why there has been such obvious indecision as to the classification of these writers. Perhaps an oversimplified explanation may be that it is always more difficult to place the "lesser lights," lesser, that is, in comparison with the great Classicists or the great Romanticists. However, it is not the concern of this study to discover large movements or to find decided literary places for the outstanding dramatists of the era dealt with

89 op. cit.
90 op. cit., p. 262.
92 Borgerhoff, op. cit.; Hulet H. Cook, Paul Hervieu and French Classicism. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 1945). Humanities Series, Nos. 11-14; Borgerhoff and Smith, op. cit.
in Chandler's book. Rather, it is the purpose here to point up the one element which continues to be evident during these years and which, in spite of the various classifications to which writers might be assigned, tends to provide a common interest. This element is the use of psychological analysis and deep probing in the handling of dramatic material. And, as has been discussed already in this study, most dramatic material at this time dealt with problems of love and sex.

It is because of his psychological treatment of character that Hervieu, though admittedly given to promoting ideas, can be discussed with dramatists like Bernstein, Capus, and Bataille. Les Tenailles studies divorce and infidelity, it is true, but not in the manner of Augier and Dumas, with the obvious intent of pointing up the evils involved. Antoine Benoist says of the play:

Je crois donc que les Tenailles ne sont pas, à proprement parler, une pièce à thèse, et que l'auteur n'a entendu plaider ni pour ni contre le divorce. Il a seulement voulu étudier, sous une forme concentrée et saisissante, quelques-uns des effets que peut produire l'incompatibilité d'humeur dans un ménage.93

Hervieu has accomplished here a masterful study of the psychological effects on the mind and personality of a woman who is forced by her marriage vows to live in incompatibility

with the husband whom she hates. From the first the reader receives the impression of the cruelty of an unhappy marriage. There is a gradual deterioration in the personality of Irène: in the beginning she is a young, pretty, simple-hearted woman, expecting and demanding more of life and love than she is receiving; having requested and been denied divorce, she resorts to the typically feminine procedures of arguing, threatening, imploring, weeping; failing in these, she adopts a more philosophical attitude, takes a lover, and is fairly content until the lover dies; a completely fatalistic resignation settles over her, which the husband mistakes for a "return to reason;" the final result is a heart so smothered with hate that it is unmoved by anything except the desire to protect her child and a mind made vicious and unbalanced in its supreme determination toward vengeance. This is literally the play of one mind against the other. Though Irène's problem resolves itself in the all-too-moralistic outcome of Pergan's having to suffer, as she has been forced to do, the unbearable marriage bond and though the drama takes on the proportions of the thesis play, the fact remains that Hervieu has produced a striking study of the personality and behavior patterns of his two characters.

Les Tenailles, produced in 1895, was the first of Hervieu's plays to merit any importance as far as character analysis is concerned. His reputation rests on approximately a dozen pieces produced between 1891 and 1913, three of which
are strong enough in their use of the psychological method to be mentioned here: *L'Enigme* and *La Course du flambeau*, both produced in 1901, and *Le Dédale*, presented at the Théâtre Français in 1903.

Much has been made over the resemblance of these later dramas to those of Classical tragedy. *L'Enigme*, though the intrigue with its villainous protagonist is a little melodramatic, respects the Classical unities of place and action. As the title suggests, the play is a puzzle in which the reader must discover which of two wives is guilty of infidelity. Curiosity as to the answer to the riddle takes away from both the study of character and the tragic suffering which might otherwise give the play claim to a comparison with the great drama of the seventeenth century.

As there is in *L'Enigme*, there is much in *La Course du flambeau* to suggest the work of the Classicists. The theme is mother sacrifice and filial ingratitude; there is not a note of comedy in all of the action; a single, uniform mood of seriousness and impending doom overhangs the entire drama. However, that a woman would sacrifice her own marriage, steal money, and even kill—not for the sake of her daughter's life, but for the sake of her happiness only—is somewhat unreasonable and lacking in Classic verisimilitude.

