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Thomas Mann, Roger Martin du Gard, and the 'Crisis'
of the Bourgeoisie in pre-First World War
Germany and France

Paul Kilbertus

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
History

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
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ABSTRACT

Thomas Mann, Roger Martin du Gard, and the 'Crisis' of the Bourgeoisie in pre-First World War Germany and France

Paul Kilbertus

European historians describe the decades before the First World War as a 'crisis' period for the bourgeoisie without being able to fully define it. One way to solve this problem of understanding is to use fictional works to analyze the crisis in this social group. A logical choice of authors is Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard, who portray the 'crisis' of the bourgeoisie in Germany and France respectively, particularly in their family novels, Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault. Mann and Martin du Gard and their families lived through a crisis and this allowed the authors to describe and analyze it in their books, raising their personal experience to the social level. The 'crisis' Mann and Martin du Gard evoke in their family novels is twofold, generational and ideological. They conclude that no ideology nor set of religious values was adequate for the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. The solution they propose is complete personal independence, which they define in such a manner as to make them forerunners of existentialism.

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1. INTRODUCTION: GENERATIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CRISIS IN THE BOURGEOISIE?

General Remarks

Historical studies frequently speak of a 'crisis' in the European bourgeoisie in the decades before 1914. In particular, cultural and intellectual studies present this thesis without being very specific about details. For instance, George L. Mosse in The Culture of Western Europe organizes the decades before the First World War under the headings of "Change in the Public Spirit of Europe," and "Dissolving Certainties." (1) He notes that the bourgeoisie desired to escape from materialistic society, specifically in a look historical style of life that contradicted the reality of industrial society. (2) Gerhard Masur, in his study of culture in the pre-First World War decades, Prophets of Yesterday, believes a 'profound transition' in bourgeois culture occurred from 1890-1914. (3) He does not hesitate to sub-classify this period as a time of crisis, using that term in two of his chapters, namely "The Self-Enchanted: The Crisis in Poetry," and "The Disenchanted: The Crisis in Science." (4) Norman Stone, in his

(1) George L. Mosse, The Culture of Western Europe (New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1961), pp. 213, 277.

(2) Ibid., pp. 214, 289.

(3) Gerhard Masur, Prophets of Yesterday (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), p. 37.

(4) Ibid., pp. 106, 159.

primarily political study Europe Transformed 1878-1919, charts the rapid change in Europe in these years. His last chapter "New Structure: The Cultural Revolution of 1900"(5) explains the "violent changes"(6) that took place in European art, culture and intellectual life after 1900. His attitude is: "Still, the years from 1894 to 1910 saw a violent reversal of much that had hitherto been accepted, and the creation of new orthodoxies."(7) H. Stuart Hughes, in his important study of the intellectual history of this period, Consciousness and Society, states that the 1890s were characterized by disillusionment and rebellion.(8) Intellectuals reacted against the cult of material progress and questioned all the social thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hughes concludes that the result of this dissatisfaction was the elaboration of modern thought. Oron J. Hale does not directly speak of a crisis in the pre-First World War decades in The Great Illusion 1900-1914, but rather he believes this time was one of flux and uncertainty:

Time and the historian have given unity to the thought and culture of past centuries--Greek philosophy in the Ancient World, Scholasticism in the Middle Ages, Rationalism in the eighteenth century, and Materialism in the nineteenth. Such a unity cannot be discerned in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Neither religion, nor philosophy, nor any system of political ideas, not even patriotic faith, was dominant or unchallenged. It is rather the pluralities, the conflicts and contradictions, that impress one. Probably the complexity of thought and theory reflected the growing complexity of society and knowledge. One encounters groups

(5)Norman Stone, Europe Transformed 1878-1919 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 389-411.

(6)Ibid., p. 394.

(7)Ibid., p. 394.

(8)H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society (New York: Octagon Books, 1976, reprint of 1958 edition), pp. 33-42.

adhering to older ideas, beliefs, and values along with those propagating the new and the novel. The landscape of thought was crowded with "prophets of yesterday" and apostles of tomorrow.(9)

He later states that one era ended and another began between 1895 and 1914.(10)

Specific studies of Germany and France also raise the issue of a 'crisis' in the bourgeoisie. In France Fin de Siècle, Eugen Weber describes the last decades of the nineteenth century as a "time of discrepancy between material progress and spiritual dejection."(11) Eric Hausen, in Disaffection and Decadence: A Crisis in French Intellectual Thought 1848-1898, assesses his period of study as a time of superficial gaiety that was, in fact, characterized by profound sadness and despair.(12) He bases his claim on the outlook of a large part of the intelligentsia, specifically fiction writers who came from the bourgeoisie, shared its values, yet felt alienated from society and criticized it vociferously. Roger Shattuck, in his study of the French avant-garde from 1885 to the First World War, The Banquet Years, studies four artists to illustrate the dissatisfaction with all previous artistic traditions, expressed in the desire for a new struc-

(9)Oron J. Hale, The Great Illusion 1900-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 82.

(10)Ibid., p. 110.

(11)Eugen Weber, France Fin de Siècle (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 2.

(12)Eric C. Hausen, Disaffection and Decadence: A Crisis in French Intellectual Thought 1848-1898 (Washington: University Press of America, 1982), pp. ix-xii.

ture of thought and expression.(13) As for Germany, Fritz Stern also supports the thesis of a crisis. In The Politics of Cultural Despair, he follows the careers of three cultural critics during the years from 1870-1933, showing how the cultural crisis of despair with modern industrial society prepared the way for Nazism. In particular, he believes in a crisis in the pre-First World War years, using this adjective to describe the decade of the 1890s in one of his chapter titles, "Langbehn and the Crisis of the 1890s."(14) He believes that during the 1890s dissatisfaction with modern society became so widespread that for the first time it began to be exploited for political and ideological ends.(15)

Before attempting to understand this crisis, its subject must be defined because 'bourgeoisie' is a term with a range of interpretations. The difficulty of defining the bourgeoisie is tackled at the beginning of Peter Gay's The Bourgeois Experience. In the chapter he devotes to describing this problem, he can only conclude that the bourgeoisie should be referred to as 'the middle classes' because that title most adequately captures the variety within the bourgeoisie.(16) In the end, he can only come up with a definition of what the bourgeoisie was not, "What nineteenth-century bourgeois had in common

(13) Roger Shattuck, The Banquet Years, revised edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), pp. 37-8.

(14) Fritz Stern, The Politics of Cultural Despair (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), p. 153.

(15) Ibid., pp. 165-168.

(16) Peter Gay, The Bourgeois Experience, vol. I Education of the Senses (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 17.

was the negative quality of being neither aristocrats nor laborers, and of being uneasy in their middle class skins."(17) Therefore, it is not surprising that several terms are used to describe groups within the bourgeoisie. In German, several words express different nuances of 'bourgeoisie.' Bürger expressed the idea of someone with education and property (Bildung und Besitz). (18) The 'bourgeoisie' was considered a product of the industrial revolution, people involved in commerce, entrepreneurs, and capitalists. (19) Finally, kleinbürger described the lower portion of the middle-class such as shopkeepers and clerks. (20) In France, among other terms, the bourgeoisie was divided into 'petite', 'moyenne', and 'haute' bourgeoisie denoting the economic levels. In sum, a variety of cultural and economic types were included in the term 'bourgeoisie.'

This study will focus on the highest economic level of the bourgeoisie, representing a small proportion of the total population of France and Germany. As for a cultural description of this group, such a definition is more difficult to provide because this group was undergoing great change. Nevertheless, Jürgen Kocka provides a cultural definition of the German bourgeoisie that is also applicable to the French bourgeoisie:

La seule solution à ce problème serait de définir le Bürgertum

(17)Ibid., p. 31.

(18)Jürgen Kocka, "La bourgeoisie dans l'histoire moderne et contemporaine de l'Allemagne: recherches et débats récents," Le Mouvement social 136 (July-September 1986): 5.

(19)Ibid., p. 10.

(20)Eda Sagarra, A Social History of Germany 1648-1914 (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1977), p. 253.

du XIXe siècle en termes culturels. Dans cette perspective, la bourgeoisie et le Bildungsbürgertum partageaient une estime spécifique pour le travail régulier, les réalisations individuelles, ainsi que la volonté d'en tirer récompense et reconnaissance, influence et distinction; un type spécifique de conviction rationaliste que la nature et à un certain degré l'histoire peuvent être maîtrisées; la croyance dans le rôle de l'instruction et la sécularisation de la pensée; une conception spécifique idéale de la vie de famille et une appréciation très positive de l'association volontaire; une inclinaison libérale pour l'autonomie politique et le self-government, la concurrence, la solution pacifique des conflits et les compromis, l'acceptation de la diversité, et du "règne du droit."(21)

The crisis of the bourgeoisie is therefore a subject that has been dealt with before, yet often without a rigorous definition of who underwent the crisis nor what precisely the crisis was. One way of obtaining a more precise understanding is to examine literary works and authors as expressions of this crisis. Writers are often sensitive barometers of the 'spirit of the times' providing a sympathetic, personal understanding of society. Two prominent authors, although certainly not the only ones, are Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard. Gerhard Masur, in Prophets of Yesterday, described Thomas Mann's and John Galsworthy's works as "mirrors of an epoch."(22) In the same breath, Masur states that a second level of bourgeois family novels about the pre-First World War period exists that lacks the "symbolic density"(23) of Buddenbrooks and The Forsyte Saga, in which he includes Martin du Gard's Les Thibault. Although Buddenbrooks is symbolically more complete than Les Thibault, a comparison of the two novels is valid. They are both novels of decline of the pre-First World War

 (21)Kocka, "La bourgeoisie dans l'histoire moderne et contemporaine", p. 22.

(22)Masur, Prophets of Yesterday, p. 251.

(23)Ibid., p. 251.

bourgeoisie that can be used as historical "mirrors of an epoch." The opinion of other historians is that Les Thibault can in fact be considered just as historically representative as Buddenbrooks and The Forsyte Saga. The similarity between the three novels has been underlined by French literary historians, such as Claude-Edmonde Magny who wrote:

Et les prédécesseurs de Roger Martin du Gard seraient moins sans doute Zola et ses Rougon-Macquart que Galsworthy ou Thomas Mann, cherchant à écrire, l'un avec ses Buddenbrooks, l'autre avec ses Forsyte, l'histoire d'une société à travers celle d'une famille.(24)

To date, individual studies of how Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard reflect their society exist, yet no comparison of these two authors and the societies they describe has been attempted. This essay undertakes a comparison of the similarities and differences of the 'crisis' of the bourgeoisie in France and Germany. Such a task is enormous. To limit the scope and to permit a close textual analysis, this essay will focus on two major works, Buddenbrooks by Thomas Mann and Les Thibault by Roger Martin du Gard.

On the one hand, the structural similarity of Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault greatly facilitates a textual comparison. Further, the content of the novels is a fictionalized account of each author's family history, specifically emphasizing the generational and ideological crises that destroyed their bourgeois families. The bourgeois crisis is depicted through the conflict of ideologies and sets of family values between the parents and their sons. For the parents, Chris-

(24) Claude-Edmonde Magny, Histoire du roman français depuis 1918 (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1950), p. 309. See also Michel Raimond, Le Roman depuis la Révolution (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1967), p. 183.

tianity becomes an ideology. The sons turn to materialist determinism as an ideology. In the area of family values, the parents strive to uphold the family name and to increase the family wealth. As for the sons, the youngest one of each family rebels against these values and the elder tries to emulate the parental model of success but fails.

Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault are the literary expressions of the ideological and family crises experienced by Mann and Martin du Gard and their families in the years before the First World War. In order to comprehend the crisis of the bourgeoisie, this essay will first analyse the depiction of ideology and family values in the work of Mann and Martin du Gard. Then, their personal experience of the crisis will be examined in order to use the authors' lives and novels to understand the society from which they came and described.

In order to link the different levels and obtain valid historical conclusions, an adequate methodological framework is indispensable. In his stimulating book, History and Criticism, Dominick LaCapra suggests that the proper manner to use novels for historical purposes is to analyze them in three contexts of interpretation: of writing, reception, and critical reading.(25) He defines the contexts of writing as the intentions of the author as well as biographical, sociocultural and political situations.(26) In this study these aspects will be dealt with in chapter four, which describes the authors' lives. LaCapra also includes a novel's position within literary traditions and genres as

(25)Dominick LaCapra, History and Criticism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 127.

(26)Ibid., p. 127.

part of the contexts of writing, a subject discussed later in this chapter. The contexts of reception are those of how the texts are "read, used, and abused in different social groups, institutions and settings." (27) He suggests that particular emphasis be placed on the reaction of literary critics, a subject elaborated in this chapter. Critical reading deals with how "a text renders its pertinent codes and contexts." (28) This analysis, the interpretation of the crisis of ideology and family values contained in Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault, is the subject of chapters two and three.

Socioeconomic Position of the Bourgeoisie

In the pre-First World War period, European population rapidly increased, although France's population grew only slightly. (29) From 1870-1910, Germany's population increased by 24 million, from 41 to 65 million. During this period, both countries were industrializing, albeit at different rates. (30) Rural population and the percentage of the work force in agriculture were decreasing. The population of cities grew and the percentage of the national populations living in cities also increased. From 1872-1911, Paris grew from 2.2 to 4.2

(27) Ibid., p. 129.

(28) Ibid., p. 131.

(29) Population figures are taken A.J.P Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery of Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. xxv.

(30) Ibid., p. xxxi.

million people.(31) In 1872, Paris held 6% of the French population and almost 11% by 1911. Likewise, the German Hanseatic cities, of which Lübeck, the setting of Buddenbrooks, was one of three, grew from a combined population of 691,000 in 1882 to 1.3 million in 1907.(32) These cities held 1.5% of the total population of the German Empire in 1882 and 2.1% in 1907.

During the pre-war period, the wealth of both countries increased rapidly and concentrated in the cities. While the absolute number of very rich was growing, as a portion of the population, it remained static. Comparative figures are not available, yet some measures indicate the enormous economic power wielded by the small economic elite. For Paris, Roger Magraw estimates that 30% of the wealth was held by 1% of the population in 1830, and by 0.4% of the population in 1914.(33) Further, a study of Parisian inheritances gives an idea of the concentration of wealth. In 1911, only 29.2% of people who died left an inheritance, a percentage that had been decreasing slightly during the nineteenth century.(34) As for those who left an inheritance, the liberal professions made up 1.6% of the deaths with

(31) Georges Dupeux, La Société française 1789-1914 (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1964), p. 54.

(32) Frank B. Tipton Jr., Regional Variation in the Economic Development of Germany During the Nineteenth Century (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1976), p. 184.

(33) Roger Magraw, France 1815-1914: The Bourgeois Century (Oxford: Fontana Paperbacks, 1983), p. 364.

(34) Adeline Daumard et al., Les Fortunes françaises au XIX siècle (Paris: Mouton, 1973), p. 195.

inheritances, yet controlled 5.6% of the inherited wealth.(35) Nevertheless, their wealth pales before that of Parisian landowners, who constituted only 3.9% of deaths with an inheritance yet controlled over 44% of the inherited wealth. The other important group was businessmen who also controlled a disproportionate share of the inherited wealth. This small elite, to which the Thibault family would have belonged, not only controlled France's wealth but also its politics and government in the century before the First World War.(36)

The situation in Germany was very similar to that of France. The Hanseatic cities were atypical of Germany because they were wealthier(37) and more concentrated on commerce than the rest of the Empire.(38) Nevertheless, the Hanseatic cities did follow the Empire's increase in population, as well as the trend towards a decreasing proportion of labour dedicated to agriculture and increase in labour dedicated to the industrial and service sectors. Karl Helfferich, author of Germany's Economic Progress and National Wealth 1888-1913, used Prussian income tax information for his study, extrapolating that Prussia, with 60% of the Empire's population, was representative of the Empire.

(35)Ibid., p. 196 contains a breakdown by occupation of the successions for 1911.

(36)Magraw's book France 1815-1914 is built around this thesis and uses it to justify his naming this period "The Bourgeois Century."

(37)Karl Helfferich, Germany's Economic Progress and National Wealth 1883-1913 (New York: Germanistic Society of America, 1914). On p. 99, the author estimates the per capita income of the Hanseatic cities to be two thirds above the national average.

(38)Tipton, Regional Variation in the Economic Development of Germany. A chart of the distribution of employment in Germany for 1882, 1895 and 1907 is on p. 82 and a corresponding chart for the Hanseatic cities is on p. 184 showing the higher concentration of employment there of commercial labour.

Accepting this assertion, the image the statistics provide for Germany corresponds well to the image of society portrayed in Buddenbrooks. Firstly, in 1896, two-thirds of the Prussian income earning population paid no income tax because they were below the minimum income, and the top 0.4% earned 14% of all taxable income.(39) In 1912, after an estimated 45% increase in per capita income, when only 40% of the income earning population did not earn enough to pay income tax, a slightly smaller percentage of income earners controlled the same percentage of taxable income.(40) Peter Gay also concluded for all of Europe that although the amount of people with a minimum of money increased at the lower end of the bourgeoisie in the late nineteenth-century, the very wealthy remained a very small minority.(41)

The fictional Buddenbrook and Thibault families belonged to a small economic elite that actually existed historically. In both novels as well, the rising economic position of the families brings with it political power, or at least political influence. Therefore, both fictional families portray the upper bourgeoisie in France and Germany in a manner reflecting its actual economic and political position. Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault describe the ideological and generational crisis in the pre-war bourgeoisie that actually existed as a privileged economic class.

(39) Helfferich, op. cit., pp. 101, 102.

(40) Ibid., pp. 99, 101, 102.

(41) Gay, The Bourgeois Experience, vol. I, pp. 23-26.

Literary and Intellectual Setting

These novels also fit into a specific literary context that influenced Mann and Martin du Gard to present the conflicts in a certain manner. Obviously, Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault form part of a European literary tradition as well as respective national literary traditions. In the first place, the nineteenth century witnessed the coming of age of the novel as a viable literary form. The novels of the beginning of that century were usually set in the past. Mid-century novels were more likely to be set in the present and to describe details of life and society as accurately as possible. At this time, Realism began. It was a movement attempting to describe narrative situations as accurately and objectively as possible. In France, Realism was characterized by the roman social(42) and in Germany by the Zeitroman.(43)

The important extension of Realism was Naturalism, first enunciated in 1880 by Emile Zola. Naturalism differs from Realism in that it is more deterministic and places greater emphasis on the animal nature of man. Determinism is expressed through the evocation of heredity and environment as the two inescapable scientific laws for society. The descriptions of the struggle to survive and the misery of life, particularly of the working class, shows the animal nature of man. Formally, Naturalism attempted to achieve fidelity to nature by rejecting

(42)Michel Raimond, Le Roman depuis la Révolution, p. 68.

(43)Hildegard Emmel, History of the German Novel, edition prepared by Ellen Summerfield (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), p. 109.

idealized portrayals and abandoning standard forms of narration in order to present a 'slice of life.'

Around 1890, movements opposed to Naturalism began to develop throughout Europe. Mann and Martin du Gard were aware of these anti-Naturalistic trends. In fact, they participated in the new developments although their first attempts at literature followed Naturalistic lines. In reaction to the supposed objectivity of Realism and Naturalism, novels emphasized psychology and returned to idealism. In France, the immediate signs of change were the writing of novels from a more psychological point of view such as the novels of Paul Bourget or the national idealism of Maurice Barrès. In Germany, a renewal of Romanticism, also called Impressionism, such as in the novels of Jakob Wassermann, Eduard von Keyserling, and Hermann Hesse shows the change. Further, through the influence of Symbolism, a movement originally opposed to the novel, a greater concern for imagery was incorporated into novels. In the long term, the subjective emphasis of these anti-Naturalistic movements led to a major change in novelistic technique: from the omniscient narrator to a narrator who describes his experiences. All these reactions were beginning, but the immediate post-Naturalistic epoch is recognized as one of great ferment. In France, the period from 1890-1918 has been called "L'Ere des métamorphoses"(44) and simply "the turn of the century" in Germany because the profusion of movements made a single title impossible.(45)

(44)Raimond, Le roman depuis la Révolution, p. 127.

(45)M.A.L. Brown, "Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks and the Turn of the Century," in Periods in German Literature, vol. II, ed. J.M. Ritchie (Chester Springs, Pennsylvania: Dufour Ed., 1970), pp. 226-7.

Nevertheless, Naturalism was the leading literary movement as Mann and Martin du Gard grew up and it had a profound influence on their early development. For instance, Mann's first published short story, "Gefallen", was published in the Naturalist journal Die Gesellschaft in 1894. By the time he began to write Buddenbrooks in October 1897(46), he had grown beyond Naturalism. Buddenbrooks too consciously recounts the process of decadence to be pure Naturalism. Nevertheless, Naturalistic and Realistic influences are visible. From his earlier Naturalistic work, Mann continued to show great interest in pathological subjects, providing detailed accounts of sickness and deathbed agonies. A deterministic view of heredity is also central to Buddenbrooks. Further, Mann adhered to the tenet of detailed description of ordinary occurrences in his accounts of daily events, particularly meals.

