

‘Flaubert’s *Cailloux*: Hard Labour and the Beauty of Stones’

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Gustave Flaubert famously referred to himself as a ‘casseur de cailloux,’ intriguing future literary critics with the incongruous image of the hardest-working chiseller of sentences comparing himself to a common stonebreaker. The unexpected comparison of mental labour and physical labour in this enigmatic phrase from his correspondence helps us to understand other not quite fully formed comparisons made in his novels relating to corporeality, labour, politics, and aesthetics. Flaubert’s ‘cailloux,’ his rocks and stones, mediate between the materiality of ink on the page and the abstract meaning of words, resulting in a text that is both ‘pulverized’ and transcendent. By emphasizing and even exaggerating the physical labour of the act of writing, Flaubert draws attention to the materiality of the words he writes and the trite formulas he set out to ‘break.’

But while literary theorists have been fascinated by Flaubert’s own pronouncements about his writing process (the ‘livre sur rien,’ ‘Mme Bovary, c’est moi,’ ‘casseur de cailloux’ are perhaps better known than any of the sentences in his novels), what are we to make of the product of all of this hard labour, the broken stones and other debris that litter his novels? ‘Cailloux,’ ‘pierres,’ and other rocky words are strewn in the lexical field of Flaubert’s correspondence and novels, but I shall argue that these seemingly unremarkable words appear at key moments in Flaubert’s last and most daring novel, *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. What sort of work does Flaubert press us into, as literary

scholars and passionate readers, when we try to interpret a Flaubertian novel where every sentence is fabricated from the shattered remains of bourgeois culture?

The original source of the image of Flaubert as a ‘casseur de cailloux,’ found in a letter to Mlle de Chantepie from 8 October, 1859, requires glossing:

Vous devez croire que je vous ai oublié ! Il n’en est rien. Mais il faut pardonner un peu de paresse à un pauvre homme qui garde la plume à la main toute la journée et qui se couche le soir, ou plutôt le matin, éreinté comme un casseur de cailloux.ⁱ (Flaubert, 1991, 45)

Flaubert likely has the sympathy of the academic reader, since we all know how mentally and occasionally physically exhausting it can be to think hard and to write. Still, Flaubert takes his complaint a bit far, his ‘plume’/pen cannot be very heavy, he had the resources to hire someone to take dictation, and it is doubtful he had first-hand knowledge of what it feels like to be a stonebreaker. The incongruous image suggests even to a reader who is not an expert that it be understood ironically. Nevertheless, the choice of words used to describe Flaubert’s physical exhaustion and mental labour reveals several layers that will return in my discussion of *Bouvard et Pécuchet*.

First, of course, is the comparison of the labourer to the writer, both of whom are linked by a compulsion (or an outside force) to perform work that exceeds the body’s rational limits. His corrected assertion that he works all day or rather through the night, while proving that he must really be tired, marks his difference from stonebreakers whose work usually ends at dusk. Second is an undoing of the idea of the writer, or the labourer, working for a higher good, for a refined aesthetic achievement. Flaubert doesn’t claim to be fatigued like a slave building the pyramids or even a Michelangelo suspended from the

Sistine Chapel.ⁱⁱ Third, there is a problem of (sexual) reproduction in this formulation. Flaubert spends all day holding his ‘plume’/pen, by its form we might think of the male member, and in French slang it means fellatio, a non-reproductive form of sex. Moreover, Flaubert describes himself as ‘éreinté,’ which by the mid-nineteenth century, as today, meant very tired, but derives etymologically from the breaking of the ‘reins’/loins. The work is, then, loin breaking, and not only loin breaking but a labour whose aim is to break ‘cailloux’/stones (unfortunately, French slang is much less imaginative than English with the word ‘cailloux’).