Hulet H. Cook is a study entitled "Paul Hervieu and French Classicism" has attempted a reconciliation of "the
dual nature of his art which, in certain respects, so strongly reflects the spirit and form of the Realism and even the Naturalism current in the period, and, in certain other respects, seemingly represents a complete reversion to Classicism. Mr. Cook has pointed to various critics who are high in their praise of Hervieu's drama as a return to the great seventeenth century tradition of Racine, Corneille, and Molière. Regardless of the conclusions which these scholars have been able to come to, there are elements in the character treatment of Hervieu which strongly resemble the pungent psychology, the relentless mental analysis, the careful study of emotion found in Racine. The primary problem of Les Tenailles is neither the social tyranny of the marriage vow nor conjugal incompatibility. It is motivated basically from an inborn selfishness and vanity from which the characters cannot escape and upon which they must build their mental and emotional personalities and their overt actions. It is the psychology of the individual's reactions to his marriage situation, not the marriage situation itself or the evil of it, which is of interest to Hervieu.

In L'Enigme and in La Course du flambeau it is the Classic "tristesse majestueuse" which furnishes the whole

95 Ibid., p. 5.
96 Ibid., pp. 10-12. e.g., Brisson, Doumic, E. P. Dargan, Henry Malherbe, Paul Gaultier, Felix Guirand.
97 Expression taken from Racine, "Preface de Berenice."
pleasure of the play. This tragic sadness—what motivates it in the minds of the characters, the love and life situations which it feeds upon, in brief the whole psychology of it—is the chief dramatic concern of the writer. The fact that he falls somewhat short of the Classical ideal in dealing with contemporary social problems and in yielding more or less to rather moralistic conclusions is of little moment here. His characters are intentional and pointed psychological studies, and this is an important contribution to the théâtre d'analyse. Describing the work of Paul Hervieu, Frank Chandler uses a definition of tragedy taken from Augustin Filon:

A tragedy, according to Augustin Filon, is neither a purely poetic conception nor yet an imitation of life. "It is a moral theorem which has for point of departure certain psychological qualities, and which leads to a rigorous conclusion." In short, it regards human sentiments as the geometrician regards his points, lines, surfaces, and volumes; it is geometrical, a masterpiece of logic and eloquence. Such a definition, whether or not it be applicable to all tragedy, describes precisely the major dramas of Paul Hervieu.98

Le Dédale, a prose play in five acts, was presented for the first time at the Théâtre Français in 1903. It is a study of the emotional struggle of a woman with her conflicting loyalties to two men, her present husband and the former husband from whom she is divorced but to whom she is still hopelessly attracted. The essence of the plot suggests a moralistic treatment in the style of Brieux, the question being whether or not divorce is the answer to marital

98 op. cit., p. 199.
infidelity. The question, however, is completely subordinated to the emotional interest of the play. The result is an intensive probe into what there is in the personality of Marianne which forces her to yield to her former husband, thus making her guilty of the same kind of infidelity that had led her to divorce him.

The action itself is weak. Max and Marianne meet again under circumstances that are almost too convenient to be realistic. Their child becomes ill, and the protracted length of his convalescence provides the necessary excuses for their seeing a great deal of each other. The denouement lacks originality. Obviously the author has not placed much importance upon the way in which he concludes his story. A physical struggle of the two husbands above a high cataract of the Rhone River ends in the opportune death of both of them, leaving Marianne and her son free to work out their futures. The thing of importance is the analysis of Marianne herself, not the details of a plot which is only a necessary tool used by the author to expose the character of the woman.

Le Dédale is a powerful psychological study. It attains extreme heights of emotion. Marianne is quite helpless before the strength of the commanding passion which directs her and yet, before yielding, presents a valiant defense. Love, guilty and unreasonable, triumphs finally, however, and Marianne succumbs to Max. Something of the power of her
emotional struggle is revealed in the following speeches from the last scene in the third act:

Max: Marianne, j'ai été léger, odieux; mais je n'ai jamais eu d'amour que pour toi. Tous mes souvenirs d'amour, c'est toi! ... Tous mes désirs d'amour, c'est encore toi! c'est toujours toi!

