

31/10/2016

31 October 2016 18:02

La Princesse de Clèves.

François I 1515-47
Henri II 1547-59
François II 1559-60
Charles IX 1560-74
Catherine de Medici

The word «trouble» occurs frequently.

The novel can be confusing.

- Mlle de Chartres and her mother are invented figures, hence the confusion.
- She becomes the princess once she is married.

The mother educates the daughter in love (p. 10):
man's insincerity

The princess strives for «le repos» - tranquility
↳ the opposite of the above
«troubles»

The mother's education is very narrow in scope.
As in the past, the man is superior to the woman.

THE DEATHBED SCENE - the mother cuts off contact with her daughter by looking away and never back again, two days before her death.

The mother wants the daughter to not "fall like other women," but to "resist temptation".

HYPERBOLE is very often used in this novel.
It creates high expectations of themselves - hyperbole puts everything on a high pedestal and reality does not live up to it.

p. 40 - This is a fairytale scene of longing.

PASTORAL GENRE - rural - shepherds, farms - L'Astree
remnants of this in this novel. Honoré de l'Urfé

When the Prince and Mlle de Chartres marry, she appears illusive - was there really love there at all? He "lacks full possession of her" (p. 22). The prince is more like a lover, not a husband - the passion has not stopped.

This is ironic because he dies of jealousy.

THE BALL SCENE - the Princesse meets Nemours (p. 23)

Nemours is quite athletic - stepping over several chairs to reach the Princesse, when the king requests that they dance together.

Nemours is portrayed in this scene as handsome and athletic.

In other scenes, he is portrayed as a voyeur, spying on her and later renting a room to look at her (p. 140).

The princesse admits ^{part of} her feelings to her husband and he sends someone to spy on Nemours.

Nemours overhears this and is happy - masochism.

"I will make you a confession which no woman has ever made to their husband" when she starts confessing. **HYPERBOLE AGAIN.**

p. 130 - Nemours, spying on Princesse - "never has passion been so tender"
- "he gave himself up to the love, letting tears flow"
- "worthy of being loved purely for the strength of his attachment".

In the final conversation between Nemours and the Princess, Nemours talks of "a phantom of duty" (the prince who has now died of jealousy).

p. 150 - Nemours throws himself at her feet, crying, revealing "the most ardent and human passion".

- She wanted to have met him while she was free. But her husband has only just died. "Give me time."

La dramaturgie de la faiblesse.
The construction of drama.

- ↳ The princesse tries not to fall in love, but she already is.
- Then she tries to not show that she is in love with another man while married.
- Then she tries to not wander into adultery with Nemours, even though her husband is dead.

The Princess strives for «repos».

peace of mind.

style indirect libre - Flaubert - Mme Bovary

↳ free indirect style

↳ this means that one goes straight into the character's mind without structures like "she thought".

Quite often, the Princesse says she will to avoid confrontation. «lit de repos»

bed rest - but she doesn't get much rest because she is troubled by feelings.

The ending of the book is very ambiguous.

The last paragraph: the Princesse will not leave the religious house.

Nemours thinks he will die of grief.

RELIGION IS ONLY MENTIONED AT THE END.

Finally, Nemours' passion diminished after many years

The Princesse never remarries and spends the last years of her life in a convent.