Flaubert’s apology for his exhaustion undercuts the image of an author as the artistic equivalent of a strong, hyper-masculine worker, since the actual oppressiveness of manual labour makes reproduction impossible. The stonebreaker, whose labour is estranged by capital, has no control over what he breaks or builds and the strenuousness of his activity wrecks his body to the point of impotence. To make the link between authorship, work, and sex even more explicit, we might quote the French copyright phrase ‘Tous droits de reproduction interdits’ (usually translated as ‘All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited’). Flaubert’s writing sets out not to propagate knowledge worthy of copying or selling, but rather to pulverize trite formulas and clichés, bringing literature back to the materiality of language and of ink on the page, which de facto takes it out of a capitalist hierarchy of labour.

While this may be too much theoretical labour to bear for such a short sentence, written in a letter and taken out of context (few commentators ever mention anything else in the letter), there is quite a bit of resonance within Flaubert’s works and in the nineteenth century as a whole. Critics have often been drawn first to Gustave Courbet’s

'The Stonebreakers' (1849, destroyed in Dresden in World War II) as a painterly inspiration or at least as a visual equivalent to Flaubert's self-description as a 'casseur de cailloux.' The original French title of the painting, however, was 'Les Casseurs de pierres'; while 'caillou' and 'pierre' have nearly interchangeable meanings and usage, the slight deviation should be enough to make us doubt that Flaubert's 'casseur de cailloux' was a direct reference to Courbet's painting. Flaubert and Courbet of course shared an aesthetic concern with the depiction of reality, an obsession with physical labour, and the goal of ridding their work of any trace of Romanticism. Courbet's most infamous act, artistic or otherwise, was his role in the toppling of the Vendôme Column, turning the iconic statue of Napoléon I to rubble. Keeping Flaubert's 'casseur de cailloux' in mind, a look at Courbet's 'The Stonebreakers' makes us wonder about the presence of the two workers, as opposed to Flaubert's solitary writer/labourer. Are we looking at a father and a son? Why are their faces turned away? They certainly look miserable, with their torn clothes, but they are obviously not literally 'éreinté.' They also work in the daytime, as opposed to Flaubert. Courbet's signature appears in the dirt, in reddish orange, perhaps connecting the artist to the rocks they pummel; yet the workers have no signature, their turned-away faces heighten the anonymity of their work. The brush strokes are rough, the composition rushed, but the work of art is not the same as the work of these labourers. Impromptu, unforced, the painting reveals a freedom of expression not available to the workers. Courbet once exclaimed that 'je fais même penser les pierres' ('I even make stones think') (Fried 1992, 184), but the painter's boast concerns his virtuosity with a brush and not his likeness to his subject. The comparisons Flaubert makes with regards to literature and physical labour cannot apply to representational painting, since the

metaphorical nature of language remains uniquely capable of referring to both specific cases and generalities, both the material and the abstract.ⁱⁱⁱ

As Jacques Rancière has written in his book *La Parole muette* (1998), as a concept with its origins in German Romanticism and the French Revolution, literature is built upon a series of contradictions between, on the one hand, the orphaned letter where writing has been cut off from its meaning, and on the other, a ‘mute speech,’ where anything can speak, even stones.^{iv} In this complex formulation, literature is concerned with how poets and novelists sculpt beauty out of the materiality of language, a language that has been severed from its sacred meaning. Yet, once language has been unanchored, once representation is no longer the criteria for the art of writing, it can be appropriated by anyone, from Baudelaire’s Natural temple with its ‘vivants piliers’/living pillars that speak to us (‘Correspondances’), to the newly literate masses who have taken up that impossibly heavy ‘plume’ in the name of intellectual emancipation. Literature holds two contradictory tendencies, it is both the domain of those privileged souls who can read Nature’s mysterious hieroglyphs and the place where anyone or anything, whether rabble or rubble, can take up language.