Particular attitudes in Germany at the time also influenced Thomas Mann.(47) Firstly, a particularity of Naturalism in Germany was its pessimism as opposed to French Naturalism, which was more hopeful about social change and improvement. Also, the peculiar relation of art to society in Germany at the time is evident in Buddenbrooks. Artists viewed the public as materialistic and philistine while the public viewed artists as dissolute and unproductive. This incompatibility of the worlds of art and society is a theme in Buddenbrooks and even more important in Mann's 1905 novella Tonio Kröger. Nevertheless, despite his apparent sympathy for artists over burghers, Mann never felt at -----
(46)Ibid., p. 225.

(47)Ronald Gray defines the main trends in "Writers and Politics 1871-1918," in The German Tradition in Literature 1871-1945 (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1965), pp. 21-45.

ease either in the world of the burgher or that of the bohemian but always viewed himself as an outsider of both worlds. Another theme in German literature at the time is the isolation of the individual. One expression of this theme at the turn of the century was novels about sensitive boys such as Hermann Hesse's Beneath the Wheel, 1906, or Robert Walser's The Siblings Tanner, 1907.(48) Thomas Mann originally planned to centre Buddenbrooks on the lonely and pathetic Hanno, the over-sensitive latecomer, but he expanded the novel in order to chart the full course of the decadence of the Buddenbrook family. Fourthly, the literature of the period is imbued with a foreboding of catastrophe. The dissolution of the Buddenbrook family can be considered a type of catastrophe but this theme is clearly central to Death in Venice, Mann's 1913 novella about the dissolution and death of a writer. Finally, the period's literature contains a defeatist attitude towards the political situation. This attitude is clearly present in Buddenbrooks where political events are glossed over and have only a tangential influence on the characters. Mann's personal disdain for politics is well known, yet his political apathy dissipated at the call to unity in August 1914. Mann's ferocious defense of the German Empire in articles and then in his Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man, published in 1918, was his opportunity to achieve the sense of belonging to some community he so ardently desired.

At another level, a series of personal literary preferences influenced Thomas Mann to write Buddenbrooks as he did. The occasion to begin work on Buddenbrooks came when Mann's publisher asked him to

(48)Emmel, History of the German Novel, p. 188.

write a novel after he had already published a number of short stories.(49) Mann was inspired by Alexander Kielland's and Jonas Lie's novels of Scandinavian merchant family life that Mann read during his 1896-1898 stay in Italy where he began his work on Buddenbrooks.(50) But the immediate model was the Goncourt brothers' Renée Mauperin, which Mann also read during his Italian stay. The short chapters and numerous sections served as a guide for Mann to plan his novel. During the preparatory period, Mann also read Russian novelists such as Tolstoy and Turgenev for whom he retained a lifelong admiration. From Tolstoy, Mann learned the epic breadth and unhurried pace that came to characterize Buddenbrooks. Finally, Mann was also influenced by Theodor Fontane, from whom he learned a dryly realistic style and irony expressed in understatement and a seething criticism of social convention.

The evolution of Naturalism into Expressionism in the second decade of this century influenced Mann during his work on The Magic Mountain, which he began in 1912, left from 1915 to 1918 to write Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man and picked up again in late 1918. The Magic Mountain became Mann's summary of the whole pre-war period. Although greatly different from Expressionistic work, The Magic Mountain shows some similar aspects. The Expressionistic emphasis on intoxication is analogous to the spell the magic mountain cast on Hans Castorp. In its strange way, his stay represents a ludicrous immoderation. As well,

(49)T.J. Reed, Thomas Mann: The Uses of Tradition (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 44.

(50)Thomas Mann, A Sketch of My Life, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter (London: Secker and Warburg, 1961), pp. 13, 44.

The Magic Mountain has other common traits with Expressionism such as the themes of realization of a New Man; union of mankind; and the satisfying of sexual desires. These elements are present in Mann's conscious renewal of the century-old form of the Bildungsroman, the educational novel. He succeeded in synthesizing many of the literary themes of the time, without the hysteria of Expressionism, into an antiquated form.

Because he was from another country and spoke a different language, Martin du Gard's literary environment differed from Mann's. His experience was similar in that he was initially influenced by Naturalism. His first major unpublished work, Une Vie de Saint, the story of the entire life of a priest, bears a strong Naturalistic influence, emphasizing the importance of environment. After some other unsuccessful attempts, Martin du Gard wrote and published Devenir! in 1909. This novella is the most spontaneous of his works, written quickly in order to finally publish something and prove he was a writer. Devenir! is unique because it contains none of the sweeping portraits of society, politics and history that characterized Martin du Gard's later works. He next tried to write the life history of a woman. After giving up on the project, he decided to publish one chapter as a novella in 1910, l'Une de Nous, a decision he later regretted. He described it as "d'un 'naturalisme' suranné, d'une sensiblerie et d'un mauvais goût déplorables." (51)

Yet, Martin du Gard was rightly never considered a Naturalist

 (51) Roger Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs autobiographiques et littéraires," in Oeuvres complètes de Roger Martin du Gard, vol. I (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1955), p. lv.

writer. His reading of Tolstoy in college, something he considered a key discovery, provided a counterweight. Martin du Gard's admiration for Tolstoy even surpassed that of Thomas Mann. From the moment Martin du Gard read War and Peace, he resolved to write long novels with many characters and episodes.(52) This experience served to anchor Martin du Gard in nineteenth-century Realism. Martin du Gard set himself the goal of attaining the objectivity of detached observation, a decision reinforced by his historical studies at the Ecole des Chartres. He summed up his attitude as, "Il m'était devenu impossible de concevoir un personnage moderne détaché de son temps; de la société, de l'histoire de son temps."(53)

Martin du Gard's next project was Jean Barois, which he worked on from 1910 until 1913 and became his first best-seller. It is done almost completely in dialogue and also contains extensive excerpts from primary sources such as newspapers and court testimony concerning the Dreyfus Affair, which provides the background for the novel. He had previously failed in his literary ventures because he always undertook enormous projects, and Jean Barois was the first one he was able to finish. It deals with a young man's interior struggle to overcome his Catholic faith and adhere to the scientific materialism dominant in France at the turn of the century. Albert Camus described Jean Barois as "le seul grand roman de l'âge scientifique, dont il exprime si bien

(52)Ibid., p. xlviii.

(53)Ibid., pp. 1-li.

les espérances et les déceptions."(54)

When Martin du Gard began to be published, French novelists were turning away from Naturalism towards a greater subjectivity, the most obvious example being Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu, the first volume of which was published in 1913. From the Naturalistic and Realistic ideal of objectivity, the novel became the report of an intimate spiritual experience(55), but Martin du Gard retained a more traditional style. Nevertheless, the subject matter of Les Thibault was one that was popular among the bourgeois reading public in France at the time it was written, namely between the two World Wars.(56) A common subject then was the conflict between the individual and the family, and the individual's desire for an unencumbered life, free from family traditions. Around 1930, the point at which Martin du Gard decided to root Les Thibault more directly in historical events, French novelists were also changing from describing the riches of individual experience to larger portraits of the anguish of individuals in society. Also in the early 1930s, other important novels about families were published, namely Georges Duhamel's Pasquier and Jules Romains' Hommes de bonne volonté.

Mann's Buddenbrooks and Martin du Gard's Les Thibault share many points in common because of the authors' shared literary experience.

Firstly, Mann and Martin du Gard grew up and wrote their first works

(54)Albert Camus, "Roger Martin du Gard," in Oeuvres complètes de Roger Martin du Gard, vol. I, p. xvii.

(55)Raimond, Le Roman depuis la Révolution, p. 169.

(56)Ibid., p. 179.

under the influence of Naturalism. The legacy they retained from Naturalism was an interest in disease and the oncoming of death, a dedication to accurate descriptive detail, a belief in the determinism of heredity, and a fascination with mediocre people who fail. Another common heritage was their great admiration for Tolstoy, who inspired both Mann and Martin du Gard to write massive social frescoes. Mann and Martin du Gard also shared a lack of nostalgia that contemporary authors who wrote fictionalized accounts of their youth usually had. Although certainly not all such fiction is nostalgic for an ideal time gone by, the majority of such works are, most strikingly Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu. Mann and Martin du Gard were also opposed to much of the literature of their time because they ignored the working class as a subject matter. In none of their works, which for both are quite extensive, was there any incorporation of characters who were workers. Finally, Mann and Martin du Gard did correspond with the trend started in the late nineteenth century of incorporating the death of God into their work. This attitude, enunciated by Nietzsche, was an increasingly important attitude in literature noted in both France and Germany.(57) Although Mann and Martin du Gard rejected faith in God, they retained forms of the virtues of hope and charity. Throughout his life, Mann affirmed his humanism and Martin du Gard, despite his pessimism, always grudgingly retained hope for social progress. The specific moment of literary history in which they found themselves served to influence the styles of their writing and the subject

 (57)For France, Roger Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 40. For Germany, M.A.L. Brown, "Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks and the Turn of the Century," p. 229.

matter. Nevertheless, they offered a personal analysis and critique of society, expressing the crisis of the bourgeoisie using the literary heritage available to them. Even when they were at odds with the dominant trends of the times, the differences serve to make the two novels more similar and provide greater grounds for comparison.

That Mann and Martin du Gard grew up in a similar literary environment is a fundamental aspect of the background necessary to compare and contrast their portrayal of the crisis of the bourgeoisie. Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault recount the same story: the dying away of a bourgeois family, symbolic of the crisis of the bourgeoisie and the ending of a particular way of life. The characteristics that doom the families are presented as inevitable steps of decline. In the situation the families find themselves, their fate is sealed. The solutions for survival are also presented fatalistically. In fact, the elder sons present the solutions when they are facing a premature death and must evaluate their lives, which they consider to have taken a mistaken course. Structurally, the action is centred around a father and two sons. The elder sons follow the bourgeois path of success for a certain time but eventually become disillusioned. The younger sons are rebellious, struggling to escape the family constraints. Unfortunately, the absence of parallel female characters in the two novels makes a comparison of decaying family values through the women in the family impossible. In Les Thibault, Oscar Thibault is a widower, so the wives of the parental generation cannot be compared. Although Tony Buddenbrook is a fairly important character in Buddenbrooks, the Thibault family has no daughter. Nevertheless, Gise

is adopted into the Thibault family and has a relatively important role, but the equivalent adopted girl in the Buddenbrook household, Clara, plays only a very secondary role.

The ideas Mann and Martin du Gard express in Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault also fit into the intellectual climate of the pre-First World War period. Specifically, sociological theories were developed at this time about the family, generational struggle, and the influence of religious outlook on values, culture and economic activity. The presence of these issues in the intellectual discourse led Mann and Martin du Gard to be aware of them and to integrate them into Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault. The intellectual climate in which they lived provided them with subjects about which they could express their opinions.

For instance, in the pre-First World War period Freud developed his psychoanalytical theories. Central to his conception of the human psyche is the oedipal complex, an aspect of which is the desire to usurp and even kill one's father. Freud believed this desire is expressed in the rejection of the lifestyle and attitudes of one's father: the generational conflict. This conflict is central to both Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault and also to the lives of Mann and Martin du Gard, who each took up literature as a means of revolting against their parents. In the novels, all the sons struggle to throw off parental constraints, feeling at odds with some or all aspects of the fathers' lifestyle.

Another important intellectual issue was the search for ties

between spiritual and economic forces. The most important figure in this area is the German sociologist Max Weber, who developed the idea of the Protestant work ethic by studying the connection between Calvinism and capitalism. According to this theory, religious outlook determines one's economic values and action. Ernst Troeltsch, a German theologian, also studied the connection between religion and culture. Less successfully than Weber, he looked for connections between economic and religious forces by studying the social doctrines of Christian Churches. Mann and Martin du Gard both portrayed the parental generation as case studies of individuals imbued with the ethic of viewing worldly success as a sign of divine predilection. Martin du Gard transposes this outlook onto the Catholic Oscar Thibault who views worldly success as a sign of redemption. Thomas Mann would even later proudly assert how he had developed the idea of the Protestant work ethic before Weber and Troeltsch:

I place some value on the fact that I sensed and discovered the idea that the modern capitalistic businessman, the bourgeois, with his ascetic idea of duty to his career, was a creation of the Protestant ethic, of Puritanism and Calvinism, that I came to this idea completely on my own, without reading, by direct insight, and that I only discovered afterward, recently, that it had been thought and expressed at the same time by learned thinkers. Max Weber in Heidelberg, and after him, Ernst Troeltsch, have treated The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, and the thought is also found in greatly exaggerated form in Werner Sombart's work of 1913, The Bourgeois--which interprets the capitalistic entrepreneur as a synthesis of hero, merchant, and burgher. I had given form to his message twelve years before he presented it: assuming, that is, that the figure of Thomas Buddenbrook, the anticipatory embodiment of his hypothesis, has been without influence on Sombart's thought.(58)

Economics, loss of parental values, and the pre-war sociocultural

(58) Thomas Mann, Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man, trans. Walter D. Morris (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1983), pp. 103-4.

crisis all converge in the work of Emile Durkheim. In his 1897 book, Suicide, the French sociologist proposed the concept of anomie, meaning normlessness or lack of regulation. He suggested that periods of rapid economic and social change lead to uncertainty about the rewards that one can expect for living up to society's standards, therefore creating disillusionment. During either a depression or boom, there is social disequilibrium; the hierarchy of values disintegrates. His ideas can easily be applied to the fictional sons. In particular, the elder sons become disillusioned with the goals and means they originally set for themselves. Further, all the sons have a death-wish, and Antoine Thibault even commits suicide, another suggestion of the profound disillusionment of the sons and by extension, of the bourgeoisie.

Other ideas discussed also found their way into Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault in a secondary manner. Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault evoke time as lived experience or duration, a concept developed by Henri Bergson. A characteristic of stream of consciousness novels is to capture time as duration. Martin du Gard is one of the few authors to attain this quality in Les Thibault.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Another important area of discussion was the rule of minorities or elites over the masses. Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, among others, were interested primarily in political oligarchies and their dynamics as examples of minority rule over the masses. The recounting of the decline of the Buddenbrook and Thibault families provided Mann and Martin du Gard the opportunity to study an economic elite in a sort of reversed manner by showing how these families lose their privileged status.

⁽⁵⁹⁾Raimond, Le Roman depuis la Révolution, p. 183.

Reception and Contemporary Reaction to Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault

Of the novels under study, Buddenbrooks was published first and became an international classic. It was Thomas Mann's first novel, finished in 1900 when he was twenty-five. The first edition of 1,000 copies in two volumes published in 1901 did not sell well, but subsequent single volume, reasonably priced editions began a year later and sold extremely well. By the end of 1904, the book had gone through twenty-one printings. In 1905, Buddenbrooks went through ten more printings.(60) In numbers, by 1904, 30,000 copies were sold(61), and by the time the book was banned by the Nazis in 1937, one million copies had been sold in Germany alone.(62) Buddenbrooks was translated into English in 1924, French in 1932, Spanish in 1936, Portuguese in 1942 and Italian in 1945.(63)

Mann had other major successes in the pre-war period. After Buddenbrooks, his next important work was his 1903 novella Tonio Kröger. It is also autobiographical, dealing with the incompatibility of the artis-

(60)National Union Catalog: Pre-1956 Imprints, (London: Mansell Information/Publishing Ltd., 1974), vol. 359, pp. 242-5 deal with Buddenbrooks.

(61)Figure cited in the "Introduction" by Richard and Clara Winston to Letters of Thomas Mann, 1889-1955 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. xvii.

(62)Figure cited in Twentieth Century Authors: The Biographical Dictionary of Modern Literature (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1942), s.v. "Thomas Mann," p. 903.

(63)National Union Catalog, vol. 359, p. 245.

tic and bourgeois lifestyles. In 1913, Death in Venice was published, the story of a successful author who resisted decadence for most of his life but then succumbed to his passions that take control of him after being seduced by the morbid atmosphere of Venice. In 1918, Mann published his Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man, a defence of the German Empire. He disowned many of the ideas in the book upon publication. While writing, he had grown to view parliamentary democracy as the best expression of his humanistic aspirations. He later described the book as "the last great retreat action, fought not without gallantry, of a romantic bourgeoisie in the face of the triumphant 'new'." (64) His final assessment of the pre-war period is The Magic Mountain (1924), one of the most important novels in the twentieth century. It reached its one hundredth printing in only four years. (65) Mann's original idea was to write a novella about "A simple-minded hero, a droll conflict between macabre adventure and bourgeois sense of duty", but this concept grew into a long novel. (66) The main character, the Hanseatic city native Hans Castorp, goes to a sanatorium for a short visit, ending up staying seven years. He is seduced by the atmosphere of the institution; both morbid and offering great learning possibilities. He is delivered by his simplicity and lack of commitment that allow him to eventually break the spell. All the dominant themes of Mann's works up to the late 1920s are contained in Buddenbrooks: the incompatibility of the bourgeois and artistic

 (64) Mann, A Sketch of My Life, p. 52.

(65) National Union Catalog, vol. 359, p. 273.

(66) Mann, A Sketch of My Life, p. 46

lifestyles, decadence, music, and a fascination with death.

Les Thibault was also a best-seller, but because of its eighteen year publishing period from 1922-1940, and editions of several parts, its success is difficult to gauge. Its international reception, as judged by translations, was less widespread than Buddenbrooks. German translation of the first half appeared simultaneously with the French edition; the first English translation was done in 1933 with a definitive two volume complete edition published in 1939 and 1941.(67)

Initially, both books were criticized for being too long, containing superfluous scenes that added nothing to the narrative. In fact, the initial reaction of Mann's publisher on seeing the manuscript was to ask him to cut his novel in half; Mann refused, saying its length was an integral aspect of the book.(68) Precisely such mundane occurrences were necessary to capture the mood of the period. By describing rather unexceptional lives, the authors were able to define a way of life. André Gide described this approach of his friend Roger Martin du Gard in his diary in 1936:

Roger, pour n'importe quelle question psychologique (et même, ou surtout, en tant que romancier), élimine volontiers l'exception, et même la minorité. De là certaine banalisation de ses personnages. Il se demande sans cesse: que se passe-t-il, dans ce cas donné, le plus généralement? Le 'un sur mille' ne retient pas son attention; ou c'est pour ramener ce cas à quelque grande loi générale (ce en quoi, certes, il a raison).(69)

Mann's contemporary Georg Lukács admired him not out of friendship

(67)National Union Catalog, vol. 365, p. 57 lists the translations of Les Thibault.

(68)Mann, A Sketch of My Life, p. 28.

(69)André Gide, Journal, vol. I (1889-1939) (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1951), p. 1259.

but for ideological reasons. Lukács saw in Mann's work the true reflection of the historical reality of bourgeois society. Lukács claimed Mann's novels as part of a socialist historical critique. Mann was the type of author Lukács found most revealing: one who was politically conservative yet whose work represented a searing critique of his society. As Lukács wrote:

He is rightly considered the most representative German writer of the first half of our century. A people can, however, be 'represented' by different types of writer. There are 'representative' writers who are prophets of the future, and others whose genius and mission is to be 'mirrors of the world.'

...

We are faced then with a special type of 'representative' writer. Thomas Mann presents a complete picture of bourgeois life and its predicaments. But it is a picture of a precise moment, a precise stage of development. (True, this portrait of the German bourgeois of the present only goes up to the period before fascism. So far Mann has not given us a picture of the German as fascist or opponent of fascism). This is why many Germans rediscover themselves so much more deeply, at once more directly and intimately, in Mann's work than in that of other writers.(70)

Although most reviewers considered the books overly long, boring because they described commonplace occurrences, and without a clear plot, others did appreciate the richness of the historical description the novels contained. One reviewer of the first part of Les Thibault wrote in 1922:

'Pourtant, un certain nombre de traits semblent déjà se dégager nettement; celui-ci, en premier lieu: tous les personnages sont pleinement conscients, ils appartiennent à une élite, ils s'analysent, se jugent, font effort pour se diriger, ont une vie morale; en second lieu tout en restant très individualisés, chacun d'eux appartient à un type social connu, classé: un grand publiciste catholique, une fille de pasteur, un protestant libertin (dans le double sens du mot: le sens du XVIIe siècle et celui d'aujourd'hui) un Christian scientist, un abbé pédagogue, etc..., de sorte que ce sont d'avan- tage des doctrines de vie qui se heurtent et s'affrontent que des

(70)Georg Lukács, Essays on Thomas Mann trans. by Stanley Mitchell (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964, p. 14.

passions individuelles qui jouent.(71)

The critical reception of Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault shows how these novels were appreciated for accurately describing the plight of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. Twenty-five years after publication, Thomas Mann, with exaggerated humility, provided his assessment of the critical and popular success of Buddenbrooks:

It did not occur to me that in having rendered a picture of Hanseatic life in the nineteenth century something more was at stake than my own performance as a novelist--that is, that I might have presented a fragment of cultural history. It did not occur to me that I not only had traced the history of my own family but had rendered an aspect of the German bourgeoisie in general. Least of all did I dream of a third possibility: that interest in this book, in its subject and spirit, would extend beyond Germany; that foreign members of the middle class would feel moved, affected by this story of the "decline of a family"; that they would be able to recognize themselves in it; in short that in producing a book extremely German in form and content I might also have produced a supra-German, pan-European book, a fragment of the psychological history of the European bourgeoisie in general.(72)

(71) Benjamin Crémieux, "Les Thibault, I--Le cahier gris," La Nouvelle Revue Française 9 (June 1922): 754.

(72) Thomas Mann, "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought," in Buddenbrooks (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1964), p. xiii.

