SOME ASPECTS OF GEORGE ELIOT'S Narrative Technique in Four Novels

ADAM BEDE
THE MILL ON THE FLOSS
MIDDLEMARCH
DANIEL DERONDA

Justine ELO MINTSA

DIRECTEUR DE THESE: M. Jean-Pierre VERNIER

DECEMBRE 1977
To my father, who initiated me in literature.

To my mother, for her love and care.
Some aspects of George Eliot's Narrative Technique in Four Novels:

Adam Bede
The Mill on the Floss
Middlemarch
Daniel Deronda

(Thèse préparée en vue de l'obtention du Doctorat de Troisième Cycle d'Anglais).

Directeur de Thèse : J. P. VERNIER
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledgements</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Note</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on the Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART ONE

### SOME ASPECTS OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

#### CHAPTER I: PRESENTATION OF THE CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I - MIDDLEGROUND CHARACTERS AND THEIR FUNCTION</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I - In relation to the Protagonist</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. As Ennobling Agent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. As Deflating Agent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Providing Ironic Analogy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. As Contrasting Parallel</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. As Progress Indicator</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| II - In relation to Theme                               | 27    |
| 1. As Authority                                         | 29    |
| 2. Comic Relief                                         | 32    |

| III - In relation to the Background                      | 36    |

Conclusion.                                             | 38    |
Notes on the "Middleground characters and their function"

II - THE PROTAGONISTS
   I - Basic selection 39
   II - Thematic Approach 40
       1. Quest of Wisdom 40
       2. Struggle to Wisdom 46
       3. The Lost Ones 53
       4. Conclusion. 54

Notes on "The Protagonists"

CHAPTER II : SCENIC PRESENTATION 56
   a) Incident 56
   b) Setting 60

I Crisis and Decision 64
II Scene and Time Sequence. 72

Notes on "Scenic Presentation"

CHAPTER III : IMAGERY 105
   I Definition 105
   II Imagistic Process in Eliot's Fiction 106
      1. Vertical Approach 106
         a) Ascending Correspondance 107
         b) Descending Correspondance 107
      2. Horizontal Process 109
      3. The Concentration Approach. 117
III Eliot's Sources of Imagery - Its Use and Function.

1. Imagery drawn from Nature
   a) Man and Nature
   b) Human and Animal
   c) Man and Childhood

2. Imagery drawn from Art
   a) Theatre
   b) Music

Notes on "Imagery"

CHAPTER IV : SYMBOLISM

I - Definition
II - Conventional Symbol: Eliot and the Bible
III - Specific Symbol
IV - Shift of Mode

Notes on "Symbolism"

PART TWO

EVOLUTION OF SOME ASPECTS OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

CHAPTER I : STRUCTURE AND FORM

I - ADAM BEDE

Notes on Adam Bede
II - THE MILL ON THE FLOSS
Notes on the Mill on the Floss

III - MIDDLEMARCH

IV - CONCLUSION

Notes on Middlemarch, on Daniel Deronda, and the Conclusion.

CHAPTER II: NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE METHODS

I - First Phase
II - Second Phase
III - Conclusion

Notes on the Descriptive and Narrative Methods.

CONCLUSION

I - Eliot and the Victorian Readers

II - General Conclusion

Notes on the Conclusion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have tried to find my way by reference to other criticism. Some aspects of George Eliot's narrative technique, though conspicuously and masterly displayed in her novels, yet remain blurred to the vision of the profane. Had it not been for the rigorous analyses of critics better acquainted with Eliot's sutleties, this attempt to describe and analyse her narrative technique would have been even more strenuous. Yet, once the acquaintance firmly made, I derived a real pleasure from discovering in her novels, the immersed treasures of her technique.

Among all the valuable writing that any Eliot Scholar must survey, I wish to acknowledge a particular debt to the work of W.J. Harvey.

I wish to acknowledge my various indebtedness to Monsieur Vernier for the encouragement, advice, and suggestions which I have received from him during the course of this work; and for giving me the possibility to lend books from the British Museum.

I am most grateful to Madame Bolton, Professeur agrégée at l'Université de Picardie, for her kind encouragement.
And among those scholars to whom I am deeply indebted, it is a pleasure to acknowledge Mr Atkinson, Tutor at the Polytechnic of Central London, who has enriched my acquaintance of Eliot. I am grateful to Mr Dickson of the West London College for his presentation of the Victorian background.

For their interest, their intelligence and their forebearance, I wish to thank ANGUE Honorine, ONDO Athanase, AKOMA Rosalie, OVONO François, AKOULOU Albert, MINKO François, MASSICOT Nicole, NDAM Claude and BANGBA Antoinette.

Special thanks are due to p'pa Gré

Wishing that this will do justice to all the attention kindly bestowed on me.
George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans Gross) was born on November 22 at South Farm, Atbury, Warwickshire. She received an ordinary education and, upon leaving school at the age of sixteen, embarked on a program of independent study to further her intellectual growth.

She moves with her father to Coventry where the influence of "Skeptics and rationalists" sway her from an intense religious devoutness to an eventual break with the church.

Publication of her translation of Strauss's "Life of Jesus".

The death of her father leaves her with a small legacy and the freedom to pursue her literary inclinations.

She becomes the assistant editor of the "Westminster Review" a position she held for three years.

She meets George Henry Lewes, the gifted editor of the "Leader", whom she could not marry because
he had a wife living whom he was unable to divorce. He was to become Eliot's advisor and companion for the next twenty-four years.

Publication of her translation of Fueurbach's "Essence of Christianity".

1855 She begins writing fiction.

1858 Publication of her first book "Scenes of Clerical Life".

1859 "Adam Bede".