Rancière’s idiosyncratic vocabulary and condensed thought might give us pause as to the pertinence of his argument to Flaubert, just as Flaubert’s isolated sentence should make us sceptical regarding its use as a critical lens for his novels. Yet, once you read Rancière’s description of speaking stones, you start to see them all over literature. Rancière found them in Victor Hugo’s *Notre-dame de Paris*, the novel made stone, the cathedral that is the protagonist of a novel. But we can also think of Gérard de Nerval’s poem ‘Vers dorés’ and the line ‘À la matière même un verbe est attaché...’ (‘To matter

itself a word is attached...'). At the end of the century and across the Channel, Thomas Hardy expressed an obsession for sculpture and stonework in his life and works, particularly *The Well-Beloved*. Several decades and a continent away, Robinson Jeffers spent a lifetime writing landscape poems about rocks (such as 'Carmel Point' or 'The Old Stone Mason') while he built a stone castle (Tor House) by hand on the California coast.

Of course, we may also think of Marcel Proust, who made not just a madeleine speak, but whose narrator claimed to build his work like a cathedral. Flaubert, on the other hand, is not claiming to sculpt or polish the stones of a cathedral, but to break them as if he were a forced labourer – he tears down the edifice of Romanticism, letting the stones speak and authorial discourse stay mute. As Proust wrote in an essay about Flaubert's style,

Mais nous aimons ces lourds matériaux que la phrase de Flaubert soulève et laisse retomber avec le bruit intermittent d'un excavateur. Car si, comme on l'a écrit, la lampe nocturne de Flaubert faisait aux mariniers l'effet d'un phare, on peut dire aussi que les phrases lancées par son 'gueloir' avaient le rythme régulier de ces machines qui servent à faire les déblais. (Proust 1971, 594)^v

Proust here contrasts previous critics' poetic visual image of Flaubert as lighthouse to lost sailors with the more frightening aural imagery of Flaubert as a mechanical excavator, pounding the earth with a regular beat. Proust's version of the Flaubertian stonebreaker pictures it levelling everything in its path as subjects and objects alike are rendered indistinguishable in the mechanical noise of Flaubert's sentences. Indeed, for Proust, Flaubert's unique contribution to literature was to show that 'Les choses ont autant de vie que les hommes' ('Things have as much life as men') (Proust 1971, 588).

We may then say that Flaubert's concise 'casseur de cailloux' resonates with other trends in literature and finds an echo in Rancière's mute speech. The connection to his novels however shouldn't be a given. After all, if Flaubert spent so much effort erasing his authorial presence in his fiction, we should take pause before 'applying' Flaubert to Flaubert, in imposing continuity between the letter writer and the novelist. Yet if Hugo, Nerval, Hardy, Jeffers, Proust, Rancière and many others have also theorized the connection of stones to literature, then what is at stake is not simply a theory Flaubert had that was then applied to his novels, but rather a certain configuration of literature itself. Therefore, I would argue that reading for something as insignificant as little stones could give us some insight as to how literature's contradictions play out at the level of individual sentences and to our difficulty at convincingly interpreting them.

The word 'caillou' appears countless times in Flaubert's novels, and with various meanings related to roads, ricochets, and idiomatic expressions. In *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, 'cailloux' and its derivatives show up seventeen times, at key moments in Flaubert's last and most audacious novel. In this same novel, we find 'pierre'/rock by itself or as a proper name forty-six times. As for the common words we often associate with the two intellectually challenged protagonists, 'bêtise'/nonsense only appears thirteen times, 'idiot' seven, and 'stupide' six. By itself, each of the seventeen 'caillou' is insignificant, hardly noticeable in the book's pile of words. These word-stones don't seem sturdy enough to build a theoretical pyramid upon. We don't even have the phrase 'casseur de cailloux'/stonebreaker to give us an intertextual clue. But if we gather up the 'cailloux,' and perhaps one or two 'pierres,' we might be able to make some ricochets and see what patterns emerge.