2. CRISIS IN RELIGIOUS VALUES

In Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault, the protagonists personify specific theories for the justification and motivation of individual action. Religion in this context is a secular concept; belief and worship of a deity is unimportant, rather faith, religious or otherwise, is the foundation for moral and social efficacy. Viewed in this light, Mann and Martin du Gard portray a religious crisis: a variety of justifications are attempted by the bourgeoisie, but all are judged inadequate. C. J. H. Hayes, in A Generation of Materialism 1871-1900, provided a similar summary of this religious crisis:

Each of the developments here indicated--"science," secularization, industrialization, liberalism, Marxism, and nationalism--had originated before 1871, some of them several generations before; and it was only because they were pretty fully matured and producing joint effects that the generation of materialism from 1871 to 1900 stands out as marking a grave religious crisis, or rather the first stage in a crisis which has continued to the present day and which poses the fundamental question whether European or Western civilization can endure if cut off from its historic Christian roots.(73)

Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault present parallel interpretations of the religious crisis in two separate settings. The parents are Christian, but they corrupt religion from a belief in and worship of God into an ideology that fosters decisive, unscrupulous action. All the sons reject their childhood religion; three turn to forms of materialist determinism as a justification for their action, and the other, Christian Buddenbrook, is unable to rationalize his life at all; he lives in an ideological vacuum. The elder sons, Tom Buddenbrook and Antoine Thibault, turn to theories

(73)Carlton J. H. Hayes, A Generation of Materialism 1871-1900 (New York: Harper and Row, 1941), p. 135.

based on science: Tom to evolutionism and Antoine to positivism. Jacques Thibault attempts the most radical break with his family, adopting socialism and completely rejecting his bourgeois background.

Although the plots portray a parallel development of religious views, the two settings are very different. In Mann's northern Germany, his fictional family is involved in commerce, which is presented as the proper sphere of activity for the established bourgeoisie. Faith in achievement, competitive success and material growth are central to the Buddenbrook family's world view. The bourgeoisie used a patriarchal political system as a proper public service to complete a career. No fundamental ideological division about political systems seems to exist among members of Mann's fictional bourgeoisie.

In the world of the Buddenbrooks, the dominant religion is Lutheran Protestantism. Overall in Germany in 1910, 62% of the population was Protestant, mainly in the north, 37% was Catholic, mainly in the south, and 1% was Jewish, located primarily in Eastern towns and cities.(74) Protestantism was the largest religion and also the state religion in Prussia. In 1834, Frederick William III united the Lutheran and Reformed denominations into the Evangelical Christian Church of which he and his successors were the head. The Evangelical Church was the official state Church in Prussia, with the role of being a pillar of the state, and its ministers were quasi-functionaries.

 (74)Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich 1913 (Berlin: Verlag von Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1913), p. 32.

Nineteenth-century German Protestantism contained two competing ideological currents.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Firstly, Rationalism was the most overtly secularized form, emphasizing the moral and pedagogical role of religion, appealing primarily to the educated class. Rationalism had its source in university theology faculties. There, biblical scholars read Scripture critically, and concluded that dogmatism was irrelevant and that to believe in miracles was superstition. Rationalists viewed the Church as essentially a human organization striving for social improvement. Rationalism was preached in town and village churches throughout north and central Germany from the early nineteenth century. The other current was Pietism, which began in the mid-eighteenth century and underwent a resurgence with Romanticism. It continued to grow during the Napoleonic wars, as people found strength to resist the occupation in religion, and it spread in the following years as well. Most prominent among church figures leading the resistance was the brilliant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. Pastors frequented upper-class homes to fan the personal piety of household members. Pietism became increasingly identified with the aristocracy seeking to preserve its privileges. By mid-century, Pietists had succeeded in identifying the Prussian state church with a reactionary social and political system, and this identification continued throughout the century. The Buddenbrook parents, Jean and Betsy, are actively engaged in Pietist worship. The frequent visits of pastors; the home as the centre of piety; and the daughter who marries a pastor are all typical aspects of Pietism in nineteenth-century Germany.

 (75) For a summary of the trends in nineteenth-century German Protestantism, see Sagarra, A Social History of Germany 1648-1914, the chapter entitled "The Churches and Religious Life in the Nineteenth Century," pp. 203-220.

In the Parisian setting of Martin du Gard's novel, the bourgeoisie is occupied in the professions rather than in commerce. In politics, the same patriarchal, career goals exist as in Germany but the differences of opinion are more developed. The faith in achievement, competitive success and material growth in France has a more personal and political hue; consisting in defeating one's enemies. Despite this fundamental agreement, the bourgeoisie was polarized between Catholics and anticlericals. No single political party represented the bourgeoisie, leading to a multi-party system that made strong decisions impossible.(76)

Rationalism, fideism, and pragmatism characterized Catholicism in late nineteenth-century France.(77) Rationalism was the recourse to proofs opposed to the teaching of the Church to demonstrate the truth of the faith. Secondly, fideism was the appeal to passive submission through blind faith when doubts continue. Finally, pragmatism was to use the moral and social efficacy of Catholicism as a foundation for faith. Martin du Gard's major works, Jean Barois and Les Thibault accurately described these tendencies, as well as the defensive character of Catholics at the time. In Les Thibault, l'abbé Vécard, Oscar Thibault's confessor, who does not hesitate to affirm the above heresies in discussions about religion with Antoine, embodies the tendency to a blind adherence to faith. Martin du Gard's personal critical spirit towards the faith he abandoned and his attachment to the Modernist movement in the

(76)Magraw, France 1815-1914, p. 221.

(77)This summary is the thesis of Charles Moeller's "Roger Martin du Gard et 'Jean Barois'" in vol. II of Littérature du vingtième siècle et christianisme (Tournai(Belgium): Etablissements Casterman, 1959), pp. 165-216.

Church through his friendship with l'abbé Marcel Hébert, to whom Jean Barois is dedicated, explains his appreciation of the weaknesses of Catholicism.

Overall, three different outlooks are identified in each novel. Firstly, the parents possess a religious outlook based on Christianity. The sons revolt against the parental hypocrisy and turn to forms of scientific materialism. Finally, the contemporaries of the sons embody a vitalistic outlook, valuing military strength and nationalism.

For the fathers, religion plays a central role for similar motives. Oron J. Hale, in The Great Illusion 1900-1914, describes bourgeois religious practice in terms coinciding with the parental type of religion and hints at the difficulties the sons experience:

Among the middle classes church adherence was perhaps more of a social and cultural formality than a religious experience. There was a great deal of accommodation certainly, a rather easy synthesis of loyalties toward church, state, and society; unconditional adherence to all three did not seem contradictory. There was no obvious clash of values to create unbearable tensions, no avowal yet, as later, by intellectuals that they were suffering Angst, isolation, nausea, and despair.(78)

For the the fathers, religion is the foundation of their lifestyle, providing approval for their actions. At the death of his father, Antoine makes the following judgment of his father's religious beliefs:

"C'est indéniable", concéda Antoine. "Père a trouvé dans sa foi un appui sans pareil. Grâce à elle, il a toujours ignoré ce qui entrave: les scrupules, le sentiment excessif de la responsabilité, le doute de soi, et tout le reste. Un homme qui a la foi n'a plus qu'à agir."(79)

(78)Hale, The Great Illusion 1900-1914, pp. 118-9.

(79)Roger Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. II (Paris: Editions Gallimard, Collection folio, 1964), p. 386.

Further, religion provides a seal of approval of their material success. In human matters, success is a blessing from God, an assurance not so much of personal goodness as of the possession of the right ideology to succeed. Human success, political achievement, and material prosperity become so intertwined with religion that at the birth of his daughter Clara, Jean Buddenbrook wrote in the family album:

"O Lord, lead us and guide us all, so long as we live upon this earth..." The pen hurried glibly over the paper, with here and there a commercial flourish, talking with God in every line. Two pages further on: "I have taken out," it said, "an insurance policy for my youngest daughter, of one hundred and fifty thaler current."(80)

Although this association of human success with divine approval is often associated with Protestantism, Oscar Thibault, a Catholic, also works with this assumption; he is assured in his religion because of his successful career and the admiration his power and wealth inspire.

The religion of the fathers is also a source of protection and approval for the social order that is advantageous for them. Both men oppose any fundamental social change, basing their claims on religious reasons, but such defense is also a way to protect their own interests. In his personal papers, Oscar Thibault explains the goals of the many works of charity he undertook:

"Oeuvres. Ce qui fait la grandeur et surtout l'incomparable efficacité sociale de notre Philanthropie catholique (Oeuvres de Bienfaisance, soeurs de Saint-Vincent-de P., etc.), c'est que, en fait, la distribution des secours matériels n'atteint guère que les résignés, les bons esprits, et ne risque pas d'encourager les insatisfaits, les rebelles, ceux qui n'acceptent pas leur condition inférieure et n'ont d'autres mots à la bouche qu'inégalité et revendication."(81)

(80)Thomas Mann, Buddenbrooks trans. by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), p. 42.

(81)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. I, p. 180.

Religion serves as a bulwark against any attempt to change a social organization that is very favourable to the bourgeoisie.

Religious convictions furnish a firm foundation for these men, so strong that they rarely question their actions. Jean Buddenbrook, for example, is simply unable to question his life. In 1852, three crises occur: Tom becomes ill; the company suffers a major loss; Tony leaves and then divorces her bankrupt husband Grünlich.(82) These blows lead to the weakening of Jean's health, but he is incapable of accepting and understanding these events; they simply leave him confused. As his health declines, his religious fervour increases: "The Consul's religious fervour grew upon him in proportion as he himself felt the weight of years and infirmity;..."(83) He feels disasters should not happen to him; to block them out he turns to the bulwark of religion. Five years later, he dies. On that day, the weather foreshadows events to come. At the moment of his death, a summer storm violently breaks. Symbolically, the overwhelming tension of the coming storm represents his ideological oppression, against which he succeeded in holding out. His survivor, Tom, who, because of his sensitive nerves, acutely felt the oppression of the oncoming storm, will live through it but in a changed atmosphere.

Oscar Thibault exhibits a similar complacency; he questions his life only twice in the course of the novel. The first occasion is when Antoine, by insisting that Jacques be released from the reformatory,

(82) Mann, Buddenbrooks, pp. 175-6.

(83) Ibid., p. 198.

does not bend to his father's will. Oscar Thibault's confessor sides with Antoine and calls the father a pharisee. For a moment Oscar Thibault loses his assurance and equilibrium:

Il se voyait sur son lit de mort et se demandait avec épouvante s'il ne s'y présenterait pas les mains vides. Il s'accrochait désespérément à l'opinion des autres sur lui: "Je suis pourtant un homme de bien?", se répétait-il; mais le ton restait interrogatif; il ne pouvait plus se payer de mots, il était à une de ces rares minutes où l'introspection descend jusqu'à des bas-fonds qu'elle n'a jamais éclairés encore.(84)

Already on the first occasion, the fear of death is prominent, it is not surprising therefore, that the second occasion of doubt occurs precisely during his deathbed agony:

En réalité, il avait tout sacrifié à la considération des hommes. Il n'avait eu que des sentiments bas, bas, bas--et qu'il avait cachés! Egoïsme, vanité! Soif d'être riche, de commander! Etalage de bienfaisance, pour être honoré, pour jouer un rôle! Impureté, faux-semblant, mensonge--!... Comme il aurait voulu pouvoir effacer tout, recommencer tout à neuf! Ah! ce qu'elle lui faisait honte, son existence d'homme de bien. Il l'apercevait, enfin, telle qu'elle avait été. Trop tard! Le jour des comptes était venu!(85)

These rare moments of uncertainty are quickly overcome. Nevertheless, the oppression of Jean Buddenbrook and the momentary stumbles of Oscar Thibault foreshadow the crises of the elder sons.

In both novels, the parents have a strong religious faith the sons reject. Both authors present the different generational views on religion as an aspect of the struggle between reason and sentiment. The religious faith of the parents is an emotional need. Christian faith, particularly in Les Thibault, is portrayed scornfully, as a desire to

(84)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. I, p. 180.

(85)Ibid., vol. II, p. 268.

deceive oneself and an expression of a biological desire to survive. The fearful deaths of the Christians Betsy Buddenbrook and Oscar Thibault illustrate the authors' views. Along with the connection of emotions with faith is the uniting of reason with atheism. Therefore, a part of the sons' maturing process is to abandon, at least interiorly, the parental faith. Antoine explained the loss of his childhood faith to his father's confessor after Oscar Thibault's funeral:

Antoine réfléchissait.
 --"Non, Monsieur l'abbé," répliqua-t-il posément. "Cela s'est fait tout seul, sans aucun orgueil, sans parti pris de révolte. Sans même que j'aie eu à y penser. Autant que je puis m'en souvenir, j'ai commencé, dès ma première communion, à sentir vaguement qu'il y avait quelque chose--je ne sais comment dire--d'embarassé, d'inquiétant, dans tout ce que l'on nous apprenait sur la religion; quelque chose d'obscur, non seulement pour nous, enfants, mais pour tout le monde... Oui: pour les grandes personnes aussi. Et pour les prêtres eux-mêmes."(86)

All the sons reject traditional religion. Like Mann and Martin du Gard in real life, the fictional sons see only too well the inconsistencies in their parents' religious beliefs. The sons reject belief in the Christian conception of God, considering it a source of obscurantism and superstition. They seek to glorify reason and progress. On a social level, C. J. H. Hayes described this movement away from Christian religion that the sons experienced:

To the same end operated the contemporaneous loosening of the hold of Christian faith and practice upon a sizable portion of Europe's population. Thereby a kind of religious and moral void was created for relatively large numbers, who promptly though unconsciously sought to fill it with a new faith, a new object of worship, a new cult. Some found the desired substitute in "science," others in Marxian socialism (which was as much a religion as a system of economics), still others--doubtless the majority--in nationalism.(87)

 (86)Ibid., vol. II, p. 417.

(87)Hayes, A Generation of Materialism 1871-1900, p. 254.

Antoine Thibault replaces the Catholic faith by a laical religion, a belief in the ability of the scientific method to solve all human problems, in other words, positivism. He describes his religious position to Mme de Fontanin:

"Comment ai-je perdu la foi? Je n'en sais plus rien. Lorsque je m'en suis avisé--il n'y a pas plus de quatre ou cinq ans--, j'avais déjà par ailleurs atteint un degré de culture scientifique qui laissait peu de place à des croyances religieuses. Je suis un positif", fit-il, avec un sentiment de fierté; à vrai dire, il exprimait là des idées qu'il improvisait, n'ayant guère eu occasion ni loisir de s'analyser si complaisamment. "Je ne dis pas que la science explique tout, mais elle constate; et, moi, ça me suffit. Les comment m'intéressent assez pour que je renonce sans regret à la vaine recherche des pourquoi."(88)

Antoine does his utmost to hide this rejection of Catholicism from his father, but Oscar Thibault ultimately realizes it and is profoundly disappointed. On his deathbed, Oscar Thibault half-lucidly tells Antoine of his chagrin:

--"Tu en reviendras, mon cher! L'abbé y compte, comme moi. Tu en reviendras de certaines idées, et je souhaite que ce soit bien-tôt... Je voudrais que ce soit déjà fait, Antoine... Au moment de quitter ce monde, n'est-il pas pénible pour moi que mon fils...? Élevé comme tu l'as été, vivant sous ce toit, ne devrais-tu pas...? Une ferveur religieuse enfin! Une foi plus solide, plus pratiquante!"(89)

Positivism was developed by the French savant August Comte (1798-1857). Antoine's outlook is almost identical to the essential ideas Comte expressed in a series of books on positive philosophy. Theology and philosophy are considered imperfect ways to attain knowledge, only the scientific method yields truth. Although dedicated to

(88)Ibid., vol. I, p. 249.

(89)Ibid., vol. II, p. 135.

reason and progress, Comte believed in the essential inequality between individuals in the areas of wealth and intelligence. Therefore, specialization of function is necessary to attain progress.(90)

At first, Antoine Thibault expresses his faith in all of the central tenets of positivism but slowly he comes to question and lose his faith in the efficacy of this system to solve all human problems. The war is the stumbling block for Antoine's belief in progress: his own and that of society. Before the war, he believes in unlimited progress brought about by specialists like himself in each field. He thinks politicians do their tasks as well as possible, just like himself:

Au fond, il pensait que ceux qui ont la charge de la chose publique sont, par définition, des experts rompus à toutes les difficultés internationales, et auxquels les incompetents comme lui devaient s'en remettre aveuglément. Le crédit qu'il apportait aux gouvernants français s'étendait, de même, aux maîtres des autres pays. Il avait un respect inné des spécialistes.(91)

The failure of politicians to avert war and ensure stability, which Antoine believes is their primary task, is the first of many blows to his faith in progress. The other blows are the experience of the wastefulness and cruelty of war, the willful deception of politicians about the war, and, most importantly, his loss of health after being wounded. He expresses his disillusionment in his diary in 1918:

Je pense à l'avant-guerre, à ma vie d'alors, à ma jeunesse. Ma vraie source de force, c'était une secrète, une inaltérable confiance en l'avenir. Plus qu'une confiance: une certitude. Maintenant, ténèbres, là où était ma lumière. C'est une torture de tous les instants.(92)

(90)A summary of Comte's thought and influence is found in Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945 vol. II (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 595-600.

(91)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. III, p. 155.

(92)Ibid., vol. V, p. 416.

Finally, Antoine's personal failure leads him to completely lose his faith in progress and the scientific method. He clearly admits the religious connotations his beliefs had:

Charité, espérance et foi. L'abbé Vécord m'a fait remarquer, un jour, que moi aussi je pratiquais les vertus théologiques. J'ai protesté. J'acceptais, à la rigueur, charité et espérance, mais je refusais foi. Pourtant? Si je voulais aujourd'hui justifier cet élan continu qui m'a porté durant quinze ans, si je cherchais le fin mot de cette indomptable confiance, ce que je trouverais serait peut-être assez proche d'une foi... En quoi? Eh bien, ne serait-ce qu'en la croissance possible et sans doute infinie des formes vivantes. Foi dans une accession universelle à des états supérieurs...(93)

Antoine's optimistic conviction in his personal advancement is intimately intertwined with his belief in social progress. His faith in the two aspects of progress is united throughout his life, therefore his final despair includes a rejection of personal advancement and social improvement.

Tom Buddenbrook's ideological development resembles that of Antoine Thibault. Relatively early in adult life, he loses faith in formal religion while continuing the external practices. Tom's loss of Christian faith and his freethinking and modern philosophical ideas are the only part of his character that disappoints his parents:

He spoke French with a distinctly Spanish accent, and astonished everybody by his enthusiasm for certain modern writers of a satiric and polemic character. Broker Gosch was the only person in town who sympathized with his tastes. His father strongly reprehended them.

But the Father's pride and joy in his eldest son were plain to be seen; they shone in the Consul's eyes.(94)

(93)Ibid., vol. V, pp. 375-6.

(94)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 194.

After Jean's death, his mother Betsy continues to worry about Tom's odd ideas and lack of faith. It pains her to see her son take so lightly the things to which she gives great importance:

"I know that you felt a certain sympathy for the papal church, while you were in France and Italy: but that is not religion in you, Tom--it is something else, and I understand what. We must be forebearing; yet in these things a frivolous feeling of fascination is very much regretted. I pray God that you and your Gerda--for I well know that she does not belong to those firm in the faith--will in course of time feel the necessary seriousness."(95)

Like Antoine, Tom begins his career young and his early belief in progress expresses his optimism. Tom confidently dedicates himself to the material and economic progress of his town, seeing it as a way to advance beyond and improve what the generation of his parents accomplished:

"Yes, the truth is, we mustn't let the grass grow under our feet. I am saying nothing against Overdieck, but he is getting on. If I were Burgomaster I'd make things move a little faster. I can't tell you how pleased I am that they are installing gas for the streetlighting, and the miserable old oil-lamps are disappearing--I admit I had a little something to do with that change. Oh, how much there is to do! Times are changing, Wenzel, and we have many responsibilities toward the new age.

...

They had to end, those good old times; they have changed, and they will have to change still more. Then the population was thirty-seven thousand: now it is fifty, you know, and the whole character of the place is altering. There is so much building, and the suburbs are spreading out, and we are able to have good streets and restore the old monuments out of our great period. Yet even all that is merely superficial. The most important matter is still outstanding, my dear Wenzel. I mean, of course the ceterum censeo of my dear Father: the customs union. We must join, Wenzel; there should be no longer any question about it, and you must all help me fight for it."(96)

(95)Ibid., p. 255.

(96)Ibid., pp. 295-6.

So long as Tom still succeeds in his business ventures, he is enthusiastic about the material progress of his town. Then, with the passage of time, he weakens, internally and physically. As he declines, he takes continually less interest in his work. By the end of his life, he is uninterested in his company and his political duties become a torture he must endure in disillusionment.