1860 "The Mill on the Floss"

1861 "Silas Marmer"

1863 "Romola"

1866 "Felix Holt"

1868 "The Spanish Gypsy (dramatic poem)"

1872 "Middlemarch"

1874 "Jubal and Other Poems"

1876 "Daniel Deronda"
1878 The death of Lewes Leaves her stricken and lonely.

1879 "Impressions of Theophrastus Such (essays).

1880 Marries John Cross, a friend of long standing, and very much younger than herself, on May 6.

On December 22 on that year, in London, she dies after a brief illness.
The criticism that George Eliot was unreadable lived on till after the Second World War. Lord David Cecil in his *Early Victorian Novelist* (1934) says that "It is not just that she is not read that her books stand on the shelves unopened. If people do read her, they do not enjoy her". This he seems to attribute to her moral point of view. "The virtues of her admiration, industry, self-restraint, conscientiousness, are drab, negative sort of virtues; they are school-teachers' virtues" (1). But ten years later, F.R. Leavis in his revaluation of George Eliot, saw the moral element as the essence of her superiority. Her reputation has now risen to the point where many authorities again place her amongst the best of English novelists.

George Eliot's art indeed cannot be separated from her ethical habit of mind. She is quite plainly a novelist who is also a sage. The didactic intention is perfectly clear in her novels. In *Adam Bede*, she says that so far from inventing ideal characters, her "strongest effort is ... to give a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind" (2). Realistic pictures of obscure mediocrity serve a didactic purpose: "These fellow-mortals every one, must be accepted as they are ... these people... it is needful you should tolerate, pity and love: it is
these more or less ugly, stupid, inconsistent people whose movements of goodness you should be able to admire" (3).

She replaces God by Humanity, Faith by love and Sympathy. This is translated into her work by the elimination of the supernatural, the elevation of the natural, and the subordination of intellect to heart and thought to feeling.

There are many ways of dividing Eliot's work and of judging the parts it falls into. Some critics separate the novels based on recollected personal experience - among which Adam Bede and The Mill on the Floss - from the more laboured - Middlemarch and Daniel Deronda - and call the first group, novels of "feelings" and therefore good, the second, novels of "intellect" and therefore, inferior. Other critics well accept these lines of division but with reversed judgment: The novels of feelings, they say, are flawed by sentimental indulgence, the novels of intellect alone are mature.

My primary object in this study is not to demonstrate the absolute superiority of one period to one other - each period, I presume, contains its beauties and its blemishes - rather, I want to detect the few aspects which allow us to distinguish the early period from the later period.
My aim in this study is to attempt to describe and analyse those aspects which, to my mind, present a particular interest in George Eliot's narrative technique. Some - such as mode of characterization, use of image and symbol presentation of the science - I selected because they are characteristic of Eliot's technique. Others - narrative and descriptive method - because they reveal, if considered chronologically, the evolution of George Eliot's technique.

I have therefore arranged the work in two main parts.

The first part is devoted to the description and study of Eliot's practice of fiction - in the selected aspects. This is without regard to the period of the novels.

The second part is the comparative study of the four novels. They are considered chronologically.

At the same time, this study is intended as a brief account of George Eliot's major themes.
Notes on the Introduction

   London: Constable CO Ltd, (1934) 1963

2. *Adam Bede*, ch I7 P. I74

3. *Ibid*, ch I7 P. I75
CHAPTER I
================================

PRESENTATION OF THE CHARACTERS
================================

I - MIDDLEGROUND CHARACTERS AND THEIR FUNCTION -

The middleground of George Eliot's human landscape mediates between the protagonists and a host of background figures who act as chorus, giving substance to our sense of a community in action. These middleground characters are endowed with a wide range of cosmic possibilities which accounts for their not less wide range of functions. These secondary characters though they are delights in themselves owe their existence to the protagonist, and through the protagonist, to the main issue. Their primary function is to aid in the portrayal of the main characters and to help express the main ideas and principles.

We may now turn to the different functions that George Eliot attributes to her middleground characters.

1°) - In Relation to the Protagonist -

The role of the secondary character in relation to the protagonist is multifunctional
Secondary characters help to create a moral conflict and make the protagonist appear in a heroic or noble light. For instance, in the situation in which Daniel Deronda the protagonist and Hans Meyrick the secondary character are in love with the same woman, the reader's sympathy and admiration are with the main character. Hans's love and very existence is that which moves Daniel to sacrifice his passion for friendship:

"He was conscious of that peculiar irritation which will sometimes befall a man whom other are inclined to trust as a mentor - the irritation of perceiving that he is supposed to be entirely off the same plane of desire and temptation as those who confess to him (1).

There is a parallel example in Middlemarch with Farebrother the protagonist, Fred Vincy the secondary character and Mary Garth the beloved. Farebrother is sent to propose to Mary on Fred's behalf. After Mary's conditional acceptance, Farebrother proclaims: "I hope I shall live to join your hands. God bless you!" (2). And Mary, alarmed, begs him to stay for tea while "her eyes filled with tears, for something indefinable, something like the resolute suppression of a pain in Mr Farebrother's manner, made
her feel suddenly miserable, as she had once felt when she saw her father's hands trembling in a moment of trouble" (3) but the vicar, after politely declining Mary's invitation to stay "was on horseback again having gone magnanimously through a duty much harder than the renunciation of whist, or even than the writing of penitential meditations " (4). It is in this respect that Hans Meyrick and Fred Vincy act as ennobling agents to Daniel Deronda and M. Farebrother, respectively. Hans and Fred make them appear in specific circumstances necessary to Eliot's firm and concrete characterization of Deronda and Farebrother. Always in such cases, the author at the end reveals the thought of the protagonist in order to emphasize the value of the sacrifice.