Marianne: Tu mens! ... (Revenant à la réalité) Oh! ... Allez-vous-en!

Max: Non, ne te reprends pas! Notre ancien tutoiement est bien revenu sur ta bouche!

Marianne: (le fuyant) Vous m'avez affolée! J'ai la fièvre! Je ne sais plus ce que je dis! Je ne sais plus moi-même!

Max: C'est bien toi que je retrouve, au contraire, comme le soir de notre mariage, avec tes cheveux ainsi tombés, tes épaules nues et ton corps qui frissonne en présantant ce que je te veux!

Marianne: Vous savez que je ne peux plus rien être pour vous! Laissez-moi! par pitié! Ne me torturez pas!

Max: Non, Marianne! Ta plainte est finie. Le seul mauvais souvenir, la seule tristesse, que tu aies respiré dans cette chambre, tu viens de les exhaling. Rappelle-toi maintenant tous les autres souvenirs, tout ce qui a régné, en ce lieu, d'exquis et de passionné, de si violent et de si doux!

Marianne: Taisez-vous! ... Je vous en supplie: taisez-vous!

Max: Je pourrais me taire, et pourtant tu ne cesserais plus d'entendre autour de toi un réveil de choses où ce sont nos baisers qui se remettent à chanter!

Marianne: Je ne veux rien entendre!

Max: Ecoute! Si! Ecoute comme l'air vibre encore de nos murmures d'amour! ... Songe que notre enfant chéri, tu en as conçu l'espoir dans l'asile où nous sommes. La
flamme de son existence future s'est, ici-mêmes, allumée dans ton être . . .

... 

Dans l'ivresse de sentir notre fils vivant, il y a aussi une odeur enivrante d'amour qui refleurit. Ne te défends plus! Reconnais-moi: c'est le père de ton petit, le père qui a désespéré de lui avec toi et qui t'a bien assisté de toute son âme! . . . Ce soir, que nous n'avons plus de crainte, ce soir, que nous avons mérite d'être heureux, le père s'approche du lit de la mère . . . Aime-moi! Je t'adore! . . . Aîmons-nous! Aîmons-nous!

Marianne: (dans le rôle d'une volonté mourante) Ah! Je suis à toi!99

Hervieu's development of the love-problem theme and the use of feminine psychology is augmented in the period 1890 to 1914 by the work of Henry Bataille. Between La Belle au bois dormant in 1894 and Notre Image in 1918, Bataille produced dramas which contributed toward making that span of years the peak period for the analytical theater. Chandler speaks of the writer as "a specialist in the pathology of love . . . who explores the hearts of characters consumed by passion and devoid of will."100

Two of the earliest plays, La Lépreuse and L'Holocauste, set the over-all tones of sad sweetness and pathetic misery which pervade all his succeeding dramas. La Lépreuse, written in 1894 and presented for the first time at the

100 op. cit., p. 106.
Comédie-Parisienne in 1896, and L'Holocauste, presented in 1897 under the title of Ton Sang, are Maeterlinckean analyses of half-human, half-symbolic characters.