After Tom discreetly abandons his parental religion, he replaces it with a faith in progress: his own, of his family and of his town. Later, this faith alters slightly. As a worn-out man, Tom expresses the little hope he still retains through Darwinism:

His father had united with his hard practical sense a literal faith, a fanatic Bible-Christianity which his mother, in her later years, had adhered to as well; but to himself it had always been rather repellent. The worldly scepticism of his grandfather had been more nearly his own attitude. But the comfortable superficiality of old Johann could not satisfy his metaphysical and spiritual needs, and he ended by finding in evolution the answers to all his questions about eternity and immortality. He said to himself that he had lived in his forebears and would live on in his descendants.(97)

Tom espouses Darwinism towards the end of his life for the same reasons that it is identified as being popular throughout Germany in the years before the First World War. The greatest extension of Darwin's ideas in their popular form was precisely in Germany in the pre-First World War period and these ideas achieved their greatest popularity in the middle-class in the late 1870s.(98) Darwinism appealed to many groups in society, becoming a replacement for stifled liberalism. Therefore, it is not surprising that Tom turns to it when his

(97)Ibid., p. 523.

(98)Alfred Kelly, The Descent of Darwin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), p. 23.

career is in decline. Politically, he could go no further than Senatorship because of his education and family background although he aspires to greater things. The liberal meritocracy that would have favoured a continual ascent for him never came true. He is disappointed by his limited business and civic career, turning to Darwinism as a theory to give his tedious life some meaning. Popular Darwinism's other points of appeal also correspond with Tom's outlook. In its most common configuration, it opposed established Christianity and favoured progress. Therefore, Tom, like other German liberals, turns to Darwinism when he feels stifled by his failure to advance himself.

Tom's recourse to Darwinism does not halt his ideological disintegration. Whereas the war changed Antoine's outlook, Tom Buddenbrook is simply worn down by the constant effort to ascribe meaning to his actions:

Often, in an hour of depression, Thomas Buddenbrook asked himself what he was, or what there was about him to make him think even a little better of himself than he did of his honest, limited, provincial fellow-burghers. The imaginative grasp, the brave idealism of his youth was gone. To work at his play, to play at his work, to bend an ambition that was half-earnest, half-whimsical, toward the accomplishment of aims that even to himself possessed but a symbolic value--for such blithe scepticism and such an enlightened spirit of compromise, a great deal of vitality is necessary, as well as a sense of humour. And Thomas Buddenbrook felt inexpressibly weary and disgusted.

What there was in life for him to reach, he had reached. He was well aware that the high-water mark of his life--if that were a possible way to speak of such a commonplace, humdrum sort of existence--had long since passed.(99)

Eventually, Tom's nervous tension can no longer sustain him and he dies worn out, after abandoning the ideals that originally inspired him.

Tom and Antoine reject their parents' religion as part of their maturing experience. They then espouse an optimistic atheistic rationalism based on the application of a certain set of scientific ideas to fundamental beliefs, specifically Darwinism and positivism. However, these surrogate religions, as shown by the ultimate disillusionment of Tom and Antoine, do not succeed in giving permanent meaning to life.

The other sons in the fictional families, Jacques Thibault and Christian Buddenbrook, reject the parental religion even more categorically. Their passionate personalities incorporate this rejection in a general refusal to live by their parents' standards. The younger sons are extremely sensitive to the insincerity of the bourgeois world and seek to escape it. Jacques, in particular, rejects his parental home, its whole lifestyle and ideology. In its place, he embraces socialism, another type of scientific materialism believing in progress that applies a set of laws to society and demands a change from an individualistic to a collective society.

Through his revolt, Jacques seeks sincerity against the deceitfulness of his home. In August 1914, at lunch with Antoine, Jacques explains how the hypocrisy of the bourgeois world seen in his own home was the major reason he became a revolutionary:

--"Ce qui a fait de moi un révolutionnaire", dit-il enfin--et ses lèvres tremblaient--"c'est d'être né ici, dans cette maison... C'est d'avoir eu, tout jeune, le spectacle quotidien des injustices dont vit ce monde privilégié... C'est d'avoir eu, dès l'enfance, comme un sentiment de culpabilité... de complicité! Oui: la sensation cuisante que, cet ordre de choses, tout en le haïssant, j'en profitais!"

Il arrêta du geste la protestation d'Antoine:

--"Bien avant de savoir ce que c'était que le capitalisme, avant même d'en connaître le mot, à douze ans, à treize ans, rappelle-toi: j'étais en révolte contre le monde où je vivais, celui de mes camarades, de mes professeurs... le monde de Père, et de ses bonnes oeuvres!"(100)

Just as the war broke Antoine's faith in positivism, so too it crushes Jacques' faith in socialism. When the resistance of the socialist parties crumbles before the oncoming First World War, Jacques becomes disillusioned, his dream of a better world is destroyed. His disappointment leads him to risk his life in a pacifist action. He willingly loses his life, dying a martyr for the truth that the soldiers are only fighting for capitalist interests. In a 1936 letter, Martin du Gard explained how he received letters from readers who believed he sympathized with the idealism of Jacques' sacrifice. In fact, he did not, as he stated:

...J'ai reçu, je reçois souvent encore, la lettre ou la visite de quelque primaire bien intentionné qui m'affirme puérilement: "Ah! si vous saviez ce que Jacques représente pour moi! Je me sens pareil à lui! C'est mon frère!" A ceux-là, j'ai toujours envie de répondre: "Tant pis pour vous!" Ils croient, en toute naïveté, me faire plaisir. Ils sont persuadés, parce que j'ai peint le personnage avec tendresse, que Jacques jouit de ma prédilection particulière, qu'il est, à mes yeux, un modèle... Ces bonnes gens m'ont mal lu. Ces bonnes gens n'ont rien compris. Je les étonnerais bien en leur avouant que je porte sur Jacques à peu près le même jugement qu'Antoine, qui aime profondément son frère, mais qui déclare, je crois, quelque part, que, tout compte fait, Jacques a vécu et est mort comme un imbécile...(101)

Even though Jacques commits himself to Jenny just before the war began, he prefers to die a hero rather than save himself for her in a world that falls short of his idealistic vision.

(100)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. III, p. 164.

(101)Letter to Marcel Lallemand of February 1, 1945 in Roger Martin du Gard, "Lettres à un ami," in La Nouvelle Revue Française 12 (December 1958): 1145.

Christian is the only son in the two families who never develops an ideological foundation in his life. He cannot live by the religion of his parents, yet is paralyzed and confused, unable to even try to attempt a coherent justification for his life. Nevertheless, like Jacques, the excessive concern for appearances among his town's bourgeoisie repulses Christian. His flouting of dignified behaviour annoys Tom immensely. Therefore, when Tom articulates impatience with Christian, Tom also reveals his own values:

But this was not all. The life Christian led outside the house, mainly with his old schoolmate Lawyer Gieseke, was observed by the Consul with disgust. He was no prig, no spoil-sport. He knew very well that his native town, this port and trading city, where men walked the streets proud of their irreproachable reputation as business men, was by no means of spotless morality. They made up to themselves for the tedious hours spent in their offices, by dinners with heavy wines and heavy dishes--and by other things. But the broad mantle of civic respectability concealed this side of their life. Thomas Buddenbrook's first law was to preserve "the dehors"; wherein he showed himself not so different from his fellow burghers.

...
In affairs of the heart, as in all others he (Christian) was disinclined to govern his feelings or to practise discretion for the sake of preserving dignity.(102)

At another time, Christian expresses his contempt for Tom's world of self-righteous propriety, of seeking respect through appearance:

"Oh," he cried, and stretched both arms in front of him, palms outward, as though pushing everything away from him, "Oh, how sick I am of all this tact and propriety, this poise and refinement--sick to death of it!"(103)

In spite of his criticisms of his parents and brother, Christian would like to have the interior strength to be able to work as his father and brother but he fails miserably. His personality is hyper-

(102)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 259.

(103)Ibid., p. 469.

sensitive, introverted and wildly fluctuating. He loves the theatre yet has no talent except that of making people laugh by imitating others. He admits his shortcomings while indicating his awareness that Tom is weak also though still capable of hiding it:

"As in the theatre! Yes, I think your right place is that of a comedian in a café chantant. I am not joking. I am perfectly convinced that is your secret ideal." Christian did not deny it; he merely gazed aimlessly about. "And you have the cheek to make such a remark--when you haven't the slightest notion of work, and spend your days storing up a lot of feelings and sensations and episodes you hear in the theatre and when you are loafing about, God knows where; you take these and pet them and study them and chatter about them shamelessly!"

"Yes, Tom" said Christian. He was a little depressed and rubbed his hand again over his head. "That is true: you have expressed it quite correctly. That is the difference between us. You enjoy the theatre yourself; and you had your little affairs too, once on a time, between ourselves! And there was a time when you preferred novels and poetry and all that. But you have always known how to reconcile it with regular work and a serious life. I haven't that. I am quite used up with the other; I have nothing left over for the regular life--I don't know whether you understand--"(104)

Having no energy for practical activity, Christian cannot work. After several furtive attempts at business, he gives up. He ends up following his whims leading to dissolution and insanity. Christian is an artist without creativity, who therefore produces nothing, yet like other artists is incapable of practical tasks. Art uses him up, leaving him critical of the world around him yet paralysed to develop any conceptions to bring about change.

The contemporaries of the sons typify another modification of the parental bourgeois spirit. The most outstanding examples live by a vitalism characterized by an aggressiveness and insensitivity absent in

(104)Ibid., p. 264.

the Buddenbrook and Thibault sons. These new bourgeois are sure of themselves and at times act ruthlessly. Among the sons' contemporaries, the values of nationalism and militarism have taken an aggressive, radicalized turn from the expression the parental generation gave them.

The rising element in the bourgeoisie in Buddenbrooks is personified by the Hagenströms. With great energy, they achieved an astronomical ascent in the town. Through aggressive, innovative business practices, as well as calculated marriages, in two generations they rose to become one of the city's most powerful families. On the eve of the Senate election, this successful approach, in the person of Hermann Hagenström, is compared to the more established success of the Buddenbrook family in the person of Tom:

Hermann Hagenström was not the man to vote in the Assembly for the application of large sums of money to preserve and restore the town's mediaeval monuments. But it was the fact that he was the first, absolutely the first man in town to light his house and offices with gas. Yes, if Consul Hagenström could be said to represent any tradition whatever, it was the free, progressive, tolerant, unprejudiced habit of thought which he had inherited from his father, old Hinrich--and on this was based all the admiration people undoubtedly felt for him.

Thomas Buddenbrook's prestige was of a different kind. People honoured in him not only his own personality, but the personalities of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather as well: quite apart from his own business and public achievement, he was the representative of a hundred years of honourable tradition. And the easy, charming way, indeed, with which he carried the family standard made no small part of his success.(105)

By the end of the novel, the calculating, successful Hagenströms eclipse the Buddenbrooks, even to the point of buying and modernizing the parental Buddenbrook home for their large, flourishing family.

(105)Ibid., p. 336.

Hanno's experiences at school also demonstrate the decline of traditional bourgeois values. He is bullied by the strong, healthy Hagenström boys of his age. Except for his friendship with another artistically inclined boy, the last remnant of an impoverished aristocratic family, he is isolated at school. The ideals of the other young bourgeois boys are the nationalistic and militaristic values associated with Prussian philistinism:

It was a lusty, not too gentle race, that of these comrades of Hanno and Kai among whom they walked up and down. The ideals of the victorious, united fatherland were those of a somewhat rude masculinity; its youth talked jargon at once brisk and slovenly; the most despised vices were softness and dandyism, the most admired virtues those displayed by prowess in drinking and smoking; bodily strength and skill in athletics.(106)

In the Buddenbrook family, succeeding generations became more sensitive and artistic while other elements in the bourgeoisie moved in the opposite direction, towards a worship of strength, specifically in the form of militaristic nationalism.

In Les Thibault, the new aggressive spirit is also clearly shown through Manuel Roy, one of the doctors Antoine hired to work in his laboratory. Roy is the only person in Antoine's entourage who anxiously awaits war; the others, including Antoine, resign themselves to it. Roy believes war will settle the Franco-German question and raise the fallen moral level of France:

--"Moi, je préfère en finir, une bonne fois. Car une chose au moins est certaine: c'est que, après une guerre--que nous soyons vainqueurs, comme il est probable, ou même que nous soyons vaincus--la question se trouvera enfin réglée définitivement, dans un sens ou dans l'autre; et il n'y aura plus de problème franco-allemand!... Sans compter", ajouta-t-il, avec un visage devenu sérieux, "tout le bienfait qu'une bonne saignée pourrait nous faire, au point où nous en sommes. Quarante ans de paix croupis-

(106)Ibid., p. 575.

sante n'arrangent pas le moral d'un pays! Si le redressement spirituel de la France n'est possible qu'au prix d'une guerre, nous sommes, Dieu merci, quelques-uns qui sacrifieraient sans marchander leur peau."(107)

On the eve of the war, he looks forward to it as a heroic national adventure:

--"Une bonne saignée est périodiquement nécessaire à l'hygiène des peuples. Dans les trop longues périodes de paix, le monde fabrique un tas de toxines qui l'empoisonnent et dont il a besoin d'être purgé, comme l'individu trop sédentaire. Une bonne saignée serait, je crois, particulièrement nécessaire, en ce moment, à l'âme française. Et même à l'âme européenne. Nécessaire, si nous ne voulons pas que notre civilisation d'Occident sombre dans la décadence, dans la bassesse."

--"La bassesse, pour moi, c'est justement de céder à la cruauté et à la haine!" fit Studler.

--"Qui vous parle de cruauté? Qui vous parle de haine?" riposta Roy, en haussant les épaules. "Toujours les mêmes lieux communs, les mêmes clichés ridicules! Pour ceux de ma génération, je vous assure que la guerre n'implique aucun appel à la cruauté, et moins encore un appel à la haine! La guerre n'est pas une querelle d'homme à homme; elle dépasse les individus: elle est une aventure entre des nations... Une aventure merveilleuse! Le match, à l'état pur! Sur le champ de bataille exactement comme sur le stade, les hommes qui se battent sont les joueurs de deux équipes rivales: ils ne sont pas des ennemis, ils sont des adversaires!"(108)

The example of Manuel Roy illustrates how radically nationalistic and militaristic values entered into the younger generation of the bourgeoisie. Behind such a change is the influence of Darwinism and the theory of evolution being embraced and modified to meet the needs of a certain group. The concepts of natural selection and survival of the fittest, when applied to international affairs and business, easily led to an aggressive attitude, manifested particularly in nationalism and militarism. Many groups adopted Darwinism to justify their ideas, and although most popular in Germany, through the example of Manuel

(107)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. III, p. 326.

(108)Ibid., vol. IV, p. 12.

Roy(109), Darwinism is shown to have also made inroads in France. Martin du Gard was aware of this trend because he followed the development of Darwinism in France, particularly as expressed in the works of Félix Le Dantec, a popularizer of scientific and evolutionary ideas in the early twentieth-century. In a letter to Le Dantec, Martin du Gard revealed that one of the main characters of Jean Barois is modelled on him.(110)

 (109)Manuel Roy is based on Gustave Valmont, a school friend of Martin du Gard who became a nationalist and died on the day Manuel Roy is portrayed to have died on. See René Garguilo, La Genèse des Thibault de Roger Martin du Gard (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1974), p. 118.

(110)Letter to Félix Le Dantec of November 26, 1913 in Martin du Gard, Correspondance générale, vol. I (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1980), p. 338.

3. CRISIS IN FAMILIAL VALUES

In Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault, the inability of the sons to live according to the family values of their parents is a source of conflict between the two generations. The Buddenbrook and Thibault parents envisage a certain type of success, valuing family social prestige and the family fortune. The means to attain success are activism and individual initiative and effort. To achieve a family-oriented type of success, the parents follow generations of family tradition, and are willing to sacrifice themselves to attain their family goals at a later time. For this aspect of the study, the lack of corresponding female characters makes a comparison of family values and the family experience as expressed by the women in the novels difficult. This absence in the analysis limits the discussion of family values, but is inherent in the matter under study. Only the family values as expressed by the male characters will be studied and the expression of these values by the female characters will not be examined. Therefore, the 'family values' are those of the fathers and sons only and this limitation is understood in the definition of the term for this study.

Two elements sum up success for the parents: to uphold the prestige of the family name and to increase the family wealth through their professional activity. The success of Jean Buddenbrook and Oscar Thibault inspire in them a type of ancestor worship to which Tom and Antoine are also sensitive. The parents believe that through several generations of sustained wealth and respectability, their families have shown their superiority. They are determined to increase the glory of

the family reputation. Obviously, material prosperity is the main measure of success, yet because of their generational outlook, they are prepared to slowly increase the family fortune. Either in personal or business matters, they desire to succeed by preserving established family traditions without innovation.

The parents seek success through their professional activity and they derive great satisfaction from their work in which they integrate personal, family, and business aspirations. They follow family traditions, happy simply to embellish the family and business reputations. Jean Buddenbrook explains his self-sacrificing attitude in personal, family and business matters in a letter to his daughter Tony:

--My child, we are not born for that which, with our short-sighted vision, we reckon to be our small personal happiness. We are not free, separate, and independent entities, but like links in a chain, and we could not by any means be what we are without those who went before us and showed us the way, by following the straight and narrow path, not looking right or left.(111)

The power and assurance Oscar Thibault's success create in him are more terrifying than Jean Buddenbrook's. The feeling he inspires among the members of his household was summed up as:

D'un commun accord, tout le monde, autour de M. Thibault, se taisait: on ne commettait plus jamais l'imprudence de le mettre au courant de quoi que ce fût, car il était impossible de prévoir quelles conclusions le gros homme, trop puissant, trop actif, tirait de la moindre nouvelle ni par quelles démarches, lettres ou visites, il se croirait en droit d'intervenir et d'embrouiller les événements.(112)

In sum, the parents possess the traditional family goals of social status and wealth, and are ready to work hard to attain them. They are -----

(111)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 120.

(112)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. I, p. 369.

quite content to conform to the values instilled in them, foregoing the freedoms other family members, such as their sons, claim. They achieve the happiness of fitting into their station in life without questioning or rebelling against it.

The sons do not accept these parental values; they cannot adhere to such a rigid lifestyle. Eda Sagarra, in A Social History of Germany 1648-1914, noted this tendency to abandon the parental values among German industrial entrepreneur families in the late nineteenth-century, the pattern being two generations living a frugal lifestyle and then the third dissipating the accumulated family wealth, selling or closing the family business, or marrying into the landed class(113), a fate strikingly similar to that of the Buddenbrook and Thibault families. Specifically, the sons show two variations of the inability to live by the parental values. The elder sons attempt a compromise, trying to unite the parental family values with their individualistic values. The younger sons, however, reject the parental family values outright and are scornful of their brothers' attempts to compromise.

Both Tom and Antoine begin their careers as ambitious young men, confident in their ability to achieve their family goals and satisfy their individualism through their prodigious activity. Over the years though, their confidence evaporates and their activity becomes fruitless motion. For instance, immediately after his father's death, Tom's ambition is described:

(113)Eda Sagarra, A Social History of Germany 1648-1914, pp. 287-288. After making this assertion, she cites examples of nineteenth-century entrepreneurs to illustrate her observation.

The thirst for action, for power and success, the longing to force fortune to her knees, sprang up quick and passionate in his eyes. He felt all the world looking at him expectantly, questioning if he would know how to command prestige for the firm and the family and protect its name. On exchange he had been meeting side-looks out of jovial, mocking old eyes, that seemed to be saying "So you're taking it on, my son!" "I am!" he thought.(114)

With the passage of time, the effort to attain power and success exhausts Tom. Eventually, his weakness becomes complete paralysis. He despises himself for abandoning the principles he formerly followed, yet is unable to react vigorously:

His will-power had grown flabby in these years of idleness or petty activity. He slept late in the morning, though every evening he made an angry resolve to rise early and take the prescribed walk before breakfast. Only two or three times did he actually carry out the resolve; and it was the same with everything else. And the constant effort to spur on his will, with the constant failure to do so, consumed his self-respect and made him a prey to despair.(115)

At the beginning of his promising medical career, Antoine formulates his confidence in almost identical terms:

La vie, à ses yeux, c'était avant tout un large espace découvert où les gens actifs comme lui n'avaient qu'à s'élancer avec entrain; et, quand il disait: aimer la vie, il voulait dire: s'aimer soi-même, croire en soi. Toutefois, lorsqu'il se représentait plus particulièrement sa propre vie, elle ne lui apparaissait pas seulement comme un champ de manoeuvres merveilleusement disponible, comme un ensemble infini de combinaisons possibles, mais aussi et surtout comme un chemin nettement tracé, une ligne droite qui menait infailliblement quelque part.

Il sentit qu'il venait de mettre en branle une cloche familière, dont il écoutait toujours le son avec indulgence. "Thibault?" murmurait la voix intérieure. "Il a trente-deux ans, l'âge des beaux départs!... Santé? Exceptionnelle: la résistance d'un animal jeune, en pleine vigueur... Intelligence? Souple, hardie, sans cesse en progrès... Faculté de travail? A peu près inépuisable... Aisance matérielle... Tout enfin! Ni faiblesses, ni vices! Aucune entrave à sa vocation! Et le vent en poupe!"(116)

(114)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 212.

(115)Ibid., p. 522.

(116)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. II, pp. 105-6.