2. As Deflating Agent

We will see later on that there is very little of the merely sentiment-al-romantic in Eliot's novels. Though Eliot often has a tendency to idealize her characters morally, she balances this by bringing in characters who serve as deflating agents.

If Dinah partly escapes from being idealized by George Eliot, it is because Dinah's dedication is constantly qualified by the shrewd worldliness of Mrs Poyser. To illustrate this, here is a dialogue between Mrs Poyser and Dinah:
"But where's the use a' talking, if ye wanna be persuaded, and settle down like any other woman in her senses, i' stead a'wearing yourself out with walking and preaching, and giving away every penny you get, so as you've nothing saved against sickness; and all the things you've got i' the world, I verily believe, 'ud go into a bundle no bigger nor a double cheese. And all because you've got notions i' your head about religion more nor what's i' the Catechism and the Prayer-book".

"But not more than what's in the Bible, Aunt", said Dinah.

"Yes, and the Bible too, for that matter", Mrs Poyser rejoined, rather sharply; "Else why shouldn't them as know best what's in the Bible - the parsons and people as have got nothing to do but learn it - do the same as you do? But, for the matter o' that, if everybody was to do like you, the world must come to a standstill; for if everybody tried to do without house and home, and with poor eating and drinking, and was always talking as we must despise the things o' the world, as you say, I should like to know where the pick o' the stock, and the corn, and the best new-milk cheeses 'ud be running after everybody else to preach to'em; instead o' bringing up families, and laying by against a bad harvest. It stands to sense as that can't be the right religion" (5).
We know that Mrs Poyser's is a mistaken and partial viewpoint. It is the collective voice of the materialistic Loamshire which fails to understand the spiritual world of Stonyshire. Yet, so attractive is the speaker, so vividly is she realized, that the weight of our sympathy is with her rather than with Dinah. Nevertheless, there being some truth in Mrs Poyser's viewpoint, we are forced to re-examine Dinah. We no longer take her ideal moral qualities for granted. As she is somehow ridiculed by Mrs Poyser, we leave our respect and admiration for her in suspension. This use of secondary character in creating an ironic frame, which qualifies our response to the protagonists, is a constant and important device in George Eliot's novels. Again, when Mr Brooke in Middlemarch says of Will: "Well, you know, he may turn out a Byron, a Chatterton, a Churchill - that sort of thing - there's no knowing" (6), the comedy lies not only in the heterogeneity of Mr Brooke's list but also in the inappropriateness of his reference to Will's amateur artistic inclinations. So Will, the idealist, who is presented as Casaubon's moral, social and spiritual antithesis is here deflated by Mr. Brooke.

We now can deduce that ennobling agents set the protagonist into action, while the deflating agents simply comment on those actions.
3. Providing Ironic Analogy

Another function of the secondary character, which George delights and excels in, is that of providing comic parallels or analogies to the main characters. This ultimately gives us ironic views of the central issues of the novel.

The most striking example is the role of Bessy Cranage in *Adam Bede*. She at once parallels and contrasts with Hetty. We meet her first when Dinah is preaching in the village. She is a particular object of compassion for the Methodists "because her hair, being turned back under a cap which was set at the top of her head, exposed to view an ornament of which she was much prouder than her red cheeks - namely, a pair of large round ear-rings with false garnets in them" (8). This foreshadows Hetty in her bedroom as she is pathetically parading before the blotched and tarnished mirror. Her gimcrack adornments are the exactly right material correlative of her limited, romantic dreams:

It was an old scarf, full of rents, but it would make a becoming border round her shoulders, and set off the whiteness of her upper arm. And she would take out the little ear-rings she had in her ears - oh! how her aunt had scolded her for having her ears bored! - and put in those large ones. They were but coloured glass, and gilding, but
if you didn't know what they were made of, they looked just as well as what the ladies wore (9).

The effect of Dinah's preaching is to make Bessy repent in terror, but this is short-lived: as soon as Dinah leaves the district, Bessy reverts to her former ways. In this she indeed contrasts with Hetty. Initially, Dinah has far less effect on Hetty than on Bessy, but in the long run far more (Incidentally, this scene on the village green foreshadows in different ways both the bedroom scene in chapter 15, and the scene in the prison cell).

At one point Eliot makes more explicit the parallel between the two girls:

Bessy ... had taken to her ear-rings again since Dinah's departure, and was otherwise decked out in such small finery as she could have looked into poor Betty's heart would have seen a striking resemblance between her little hopes and anxieties and Hetty's. (10).

Eliot's ways of drawing ironic analogies are twofold. The first way consists in two characters depicted in parallel, the one being the parody of the other, as we have just seen with Hetty and Bessy. The other technique necessitates a secondary character who, in conversations, draws analogies about the protagonist, these analogies being for the
most part ironic. This is Mr. Brooke's field, and illustrations abound. But the one to me which seems typical is the following: in chapter 28 of Middlemarch, he unconsciously makes a parody of Casaubon's sterile pedantry. He remarks to Casaubon that he hopes that Ladislaw "will stay with me a long while and we shall make something of my documents". From this comic analogy is derived the irony of his remarks on Casaubon: "I overdid it at one time... about topography, ruins, temples. I thought I had a clue, but I saw it would carry me too far and nothing might come of it. You may go any length in that sort of thing and nothing may come of it, you" (12). We can imagine how Casaubon's "Key to all Mythologies" shrivels up in such a contests. Of course, Mr Brooke speaks truer than he knows.

Bessy and Mr Brooke, by providing ironic analogies or parodies to the protagonists, illustrate the main issues of the novels, namely, Hetty's vanity and Casaubon's unproductivity.