In the first play the impending tragedy is obvious from the beginning with the reader's knowledge that the heroine is a leper. The diseased Aliette, the instrument of death for many men in the village, finds in Ervanoik an honest love. Her soul-conflict is between her passion for him and her desire to protect him from herself. Tension mounts as her designing mother, also a leper and bitter because of her lot in life, seeks revenge on the young lover. Most scenes in the play draw dramatic contrasts between disease and wholesomeness, between evil and innocence. The purity of Aliette's love for Ervanoik almost succeeds in saving her from her baser self. Human weakness triumphs, however, and the girl succumbs to a natural feminine jealousy. With passion suddenly out of control she deliberately infects the young man, thus rendering him, like her, socially undesirable and unavailable. It is a bittersweet victory. Finally Ervanoik belongs to her and to her kind. But the tender farewell scenes between the young man and his family somehow fail to provide feelings of triumph. Instead, a cold fear grips Aliette, and remorse, piercing and relentless, settles over her. The drama ends in multiple tragedy: Aliette's loss of Ervanoik's respect and love; isolation from the familiar world; and for both of them inevitable loss of life itself.
L'Holocauste presents love as a fragile emotion, too delicate to withstand the forces of evil and hatred which exist between two brothers. Daniel, sickly, beset by fears and insecurity, has an honest love for Marthe. Maxime, robust and brash, has only a sexual interest in the girl. The major conflict is not between the two brothers, but in the mind of Marthe, who struggles between her sincere sympathy for Daniel and her overwhelming desire for Maxime. Her decision to marry Daniel is made in a pitiful effort to right things after the great "sin" of her illicit relationship with Maxime. Bataille's treatment of the feminine mind under emotional stress is greatly similar to that of Maeterlinck. He uses physical weakness, in this case the blindness of Marthe, to symbolize the ineffectiveness of a pure and simple love against the stronger desires of the flesh or the futility of the struggle of man against his destiny. Interest in the situation of the love triangle is completely subordinate to the psychology of a woman torn between two ideals: sympathy and tenderness toward a noble, sincere emotion and uncontrolled passion for an exciting physical love.

La Marche Nuptiale (1905), Poliche (1906), and La Femme nue (1908) exemplify the work of Bataille which is typical of the pre-war interest in love and the consideration of it from a psychological point of view. The first is a four-act tragedy which promotes the idea that love outside of one's social class is impossible, that an impassioned, unreasonable emotion will soon run its course, leaving only
sordidness and despair. In this drama Bataille departs somewhat from the pathological procedure which he follows in most of his plays, but the emphasis is still on physical motivation of mental reaction. For example, Grace de Plessans realizes that she is in love only after she is kissed.

For his portrayal of Poliche in the play of the same name, presented for the first time at the Comédie-Française on December 10, 1906, Bataille depends upon such physical situations to reveal the innermost character. Under an exterior of polite suavity and modern savoir-faire there is the jealous, vicious, and socially insecure Poliche. Because Rosine's indifference terrified and intimidated him, he attempted to avoid it by appearing detached and uninterested himself. The result is a cordial, fraternal relationship, a kind of brotherly confidence that is devastating to a lover. Something of the mental torture of Poliche is revealed in his own description of the physical effects of losing a mistress:

Poliche: Jacques! Quelle drôle de sensation que celle de perdre une maîtresse! C'est la première fois que ça m'arrive! On sent mieux tout... on est plus ami avec les choses... on est très malheureux et l'on ne sait pas pourtant si ce n'est pas du bonheur... Cela donne une langueur à la vie, extraordinaire. C'est comme si l'on s'ouvrait les veines... c'est doux... c'est doux... Ah! bien, il est frais ton ami Poliche, il est frais!101

By such examination of the inner feelings of his characters, Henri Bataille, as Edmond Sée has observed:

half psychologically, half lyrically . . . seized, embraced "à plein coeur" the ardent, the eternal truth, translated it into scenes of . . . a sensible and ideological eloquence, of an irresistible power . . . so that works like La Femme nue, L'Enfant de l'amour, La Tendresse, Le Phalène enrich and ennoble forever the dramatic literature at the beginning of this century.102

If the work of any one dramatist indicates in its entirety a complete capitulation to the trend of the sex play, it is that of Bataille's young contemporary, Henry Bernstein. Though Mornet considers only his post-war plays (Judith, 1922; La Galerie des Glaces, 1924; Félix, 1925) really fine psychological studies,103 during the period between Le Marché in 1900 and Le Secret in 1913 Bernstein produced striking theatrical pieces, delicate and penetrating probes into the affairs of the human heart. Every play is a play of sex. If that is too blunt a classification, there can certainly be no quarrel with the statement that every play is a play of love: love which activates a problem or love which solves a problem; love as a simple and honest emotion or love as a complex and designing passion; love, whatever its role or whatever form it takes, the commanding drive, the motive for action.