His lifelong refrain is "Vivre, c'est agir," eventually being used to suppress his growing uncertainty about the way he has ordered his life. This adage becomes a means to avoid his incipient doubts. For instance, it is his last recourse to find some consolation in the fact the war will destroy his orderly life:

Depuis trois jours, il se sentait captif, condamné à la passivité, entraîné par l'événement mondial, solidaire de sa patrie, de sa classe: aussi impuissant qu'un caillou pris dans la masse glissante d'un tombereau qu'on décharge. Son avenir, ses projets, l'organisation si longuement préméditée de sa vie, tout était par terre. Devant lui, l'inconnu. L'inconnu, mais aussi l'action. Cette idée, chargée de potentiel, l'avait aussitôt redressé.(117)

Also like Tom, Antoine comes to question his life, eventually becoming completely disillusioned. He can no longer work to achieve the goals he set for himself; he is worn out:

Vivre satisfait entre les limites que je m'étais assignées était devenu pour moi la condition d'un bien-être que je sentais indispensable à mon travail. Ainsi, très tôt, je m'étais commodément installé au centre de quelques principes--j'écris principes, à défaut de mieux; le terme est prétentieux, et forcé--principes qui convenaient aux besoins de ma nature, et à mon existence de médecin. (En gros: une philosophie élémentaire d'homme d'action, basée sur le culte de l'énergie, l'exercice de la volonté, etc.)

Rigoureusement vrai, en tout cas, pour la période d'avant-guerre. Vrai, même, pour la période de guerre, au moins jusqu'à ma première blessure. Alors (convalescence à l'hôpital de Saint-Dizier), j'ai commencé à remettre en question certaines façons de penser et de se conduire qui m'avaient assuré jusque-là une certaine pondération, une confortable harmonie, et m'avaient permis de tirer bon rendement de mes facultés.(118)

As for their individualism, both characters initially compromise it, accepting to channel their aspirations into professions that reflect well on their families and lead them to success and fame. As their activism fails to realize their hopes, their individualism is

(117)Ibid., vol. IV, p. 273.

(118)Ibid., vol. V, p. 352.

transformed, leading them to isolate themselves so as not to face their failure. To begin, Tom enters the family business knowing he will need to curb his aspirations to accommodate the expectations placed on him. His thoughts while gazing at his uncle's corpse describe his early attitude:

"To cherish the vision of an abstract good; to carry in your heart, like a hidden love, only far sweeter, the dream of preserving an ancient name, an old family, an old business, of carrying it on, and adding to it more and more honour and lustre--ah, that takes imagination, Uncle Gotthold, and imagination you didn't have.

...
Oh, we are travelled and educated enough to realize that the limits set to our ambition are small and petty enough, looked at from outside and above. But everything in this world is comparative, Uncle Gotthold. Did you know one can be a great man, even in a small place; a Caesar even in a little commercial town on the Baltic."(119)

By the end of his life, all too aware of his failure to live up to the ideal he had set for himself, he prefers to keep his moral and physical suffering to himself; he knows no other way. In his moment of extreme loneliness, Tom is tempted to ask for help to face death, but then decides to remain alone:

Thomas Buddenbrook had played now and then throughout his life with an inclination to Catholicism. But he was at bottom, none the less, the born Protestant: full of the true Protestant's passionate, relentless sense of personal responsibility. No, in the ultimate things there was, there could be, no help from outside, no mediation, no absolution, no soothing-syrup, no panacea. Each one of us, alone, unaided, of his own powers, must unravel the riddle before it was too late, must wring from himself a pious readiness before the hour of death, or else part in despair.(120)

Similarly, Antoine Thibault is initially proud of his profession, aware of the limits it put on him, but believing that one has to

(119) Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 227.

(120) Ibid., p. 523.

choose, and he made the best choice. Nevertheless, at times, the perception of his limited career bothers him:

"Alors, je serais bien près de dire: tout est permis... Tout est permis du moment qu'on sait ce qu'on fait, et, autant que possible, pourquoi on le fait!"

Presque aussitôt, il sourit aigrement: "Le plus déroutant, c'est que, si l'on y regarde attentivement, ma vie--cette fameuse "liberté complète" pour laquelle il n'y a ni bien ni mal--elle est à peu près uniquement consacrée à la pratique de ce que les autres appellent le bien. Et tout ce bel affranchissement, il aboutit à quoi? A faire, non seulement ce que font les autres, mais plus particulièrement, ce que font ceux que la morale courante appelle les meilleurs!(121)

He later provides a summary of his life and decision to limit himself in a moment of incipient doubt just before the war:

"Je suis terriblement esclave de ma profession, voilà la vérité", songeait-il. "Je n'ai plus jamais le temps de réfléchir... Réfléchir, ça n'est pas penser à mes malades, ni même à la médecine; réfléchir, ce devrait être: méditer sur le monde... Je n'en ai pas le loisir... Je croirais voler du temps à mon travail... Ai-je raison? Est-ce que mon existence professionnelle est vraiment toute la vie? Est-ce même toute ma vie?... Pas sûr... Sous le docteur Thibault, je sens bien qu'il y a quelqu'un d'autre: moi... Et ce quelqu'un-là, il est étouffé... Depuis longtemps... Depuis que j'ai passé mon premier examen, peut-être... Ce jour-là, crac! la ratière s'est refermée... L'homme que j'étais, l'homme qui préexistait au médecin--l'homme que je suis encore, après tout--c'est comme un germe enseveli, qui ne se développe plus, depuis longtemps..."

...

"Voilà le docteur Thibault qui reparaît", fit-il en souriant. "Eh bien! Vivre, c'est agir, après tout! Ca n'est pas philosopher... Méditer sur la vie? A quoi bon? La vie, on sait bien ce que c'est: un amalgame saugrenu de moments merveilleux et d'ennuements! La cause est entendue, une fois pour toutes... Vivre, ça n'est pas remettre toujours tout en question..."(122)

Antoine's gassing definitively ends his hope of still achieving something noteworthy through his formerly cherished specialization. His gassing also condemns him to end his life in suffering, yet when he

(121)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. II, p. 98-9.

(122)Ibid., vol. III, pp. 157-8.

realizes he will inevitably die, he accepts the isolation his lonesome search for success has imposed on him:

A l'angle de la rue de l'Université, à quelques pas de chez lui, une peur le saisit: la peur panique de la solitude qui l'attendait là-haut. Il stoppa net, prêt à fuir. Il avait machinalement levé les yeux vers le ciel balayé de lueurs, cherchant dans sa tête quelqu'un auprès de qui quêter un regard de compassion.

--"Personne...", murmura-t-il.

Et, plusieurs minutes adossé au mur, tandis que les tirs de barrage, le ronflement des avions, le sourd éclatement des bombes, lui martelaient le crâne, il réfléchit à cette chose inexplicable: pas un ami! Il s'était toujours montré sociable, obligeant; il s'était acquis l'attachement de tous ses malades; il avait toujours eu la sympathie de ses camarades, la confiance de ses maîtres; il avait été violemment aimé par quelques femmes--mais il n'avait pas un seul ami! Il n'en avait jamais eu!... Jacques lui-même... "Jacques est mort sans que j'aie su m'en faire un ami..." (123)

Antoine and Tom try to integrate parental family values and individualistic values but fail. Their desire to channel their individualism into professional activity that will bring them personal fame as well as increase the family fortune illustrates their compromise. Their activism, originally aimed at achieving success, becomes fruitless nervous movement. Moreover, in the face of their failure, their individualism leads to isolation. A compromise between parental family values and individualistic values is impossible.

Tom and Antoine not only fail to integrate family and individualistic values but they also bring complete desolation upon their families. They still want the expressions of success their parents achieved but they fail to hold onto them. In fact, the failures of Tom and Antoine are not simply personal; they bring about the collapse of their families' privileged position. For a time, they achieved the highest status of their families but their success is

(123)Ibid., vol. V, p. 298.

ephemeral and their final failure complete; they both lose the family fortune.

Tom guides the family business to its greatest wealth by innovative business practices, but in so doing, he betrays the family traditions. He tries to unite the family business tradition with modern aggressiveness but the two do not go together. Tom loses the energy to perform this balancing act. Hanno is repulsed by the violence his father does to himself, deciding early never to become a businessman. At Tom's death therefore, the family business is liquidated at a substantial loss. The Buddenbrook family ceases to be one the richest and most powerful in the town. Soon thereafter, the death of Hanno even extinguishes the family name.

Antoine also loses his family fortune. At his father's death, he invests some of his inheritance in speculative ventures, using the rest to rebuild his house into a suitable setting for his scientific research. By adopting an extravagant lifestyle, centred only on his career and comfort, he betrays the bourgeois ideal. He takes advantage of his inheritance to live leisurely, ignoring his family responsibility. He admits his failure to enrich the family near his death:

"Et, en effet", reconnut-il, je n'ai pas lieu d'être fier de tout ce qui s'est passé après la mort de Père." (Il entendait par là, non seulement son installation luxueuse, mais aussi sa liaison avec Anne, ses sorties du soir; tout un irrésistible glissement vers la vie facile.) "Sans compter", ajouta-t-il, "la perte d'une grande partie de la fortune laissée par Père..." (Il avait englouti, dans les dépenses faites pour la transformation de la maison, une bonne moitié de la fortune mobilière; le reste dédaignant le taux des sages placements de M. Thibault, il l'avait converti en valeurs russes, aujourd'hui tombées à zéro.) "Bah", se dit-il, "pas de regrets stériles..." C'est ainsi qu'il avait coutume d'apaiser ses scrupules. Cependant--et ce rêve en était le sûr indice,--il conservait, au fond, la conception bourgeoise du "bien familial", de l'argent économisé pour être transmis; et, bien qu'il n'eût de comptes à rendre à personne, il éprouvait un sentiment de honte à

avoir dilapidé, en moins d'un an, un patrimoine que plusieurs générations avaient sagement constitué.(124)

The failure of the elder sons to keep the family prosperous is a symptom of their inability to accept and live according to the parental expectations put on them. They pursue paths to riches that compromise the family traditions. They sought a compromise in their professional activity by limiting themselves to a respectable career in the belief that their activism would bring them personal fame and family wealth. Tom and Antoine are not only incapable of achieving the family and individualistic goals they aspire to, but by abandoning family traditions, they bring about the failure of their families, most eloquently shown by their loss of the family fortune.

The younger sons, Jacques and Christian, embody another attitude towards the parental values. They revolt against their parents' values and also despise the compromise their brothers make, which Jacques and Christian see as hypocrisy. They detest their family homes, critically seeing through all the falseness and image consciousness. Their reaction is to escape by running away. Christian is originally sent to London to work. When there, his parents reluctantly agree to let him go to South America. He is happy to be away from the family household where many demands are placed on him. He only returns after the death of his father. He is uncomfortable at home, quickly seeking any excuse to go to 'the Club', where he finds temporary escape. Jacques literally runs away twice. The first occasion was when he was a

(124)Ibid., vol. V, pp. 185-6.

teenager. The second occasion is when he disappears after telling his father he would commit suicide. After travelling and living a life he describes as "inavouable"(125), he ends up in Switzerland. Antoine discovers Jacques' hiding place, and goes to bring him back to Paris because of their father's mortal illness. While at his father's home, Jacques is anxious to leave, which he does as soon as possible after his father's funeral.

The revolt of Jacques and Christian is not only a personal tragedy for their parents, but it also tarnishes the respectable family image. Even as a young boy, Christian's behaviour was one of the few blights on the Buddenbrook household, as explained after one of the boys' pranks:

It seemed probable that more might be expected from Thomas Buddenbrook than from his brother Christian. He was even-tempered, and his high spirits never crossed the bounds of discretion. Christian, on the other hand, was inclined to be moody: guilty at times of the most extravagant silliness, at others he would be seized by a whim which could terrify the rest of them in the most astonishing way.(126)

Throughout his life, Christian is a source of consternation to the family: his excessive love of the theatre; his inability to work either at home or abroad; his business failures; his sordid love affairs; and his strange and obsessive fears. To a family putting great importance on its image, Christian was a source of disgrace throughout his life.

The situation of Jacques is an even more eloquent example of the revolt of the younger son. Les Thibault begins with Jacques' running away from home. His father is upset not only because of the affront to

(125)Ibid., vol. II, p. 252.

(126)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 55.

his authority but also because of the personal embarrassment. At the moment of the flight, Oscar Thibault was up for election before the Institut. He was known as the benefactor of a reformatory for delinquent boys; to have his son run away therefore was an ironic scandal. Again, years later, Jacques revolts, telling his father that he will commit suicide. His father believes the threat. Oscar Thibault dies with a guilty conscience, blaming himself for Jacques' apparent suicide:

--"J'ai d'autres comptes à rendre. La mort de Jacques. Pauvre enfant... Ai-je fait tout mon devoir?... Je voulais être ferme. J'ai été dur. Mon Dieu, je m'excuse d'avoir été dur avec mon enfant... Je n'ai jamais su gagner sa confiance. Ni la tienne, Antoine... Non, ne proteste pas, c'est la vérité. Dieu l'a voulu ainsi; Dieu ne m'a jamais accordé la confiance de mes enfants... J'ai eu deux fils. Ils m'ont respecté, ils m'ont craint; mais, dès l'enfance, ils se sont écartés de moi... Orgueil, orgueil! Le mien; le leur... Pourtant, est-ce que je n'ai pas fait tout ce que je devais?"(127)

Despite their revolts and the embarrassment they are for their families, Jacques and Christian feel superior to their success-oriented brothers. As they are critical of their parents, likewise they disdain their brothers who sacrifice everything in their lives to maintain their compromise of family and individualistic values. Since Jacques and Christian do not attempt to live by their parents' values, they can be critical of their brothers who have become cold and withdrawn in their effort to keep up a facade of success and power. Christian reprimands Tom for his coldness after their mother dies:

Christian went on, and his voice was hollow and rasping. "Your heart is full of coldness and ill-will toward me, all the while. As far back as I can remember I have felt cold in your presence--you freeze me with a perfect stream of icy contempt. You may think that is a strange expression, but what I feel is just like

(127)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. II, pp. 135-6.

that. You repulse me, just by looking at me--and you hardly ever even so much as look at me. How have you got a right to treat me like that? You are a man too, you have your own weaknesses. You have always been a better son to our parents; but if you stood so much closer to them than I do, you might have absorbed a little of their Christian charity. If you have no brotherly love to spare for me, you might have had some Christlike love. But you are entirely without affection. You never came near me in the hospital, when I lay there and suffered with rheumatism--"(128)

Likewise, in a moment of anger, after Antoine disapproves of Jacques' love for Jenny, Jacques provides a similarly harsh but just description of his older brother:

Il haussa encore une fois les épaules, saisit le bouton de la porte, et, se tournant, jeta par-dessus son épaule: "Je croyais te connaître. Je te connais seulement depuis cinq minutes! Je sais maintenant ce que tu vaux! Tu es un coeur sec! Tu n'as jamais aimé! Tu n'aimeras jamais! Un coeur sec, irrémédiablement sec!" Il toisait son frère de haut,--du haut de son intangible amour. Il grimaça un sourire, et articula, du bout des lèvres: "Sais-tu ce que tu es? avec tous tes diplômes, et tout ton orgueil? Tu es un pauvre type, Antoine! Rien de plus qu'un pauvre type!"(129)

Despite their revolt, Jacques and Christian cannot escape the legacy of their family home. For both sons, their fathers' deaths bring them back into contact with their families. Christian returns from his self-imposed exile and lives in an increasingly difficult intimacy with his family, subjected to, but disobeying the rules for acceptable conduct. This revolt is a source of bitterness to him also. He gives in to his weaknesses but is not proud of them. Christian criticizes the values of his father and brother, but he would like to be able to work and be responsible like them. He is a reluctant rebel. Only because Christian is incapable of living according to the values of his home, and is well aware of his shortcomings, does he rebel against his

(128)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 467.

(129)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. IV, p. 284.

family.

Jacques is also marked by his family, no matter how hard he tries to escape or reject it. Jacques makes the most concerted effort to separate himself from his family and background, running away twice. His revolt eventually becomes revolutionary activity against the class from which he came. He even separates himself from his childhood friend Daniel and his brother after the death of his father had renewed contact with them. He wants to isolate himself from his past. Yet, even in his revolutionary transformation, Jacques retains a legacy of individualism from his home, as his opinions and the observation of a revolutionary leader indicate:

Complaisamment, Jacques expliqua:

--Je disais au Pilote que beaucoup d'entre nous ont encore une manière de penser, de sentir, de vouloir le bonheur, qui reste formellement capitaliste... Ne crois-tu pas? Etre révolutionnaire, qu'est-ce que c'est, si ce n'est pas, avant tout, une attitude personnelle, intérieure? Si ce n'est pas, avant tout, d'avoir fait la révolution en soi-même, de s'être purgé l'esprit des habitudes qu'y a laissées l'ordre ancien?"

Meynestrel jeta vers lui un coup d'oeil rapide. "Purgé", songeait-il amusé. "Curieux petit Jacques... Si bien désempourgeoisé, c'est vrai... L'esprit purgé des habitudes, oui!--sauf de la plus foncièrement bourgeoise de toutes! L'habitude de mettre l'esprit lui-même à la base de tout!"(130)

Notwithstanding all these efforts, he cannot detach himself completely. In a letter to a friend, Martin du Gard condemns Jacques' vacillation even more strongly than in the novel:

Vous dites: "Jacques se trouve tout à coup devant la Révolution." Non... C'est plus simple que cela. Devant la menace d'une guerre européenne, qui hérisse en lui son pacifisme naturel, son humanitarisme de jeune bourgeois tendre. Ça lui donne un but d'action: lutter contre la guerre, éviter l'hécatombe, à tout prix. Il y a du flou dans l'intelligence de Jacques. (Ne vous substituez pas trop à lui!...) C'est un intellectuel, par formation et par goût naturel. Et un fils de famille, quoi qu'il fasse! Tunique de

Nessus... Il ne peut pas devenir tout à coup semblable à un enfant du peuple, qui par sa naissance même et sa jeunesse, s'est trouvé "nourri" dès le berceau et n'a eu qu'à grandir parmi les siens. Il a une nature révoltée, mais compliquée et incertaine (à cause de la multiplicité des tendances, hérédités, éléments contradictoires, qui sont en lui). Capable d'enthousiasme, mais guère de foi. Perpétuel décalage en lui, flottement. Trop raisonneur, trop habitué à voir le pour et le contre de tout. Il est frère d'Antoine, par le sang! par son passé!

Ne pas faire de lui un personnage à la J. Romains, aux contours nets, symbolisant une idée claire. C'est un refoulé. Energique, courageux, mais hésitant toujours, par intelligence. Répugnant aux extrêmes. Se refusant à la violence. Etc.

Tout l'opposé d'un vrai révolutionnaire!(131)

The sons' experience of love and marriage also illustrates their rejection of family values or attempts to compromise. It is another area of conflict between the generations; the sons do not possess the parental values with regard to love and marriage. Precisely because Mann and Martin du Gard knew the function of love and marriage for the bourgeoisie, they were able to illustrate the internal conflicts of the sons between the family expectations and their personal aspirations.

First, for the bourgeoisie of the nineteenth-century, marriage was a crucial means for material advancement:

The marriage of children was a public valuation placed on the parents' position, and it was also a method of improving that position. The great problem was to avoid a mésalliance, which was why love was the great enemy, the rebel against parental authority which could bring disaster on all their plans.(132)

Edward Shorter, in his study of the modern family, also stresses the significance of love and marriage in incipient capitalist

(131)Letter to Marcel Lallemand of May 19, 1936 in Martin du Gard, "Lettres à un ami," La Nouvelle Revue Française, pp. 1144-5.

(132)Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol. II, p. 287.

societies.(133) He affirms that capitalism led to the development of romantic love. Yet, according to Shorter, this ideal started among city-dwelling wage earners who were free from social control and without any property to protect. They were free from any considerations except their own preferences when choosing a spouse. The middle-class did not adopt romantic love as the basis for marriage because its members were instilled with generational values; the family wealth had to be passed on from ancestors to future generations. Because the bourgeoisie had its family property to protect and preserve, romantic love with its emphasis on individual choice of spouse and emotional attachment was a threat. The logical conclusion of these ideas is that when romantic love became more important than material advance as a reason to marry, the bourgeoisie would be betraying its family values and seeking individual fulfillment. In other words, the social effects of capitalism would then have reached the bourgeoisie. Using this framework, the crisis in family values is well illustrated by the experiences of love and marriage of the sons who are torn between their desire to wed for love and their attachment to family values that leads them to seek a spouse for material advancement and to improve social status.

Of all the sons, Tom comes the closest to combining love and material advancement in his marriage. His first love, though, is a shop girl:

"God knows, Anna, what will happen. One isn't young for ever--you are a sensible girl, you have never said anything about

(133)Edward Shorter, *Naissance de la famille moderne* trans. Serge Quadruppani (Paris: Editions Du Seuil, 1977). The beginning of his conclusion, pp. 311-20, provides a summary of his thesis.

marriage and that sort of thing--"

"God forbid--that I should ask such a thing of you!"

"One is carried along--you see. If I live, I shall take over the business, and make a good match--you see, I am open with you at parting, Anna. I wish you every happiness, darling, darling little Anna. But don't throw yourself away, do you hear? For you haven't done that--with me--I swear it."(134)

Several years later, Tom falls in love with and marries Gerda Arnoldsen. He is initially very happy. He perceives Gerda as an appropriate spouse because of her refinement, intelligence, original personality, and large dowry. She is the perfect match for a man of his standing. Nevertheless, his happiness quickly dissipates. He and Gerda lack affection and understanding. He cannot share her passion for music and he feels continually more isolated. They grow further apart until he is completely alienated from her. Instead of a crowning achievement, his marriage becomes a great disappointment and even a source of shame when a young army officer frequently comes to see Gerda to play music with her.

