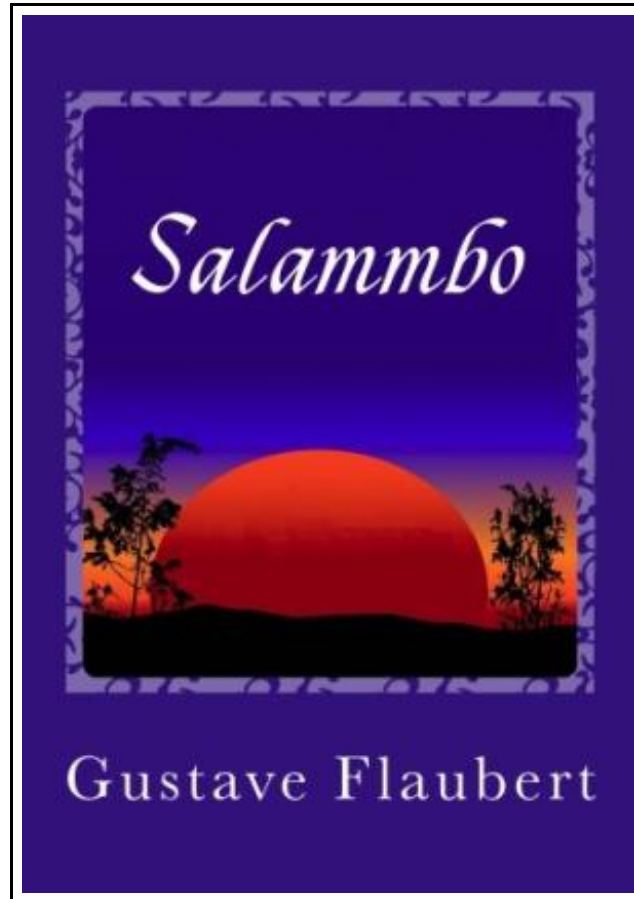


Salamambo



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Reviews

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(Dayne Johns)

SALAMMBO



CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 188 pages. Dimensions: 10.0in. x 7.0in. x 0.4in. Perhaps wearied by his years in the company of the pathetic bourgeoisie Emma Bovary, Gustave Flaubert chose as his next creation what may be the most extravagantly exotic novel ever written, *Salammbo*. The critic Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve called it this laboriously artistic work and the book, published in 1863, does require a great deal of patience from its readers. To begin with, there is the esoteric vocabulary: a suffete is a judge with tyrannical power, a hierodule is a temple slave, and the all-important zamph is a holy veil, the theft of which causes many problems for the main characters. Most of these characters are historical, such as Matho, Spendius, Hanno and the great Hamilcar himself. Flaubert spent several years researching this book about an army of mercenaries who revolt against ancient Carthage. The book is a combination of history and myth not unlike Homers *Iliad*. Like the *Iliad* it is a larger than life epic tale, but this tale has neither poetry nor heroes. Carthage does not want to pay the mercenaries their due; the mercenaries seek to plunder Carthage in revenge. Both sides rely on deceit and treachery to advance their cause. In the background, the sensual and mysterious *Salammbo*, seeking her own objective, indifferently and unwittingly affects the outcome. The war becomes long and brutal as the balance shifts back and forth. The horror of war becomes increasingly indefensible as the author offers neither heroes nor justifications. Fed only by greed, pride and revenge, the war and the slaughter grind on endlessly. Some would criticize, This is not *Madame Bovary*, and this is too much violence without a point. Others would say, This is not...



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