4. As Contrasting Parallel

At other times, the secondary character is presented under identical circumstances as those of the protagonist. This emphasizes different qualities of the protagonist that Eliot is eager to put forth. This is done most effectively by Eliot through contrast. We shall take an example
from *Middlemarch*. Mary strikingly differs from Rosamond in all respects—physically, mentally, socially, morally and spiritually. The first contrast between them is brought about by mirrors, which evoke their physical differences:

"Rosamond and Mary ... stood at the toilette-table near the window while Rosamond took off her hat, adjusted her veil, and applied little touches of her finger-tips to her hair ... Mary seemed all the plainer standing at an angle between the two nymphs. The one in the glass, and the one out of it, who looked at each other with eyes of heavenly blue, deep enough to hold the most exquisite meanings an ingenious beholder could put into them, and deep enough to hide the meanings of the owner if these should happen to be less exquisite. Only a few children in Middlemarch looked blond by the side of Rosamond, and the slim figure displayed by her riding-habit had delicate undulations. In fact, most men in Middlemarch, except her brothers, held that Miss Vincy was the best girl in the world. Mary Garth, on the contrary, had the aspect of an ordinary sinner: she was brown; her curley dark hair was rough and stubborn; her stature was low; and it would not be true to declare, in satisfactory antithesis, that she had all the virtues. Plainless has its peculiar temptations and vices quite as much as beauty; it is apt either to feign amiability, or, not feigning it,
to show all the repulsiveness of discontent: at any rate, to be called an ugly thing in contrast with that lovely creature your companion, is apt to produce some effect beyond a sense of fine veracity and fitness in the phrase. At the age of two-and-twenty Mary had certainly not attained that perfect good sense and good principle which are usually recommended to the less fortunate girl ... Her shrewdness had a streak of satiric bitterness continually renewed and never carried utterly out of sight except by a strong current of gratitude towards those who, instead of telling her that she ought to be contended, did something to make her so. Advancing womanhood had tempered her plainness, which was of a good human sort ... For honesty, truth-telling fairness, was Mary's reigning virtue (13)

We will note how the portrayal of the two characters gradually moves from physical to psychological, and moral. The more Eliot insists on a quality or a feature in the one character, the more the reverse quality is emphasized in the other. Surely, contrast, as a device for depth to a character is far more effective than a plain description of an isolated character. Mary afterwards dramatizes her role by exclaiming:

"What a brown patch, I am by the side of you, Rosy!" (14). Once this physical contrast is established the reader is prompted to look for further contrasts between the two girls,
which is precisely Eliot's aim. Thus, else where in the book, though Rosamond and Mary are presented in isolation, their attitudes are diametrically opposed. This can be illustrated by two passages revealing the two girls views about love:

She (Rosamond) judged of her own symptoms as those of awakening love, and she held it still more natural that Mr Lydgate should have fallen in love at first sight of her. These things happened so often at balls and why not by the morning light, when the complexion showed all the better for it? Rosamond, though no older than Mary, was rather used to being fallen in love with, but she, for her part, had remained indifferent and fastidiously critical towards both fresh sprig and faded bachelor (15).

"... To me (Mary) it is one of the most odious things in a girl's life, that there must always be some supposition of falling in love coming between her and any man who is kind to her, and to whom she is grateful. I should have thought that I at least, might have been safe from all that. I have no ground for the nonsensical vanity of fancying everybody who comes near me is in love with me" (16).

Beside the realistic, modest and almost prosaic
Mary, Rosamond appears vain, coquettish. Rosamond is used to being fallen in love with and thinks herself irresistible. This feature of her character foreshadows her crisis with Will Ladislaw: Rosamond "had felt stung and disappointed by Will's resolution to quit Middlemarch, for in spite of what she knew and guessed about his admiration for Dorothea, she secretly cherished the belief that he had or would necessarily come to have, much more admiration for herself; Rosamond was one of those women who live much in the idea that each man they meet would have preferred them if the preference had not been hopeless. Mrs Casaubon was all very well; but Will's interest in her dated before he knew Mrs Lydgate. Rosamond took his way of talking to herself, which was a mixture of playful fault-finding and hyperbolical gallantry, as the disguise of a deeper feeling; and in his presence she felt that agreeable titillation of vanity and sense of romantic drama which Lydgate's presence had no longer the magic to create" (17). She even "constructed a little romance which was to vary the flatness of her life: Will Ladislaw was to be a bachelor and live near her, always to be at her command, and have an understood though never fully expressed passion for her, which would be sending out lambent flames every now and then in interesting scenes" (18). We know that all this is pure fancy, for Will's flame in fact is burning for Dorothea. And the retribution to Rosamond's vanity is her bitter disappointment.

Their criteria of a good husband further diffe-
And there was Mr Lydgate suddenly corresponding to her ideal being altogether foreign to Middlemarch carrying a certain air of distinction congruous with good family, and possessing connections which offered vistas of that middle-class heaven, rank; a man of talent, also, whom it would be especially delightful to enslave (not to worship, mind; leave that to Dorothea Brooke)\(^1\). Rosamond ... was far on in the costume and introductions of her wedded life, having determined on her house in Middlemarch, and foreseen the visits she would pay to her husband's high-bred relatives at a distance, whose finished manner she could appropriate as thoroughly as she had done her school accomplishments, preparing herself thus for vaguer elevations which might ultimately come. There was nothing financial, still less sordid, in her previsions: she cared about what were considered refinements, and not about the money that was to pay for them (19).