Christian's experience of love and marriage is, by contrast, tragicomic. He is infatuated with women of the theatre as a young boy and as an adult frequents the prostitutes of his town. He eventually marries a prostitute from Hamburg who is the mother of his children, a marriage he contends is one of love but to which his family is vehemently opposed. In order to marry, he first waits until his mother dies, then witnessing Tom's violent disapproval, he waits until Tom dies. After his obligatory patience, his marriage turns out to be a failure. Christian's bizarre obsessions lead him to insanity and his wife commits him to an asylum, to nobody's regret because there he will finally stop

(134)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 139.

embarrassing his family.

As for the Thibaults, Antoine is unable to fulfill either ideal, incapable to marry either for love or for social status. Throughout his life he has many mistresses but only considers marrying one, Rachel. He keeps his emotional distance from all the others but loves her. Along with her beauty, her exotic nature appeals to Antoine, who affirms his complete freedom but leads a conventional life. Rachel lives an amoral life that intrigues Antoine. She has been a ballet dancer and has travelled to Africa and the Middle East. Her exoticism and morally scandalous background set her diametrically against Antoine's regulated bourgeois world. To love her is clearly against his family values, something he realizes without abandoning these values:

Il se sentait si différent d'elle, rivé au sol de France par sa naissance bourgeoise, par son travail, par des ambitions, par tout un avenir organisé! Il apercevait bien les chaînes qui le liaient, mais il ne souhaitait pas un instant de les rompre; et il éprouvait, contre tout ce que Rachel aimait et qui lui était si étranger, la hargne d'un animal domestique contre tout ce qui rôde et menace la sécurité du logis.(135)

He would like to marry her but cannot because she leaves him to rejoin her former lover, Hirsch, in Africa. She loves Antoine but is drawn to Hirsch. She cannot accept to live according to Antoine's staid lifestyle. Later, Antoine proposes to Gise out of a desire to complete his successful existence with a socially acceptable marriage, but she refuses him. Finally, shortly before his death, he proposes to Jenny in order to leave Jean-Paul the family name and to legitimize him. Jenny refuses, preferring that she and her son remain on society's margin.

(135)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. I, p. 477.

Whether for love or for social status, his own or his nephew's, Antoine's attempts to marry are unsuccessful, being refused at every attempt.

Jacques loves in a manner opposed to his upbringing; it is an extension of his lifelong revolt. His first love is Lisbeth, the Alsatian servant girl who initiates him. Antoine also had sexual relations with her but without developing any emotional attachment. Jacques, on the other hand, falls passionately in love with her, even proposing to her. Later, the true love of Jacques's life turns out to be Jenny. Again, because she is a Protestant, he loves a girl from outside his family's world. Although Jacques' love goes against his family, it also contains a legacy of his family home. Although Protestant, Jenny is definitely from the same class, the one Jacques detests and fights against. Jacques is even ashamed of Jenny when she accompanies him in his political activity with his socialist friends. Further, despite the exaltation of his love, just as with his first love with Lisbeth, he is quickly ready to sacrifice it. He leaves Jenny to pursue a more important mission, to stop the war, therefore abandoning her after committing himself to her less than a week earlier.

4. THE AUTHORS' PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE CRISIS

Roger Martin du Gard and Thomas Mann experienced the crisis of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie personally, thus enabling them to describe it in a compelling manner in their novels. They both came from upper middle-class families with established occupational traditions. In Thomas Mann's and Roger Martin du Gard's generation, these traditions ended. From a young age, each refused to follow the path their families expected of them, namely, to continue the family business or profession. Each rejected the religious and family values of their parents and proclaimed his individualism by pursuing his aspirations. Mann and Martin du Gard incorporated many aspects of their family background and their personal experience of the crisis into their novels. Although Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault are not autobiographies, many elements are autobiographical. Nevertheless, they did not completely abandon all the parental ideals and habits. Their parents lived by a type of individualism and by activism, traits that Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard inherited but modified. Further, Mann and Martin du Gard imitated the parental lifestyle by living in the comfortable manner of the upper bourgeoisie.

Both authors were born into well-to-do families where hardship was unknown. Roger Martin du Gard's family had been professionals in the field of law for generations. His parents were originally from Clermont, a small town near Paris but moved to Paris where his father continued his legal practice. Their first son, Roger, was born on March 23, 1881 in his grandparents' home at Neuilly-sur-Seine. One other son

was born in 1884. Martin du Gard received his initial education from his mother and only at nine years of age did he begin to attend school. From 1898-99 he attended the Sorbonne, and from 1899 to 1905 he attended the Ecole des Chartres, the school for historians. He graduated with a Diplôme d'archiviste-paléographe in 1905.

In 1908 Martin du Gard satirized his family background in a description of the father of the main character of his first published work, Devenir!:

M. Mazareilles appartenait à cette bourgeoisie spéciale, qui n'est pas la "Grande Bourgeoisie", mais qui est cependant une bourgeoisie "de race". Pour en faire partie, il faut être né bourgeois, comme d'aucuns naissent gentils-hommes; c'est à dire qu'il faut être le fils de son père, non de ses oeuvres, compter avant soi plusieurs générations de gens aisés, probes, estimés, et avoir hérité cet ensemble de vertus, de préjugés, d'habitudes et d'écus, dont se composent la culture morale et l'éducation de la bourgeoisie.(136)

In his mature critical attitude, he characterizes this class: without fear of the future; certain that children would grow up, study, go into the same occupation, conserve and increase the family capital; always advancing with patience and hard work; and, never speculating like the modern big business bourgeoisie.(137) This brand of satisfied, Catholic paternalism would find its fullest expression in the character of Oscar Thibault.

Thomas Mann was born on June 6, 1875 in the prosperous Baltic seaport of Lübeck, where his father was one of the leading merchants. In the Mann family mansion-home, no luxury was lacking. His father came

(136) Roger Martin du Gard, Devenir!, in Oeuvres complètes de Roger Martin du Gard, vol. I, p. 13.

(137) René Garguilo, La Genèse des Thibault, pp. 26-7.

from an established local patrician family, but his mother was born and raised in Brazil of German and Portuguese parents. She played an important role in fostering her childrens' artistic inclinations. Thomas was the second of five children; his elder brother Heinrich also became a successful novelist. Thomas Mann studied at the Katherineum in Lübeck until the sixth form in 1894, which entitled him to a shortened military service. His father died in 1891 and the family business was closed, neither of the elder sons had the desire or the aptitudes to continue it. After Mann's schooling was finished in 1894, he left Lübeck to join his mother in the more pleasant setting of Munich.

Mann's description of economic decline in Buddenbrooks applies not only to his father's firm but to Lübeck as a whole. Despite enormous economic development in Germany, particularly after 1870 with the coming of large-scale industrialization, the economy of Lübeck stagnated. Many reasons accounted for Lübeck's troubles. Internally, the constitution permitted political representation for only a small group and economic legislation remained equally exclusive until very late in the nineteenth-century.(138) External factors further crippled Lübeck's economy. German industrialization led to an increase in internal trade to the detriment of maritime trade. After the 1870s, German agricultural products were no longer competitive on world markets. Finally, the Kiel canal, begun in 1887 and finished in 1895, deprived Lübeck of its traditional role of port serving Hamburg on the

 (138) Pierre-Paul Sagave, *Réalité sociale et idéologie religieuse dans les romans de Thomas Mann* (Paris: Editions Orphy, 1954), pp. 4-5.

Baltic.(139)

For all the privileges Mann and Martin du Gard enjoyed during their youth, they felt uncomfortable in their parental environment and revolted against certain aspects of it. In both cases, their revolt began with their education and led them to become writers, a career opposed to their families' wishes. Their revolt was also internal, leading them to attitudes and intellectual positions radically different from those held by their parents.

Mann and Martin du Gard were both uninspired students. Success in studies would have been a sign of preparedness to follow in their fathers' professions; mediocre school results was a form of passive resistance to their parents' expectations. Martin du Gard readily admitted to his laziness:

J'ai été un cancre: sauf en narration française et en histoire, dans les dernières à toutes les compositions. Pas tout à fait le cancre indécrottable, ni le potache indiscipliné; non, plutôt docile, mais paresseux et résolument inattentif.(140)

Martin du Gard used his university education as another means of revolt: to escape his parents' wishes after he failed his examination for the 'licences ès lettres' at the Sorbonne. At the spur of the moment, in July 1899, he decided to attempt the entrance examination for the Ecole des Chartres:

J'ai écrit d'autrefois, en m'amusant à esquisser le portrait d'un jeune chartiste que j'apercevais dans la glace: "Il était entré à l'Ecole comme on entre sous une porte cochère pendant une averse: pour attendre."

C'était en effet mon cas. Pour attendre quoi? De vieillir un peu. Pour attendre l'appel au service militaire. Pour attendre surtout d'avoir l'âge de déclarer à mon père:--"Je veux écrire...

(139)Ibid., p. 11.

(140)Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs," p. xliii.

des romans."(141)

Martin du Gard enjoyed his historical studies at l'Ecole des Chartres:

En outre--et ce n'est pas la moindre des dettes que j'ai contractées envers l'Ecole--j'y ai été soumis à une certaine méthode de travail, à une certaine discipline intellectuelle et morale, qui me sont devenues une seconde nature. J'ai appris, non seulement à respecter mais à considérer comme indispensable, pour accomplir une oeuvre digne de confiance et d'estime, la rigueur qu'appliquaient à leurs recherches ces historiens impartiaux, qui ne se seraient pas permis la plus petite affirmation sans s'être livrés au préalable à une documentation méticuleuse.(142)

Before he arrived there, he had to pass through college and the Sorbonne. He changed his unpleasant memories of these two schools from his personal passive resistance into episodes of Jacques' revolt against the education expected of him.

Thomas Mann was also a poor student. He attended the Katherineum at Lübeck, following the education for those entering the world of business. Mann studied to please his father, who hoped his sons would continue the family business. The death of Mann's father liberated him from these expectations he felt no urge to fulfill:

School I loathed, and to the end failed to satisfy its demands. I despised it as a milieu, I was critical of the manners of its masters, and I early espoused a sort of literary opposition to its spirit, its discipline, and its methods of training. My indolence, necessary perhaps to my particular growth; my need of much free time for leisure and quiet reading; an actual heaviness of spirit--even today I suffer from it--made me hate being urged to study, and react with feelings of contempt and scorn.

The humanities might have proved better suited to my needs; but I was intended for a merchant--the heir to the old family business--and so attended the Realgymnasium at the Katherineum, where I got no further than qualifying for the one-year military-service certificate--that is to say, as far as the upper second. During almost the whole of this stagnating, unsatisfying time I had for a friend the son of a Lübeck bookseller who had failed in business and then died. Our friendship subsisted on a fantastic

(141)Ibid., p. 1.

(142)Ibid., p. 11.

and scurrilous mockery of "the whole thing" but in particular the "institution" and its heads.(143)

In Buddenbrooks, Mann transferred his school experiences to the young Hanno, who is harassed by his father to show practical knowledge. Also, the chapter describing a school day of the fifteen-year-old Hanno captures the repulsion Mann felt during his school years.

For Mann and Martin du Gard another important aspect of the rejection of the world of their parents was opposition to the parental religion. Martin du Gard became an atheist as a teenager, revolting against the Catholic upbringing he had received. His definitive break with his childhood religion came spending the summer of 1901 reading the Bible and finding irreconcilable contradictions.(144) Furthermore, Martin du Gard was a good friend of the director of his college, l'abbé Marcel Hébert, soon to become a controversial figure by participating in the Modernist movement, the current in Catholic thought seeking to reconcile difficult points of Catholic faith through a symbolic interpretation. Martin du Gard shared many of the criticisms of the Modernist priests who taught him at l'Ecole Fénelon, but rejected religion altogether rather than seeking a compromise. To replace the religion of his parents, he adopted a pessimistic philosophy firmly based on the rejection of the Christian conception of God yet believing in certain harsh unalterable laws:

Il ne faut pas croire en Dieu, car on ne pourrait que le haïr. Il faut croire à l'indifférence des forces universelles, pour qui nous ne sommes pas plus, avec toute la gamme de nos peines et de nos joies, que les parcelles de sable que la mer et le vent soulèvent,

(143)Mann, A Sketch of My Life, pp. 6-7.

(144)Letter to Marcel Hébert of August 8, 1901 in Martin du Gard, Correspondance générale, vol. I, pp. 54-6.

heurtent, mêlent et séparent, aveuglement.(145)

Thomas Mann's attitude to religion, on the other hand, remained ambiguous. He kept an ironical distance, never clearly taking a position in order to be critical of all others. He was brought up as a Lutheran, but his family was not very interested in religion. As an adult, he enjoyed religious services for their ceremony and beauty yet his beliefs were far from fervent. He summed up his attitude in a letter years later, saying, "Another archbishop has recently declared that there are only three kinds of people: Communists, convinced Christians, and amiable nonentities. I count myself among the last."(146) As in most matters, Mann had a cultural understanding of religion. He was proud to express a Protestant world view but without the Protestant faith.

The slightly different attitudes of Mann and Martin du Gard stem from a similar observation: the superficiality of the Christianity of their parents, especially of their fathers. Mann and Martin du Gard believed their fathers used religion self-servingly to justify an advantageous social order. The observant sons discerned hypocrisy and instinctively revolted against it. Nevertheless, the hypocrisy that they observed in their father's lives, they repeated to some extent in their own. Both men were married in religious ceremonies and had their children baptised. Even though they interiorly rejected the parental religion, they still exteriorly acquiesced to some of its conventions.

(145)Letter to André Frenet of December 14, 1912, in Correspondance générale, vol. I, p. 270.

(146)Letter to Felix Braun of March 29, 1949 in Letters of Thomas Mann 1889-1955, p. 576.

After passive resistance at school and interior rejection of traditional religious beliefs came the moment when the revolt took the concrete form of pursuing a literary career. Martin du Gard became interested in literature at l'Ecole Fénelon. In the 1894-95 school year, he helped form the school's literary journal and acted in a play for the first time. It was around this time that he decided not to follow his father's profession. Literature then became a way to manifest his opposition to his parents.(147) Therefore, he took an active interest in literature while continuing to languish in most of his subjects. In 1901 he attempted his first novel, but he abandoned it as well as the two following attempts. By early 1908, he had become desperate; he felt the need to prove himself, so he quickly wrote and paid to print the novella Devenir!:

Cette crainte qui me hantait de manquer ma vie m'a tout à coup sauvé: le désir m'a pris d'écrire l'histoire d'un jeune écrivain présomptueux, sans talent mais plein d'"illusions sur ses capacités", et dont l'existence ne serait qu'une suite de velléités stériles et de déconvenues. (Je m'étais mis en tête que si je réussissais ce portrait d'un "raté", la preuve serait faite que je n'étais pas menacé d'avoir la destinée lamentable de mon héros.)(148)

Devenir! was far from successful. After thirteen years, only 465 copies of the first edition of 1,000 had been sold(149), but the response of friends and some critics encouraged him. Initially, Martin du Gard had a great desire to be published to prove to his family that he could succeed outside their orbit of approved activity. Writing was how he

(147) Claude Sicard, Roger Martin du Gard: les années d'apprentissage littéraire (1881-1910) (Lille: Atelier Reproduction des Thèses, 1976), pp. 64, 82.

(148) Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs," p. liii.

(149) Sicard, Roger Martin du Gard, p. 565.

chose to affirm himself and to show his independence.

His career peaked in 1936 with the appearance of the three volumes of L'été 1914, the dramatic second half of Les Thibault. The following year he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. After finishing Les Thibault with L'Epilogue in 1940, he did not publish another novel during his lifetime.

After 1940, he worked on the Souvenirs du Colonel de Maumort, endlessly reworking it until his death. The unfinished manuscript was published posthumously in 1983. It was not a great success, and its excessive length and uneven quality places it in a category below his more famous novels. Only when writing about the world of 1890 to 1914 was Martin du Gard comfortable, he could not effectively write about any other period. His only attempt to write a novel that would include the post-First World War period, Souvenirs du Colonel de Maumort failed. He was continually dissatisfied, reorganizing and beginning again until his death. René Lalou, in Le Roman français depuis 1900 concludes that Martin du Gard's major works, Jean Barois and Les Thibault, deal with the three crises that marked the French consciousness from 1890 to 1918.(150) These crises are summarized by Dr. Philip, a minor character of Les Thibault, namely: the decline of Catholicism before the onslaught of positivism, the conflict between the judicial system and truth in the Dreyfus Affair, and the realization that the European people would pay the price for the war

 (150)René Lalou, Le Roman français depuis 1900 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1941), p. 117.

begun in 1914 between the different governments.(151)

Thomas Mann's father would have opposed his son's literary career, but the patriarch died in 1891. However, Heinrich Mann, Thomas' older brother, had struggled against their father to begin a literary career while their father was alive. Like Martin du Gard, Mann also made his initial literary attempts as a teenager in school. His first published short stories, written soon after he arrived at Munich in 1894, are about deformed individuals who die and the opposition between ordinary life and art. Mann was determined to see himself as an outsider. He expressed his view of literature to Heinrich in 1901:

Ah, literature is death! I shall never understand how anyone can be dominated by it without bitterly hating it. Its ultimate and best lesson is this: to see death as a way of achieving its antithesis, life.(152)

This rhetoric found little correspondence in Mann's life. He was neither an outsider nor socially marginalized, and he did not flaunt death. On the contrary, he definitely enjoyed good meals, clothes, opera and the access to upper-class society literary fame eventually brought him. Despite his affluent lifestyle, he continued to view his art as a "questionable existence", more as a psychological means to distance himself from his father's bourgeois values than from any deviant actions in his life.

Mann's career attained an early peak with the publication of Buddenbrooks, which remained the most accessible of all his works. For the next fifty-five years, he continued to produce, going from one success -----
(151)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault vol. IV, p. 278.

(152)Letter to Heinrich Mann of February 13, 1901 in Letters of Thomas Mann, p. 23.

to another. Widely considered to be the most important German novelist of the twentieth-century, he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1929, Buddenbrooks being cited as the novel that merited the prize.

Mann and Martin du Gard also shared certain attitudes that, although not exclusively formed out of revolt against their parents' world, nevertheless do have at least an element of rejection of the world from which they came. First, both authors were wary of any sort of commitment. They viewed the bourgeois as a sort of simpleton, overlooking life's complexities to adhere to clear, even if incorrect positions. A large part of their artistic success is precisely their ability to portray characters as complex beings. Because they appreciated the complexity of life, Mann and Martin du Gard believed nothing was ever clear, no unequivocal position was possible or desirable. As a result, both were fearful of public commitment to any position or group. Martin du Gard was never a member of any movement, not even participating at La Nouvelle Revue Française to which he contributed and where he had many close friends. Further, after the Second World, his stature was great yet he refused any appeal to commit himself to a political or literary movement. Mann's fear of commitment is even better known. He initially believed artists should stay out of politics. He changed his mind at the outbreak of the First World War when he came to the defense of the Wilhelmine Empire in various articles and in his Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man. After the war, he again remained silent until 1922 when he publicly changed his position and rallied to the cause of the Republic until the Nazis came to power in 1933. For four years he kept his indignation about the

Nazis private, much to the consternation of many, including his two eldest children. Only in 1937 did he publicly denounce the Nazi regime. As one of Germany's leading writers, circumstances forced Mann to enunciate clear positions, but he was always hesitant to speak clearly and delayed as long as he could.

Mann and Martin du Gard were also sympathetic to socialism. As early as 1911, the observation of the rising tide of nationalism brought forth the following reaction from Martin du Gard:

Je n'ignore pas que les mouvements que j'approuve doivent anéantir la condition sociale dont je suis et dont je profite chaque jour, mais je vois autour de moi trop de condamnés à mort, ayant mérité de ne plus vivre, pour regretter que cette classe dont je fais partie en fait disparaisse.(153)

During the First World War, contact with the war writings of Romain Rolland deepened Martin du Gard's revolutionary pacifism. As for Thomas Mann, he is remembered for the conservative political views expressed in his Reflections, yet the tone of passionate affirmation of that tome shows an underlying uncertainty. As soon as it was published, his convictions changed, he saw socialism as the major movement of the future:

There can be no doubt that the future belongs to the concept of socialism, even of communism, as an idea--in contrast to the old democracy represented by the West, which incontestably has no part in the future.(154)

Nevertheless, neither gave full support to socialism because each opposed its collectivist aspect. Although they agreed with socialist economic reforms, they were afraid socialist cultural ideology would -----

(153)Letter to Jean Frenet of July 6, 1911 in Martin du Gard, Correspondance générale, p. 212.