A first way to categorize them might be to separate those ‘cailloux’ that literally trip up Bouvard and Pécuchet in their various pathetic adventures from the ‘cailloux’ that Bouvard and Pécuchet scrutinize for deeper meaning in their quest for pure knowledge. The distinction between ‘unconscious’ ‘cailloux’ and ‘signifying stones,’ what Rancière divided into mute speech and hieroglyphs, is of course collapsed by Flaubert’s text, levelled or pulverized, by the undistinguished and indistinguishable common denominator of ‘caillou.’ The reader, however, very well may find meaning in any of the ‘cailloux’ even when the novel’s heroes fail to understand what they’re looking at. Conversely, we can see that what Bouvard and Pécuchet take as objects charged with symbolic meaning are only random rocks.

The novel tells the story of two Parisian copyists who become friends and retire to a farm in Normandy when one of them, Bouvard, inherits a small fortune from his long-lost father. They vow to give up the books they’ve been copying for a life as gentlemen farmers, and then wind up getting drawn into every other realm of human knowledge, from medicine to religion, from history to urbanism, and everything in between. The ‘comic’ aspect of the novel, such as it is, arises from their spectacular failures at every one of their endeavours. Eventually they decide to return to copying, now a hobby because they copy what they want, collecting quotations that reveal the resistance of language to rational thought. In other words, Bouvard and Pécuchet collect those same textual ‘cailloux’ that tripped them up during their intellectual peregrination.

The first mention of ‘caillou’ in the novel occurs during Pécuchet’s voyage from Paris to their new Calvados farm, accompanying their movers: ‘et la route, toujours la même, s’allongeait en montant jusqu’au bord de l’horizon. Les mètres de cailloux se

succédaient...’ (Flaubert 1952, 727).^{vi} Surely, we can see here an auspicious and joyous start to their adventure. During their first inspection of their newly purchased farm, the caretaker Maître Gouy tells them that all the buildings need repairs, the crops need too much fertilizer, and that it is ‘impossible d’extraire les cailloux’ (‘impossible to extract the stones’) from the fields (Flaubert 1952, 731). The most prominent topographical place on the property, La Butte, is covered in ‘cailloux,’ and the two would-be farmers spend countless and fruitless hours attempting to remove them – and strangely without the rocks, the Butte produces even less than before. A farm that only grows rocks isn’t very profitable. Having set out to be farmers and to abandon books in Paris, our copyists find themselves not authors but, in a way, ‘casseurs de cailloux.’ At the end of the novel, after the narrative has forgotten about the garden for hundreds of pages, by some unexplained miracle it is now well maintained (Flaubert 1952, 987). The villagers are jealous, and their children throw ‘pierres’ through the fence into the garden, bringing us back to the beginning of the novel and the inescapability of insignificant stones – or rather stones that take on significance only by dint of their eternal return.

After several other failed ventures, they turn their attention onto geology and palaeontology, where stones can take on meaning instead of impeding it:

Ils furent stupéfaits d’apprendre qu’il existait sur des pierres des empreintes de libellules, de pattes d’oiseaux, – et ayant feuilleté un des manuels Roret, ils cherchèrent des fossiles. Un après-midi, comme ils retournaient des silex au milieu de la grande route, M. le curé passa, et les abordant d’une voix pateline:

– Ces messieurs s’occupent de géologie? fort bien! Car il estimait cette science. Elle confirme l’autorité des Écritures, en prouvant le Déluge. (Flaubert 1952, 782-3).^{vii}

Evolution and Christianity meet in the delusion of reading the mark of time onto the ‘cailloux bizarres’ Bouvard and Pécuchet will see on the côte des Hachettes. Wishing to pass for scientists, they are stopped by a suspicious customs agent and a ‘garde champêtre’ (a combination of game warden and policeman). Later the local children mock them, since, ‘ces deux étrangers, portant des cailloux dans leurs mouchoirs n’avaient pas une bonne figure’ (‘these two strangers, carrying rocks in their handkerchiefs, didn’t make a good impression’). (Flaubert 1952, 786).