Mary, on the contrary, does not base her choice on Fred's heritage and birth in deciding to marry him, but rather she values the man himself:

"Don't fear for me, father", said Mary gravely

---

\(^1\) Bracket mine.
meeting his father's eyes; "Fred has always been very good to me; he is kind-hearted and affectionate, and not false, I think, with all his self-indulgence. But I will never engage myself to one who has no manly independence, and who goes on loitering away his time on the chance that others will provide for him. You and my mother have taught me too much pride for that"(20).

Mary says this though at this stage, she knows that Fred is likely to inherit from his uncle Featherstone.

Thus set against Mary - for whom personal qualities are primary, Rosamond looks superficial, irresponsible, vain and materialistic. We will observe that no personal quality whatever enters in Rosamond's criteria of the ideal man. Her criteria of the ideal man is based exclusively on social status rather than on individual worth.

Even their attitudes towards the social status of their respective families oppose the two girls:

Rosamond felt that she might have been happier if she had not been the daughter of a Middlemarch manufacturer. She disliked anything which reminded her that her mother's father had been an innkeeper (21). And after her marriage to Lydgate, Rosamond reflected that if any of those high-bred
cousins who were bores, should be induced to visit Middlemarch, they would see many things in her own family which might shock them. Hence it seemed desirable that Lydgate should by - and - by get some first rate position elsewhere than in Middlemarch (22).

We need not mention here that Rosamond owes all her winning cards to her parents;

Mary's feelings towards her almost deprived parents is summed up on the following dialogue between herself and Mr Featherstone:

"I suppose your father wanted your earnings", said old Mr Featherstone, with his usual power of unpleasant surmise, when Mary returned to him "He makes but a tight fit, I reckon. You're of age now, you ought to be saving for yourself"

"I consider my father and mother the best part of myself, sir' said Mary coldly (23).

Mary loves and gives. Rosamond takes the best and steps on the rest. Let us linger further on the family circle in order to compare their respective concept of the family unit. As unity manifests itself only in times of trouble, we will select a critical moment to observe how each
reacts in similar situations. The following scene adequately "places" Mary:

"What is that Mary doesn't like, eh?" said the father, looking over his spectacles and pausing before he opened his next letter.

"Being among a lot of nin-compoop girls" said Alfred. "It is the situation you had heard of, Mary?" said Caleb, gently, looking at his daughter.

"Yes, father: The school at York. I have determined to take it. It is quite the best. Thirty-five pounds a year, and extra pay for teaching the smallest strummers at the piano."

"Poor child! I wish she could stay at home with us, Suzan", said Caleb, looking plaintively at his wife.

"Mary would not be happy without doing her duty", said Mrs Garth, magisterially, conscious of having done her own.

"It wouldn't make me happy to do such a nasty duty as that", said Alfred at which Mary and her father laughed silently, but Mrs Garth said, gravely:
"Do find a fitter word than nasty, my dear Alfred for everything that you think disagreeable. And suppose that Mary could help you to go to Mr Hammer's with the money she gets?"

"That seems to me a great shame. But she's an old brick, said Alfred, rising from his chair and pulling Mary's head backward to kiss her" (24).

Mary shares her parents' troubles. She sympathizes with her family to whom she brings material and moral comfort.

On the one hand, no help is required from spoiled Rosamond. On the other she hasn't the least concern for her family who at this point is steeped with troubles. She distinctly dissociates her well-being from her family's. What she sees is her only interest, as illustrates this short dialogue between she and her father:

"... With this disappointment about Fred, and Parliament going to be dissolved, and machine-breaking everywhere, and an election coming on".

"Dear papa! What can that have to do with my marriage?" (25).
I hope this little scene is explicit enough. One last example will suffice our study of the contrasting parallel between Mary and Rosamond. Rosamond beguiles her father into accepting her marriage, while Mary remains apprehensive with regards to Fred even after her father is convinced of Fred's reformation. The irony is that Rosamond's marriage is a failure while Mary and Fred live "happily everafter".

Indeed, the list of contrasts could go on and on, but the point I want to make is that Eliot exploits her secondary characters economically. That is, though their part is almost exclusively functional, they are elaborated in such a way as to be whole and interesting characters.

However, Eliot's use of the contrasting parallel is not restricted to characters like Rosamond and Mary who are contrasted in all aspects and throughout the novel. She often uses the same device to emphasize just one quality in a character. For instance, Lucy Dean cannot strictly be considered Maggie's parallel. Lucy is not adequately dramatized, and her contrast to Maggie is restricted to their physical appearances. Eliot uses Lucy in selected scenes and for the purpose of drawing further attention to Maggie's physical appearances:

Maggie looked twice as dark as usual when she was
by the side of Lucy ... Certainly the contrast between the cousins was conspicuous, and to superficial eyes was very much to the disadvantage of Maggie ... It was like the contrast between a rough, dark overgrown puppy and a white kitten ... Maggie always looked at Lucy with delight. She was fond of faucing a world where the people never got any larger than children of their own age, and she made the queen of it just like Lucy, with a little crown on her head and a little sceptre in her hand ... only the quen was Mag-gie herself in Lucy's form (26).

Lucy's beauty helps to emphasize Maggie's physical disadvantage. The different phases of the contrast, which ends up with Maggie's fanciful transmutation into Lucy's body and with the symbolical image of the beauty queen, enforces Maggie's desire to be beautiful. For as we know, the theme of the "Ugly Duckling" is an important element in Maggie's story. In this example, I tried to distinguish a parallel from a mere contrast. Both fulfill, the same function but structurally speaking the one is an extended line in time and space while the other is just a point on the same line.