(154)Entry for November 29, 1918 in Thomas Mann Diaries 1918-1921, 1933-1939, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (London: Robin Clark, 1984), pp. 24-5.

stifle artistic individuals. Mann stated this reservation clearly in his diary during the political upheaval in Munich in 1919:

How can one help but go over to communism lock, stock, and barrel when it has the tremendous virtue of being hostile to the Allies? To be sure, communism is marked by disorder and cultural Hottentotism, but in Germany it would scarcely remain that way for long.(155)

Martin du Gard also kept his distance from the socialist movement. He never became involved in any political movement, even his passionate wartime pacifism remained private. Politically, he was on the left but on the anarchist left emphasizing the individual and independence.(156)

Their spiritual and professional revolt did not prevent Mann and Martin du Gard from retaining many habits and attitudes from their upbringing. Martin du Gard assessed this reality in a 1937 letter:

Bien cher ami, je crois que vous avez tout à fait raison de souligner ce que mon atavisme bourgeois a laissé d'éléments en moi. On ne change pas de peau, et c'est le commencement de la sagesse que de s'accepter comme une donnée, et de partir de là. J'ai toute ma vie lutté contre ces éléments, et à la fois, composé avec.(157)

Specifically, they adopted certain traits from their parents; for instance, both authors were individualists. Their parents, as successful participants in a capitalist economy, believed in the necessity of individual initiative and achievement. Mann and Martin du Gard were also individualists. Their sympathy for socialism was tempered by a fear of its collective aspect; they believed talented individuals such as themselves should be free to express themselves. They radicalized the indi-

(155)Entry for April 30, 1919 in Thomas Mann Diaries, p. 54.

(156)Maurice Rieundau in "Introduction" to Martin du Gard, Correspondance générale, vol. I, p. 30.

(157)Letter to Marcel Lallemand of July 8, 1937 in Martin du Gard, "Lettres à un ami," La Nouvelle Revue Française, 1152.

vidualism of their parents who believed that the individual had to channel personal initiative towards achieving family goals and increasing family prestige. Mann and Martin du Gard pursued a more authentic individualism, striving to achieve their personal goals, independently of what their families expected of them.

Like their hard-working fathers, Mann and Martin du Gard were also activists in their own manner: sedentary but extremely dedicated to their work. They needed a regulated lifestyle and many hours of labour in order to write. They slavishly followed their work habits, feeling guilty if they did not produce a certain amount each day. Martin du Gard required exhaustive preparation and copious notes in order to write. Also, he sought retreats away from Paris to concentrate without distraction, and like Mann, he needed a fixed schedule in order to produce anything. They were artists, but they were certainly not bohemians. They lived controlled, orderly lives resembling those of their bourgeois parents. Thomas Mann described his bourgeois inheritance in "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought":

How often in my life have I not observed with a smile that the personality of my deceased father was governing my acts and omissions, was serving as the secret model for them?

...

We two brothers, my older brother and myself, are well aware of what our nature owes to our mother and her blithe southern disposition, what Goethe calls *Frohnatur*; but our father endowed us with "the serious conduct of life," des Leben ernstes Führen, the ethical note that so strikingly coincides with the bourgeois temper. For the ethical bent, in contrast to the purely aesthetic impulse, to the pursuit of beauty and pleasure as well as to nihilism and the vagabond's flirtation with death--the ethical bent is really the bourgeois spirit applied to life. It is the perception for the duties of life, without which the impulse toward achievement, toward making a productive contribution to life and the development of humanity, would be lacking.(158)

(158) Thomas Mann, "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought," pp. xv-xvi.

The values of activism and individualism were not the only legacy Mann and Martin du Gard retained from their upbringing. At a more practical level, they kept many of the lifestyle habits of their youth. Theoretically, they believed the artist was a marginal being, critically opposed to social conventions. This theory did not stop them from aspiring to a lifestyle on the scale of the upper bourgeoisie, which they believed to be retrograde and on the point of disappearance.

An intimate aspect of their attachment to bourgeois lifestyle is represented by the women they married. In 1906, Martin du Gard married Hélène de Foucault, the daughter of a well-to-do Parisian lawyer. Unlike himself, but like the rest of his family, she was a believing Catholic. Martin du Gard was always discrete about his relationship with his wife, for instance, his letters to his wife are among the only ones still unpublished. Nevertheless, from his letters to friends it is clear that he loved his wife and daughter dearly and one of the greatest sorrows of his life was his wife's death in 1949. Thomas Mann likewise married into the class from which he came. The popular success of Buddenbrooks opened doors to the upper echelons of society for the young author, one of the venues being the mansion of Alfred Pringsheim, a centre of intellectual and artistic meetings in Munich. Pringsheim was a mathematics professor at the University of Munich and heir to a fortune made from Silesian coal mines and early railroads. Mann described his impressions years later:

The atmosphere of the large home, which brought back my childhood memories as if they were real again, totally enchanted me. The familiar spirit of the elegance of the cultural businessman's world was enhanced and transmuted into the luxurious glamor of artistic

and literary life.(159)

Mann courted and married Pringsheim's only daughter, Katia, in 1905. The couple had six children and were inseparable until Mann's death. Although his diaries describe disputes with his wife and his dreams of homosexual activity outside of marriage, Mann loved his wife. After almost forty years of marriage, during their exile in California, Yousuf Karsh visited Mann to photograph him and observed: "Then with old-fashioned and rather formal courtesy, he ushered me into his well-stocked library, his wife in close attendance. They had known each other since school days, he told me, and I found the attachment between these two elderly people very moving."(160)

Therefore, although they rejected their family traditions and described their families' social class as declining inevitably, both men nonetheless married women from that same upper bourgeoisie. In practice, Mann and Martin du Gard were certainly able to live with and understand their wives, even though these came from the bourgeois world the two writers theoretically opposed. In fact, they imitated their fathers by marrying women strikingly similar in background to their mothers.

Mann and Martin du Gard also imitated their parents by living on the scale of the upper bourgeoisie. Mann admitted how much he enjoyed his status in his diary in 1919:

(159)Mann, A Sketch of My Life quoted in Dictionary of Literary Biography vol. 66, German Fiction Writers, 1885-1913 part 2: M-Z, s.v. "Thomas Mann," by D.W. Adolphs & E. Schwarz (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1988), p. 365.

(160)Yousuf Karsh, Portraits of Greatness (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 122.

I told Katia about the charming episode that occurred recently during the third act of Der arme Heinrich, how (Bruno) Walter threw glances at me from the podium to call my attention to the monks' chorus. This is the sort of thing one could not have dreamed of as a young man newly arrived in Munich. Katia, infected by a certain complacency on my part, spoke of our splendid situation in general. There is something touching about two such melancholy people spurring each other on to enjoy their bourgeois comforts.(161)

Even when his means were overextended, Mann still maintained his high standard of living. For instance, Mann received support from his father-in-law for many years in order to live at the level both spouses were accustomed to and enjoyed, which included servants, travel and frequent sanatorium visits.(162) This support did not mean he took money matters lightly; indeed he was obsessed by the question of financial security, a subject filling his diaries. Everything from the inflation of the 1920s, the Nazi seizure of his Nobel Prize money, the payments he received for each work, the dates and amounts of bank transfers while in exile, and even the amounts he spent on petty purchases such as taxi rides, tips and meals are mentioned by him.

Martin du Gard also lived for a long period on his accumulated family fortune; he never had a paying job in his life, avoiding even literary work he was disinclined to do. His demanding criteria eventually caused problems. In 1931, his money ran out as he had too ambitiously bought and renovated his father-in-law's estate while his royalties declined after he suspended Les Thibault for two years. He was faced with financial difficulties, but he found his way out of having to change his work habits:

De très sérieuses préoccupations matérielles s'ajoutaient à ce

(161)Entry for June 15, 1919 in Thomas Mann Diaries, p. 59.

(162)Dictionary of Literary Biography, vol. 66, p. 365.

désarroi. La réfection du Tertre m'avait entraîné à de si folles dépenses qu j'y avais épuisé l'héritage de mes parents. Restaient mes gains professionnels. Mais la série de Thibault était suspendue depuis 1929; la vente baissait de trimestre en trimestre. Mes droits d'auteur se trouvaient réduits des quatre cinquièmes; ces ressources tronquées étaient tout à fait insuffisantes pour entretenir ma propriété, et pour y vivre, même modestement. Or, je ne me dissimulais pas que la difficile élaboration d'un nouveau plan des Thibault, et ensuite l'achèvement de l'oeuvre, allaient exiger un très long effort, toute une période de travail infructueux. Que faire?

J'avais dans mes notes de nombreux projets de nouvelles. Devant l'obligation pressante de gagner quelque argent, une solution s'offrait; elle exigeait de ma part un douloureux renoncement, mais je n'en imaginai pas d'autre: il fallait me mettre à écrire des nouvelles, dont le placement dans les revues serait assez facile et immédiatement rémunérateur; en outre, réunies en volume, ces nouvelles m'assureraient la mise en vente d'un livre par an.

Gaston Gallimard, averti, m'est encore une fois venu en aide. Pour me permettre de vivre, tout en continuant mes Thibault, il m'a spontanément proposé une mensualité régulière; et cela, pour un temps indéterminé, sans me fixer aucun délai. (Il a même poussé la confiance et la discrétion, pendant les trois ans où j'ai vécu de ces avances, jusqu'à ne jamais s'informer de la marche et des progrès de mon travail.)(163)

Faced with the prospect of working at something necessary but unpleasant; such as writing novellas to earn money, he accepted the stipend instead, remaining comfortably secluded.

In their tastes in apparel, they also continued the habits of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. Both dressed immaculately and had many caprices related to their appearance. For example, at any informal public occasion, a white suit was their standard outfit. In other words, they embodied the image of dandies they described in Tom and Antoine.

Throughout their lives, Mann and Martin du Gard lived the placid, predictable lifestyle idealized by the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. They enjoyed the privileges and comfort of financial

(163)Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs," pp. xcvi-xcvix.

security, feeling it to be a privilege they were entitled to. Even when they did not have to work to obtain the necessary means to maintain the standard of living they were accustomed to, their consciences remained untroubled.

Finally, after the First World War, Mann and Martin du Gard considered this event as the definitive end of the lifestyle from which they came. For both men, the war came as a very unexpected and unpleasant surprise; they were so preoccupied with their own projects, they had not been closely following current events. At the beginning of the war, Martin du Gard was called to serve as a truck and ambulance driver, which he did for the duration of the war. He was present at almost every major battle on the western front. The war ingrained his pacifism; he was alone among his friends not to exalt in warrior heroism. The dichotomy of his inner rage but outward compliance with the war effort (he had the opportunity to be discharged but refused) has been assessed as that he lived the war of Antoine with the heart of Jacques.⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ Thomas Mann did not have to participate in his country's war effort as a soldier but he wanted to help nonetheless by rallying support, which he did through his articles and Reflections. Taken together, his war writings are a discursive mixture of cultural and political arguments.

The four-year creative hiatus for each author was not time wasted. Mann's awkward political essays served to enrich The Magic Mountain, in which he described the disappearance of the false security of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. Martin du Gard lived the war in an -----
⁽¹⁶⁴⁾Garguilo, La Génèse des Thibault, pp. 119-20.

apparent paralysis, unable to work on any creation or coherently express his thought. Nevertheless, the war was a marking experience. While writing Les Thibault, the war grew from an initially perceived historical reference point to the central event of his novel. The fact that he could see the Second World War coming while he wrote his last volumes also spurred him to speak out against the coming tragedy by reminding readers of the futility of the First World War.

Like many of their generation, Mann and Martin du Gard came to see the First World War as the end of a way of life that existed before.

Thomas Mann explained his view in a letter in 1946:

I would not place the end of the bourgeois cultural era in 1933, but back in 1914. The shock we experienced then was, of course, based on the feeling that the outbreak of the war marked the end of a world and the beginning of something completely new.(165)

Martin du Gard expressed the same sentiment in a letter in 1954:

L'intrusion de la guerre de 1914 dans la société européenne a bousculé brutalement toutes les valeurs, a créé un climat nouveau, dramatique, où les événements politiques ont rejeté dans l'ombre les destinées individuelles. Dans la mesure où les Thibault ont un intérêt documentaire et constituent l'histoire d'une époque déterminée, les derniers volumes expriment très fidèlement le bouleversement causé par la guerre.(166)

Mann and Martin du Gard lived through the crisis of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie, rejecting the family and religious values they grew up with while striving towards a greater individualism. They resisted the education expected of them, and they rejected the religious values of their parents and the careers expected of them. They

(165)Letter to Pierre-Paul Sagave of January 28, 1946, in Letters of Thomas Mann, p. 497.

(166)Letter to Thomas White Hall of March 5, 1954 quoted in Garguilo, La Genèse des Thibault, p. 724.

rejected the world they grew up in, transferring their rebellion to their protagonists. Nevertheless, they retained the individualism, activism, and taste for a comfortable lifestyle, contradictory qualities they also gave to their characters. Martin du Gard was well aware of the contradictory aspects of his life and realized how he made use of them in Les Thibault:

..., j'avais été brusquement séduit par l'idée d'écrire l'histoire de deux frères: deux êtres de tempéraments aussi différents, aussi divergents que possible, mais foncièrement marqués par les obscures similitudes que crée, entre deux consanguins, un très puissant atavisme commun. Un tel sujet m'offrait l'occasion d'un fructueux dédoublement: j'y voyais la possibilité d'exprimer simultanément deux tendances contradictoires de ma nature: l'instinct d'indépendance, d'évasion, de révolte, le refus de tous les conformismes; et cet instinct d'ordre, de mesure, ce refus des extrêmes, que je dois à mon hérédité.(167)

(167) Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs," p. lxxx.

5. CONCLUSION

This essay has examined the 'crisis' of the bourgeoisie from three positions, namely, the personal crisis of Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard, the fictional crisis of the Buddenbrook and Thibault families and the actual crisis of the bourgeoisie. The starting point is the crisis that the authors and their families lived through in the pre-First World War years. Mann and Martin du Gard took these personal experiences and transformed them into the fictional crisis of the Buddenbrook and Thibault families, who bear a close resemblance to the Mann and Martin du Gard families. In so doing, the authors were able to achieve a larger vision. They obtained an excellent reference point from which to analyze themselves and criticize their societies. An added advantage was that this stepping back and objectifying their own lives meant they did not impose the demanding conclusions they made upon themselves. Their detachment let them identify the tensions and dilemmas in the bourgeoisie and even helped them grope for a solution to the crisis, yet without the responsibility of acting upon what they saw.

Although the authors describe the crisis of the bourgeoisie in each country and setting with respective differences, Mann and Martin du Gard both arrive at the same conclusion: no ideology or set of religious beliefs is satisfactory for the pre-First World War bourgeoisie. Religion and traditional values were rejected but no viable new values took their place. The crisis was one of confusion and indecision.

In terms of ideology, Mann and Martin du Gard identified variations

of outlook in the pre-First World War bourgeoisie, demonstrating the inadequacy of each one. Nevertheless, neither author was certain which spirit was the most characteristic of the bourgeoisie. Thomas Mann in particular was perplexed by this problem. He believed that a continuity existed from the parents to the children although he was also aware that great change took place in the space of the one generation. In other writings he referred to the parental generation as the burghers and the sons as bourgeois. He commented on the similarities and differences between these two types:

Am I finished? Not quite. For after I have said why I, to a certain extent, slept through the transformation of the German burgher into a bourgeois--the reason was that I experienced the process of the loss of burgherly nature in an all too intimately psychological, completely unpolitical way--I do not wish to remain silent about how far the burgher in his modernness has nevertheless neither remained completely beyond my perception nor even beyond my emotional interest--yes, how far such perception and interest have taken form in my literary work.

...
If I have understood anything at all of my times sympathetically, it is its type of heroism, the modern-heroic life form and attitude of the overburdened, overdisciplined moralist of accomplishment "working at the edge of exhaustion," and here is my psychological contact with the character of the new burgher, my only contact, but one that is important and moving to me. I have never created him in real, political-economic form; I had neither enough sympathy nor understanding to do this. But fiction has always seemed to me to be symbolic, and I may say that I have hardly written anything that has not been symbolic of the heroism of this modern, neoburgherly character. Yes, seen in this way, Thomas Buddenbrook is not only a German burgher, but also a modern bourgeois; he is the first figure in whose formation this decisive experience participated; and this experience worked formatively, creating symbols in my work from the main characters of the Renaissance play, through all the figures in the novel about the prince, all the way to Gustav Aschenbach.(168)

In an analysis of the ideological and social uncertainty implied in Mann's portrayal of the Buddenbrook and Hagenström families, the

(168)Mann, Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man, pp. 102-3.

Marxist cultural historian, Georg Lukács, wrote:

During the War he (Mann) wrote about his early work: 'It is true that I rather slept through the transformation of the German burgher into a bourgeois...' He underestimates here his own achievement. One need only take the contrast between the development of the Hagenström and Buddenbrook families: the Hagenströms are a perfect illustration of that development of burgher into bourgeois which Mann says he 'slept through'. So little did he 'sleep through' this development that the second half of his first novel, from a socio-cultural and moral point of view, turns on the question: who really represent the middle class, the Hagenströms or the Buddenbrooks?

Superficially the answer is simple. The patrician culture of the Buddenbrooks is doomed and the Hagenströms rule the new Germany. So much is clear; and Mann did not 'sleep through' it. Nor did he resign himself to it. Had he done so, he would have had to renounce the idea of a contemporary German culture and literature. He would have become a laudator temporis acti, a new Raabe.

Instead the question faces him: who is the bourgeois? What does his type look like, what is its pattern and culture if he does not belong with the victorious Hagenströms? In this light the Buddenbrooks appear not simply as a family on the downgrade but, despite their decadent tinges, as upholders of a bourgeois culture which was once Germany's pride and could still be the source of its resurgence, could provide an organic continuation of the glorious past. In this sense the Buddenbrooks saga is the story of what happens to Germany's cultural traditions in the nineteenth century.(169)

Mann and Martin du Gard use Buddenbrooks and Les Thibault to describe a profound crisis in the bourgeoisie: no ideology adequately fulfills its aspirations. The different foundations, namely religion, scientific materialism and vitalism are all attempted yet are unsatisfactory. With ruthless precision they show the hypocrisy and insincerity of the parents; they present the shortcomings of the different types of scientific materialism that fail to bring about the marvellous changes they promise; and they emphasize the crudity and readiness to waste their lives of those living by vitalism. Even though they were uncertain as to which ideology was prevalent among

(169)Lukács, Essays on Thomas Mann, pp. 20-1.

their generation of the pre-First World War bourgeoisie, either scientific materialism or vitalism, both Mann and Martin du Gard judged the outlooks as unable to provide a strong ideological foundation for the bourgeoisie.

The sons' inability to live by the family values of their parents or to distance themselves from these values illustrates the crisis in family values. All the sons attempt to modify the parents' family values in order to live more individualistic lives, but all fail. The younger sons try to reject these values and the elder sons attempt to diminish the importance of these values in their lives but none succeed in their attempts. None of the sons can escape the imprint of the family values they received in their homes. They aspire towards a more individualistic lifestyle, either by compromising or rejecting the parental family values, but their desires cannot be fulfilled. Mann and Martin du Gard portray a generation of the bourgeoisie that is caught: disillusioned with traditional family values yet unable to live by individualistic values.

Mann and Martin du Gard, however, do propose a solution to the crisis. To overcome the generational and ideological conflict, the authors suggest complete personal independence, similar to the outlook on life embodied by existentialism. Mann and Martin du Gard can thus be seen as forerunners of existentialism, enunciating many of its ideas, such as the individual's lonely position in society and the need to create one's own morality in the absence of predetermined values, before it was formally developed.

In Buddenbrooks, Tom illustrates Mann's solution to the crisis of

the bourgeoisie. The self-consciousness that grew throughout his life becomes a moment of lucidity when he realizes his death is impending and not just a distant, impersonal fact. Then, for a moment, he clearly views the pettiness and absurdity of his life. Tom lacks the willpower to follow up on his insights and falls back into his habits, neglecting to prepare for death.

Mann offered a more complete solution to the crisis of the bourgeoisie in The Magic Mountain, a novel he considered a continuation of Buddenbrooks.⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ The crisis of the bourgeoisie is again central; this time it paralyzes the protagonist from the outset, "...it will be necessary to show how Hans Castorp is intellectually bound by his own time, reveal his mental and moral lassitude, lack of faith, and hopelessness."⁽¹⁷¹⁾ An awareness of the proximity of death, all pervasive at the sanatorium, is the starting point for Hans' heightened self-consciousness, of his 'taking-stock.' Hans' experience is very close to that of the existentialists; the awareness of death leads to greater self-consciousness and a desire to take advantage of the opportunities of life, fully aware of its shortness.

As for Martin du Gard, he formulated his ideas through Antoine's diary. Antoine is self-assured and confident, but always with a suppressed dissatisfaction. Although claiming total freedom, Antoine is at times bothered by actions that show he is not free. He suddenly becomes aware of his impending death while visiting his teacher in Paris in 1918. Then, upon his return to the hospital, he begins a

 (170)Mann, "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought," p. XXII.

(171)Thomas Mann Diaries, p. 59. Entry for June 9, 1919.

diary, to develop his thoughts and leave something he has learned from his life to his nephew. He often remarks how his coming death is the central experience of his existence; he realizes his consciousness will soon be extinguished.