102 op. cit., p. 58.
103 Mornet, op. cit., p. 34.
Almost without exception the central figure of a Bernstein play is a woman. It is feminine psychology which interests him most. This characteristic of his work rather summarizes the trend which had become a very strong dramatic movement even before Bernstein began to write. A psychological study of the love problems of characters was—and is—almost synonymous with a psychological study of the love problems of feminine characters. In Bernstein's theater a woman either struggles toward respectability (Le Détour) or yearns for free love (Le Bercail). She either throws herself frantically at the mercy of one lover after the other in a vain attempt to save her single, commanding love (La Rafale) or purposely abuses a succession of lovers in a malicious effort to ruin one (La Griffe).

La Griffe, La Danse de la mort, and Le Voleur further summarize and emphasize the dramatic atmosphere of their day. They are sex plays in every sense of the word. Action is motivated entirely by the baser drives of the physical nature. They are unrelieved by noble purposes or even by justifiable conflicts between the inner and the outer self. The heroine of Le Voleur steals and amuses herself with the fawning attentions of a susceptible boy with no apparent motive except the satisfaction of physical lust. This extreme preoccupation with sex in its most elemental form indicates a beginning of the decline of the delicate perception with which characters had been studied. Interest in physiology begins to replace interest in psychology. This is not to say
that either Bernstein or the war period marks the decline of psychological drama. It asserts merely that, just as there are indications of a developing analytical theater long before the movement takes shape, there are also indications of a changing emphasis in Bernstein's plays and in the drama of others, of more interest in the physical than in the mental activity of a character.

Yet the fact that the strength of purely analytical drama in this pre-war period suffered only the slightest decline and was still dominating theatrical productions is attested to by plays such as Bataille's *La Femme nue* (1908) and Porto-Riche's *Le Vieil homme* (1911). The first is a study of the young wife-model whose simple, honest devotion to her artist husband leads her to weep, to plead, to attempt suicide, and finally to resign herself in despair to the fact that his love for her is over. A careful examination of what she says and what she does reveals that her single love has rendered her incapable of retaliating by taking a lover herself and has left her with no recourse except misery. The concern of the entire drama is the mental torture of the heroine.

*Le Vieil Homme*, like the earlier *Amoureuse*, but with more sympathy for the heroine, is a study of a woman's love which is stronger than duty or morality or the anguish which it brings her. Thérèse suffers through a lifetime of her husband's Don Juanesque affairs. The final one, as a result of
which the life of his own son is sacrificed, would seem to be the breaking point for Thérèse. Love, though, again proves itself too strong a bond to break. Torn between a momentary hatred for the husband who has been responsible for the death of her child and the old, familiar, irresistible, emotional attraction to him, Thérèse yields to love. Unhappiness will result, but it is her lot. Le Vieil homme dramatizes the feminine nature which is completely dependent for existence upon the satisfaction of human passion.

To this extreme importance did the love-problem play develop between 1890 and 1914. The dramas discussed in this chapter indicate that the growth of the trend toward the use of psychological analysis in the theater was steady and that the trend spread into a theatrical movement which reached its peak in 1895 with Maurice Donnay's Amants and set the dramatic tone for the next twenty years. That an unusual interest in problematical love made itself apparent during these years is the chief conclusion of a study made by Charles Edmund Young. Young deals with the marriage question in all of its aspects: divorce and the opposition to it; the restraints of marriage and the popular preference for a free union; the idea that the civil ceremony is adequate for both the letter and the spirit of the marriage.

bond; the gospel of pardon for marital infidelity; questions of eugenics; the *mariage de raison*; the *mariage d'amour*; the double standard; the place of the courtesan or mistress in the marriage situation. Writing in 1912, Young states that "The eternal triangle composed of two men and a woman or vice versa, two or more of them married, is still the favorite theme for dramatists."\(^\text{105}\) In spite of changing emphases (for example, the preoccupation with the physical) the theme continued to be of major importance even after the war years.