But there again, all parallels are not sustained throughout the novel. A secondary character might parallel the protagonist only in a unique situation to obtain a striking effect of irony, as illustrated in the coincidence
involving Gwendolen Harleth's ambition and Mirah's achievement. This coincidence is partly visible to Gwendolen as she goes to hear Mirah sing:

While turning her glance towards Mirah, she did not neglect to exchange a bow and smile with Klessmer as she passed. The smile seemed to each a lightning flash-back on that morning when it had been her ambition to stand like the "little Jewess" was standing, and survey a grand audience from the higher rank of her talent — instead of which she was one of the ordinary crowd in silks and gems, whose utmost performance it must be to admire or find fault (27).

Gwendolen and Klesmer's partial recognition of the irony encourages the reader to see it in full. Mirah and Gwendolen each sing, one is a professional, the other an ill-taught amateur. Each has the opportunity to sell herself. But Mirah flees from her count, who, intentionally or not, resembles Grandcourt not only in title, but in appearance, for he "was neither very young nor very old: his hair and eyes were pale; and he was tall and walked heavily and his face was heavy and grave" (28).

Gwendolen's and Mirah's destinies are paralleled up to a certain point in the story. The first part of Mirah's life is simply narrated, while Gwendolen's is dramatized
throughout. However, Mirah perfectly fulfills Eliot's contrasting design.

In George Eliot's novels, contrast not only serves to emphasize points of characterization and situation, but also to illustrate an idea. Here again she utilizes the secondary character.

Typical of George Eliot who is essentially a moralist, virtue is a matter of capacity, and vice only calls for sympathy, as suggests the contrast between Lydgate and Fred. Though marriage appears the "determining act" in their lives, it is itself determined by certain essential points of the character's disposition. Fred's honest affection for a girl endowed with virtuous qualities brings its reward. The failure of Lydgate's intellectual aspirations, as the consequence of a marriage contracted altogether at the bidding of his lower nature, is, of course, much more elaborately treated than Fred's simple "love-problem". But we must not forget that Fred, as a secondary character, helps us to see the main issue and must not distract our attention by being too central.

Here is another example in which the characters are embodiments of ideas in a more obvious way. George Eliot has a typical view on the conflict between theoretical conviction on ethics and human tenderness. Her presentation of
religious men reflect her personal views on religion. This appears in her treatment of Mr Irwine. M. Irwine, the parson of Loamshire, who is very carefully drawn, is an important moral influence throughout the book. He is a favorable representative of preachers at the close of the last century. The author has placed him in contrast to Mr Ryde, who "preached a deal about doctrines", Adam relates to his creator, but he adds, "I've seen pretty clear, ever since I was a young un, as religion's something else besides doctrines and notions. I look at it as if the doctrines was like finding names for your feelings, so as you can talk o'em when you've never known'em, just as a man may talk o' tools when he knows their names, though he's never so much as seen'em, still less handled'em" (29). To the contrary Irwine was a noble man with a fine presence and kind nature. He was a silent influence, one who did not trouble his parish much with theological "notions" but gave them the example of a kind heart: "It's summat like to see such a man as that 'the desk of a Sunday" says that rattling Mrs Poyser, "it's like looking at a full crop o'wheat, or a pasture with a fine dairy o'cows in it; it makes you think the world's comfortable-like" (30). It is to Mrs Poyser again that we owe the following exquisite comparison between Mr Irwine and Mr Ryde: "Mr Irwine was like a good meal of victual, you were the better for him without thinking on it, and Mr Ryde was like a dose o'physic, he gripped you and worreted you, and after all he left you much the same"(31).
This idea reappears in *Middlemarch* in the shape of Mr Farebrother who is contrasted to Mr Tyke: Mr Farebrother, parson of Middlemarch, is a man of the world, and he even gambles, yet he displays pity and fairness, tact and wisdom, and he knows the secret of renunciation; Mr Tyke is doctrinal and evangelical, yet inhumane. It was George Eliot's constant objection to evangelicanism, that in its emphasis upon the will and acts of implacable Deity, it extinguished human love. She extended this abjection to all ethical maxims that failed to regard human results: "There is no general doctrine" she says in *Middlemarch* "which is not capable of eating out our morality if unchecked by the deep-seated habit of direct fellow-feeling with individual fellow-men" (32). Fred Vincy feels no remorse for his careless borrowings until he sees their actual effect upon the Garth family: "Indeed, we are most of us brought up in the notion that the highest motive for not doing a wrong is something irrespective of the beings who would suffer the wrong" (33). This last quotation was an intentional digression by which I tried to further illustrate Eliot's conviction that humanity is the true religion, not doctrines.

To conclude, we can observe that the parallel or contrast, in other words the secondary character, is not essential to the protagonist. But for effectiveness and richness, they are made concomitant in George Eliot's mode of characterization.
5. As_Progress_Indicator

We have just seen how some characters evolve in relation to the protagonist. But not all characters do evolve. Among the secondary characters, there are static figures who undergo no change whatsoever. They are presented as such at the beginning of the novel, and as such they remain to the end. Such characters might tend to be boring and superfluous, but not when handled by George Eliot. Not only do they serve a purpose, but they often are endowed with loads of amusing idiosyncracies.

Effectively, the fixity of these characters acts as a point of reference where we can measure the development of the protagonists. By viewing X - the protagonist - who changes in relation to Y - static -, at different points in the novel, we can measure the amount and kind of change in X. Mrs Cadwallader doesn't change in Middlemarch, but we can account for the alteration in Dorothea's character by noting that she is much more vulnerable to Mrs Cadwallader's criticisms at the beginning of the novel than at the end.