They soon transform themselves into archaeologists, wishing to preserve the stones of the past in their ‘musée,’ which contains countless worthless objects, notably a statue of Saint Pierre (Peter). Later, in a fit of exasperation, they throw the ‘bonhomme de pierre’ (‘the stone/Peter fellow’) out the window, into the compost heap, where it breaks into twelve pieces, one for each apostle (Flaubert 1952, 909). In the next chapter, during their religious phase, Pécuchet regrets the sacrilege, and sighs every time he passes by the compost. The fate of Saint Peter, summed up by Jesus’s famous pun, ‘Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam’ (‘You are Peter, and on this rock/Peter I will build my church’), ties together the different strands of meaning around rocks in the novel. Bouvard and Pécuchet understand the statue first as a valuable antique, then as simply a worthless pile of rocks, and eventually as the material incarnation of a spiritual power, a stone sculpted in the image of a man, whose name in Greek, Latin, and French

sounds like stone. But again, the novel's levelling of discourse, its refusal to romanticize, means that for the reader the statue has only ever been just a collection of printed letters.

The heart of the novel consists of its three central chapters on literature, (class) politics, and love (or sex), roughly the same three aspects we saw at the beginning of this essay in Flaubert's phrase 'éreinté comme un casseur de cailloux' ('exhausted like a stonebreaker'). In the literature chapter (chapter five), Bouvard does a dramatic reading of Racine in order to impress, and maybe woo, Mme Bordin. Bouvard, as Phèdre, 'exprimait le délire des sens, le remords, le désespoir, et il se rua sur le glaive idéal de Pécuchet avec tant de violence que trébuchant dans les cailloux, il faillit tomber par terre' (Bouvard 'expressed a delirium of the senses, remorse, despair, and he threw himself onto Pécuchet's ideal sword with so much violence that he tripped over some rocks, he almost fell on the ground') (Flaubert 1952, 832). We might want to pass over Pécuchet's 'ideal sword' (though it certainly evokes Flaubert's broken loins) and ask why there were 'cailloux' in their salon for Bouvard to trip over. Despite the power of Racine's words, Bouvard literally trips over the 'cailloux' Flaubert has scattered in his path. There is no inherent dignity to literature, and dressed as Phèdre tripping over rocks, isn't a terribly effective way to seduce Mme Bordin. As we find out in the love chapter (chapter seven), she is only interested in him in order to get him to sell the best portion of their land, called, Les Écalles – a place name that is one letter away from 'écales,' which Littré's dictionary defines as 'fragments de grès propres à paver des lieux de peu d'importance' ('fragments of gravel fit for paving places of little importance') (Littré 1873, 1265).^{viii}

The reader finally encounters actual 'casseurs de cailloux' in the politics chapter (chapter 6) at the centre of the novel. During the events of 1848 in Paris, the little

Calvados town has its own civil unrest in the form of a crowd, led by the former carpenter turned indigent Gorju, walking down the road, ‘poudeux, en sueur’ (‘dusty, covered in sweat’) and demanding work in the name of the revolutionary idea of the ‘droit au travail’ (‘right to work’) (Flaubert 1952, 851). The only idea the Conseil municipal has is to ‘tirer du caillou’ (852), to have the workers extract and break rocks. In order to calm down the mob, Pécuchet does his best Lamartine impression, but lacks gravitas. One of the men calls out: ‘Est-ce que vous êtes ouvrier? – Non. –Patron, alors? – Pas davantage! –Eh bien, retirez-vous!’ (‘ “Are you a worker?” “No.” “A boss, then?” “Not that either!” “Well then, move back!”’) (Flaubert 1952, 853). Even though the literature chapter had revealed the revolutionary potential of the novel, and even though Bouvard and Pécuchet’s observations on politics are, quite exceptionally for them, spot on, their compulsion to level everything to a common denominator, their radical equality in short, is rejected by those most in need of political solidarity. Bouvard and Pécuchet have no place in the capitalist hierarchy, and the workers and capitalists see no use for them.