In his diary, Antoine develops many positions, particularly about how to live freely, that are identical to existentialist ideas. For instance, Antoine encourages Jean-Paul to avoid any mass movement where he would compromise himself:

Résiste, refuse les mots d'ordre! Ne te laisse pas affilier! Plutôt les angoisses de l'incertitude, que le paresseux bien-être moral offert à tout "adhérent" par les doctrinaires. Tâtonner seul, dans le noir, ça n'est pas drôle; mais c'est un moindre mal. Le pire, c'est de suivre docilement les vessier-lanternes que brandissent les voisins. Attention! Que sur ce point, le souvenir de ton père te soit un modèle. Que sa vie solitaire, sa pensée inquiète, jamais fixée, te soient un exemple de loyauté vis-à-vis de toi-même, de scrupule, de force intérieure et de dignité.(172)

Antoine also remarks upon the fluidity of truth and the need to avoid a dogmatic outlook. He wants Jean-Paul to accept the complexity of life rather than forcing categories on his experiences. He tells Jean-Paul: "Renoncer, avant tout, au désir puéril que tout soit explicable, logique,"(173) and in his last explicit message he tells Jean-Paul: "Ne rien affirmer définitivement... Se guérir jeune du goût de la certitude."(174)

By examining two major novelists of the pre-First World War era, this essay has attempted to give tangible content to the vague notion of a 'crisis of the bourgeoisie' often encountered in European

(172)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault, vol. V, p. 398-9.

(173)Ibid., vol. V, p. 374.

(174)Ibid., vol. V, p. 415.

historiography. The oeuvre and personal lives of Thomas Mann and Roger Martin du Gard reflect an experience of 'crisis'--both specific and amorphous--in the pre-First World War period. In concentrating on the religious and generational dimensions of this crisis, both authors reveal and intensely personal orientatation. Unsurprisingly, therefore, neither envisages a collective or political solution to the 'crisis'. For both Mann and Martin du Gard only a world-view based on complete personal independence and spiritual autonomy can overcome the malaise; in emphasizing spiritual and practical individualism, they can be considered forerunners of mid-twentieth-century existentialism.

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APPENDIX: SYNOPSIS OF BUDDENBROOKS AND LES THIBAUT

Thomas Mann began Buddenbrooks while he was in Palestrina, a village outside Rome, with his brother Heinrich from late 1896 until 1898. They lived there off the monthly stipend from their inherited fortune that their mother allotted them. Both brothers were confident of their eventual literary success and during their Roman stay they were biding their time until fame came to them.(175) Thomas Mann's first collection of short stories appeared while he was in Italy but it was hardly noticed. At this time, his older brother Heinrich was a better known author. In 1897, when Thomas Mann's book appeared and his publisher asked him for a novel, the twenty-two year old Mann fell back on the only experience he had: his family. He began preparing notes from memory and writing letters asking for remembered information from a cousin of his deceased father, his mother, his sister and his aunt.

He prepared his novel for five months and then spent a little less than three years writing it.(176) Mann based the novel on his family's history but changed certain elements to adapt to the destiny he injected into the narrative. For instance, Mann's father died in 1891, yet Thomas Buddenbrook dies in January 1875.(177) Further, Mann depicts the decline of Lübeck's established commercial family enterprises occurring earlier than they really did. From the 1860s to the 1880s, Germany faced fierce competition on the foreign grain market as Russian

(175)Mann, A Sketch of My Life, p. 13.

(176)Brown, "Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks and the Turn of the Century." p. 225.

(177)Mann, Buddenbrooks, p. 539.

and American exports became abundantly available at low cost.(178)
Therefore, the economy of the Hanseatic cities, of which the grain trade formed a major part, suffered from foreign grain competition. Finally, the description of Hanno Buddenbrook's school experiences, which are placed in the 1870s, are really those of Thomas Mann in the early 1890s.

Although Buddenbrooks is not a roman à clef, family members recognized themselves as characters in its pages. Thomas Mann's uncle on whom the character Christian was modelled never forgave his nephew for the depiction made of him. Further, the fine townsfolk of Lübeck were scandalized by the treatment the town had received. In the novel, the town the Buddenbrooks live in is never named, but events and sites identify it as Lübeck. To describe the decay of a family was a betrayal of the Lübeck's fine traditions and not the idyllic portrait they believed their town warranted. After all, this was a time when one described one's national enemies as decadent. To apply that term to one's home town was a grave insult.

Buddenbrooks recounts the story of four generations of a Hanseatic city commercial family from 1835-1877 with particular emphasis placed on the third and fourth generations. The original goal of the family is twofold: to preserve the family prestige and to succeed in business. Both objectives are intimately intertwined into political, commercial, social, and marital matters. Nevertheless, the drive for success is broken, leading to the decline and death of the family. The

(178)Sagave, Réalité sociale et idéologie religieuse dans les romans de Thomas Mann, p. 11.

tendency to dissolution arises from the appeal of art that Mann considered antithetical to the bourgeois lifestyle as he explained in his 1926 speech, "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought":

And to return to a more modest sphere, to Lübeck as a way of life -- he who has spoken to you today is a bourgeois storyteller who all his life has actually told one single story: the story of the burgher who sloughs off the burgher's skin. Not in order to become a capitalist or a Marxist, but to become an artist; to achieve the irony and freedom of art, and art's capacity to flee and to fly.(179)

The book begins with a presentation of three generations of the family in 1835 at the housewarming party. Johann Buddenbrook Sr. is the patriarch, the second head of the family business, he is an example of the German Romantic, idealistic, atheistic tradition. His son, Consul Jean Buddenbrook is inclined to liberalism and is interested in the economic and political questions of the day. Jean is a devout Protestant, superposing the Protestant cult on his business affairs. Finally, Jean's children are presented: Tom, Christian, Antonie (Tony), and the adopted and effacing Clothilde. Another daughter, Clara, will be born two years later.

After the deaths of Johann Buddenbrook Sr. and his wife, the next major event is Bendix Grünlich's success in his efforts to marry Tony. She finds him repulsive and initially shuns him as a suitor but finally she accepts to marry him out of a sense of duty to her family and its business. They soon have a daughter, but four years later Grünlich is bankrupt. The immature Tony still finds him repulsive and uses the bankruptcy as an excuse to leave him to return to the parental home.

Five years later, Consul Jean Buddenbrook dies, weakened by the

(179)Mann, "Lübeck as a Way of Life and Thought," p. xxiv.

setbacks to the family and firm. He was unable to adapt to changing times and now Tom takes over the family business at twenty-two, bringing a new dynamism to the company. At thirty, he marries Gerda Arnoldsen, attaining his apogee.

After Jean's death, Christian returns after eight years in London and South America. Although Tom struggles to channel his artistic inclinations into business endeavours, his younger brother could never resist these tendencies, making him a constant cause of scandal to the family. Upon his return, he works for the family business but conflicts quickly arise because Tom cannot bear Christian's dissolute behaviour. A falling out occurs and Tom sends Christian to Hamburg.

The latter part of the book focuses on Tom's interior decline. Outwardly he achieves his greatest honours and successes: he is elected Senator in the town; he builds an imposing new house; and his wife gives birth to a son, the long awaited heir. Interiorly, though, Tom loses his mastery of fate; he can no longer force his will on events. In fact, his life sickens him, but he is too timid to change. He makes a last attempt to regain his magic touch through a questionable grain deal with an aristocrat that ends in failure. This bad news, which accelerates his decline, arrives during a party to celebrate the company's one hundredth anniversary. Tom then progressively closes in on himself, becoming obsessed with keeping his outward person immaculate as a cover for his inner emptiness, disgust, and disappointment.

Tom stifled his artistic, reflective tendencies in order to succeed in business but these tendencies eventually overwhelm him. One day, he reads Schopenhauer, having a mystical experience leading him to foresee

his imminent death. Shortly thereafter, he dies and the signs of success amassed over the generations disappear. The family business closes down. Tom's house is sold. Christian takes the opportunity to marry a prostitute in Hamburg, but she soon commits him to an asylum.

The book ends with a section on Hanno, the last Buddenbrook. His sensitive nature is ill-suited for life in the triumphant and crass Germany of the united Reich. He is even weaker than his father, lacking a will to live, dying at fifteen after contracting typhoid. The decay of the family is complete, it is extinguished.

In the case of Roger Martin du Gard, the idea of writing Les Thibault came to him more than twenty years after Thomas Mann decided to write Buddenbrooks. In January 1920, at the age of thirty-eight, after having been demobilized from the army for less than a year, Martin du Gard was seized by the idea of writing Les Thibault. He had served as a driver throughout France from 1914-1918, and was stationed in Germany until the spring of 1919. He had achieved a measure of fame with Jean Barois in 1913, but was silent during the war. In 1920, he was ready to put everything he had to say into Les Thibault, whose original name Le Bien et le mal gives an idea of the enormous scope Martin du Gard envisaged.

The two most important experiences of his life provide the context for Les Thibault, namely his family experience and the First World War. Les Thibault is not as blatantly autobiographical as Buddenbrooks yet Martin du Gard did dig deeply into his childhood memories. He changed many details of his own family, possibly because both his par-

ents were alive whereas when Thomas Mann wrote, his father had died and his mother disliked Lübeck and encouraged her children's artistic endeavours, so there was nobody in his immediate family who would be offended by a clear description of his childhood memories. Nevertheless, the family situation of the Thibaults is similar to Martin du Gard's family environment. The Martin du Gard family was a Parisian family with provincial roots, who for generations had been lawyers, notaries, and clergymen and had never ventured into the military, commerce, nor the arts(180), just like the Thibault family. The discrete confidence in the success of the family that characterized the Thibault family was at the core of the outlook of families like the Martin du Gard's.

Secondly, the vantage point of the First World War is necessary to understand Les Thibault. At the very outset, before the novel begins, the specter of the war is raised in the dedication:

Je dédie Les Thibault à la mémoire fraternelle de Pierre Margaritis dont la mort, à l'hôpital militaire, le 30 octobre 1918, anéantit l'oeuvre puissante qui mûrissait dans son coeur tourmenté et pur.(181)

Yet the war always remains in the background. In the first half of the book, practically no indication of its coming is given. After Martin du Gard had written the first half, he had a car accident in early 1931 and spent five months in hospital. He reflected on his original plan and his progress, deciding to make major changes. Les Thibault was supposed to cover the years from approximately 1900 to 1940 but Martin du Gard decided instead to extinguish the family in the First World War.

(180)Martin du Gard, "Souvenirs," p. xli.

(181)Martin du Gard, Les Thibault vol I, p. 7.

He felt his initial plan was too cumbersome; the final product would be too long; he was never able to place his fiction within current events as he would have had to do with his original plan (he had also included a part of the novel to be set in the future); and finally, he could never conceive and write about lives that ended with a peaceful death at an old age, all the deaths in his major novels are pathetic. The obstacle of a peaceful death was the major stumbling block for his first uncompleted works, but for Les Thibault, he found a way around this problem. Martin du Gard's solution to the accumulated problems he discovered halfway through the novel was a major reorganization that brought the war into the book. In L'été 1914, the events of the weeks before the start of the First World War are used as the background, then the war is passed over, only reappearing as the moribund Antoine Thibault remembers the war and his life before it.

Martin du Gard's writing method was very painstaking, requiring minute preparation. Ironically, reviewers later said he was improvising as he went along. After his initial conception of Les Thibault, he prepared a plan for twelve parts from January to May, 1920. For the next two years he worked steadily and in 1922, the first two parts were published, followed by the third part in 1923. He left his work to care for his sick father who died in 1924, and in 1925, to care for his dying mother. He then bought his father-in-law's estate and oversaw the renovations. In the fall of 1926, he resumed work and in 1928, two more parts of Les Thibault were published, followed by another part in March 1929. He continued work on the next section of his original plan, and was nearly finished when he had his car accident in January,

1931. Thereafter, he wrote two plays and in 1933 he returned to Les Thibault to redesign his original plan. He conducted extensive historical research and only finished the first part of L'été 1914 in May 1935, the second and third section followed in March 1936. The three sections were published in November 1936. The following summer he prepared the final part, L'Epilogue, but was interrupted when he won the Nobel Prize and had to go to Sweden. He resumed L'Epilogue in the spring of 1938, finished it in March 1939, and it was published in January, 1940.

Martin du Gard's decision to alter Les Thibault halfway through is noticeable in the final product. The last four parts of the novel, the three sections of L'été 1914 and L'Epilogue, directly intertwine events of the First World War. The first six parts, from Le cahier gris to La mort du père, are loosely set in the decade before the First World War. A change in style also marks the two halves. Whereas the first half closely adheres to Martin du Gard's ideal of objective fiction, explaining the action as if he did not know the thoughts of the characters but was only observing. The second half has many interior monologues and explanations of the characters' thoughts and emotions, here Martin du Gard approaches the stream of consciousness style. Although Les Thibault kept its fundamental unity, the author's major changes halfway through marked the book.

Les Thibault, as the name implies, is primarily, although not exclusively, about the Thibault family: father and two sons. None of the three is the clear protagonist, but the two sons are the most important characters. The father, Oscar Thibault, is cold, aloof, and

authoritarian. He moves in officially Catholic circles, but he hypocritically seeks his own glory. He is a widower, his wife having died while giving birth to his younger son.

Oscar Thibault is a lawyer, although his exact work and source of wealth remain nebulous. It eventually comes to light that much of his income is from stock investments, he is a 'rentier.' Although he is of the established professional class, he also participates in the economic changes of the period. Joint-stock companies, existent for about a century, multiplied in the late nineteenth century, bringing about the change in business organization from cottage industries and family commercial enterprises to corporations.⁽¹⁸²⁾ The fundamental economic change of the time is reflected in both novels. The Buddenbrook family firm is precisely a family enterprise that is no longer suited to the times; and the Thibaults, while remaining professionals, take part in the development of corporations through their stock investment in modern style corporations that have the goal of amassing large amounts of capital for investment in large-scale, expensive operations.

The elder son is Antoine, a hard-working, successful doctor. Like his father, he is rather aloof, convinced of his superiority and characterized by his cold rationality. He is dedicated to medicine and also limited by its horizons. He is more modern in his outlook than his father because of his faith in science to answer all questions rationally. When he obtains his inheritance, he takes his father's low-risk stock investments and turns them into high-risk stock, he is

⁽¹⁸²⁾Shephard B. Clough, The Economic Development of Western Civilization (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959), pp. 346-7.

even more willing than his father to take advantage of the modern economy.

The younger son Jacques is a born rebel. He rebels against parental authority; school authority; and finally even the established social authority through his involvement in the international socialist movement. He is idealistic, seeing the corruption and hypocrisy of all social conventions and dreaming of overcoming them. He is very intelligent, yet unlike his father and brother, he is ruled by emotions that sweep over him, leading him to impulsive action.

Other characters' fates are tied up with those of the Thibaults'. For instance, Gise is an adopted, simple, and pious girl who grows up in the Thibault household almost as a sister to Jacques and Antoine. The de Fontanin family's fate is also closely intertwined. The mother Thérèse is a morally noble Protestant. The older child, Daniel, is a talented painter who grows up to be like his father, leading the life of a libertine and practically abandoning the family home. The younger child Jenny is haughty, sensitive, and withdrawn.

Les Thibault begins at an unspecified moment before the First World War, approximately 1904, with Oscar Thibault portrayed as being upset because his son Jacques has disappeared. After several inquiries, Antoine deduces that Jacques has run away from home with his friend Daniel. The two teenagers had kept a notebook of intimate, artistic messages that was discovered by school authorities. In a passionate reaction, Jacques decided to run away and he convinced Daniel to come. They took a train to Marseilles but after failing to board a boat, they are discovered a day later outside Marseilles as they headed to another

port city. After being returned home, Mr. Thibault decides to send Jacques to the reform colony for boys he runs as a work of charity.

A year later, Antoine goes to visit his brother. He spends the day maneuvering to have Jacques open up to him. Finally, Jacques admits he is miserable, the environment suppresses his nature. Antoine decides to obtain Jacques' immediate release. Antoine returns to Paris and demands that Mr. Thibault release Jacques into his care. Mr. Thibault laughs off the suggestion, yet Antoine insists and Mr. Thibault is surprised at Antoine's insolence yet still adamantly refuses. Antoine enlists Mr. Thibault's confessor who succeeds at length in changing Mr. Thibault's mind. Thereafter, Jacques is released and returns to Paris, living under the guardianship of Antoine.

The narrative resumes five years later. Jacques has been studying on his own for the last years and recently took the entrance examination for the Ecole Normale. Antoine and Jacques go to see if he has been accepted and discover that he has. With some friends there to congratulate the unmoved Jacques, they decide to celebrate. Before joining them at the restaurant, Antoine stops at his office-home to see if there are any messages. While there, one of the servants receives notice that his niece has been hit by a car. Antoine goes to treat her and despite the child's grave situation, he confidently performs emergency surgery and stays the night to watch over her progress.

Also helping at the emergency is Rachel, a neighbour from the lower apartment. Antoine is immediately drawn to her, returning later in the day with the excuse of seeing the child but really to see Rachel. He begins a liaison with her, the only woman he ever loves. In fact, she

is the only person to whom Antoine feels inferior. He is fascinated by her amoral lifestyle and exotic travel adventures. After a brief summer romance, Rachel leaves Antoine to go to Africa to rejoin Hirsch, a monstrous man with whom she had been living before Antoine knew her.

As for Jacques, he spends the weeks following his acceptance at the family country house at Maisons-Lafitte, close to where the de Fontanin's also have one. Jacques and Jenny meet more frequently as the summer months pass. They feel drawn to each other yet their sensitive personalities constantly feel injured by the other.

The narrative resumes three years later, Antoine is a successful and respected doctor, energetically pursuing his profession. Precisely the day Rachel left Antoine, Jacques runs away for the second time and is not seen again. Mr. Thibault is terminally ill, although Antoine is hiding the truth from him. One day, Antoine receives a chance letter sent to Jacques from a professor. He contacts the man who gives him a Swiss magazine containing a novella entitled, "La Sorellina," a thinly veiled autobiographical explanation of the circumstances of Jacques' disappearance. The novella describes Jacques' feelings during his final summer at the family country house, how he was in love with both Jenny and Gise. This interior crisis, coupled with a heated argument with his father over his decision not to go to the Ecole Normale led to a moment of rage. He told his father he would kill himself, thereafter disappearing. Through the magazine, Antoine locates Jacques in Switzerland, then goes to bring him back to see their dying father. Reluctantly surrendering his cherished isolation, Jacques returns to Paris, the world he is attached to, yet has tried to escape. Upon their re-

turn, Mr. Thibault falls into a delirium. Antoine takes all the measures to preserve his father's excruciating agony. After four days, he realizes the suffering will continue for weeks, so he ends his father's life with a fatal dose of morphine in order to avoid the burden of caring for his sick father.

The next day, Antoine examines his father's personal papers, discovering for the first time the person behind the authoritarian mask. As soon as possible after his father's death, Jacques returns to the revolutionary internationalist circle where he had been active since leaving Paris and after spending several months travelling. Soon after Jacques' return to Switzerland, Archduke Ferdinand is assassinated and the expectancy of war mounts. Jacques goes to Paris to report on the general mood and decides to visit Antoine. Jacques is struck by his brother's unawareness of the danger of the crisis. Antoine is only interested in pursuing his medical research. As they speak, Jenny arrives to tell Antoine that her father has attempted suicide and asks him to treat her father at the hospital. Both Jenny and Jacques are uncomfortably surprised to see each other. The following day, Jacques returns to Geneva, partly to avoid Jenny.

Jacques is immediately sent back to Paris. Mr. de Fontanin dies several days after his suicide attempt. Jacques attends the funeral and later sees Daniel off at the train station. There, he meets Jenny, corners her and opens up his heart, telling her of his loneliness and how he has only truly loved her. Reluctantly, Jenny admits she has the same feelings for him. They spend the following last days of July and early August together, observing the failure of the European socialist

parties to unite and resist the imminent war. During Jacques' last night in Paris before leaving to avoid being mobilized in the army, they consummate their love in despair.

The following day, Antoine is mobilized and Jacques sees him off at the train station. For his part, Jacques is determined to return to Geneva and find some way to resist the war. Initially, Jenny wants to accompany him but she decides to stay with her mother. Her decision is rather a relief to both: Jenny does not want to leave her mother alone; Jacques is now free to pursue his daring plan.

Jacques returns to Geneva and sets to work on his project to drop pacifist pamphlets on the combatants in Alsace. He performs the secret arrangements in an ecstasy of self-sacrifice. Everything functions properly until he is flying with his revolutionary friend Meynestrel. The plane crashes after suffering engine trouble. Jacques is wounded, captured by the retreating French army and considered a spy. In the confusion of the retreat, the stretcher he is on is needed for a wounded officer, so he is summarily executed and abandoned.

The novel then resumes in early 1918. Antoine is now in a hospital for gassing victims and due to an earlier lung wound, he is terminally ill. He receives a letter from Gise indicating the death of her aunt and former family housekeeper and he decides to attend the funeral in Paris. From there, he visits the family country house that Mme de Fontanin has turned into a hospital where, Jenny lives with her son by Jacques, Jean-Paul, as well as Gise, who is a nurse, and Daniel, who was wounded and crippled during the war. After spending a few days there, he passes through Paris and his teacher examines him. From the

look of pity in Dr. Philip's eyes, Antoine realizes what he knew but did not admit; he is going to die, there is no hope for him.

He returns to his hospital, beginning a journal with the intention of allaying his fears of death and of leaving a legacy to Jean-Paul, the last Thibault. In the last months of the war, as the old order is falling away, so is Antoine's health. The only palliative in his agony is his journal, where he analyzes the war, his life before it, and his hopes for the future. Stoically facing his death, he ends his life with a lethal dose of morphine, one week after the Armistice.