Again in Middlemarch, we are told about Lydgate, early on in the novel, that "money had never been a motive to him. Hence he was not ready to frame excuses for this deliberate pursuit of small gains" - referring to Farebrother's inclination to gamble. "It was altogether repulsive
to him" (34). Before and after this, Fred Vincy is presented to us as an incurable gambler. Towards the end of the novel, the reader finds Fred and Lydgate in a billiard-room, where Lydgate is gambling. This marks a great change in Lydgate's character. Eliot emphasizes:

But the last thing likely to have entered Fred's expectation was that he should see his brother-in-law Lydgate - of whom he had never quite dropped the old opinion that he was a prig, and tremendously conscious of his superiority - looking excited and betting, just as he himself might have done. Fred felt a shock greater than he could quite account for by the vague knowledge that Lydgate was in debt (...). It was a strange reversal of attitudes: Fred's blond face and blue eyes usually bright and careless, ready to give attention to anything that held out a promise of amusement, looking involuntarily grave and almost embarrassed as if by the sight of something unfitting: while Lydgate, who had habitually an air of self-possessed strength and a certain meditativeness that seemed to lie behind his most observant attention, was acting, watching, speaking with that excited narrow consciousness which reminds one of an animal fierce eyes and retractile claws (35).

Fred's reaction further stresses the change in
Lydgate. The irony reaches its climax as Fred attempts to make Lydgate stop the game and leave the billiard-room. Lydgate's evolution marks three phases when put against the character of Fred Vincy: first of all, superior to Fred, as he scorns gambling; Fred's equal when he takes up gambling himself; and thirdly he finds himself in an inferior position to Fred as he gives in and stops the game.

In conclusion, it is not by chance that some characters appear intermittently or shadow other characters. Indeed, they emerge at specific scenes to fulfill specific functions. When their presence is no longer required by the protagonist or for the carrying out of the main issue, they drop back into darkness. That is the lot of the secondary character.

II - IN RELATION TO THEME -

1°) - As Authority -

It is all very well for George Eliot to produce striking characters indulging themselves in acrobatic moral adventures, but it remains for her to convince us. Once again, the secondary character is employed. This time as a tool in Eliot's persuasive technique. Indeed, once the general outline of their personalities is clear to the reader, a carefully selected number of these characters are
used as authorities on views Eliot wishes to defend. Any novelist, by creating the illusion of reality, may introduce as many reliable witnesses as he needs. But because, a succession of unimpeachable authorities would exasperate the reader and eventually arouse his suspicious, we therefore find systematic variety in the natures of those authorities. These characters are commentators and they are given, often casually and unemphatically, some truth or insight which is concordant with the major Themes of the novel.

Generally, these commentators are ironic. Their remarks rather than expressing in a gnomic way some central theme, cast an ironic light on some particular character or situation. That is the impression we derive from Dorothea's interaction with the other characters and the comments of these other characters on her. These comments range from stupidity as in the case of Sir James, to the "negative" wisdom in Celia. Sir James says to Dorothea: "You seem to have the power of discrimination" (36), when we know this is precisely what she lacks at the moment. Celia's view of Dorothea is limited but just; Celia hates "notions". To her, Dorothea's reforming plans are just a "fad". Also, she doesn't think "it can be nice to marry a man with a great soul" (37) By far the most important of these ironic commentators is Mr Brooke. He says to Dorothea "I thought you liked your own opinion - liked it you know" (38), and we supply
the implied criticism. Or again, on Dorothea's power of discernment.

"Music of that sort I should enjoy", said Dorothea...

"That kind of thing is not healthy, my dear", said Mr. Brooke" (39).

All these comments cumulatively create a rich and firmly controlled human context, in which Dorothea's value is not denied but is seen in an ironic perspective of greater maturity than anything she herself can comprehend.

Sometimes, these commentors are in themselves non-ironic. For instance, Caleb Garth, a Middlemarch agriculturer speaks of "the soul of man", using a "deep tone and a grave shake of the head" and "looking on the floor and moving his feet uneasily with a sense, that words were stantier than thoughts" (40). He says this as he becomes our authority for the doubtless deep thought that "Things hang together".

But after all, this is a simple man's version of a momentous faith; but Eliot's viewpoint becomes more comprehensive and wider reaching because we see it expressed by a great variety of characters, in both simplistic and sophisticated forms.
In other words the same truth is approached from different angles by various characters. Thus, Mr Garth's "Things hang together" links with Mr Trumbull's "Trifles make the sum of human things - nothing more important than trifles" and will Ladislaw's "The little waves make the big ones" and Brooke's "We're all one family you know - it's all one cupboard".

All these are variants of an insight which close to the heart of the moral vision of the novel. And this complex use of characters as authorities is fundamental to the plausibility of Eliot's vision.

2°) - Comic Relief -

George Eliot had a strong sense of humour. It was, however, rarely allowed full play in her main characters and plots. Therefore, it tended to find its natural outlet in secondary characters and subsidiary episodes. The other reason why the comedy flourishes chiefly among the secondary characters is that these are, for the most part, less disciplined in the overall structure of the novel. They carry less of the moral burden than the protagonist, and Eliot has therefore greater room for manoeuvring, and greater freedom to elaborate them for their own sake.

But this elaboration, this simple delight in idio-
syncrasies is rarely uneconomic.

It is not difficult to determine the function of Mrs Poyser's idiosyncrasies. Comedy for its own sake is reconciled with comedy for the novel's sake, as testifies this scene from chapter 53, at the Poyser's Harvest Supper:

"Ah!" said Bartle, sneeringly, "the women are quick enough - they're quick enough. They know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows' em himself".

"Like enough", said Mrs Poyser, "for the men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun' em, an' they can only catch' em by the tail. I can count a stocking-top while a man's getting's tongue ready an' when he outs wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks take the longest hatchin'. However, I'm not denyin' the women are foolish: God almighty made' em to match the men (41).