Only after much discussion, with the town’s mayor fiddling with his ‘plume’ and with continual pressure from the mob of unemployed workers, does the Conseil decide what to do with the workers and the ‘cailloux’ they are to extract to keep them busy: build a road to the Comte de Favèrges’ château. The count generously agrees to this sacrifice, which of course, will be to the benefit of the workers. The stonebreakers, having rejected the equality and also the legitimacy of Pécuchet as a (metaphorical) stonebreaker, find themselves thrown back to the feudal era.

Near the end of the novel, the angry villagers have had enough of the two ‘farceurs’/pranksters who are always ‘à la recherche des cailloux’ (‘in search of rocks’) (Flaubert 1952, 975). Aren’t we critics and scholars, too, in danger of resembling Bouvard and Pécuchet, following a trail of mute stones, hoping to hear them talk to us, but always running the risk of sounding crazy? The banality of the word ‘caillou’ discourages us from reading too much into it, yet the recurrence of the image promises an interpretive reward since repetition signals meaning. Our understanding of these stones as speaking or mute places us in the same position as Bouvard and Pécuchet, by turns doubting and overconfident, tripping over the meaning of the words we read and copy. The gap between Flaubert’s private authorial pronouncements and the actual material of his novels offers the promise of theoretical grandeur to the scholar, but upon closer inspection shatters any hope that a theory may be reached.

If we readers are more akin to the dilettante writers Bouvard and Pécuchet, what are we to make of Flaubert’s self-proclaimed work ethic? Roland Barthes in his first book, *Le Degré zéro de l’écriture*, chose Flaubert as the exemplar of the nineteenth-century writer as a hardworking craftsman of a style that effaced for the sake of a so-called zero degree of writing, ‘écriture’ (Barthes 1953). But Barthes is only able to make this claim because he avoids practically any analysis of Flaubert’s writing, as if simply conjuring up an image of the nineteenth-century writer were sufficient.^{ix} Barthes focuses instead on the labour of the ‘casseur de cailloux’ and not on the ‘cailloux’ produced, and therefore he assumes that Flaubert is, in a sense, his own work of art. *Écriture* depends upon craft, it can be nothing but craft, since the work of art is the process that produced it. A smashed rock only produces smaller rocks, while the one who breaks them

undergoes a more fascinating transformation. Barthes's analysis, or lack thereof, fits 1950s aesthetic concerns about representation, but even the quickest read through *Bouvard et Pécuchet* should be enough to see that the act of reading this novel, of gathering its stone words, defies any attempt at a studious, mechanical, 'craftsman'-like approach to criticism.

In a surprising reversal, the studiousness of the author induces a form of stupidity on the part of the scholar, who, as I have tried to show, cannot help but resemble Bouvard and Pécuchet. The two characters' desire to repeat on their farm whatever they think they have learned in books might not have the regularity of an excavator or of a machine, but still obeys a will to produce and reproduce, as good bourgeois capitalists. What saves Bouvard and Pécuchet is their persistent 'failure,' due to their spectacular idiocy stemming, according to Michel Foucault, from their rejection of any distinction between categories, as they face down 'bêtise' (foolishness or error) in the way only a philosopher can (Foucault 1970). Their failed repetitions lead to something greater than success (the reproduction of the same), which is to say they learn to notice and appreciate how systems fail. By the end of the novel, they no longer try to copy for the sake of repeating, but rather copy for the sake of finding those instances when the machinery of language breaks down. They thus manage to escape the logic of capitalism and of reproduction, as they delight in the comedy of language tics.^x

And while we academics display our long night's labour in footnotes and the due respect of disciplines and categories, as we engage in the backbreaking drudgery of archival work and surrender our copyright to corporate presses, we might do well to take

inspiration from Bouvard and Pécuchet, who observe the beauty to be found in the debris of literary language.