CONCLUSIONS

A cursory review of the principal points made in this study will be helpful in strengthening the whole concept of a developing trend toward the use of psychological analysis as a dramatic technique in the popular play of love and sex. These points can be summarized into three major ones:

1. There was a new kind of dramatic psychology employed;
2. There developed a new kind of drama;
3. There was a new concept of love.

The pungent, probing examination of character by dramatists of the late nineteenth century was similar in many respects to the procedures of Racine, but with two major differences. Racine studied love with a consuming interest in the passion itself; writers of the period with which this study is concerned dealt with the problems of emotion that make it normal or abnormal. The Classical psychology of the great dramatists of the seventeenth century was a mass psychology, applicable universally to large groups of people. Techniques employed by Porto-Riche, Donnay, Lavedan, and their contemporaries were directed toward the individual. A single character was important for his own
sake. No applications or justifications were to be made to society as a whole.

This new concept of psychology necessitated a different concept of the drama. It was a drama of conflicts, but obscure conflicts, often not apparent even to the personage involved. It was broad, free, eclectic, not categorized into a specific genre, but a curious mingling of many ideals. It was a servant of neither Classic order nor Romantic extremes, yet it was characterized by a great deal of both. It was Classical in simplicity, precise focus, penetrating psychology and Romantic in its concern with the problems of the individual and introspective examination.

Particularly typical of this new drama was its delicate, symbolic, analytical portrayal of character. Equally typical was the freedom which writers enjoyed in choosing dramatic procedures. Some, such as Maeterlinck, chose to portray their characters by use of symbols. Some made concentrated examinations of the heart, probing delicately into the not always obvious reasons for the behavior patterns of their personages (Porto-Riche, Donnay, Lavedan). Others followed a more direct line of attack and searched diligently for motives, laying bare and analyzing, with the skill and precision of the surgeon, the hidden desires of the soul (Bataille and Bernstein). Regardless of the treatment which a writer might give to the love theme, the important thing is that he was interested in the psychology of the individual
and sought to study his marital problems in relation to that psychology.

The third important point developed in this study is the reactionary concept of love which was new to the late nineteenth century. It was a return to the Platonic concept which had been predicted by Michelet in 1852. With a growing emphasis on the mental, the spiritual nature of love began to take precedence over the interest in the purely physical, naturalistic aspects of sex and emotion.

This study establishes the love problem as the most prominent subject for theatrical productions toward the turn of the twentieth century. Predicted but not accomplished before 1890, the triangle play began to emerge twenty years earlier in the work of such writers as Dumas (fils) and Sardou and in the early plays of Porto-Riche, Maeterlinck, Claudel, Brieux, and Lavedan. An attempt has been made to show here that during the period classified as the period of the development of the formal psychological drama (1890-1914) the acute problems of human love and the resultant intense emotions provided the major themes for dramatic authors. Chief among these are Georges de Porto-Riche, Jules Lemaitre, François de Curel, Maurice Maeterlinck, Henri Lavedan, Maurice Donnay, Paul Hervieu, Henry Bataille, and Henry Bernstein.

Much space has been devoted to discussions of *Amoureuse* (Porto-Riche, 1891) and *Amants* (Donnay, 1895) because, in
the opinion of the writer, they represent the greatest achievements in the use of analytical procedures. They, of the many contemporary theatrical productions, best exemplify an introspective, searching, individual psychology. They typify the free, eclectic drama of the period. Most important of all, these two plays make thorough use of the most popular theme at the turn of the century, irregular love, and treat it with the keen, precision analysis which is of such dramatic significance in that period.
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Kathleen Bordelon Levingston was born March 7, 1922, in Lake Charles, Louisiana. She received her early education in the public schools of Lake Charles and was graduated from the Lake Charles High School in May, 1939.

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EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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Major Field: French Language and Literature

Title of Thesis: The Evolution of the Théâtre d' Analyse in France between 1870-1914

Approved:

Elliott D. Healy
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Date of Examination:

December 6, 1961