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ⁱ 'You must think that I've forgotten you! That's not it at all. But you must forgive a little laziness from a poor man who holds a pen in his hand all day long and who goes to bed at

night, or rather in the morning, exhausted like a stonebreaker.’ All translations are my own.

ⁱⁱ In an earlier letter to Louise Colet (27 March, 1853), however, Flaubert encourages her to ‘casse[r] du caillou’ (‘break some rock’) (Flaubert 1980, 287). Later in the same letter, he compares their work to that of literary giants like Rabelais and Hugo. Compared to their efforts, Flaubert and Colet only ‘entass[ent] l’un sur l’autre un tas de petits cailloux pour faire nos pyramides’ (‘pile one on top of the other a heap of little rocks to make our pyramids’) (Flaubert 1980, 288). The ridiculousness of the image of Louise Colet and Flaubert making a pyramid out of little rocks underscores the gulf that separates forced physical labour from the labour of the artist.

ⁱⁱⁱ Michael Fried, in his book *Courbet’s Realism*, gives an overview of how scholars have compared Flaubert and Courbet, and then offers his own parallel: ‘Courbet’s efforts to undo his own spectatorhood by transporting himself into his paintings in the act of making them have much in common with Flaubert’s ideal of immanence. But it can’t be emphasized too strongly that all such efforts were doomed to failure – that no matter what steps Courbet took to realize what I have been claiming was his central aim, he couldn’t literally or corporeally merge with the canvas before him but instead was compelled to remain outside it, a beholder (albeit a privileged one) to the end.’ (Fried 1992, 269).

^{iv} In *Politique de la littérature*, Rancière sees in nineteenth-century literature a ‘petrification’ and defines ‘mute speech’ as ‘une parole qui n’est proférée par personne, qui ne répond à aucune volonté de signification mais exprime la vérité des choses à la manière des fossiles ou des stries de pierre portent leur histoire écrite.’ (Rancière 2007,

23) ('a speech which is proffered by no one, which responds to no particular will for meaning but expresses the truth of things in the same way that fossils or striations in stone are marked by a written history.')

^v 'But we like these heavy materials that Flaubert's sentence picks up and drops with the intermittent noise of an excavator/steam shovel. For if, as has been written, Flaubert's lamp served as a lighthouse for mariners, we can also say that the sentences thrown out by his "gueloir" had the regular rhythm of the machines used to make rubble.' Flaubert referred to his habit of yelling ('gueler') his written sentences out loud in order to test their viability as his 'gueloir.' See Michael Fried's *Flaubert's 'Gueuloir': On Madame Bovary and Salammbô* (Fried 2012).

^{vi} 'And the road, always the same, stretched out ascending up until the horizon. Meters of stones followed one after the other...'

^{vii} 'They were stupefied to learn that there existed rocks imprinted by dragonflies, bird feet, – and having leafed through one of the Roret manuals, they looked for fossils. One afternoon, as they were turning over flint in the middle of the highway, the priest passed by, and calling to them in a wheedling voice: – You gentlemen are interested in geology? Very good then! For he held this science in esteem. It confirmed the authority of the Scriptures, by proving the Flood.'

^{ix} As Daniel Just puts it, 'Whether we agree with Barthes's assessment of Flaubert's place in the history of the novel or not, what is striking about it is the superficiality of Barthes's analysis.' (Just 2007, 392).

^x While *Bouvard et Pécuchet* was published posthumously, Flaubert indicated that there was supposed to be a second volume consisting entirely of what the texts that two copyists had collected. Much scholarship has been written trying to puzzle out what would exactly would be in this second volume. See the ‘Dossiers de Bouvard et Pécuchet’ website, hosted by the CNRS-LIRE team, for a list of possible second volumes: <http://www.dossiers-flaubert.fr/projet-seconds-volumes> (consulted 21-8-16 at 5:55pm EST).