This comic clash of the sexes is a traditional, benighted and public joke; Mrs Poyser and Bartle Massey are only playing the parts that their delighted audience expects of them. It is a kind of comic ceremonial being translated into impulses and tensions which could lead to tragedy - the kind of tragedy that is, in fact, played out in Adam Bede.
That this comic ritual can now be fully and whole-heartedly performed is a significant sign of health and reassurance. The catastrophe has worked itself out and the community is now back to normal. The course of nature has been re-established.

Characters like Mrs Poyser also provide a kind of relief analogous to comic relief. These characters are generally fixed and definite. We come to know them thoroughly after a short acquaintance and we can depend upon them to remain much the same throughout the novel. Because they are in that sense static they ease the tension by allowing us to rest our attention on what is familiar and well-known rather than exerting our attention to take in what is new or developing.

On the other hand, it is impossible not to realize that behind the words spoken and the characteristic idiom lie the accumulated inherited beliefs, the prejudices, experiences and common sense which make up rural wisdom. Mrs Poyser's verbal mannerism, for instance, is more than a delightful idiosyncrasy. I even long hesitated between selecting her as Eliot's eminent "authority" and the brilliant representative of George Eliot's humour. She could have sufficed as an "authority" because is often sententious. Her wisdom pervades the novel as expressed by herself, or by some other character or by the author. On one occasion even, the
author, unable to express herself in her own words, introduces Adam Bede to express the thought in his words, and Adam finding his own language inadequate, is obliged to fall back upon the expressions used by Mrs Poyser, whom he quotes: "Mrs Poyser used to say Mr Irwine was like a good meal of victual" (42). Her style even runs into proverbs: "Folks must put up with their own kin, as they put up with their own noses - it's their own flesh and blood", and "If the chaffcutter had the making of us, we should all be straw I reckon"; and "I'm not one o' those as can see the cat i' the dairy an' wonder what she's come after", and again "He's welly like a cock as thinks the sun's rose o' purpose to hear him crow", And so on. So that as an 'authority' Mrs Poyser would have appeared too heavily loaded by her wisdom. This seeming digression was an attempt to explain why I abstained from quoting Mrs Poyser as an "authority". What we were trying to show in fact, is Eliot's economic way of using humour. Mrs Poyser might not be an authority, but, as we observed earlier her pungent style is more than a delightful idiosyncrasy. The metaphors she uses reflect her own character and also the habits, the daily activities, the religious tradition and the social conventions and assumptions of her time and class.

I restricted my study of the secondary character as a comic relief to Mrs Poyser because she is Eliot's gem in that respect. And I will conclude by insisting that
herself, and those she represents here, are not to be defined in a bundle of functions. Our primary response to, and sense of, these characters is of local interest as we delight in their speech and actions.

III - IN RELATION TO THE BACKGROUND -

The Middleground characters are thoroughly exploited for their cosmic possibilities. Having dealt with them in relation to the protagonists and in relation to the theme, we see them now in relation to the background characters.

The main role of the background characters is to give to the novel, a solid sense of community. Community with its traditions, religions, beliefs, wisdom and conventions, from which the protagonists' conflicts are raised and against which they are enacted. We will also note that these background characters are not endowed with individualities. They always manifest themselves in group. We may then wonder how, being thus denied their entities, can the background characters be set efficiently against the main characters? The answer to this is simple: the Background are denied individuality but not expression. Into Mrs Poyser's witty aphorisms, for instance, are compressed the wisdom of a tradition, a compassion, honesty and acceptance of all facts of life. In other words, she is the mouthpiece of the
community, the articulation of a way of life. This way of life, as embodied in Mrs Poyser - natural, robust, earthly commonsensical - is the life of Loamshire. This is set against the way of life represented by Dinah. In the first description she gives of Mrs Poyser, Eliot sets the keynote for their distinctive natures:

The family likeness between her (Mrs Poyser) and her niece Dinah Morris, with the contrast between her keenness and Dinah's seraphic gentleness of expression, might have served a painter as an excellent suggestion for a Martha and Mary (43).

We supply the inference that Mrs Poyser, like Martha, belongs to the common stock. And she gives expression to her people. To the young and fervent Methodist, Mrs Poyser gives way to her shrewd worldliness:

"You're like the birds o' th'air, and live nobody knows how. I'd ha'been glad to behave to you like a mother's sister, if you'd come and live i' this country, where there's some shelter and victual for man and beast, and folks don't live on the waked hills, like poultry a-scratching on a gravel bank. And then you might get married to some decent man, and there'd be plenty ready to have you, if you'd only leave off that preaching (44). (AB. ch.6. p.84).
According to the community of Loamshire, this is what Dinah's dedication comes to: not only is it an unrewarding vocation, but it is not the right one for a young woman whose sole alternative is to marry.

In conclusion, the mass which constitutes the background characters and contributes to the solidity of the novel is not handicapped in terms of expression, since the secondary characters are their mouthpieces. On the other hand, if the background characters were endowed with individuality, they would inevitably be obtrusive. All things considered, the background are more effective in their latent, quiet, dormant mode.

CONCLUSION

The different groups of characters in George Eliot's novels reflect the hierarchical pattern of any type of society. We have the protagonist for the leader, the background for the mass and the middleground for the mediator.
Notes on the 'Middleground Characters and their Function'


3. Ibid, P. 562

4. Ibid, P. 562


7. Ibid, ch q P. 107

8. *Adam Bede*, op. cit. ch 2 P. 31

9. Ibid, ch I5 P. 151

10. Ibid, ch 25 P. 266

II. *Middlemarch*, ch 28 P. 309

12. Ibid, ch 28 P. 309

13. Ibid, ch I2 P. P. I39-40

14. Ibid, ch 12 P. 40

15. Ibid, ch I2 P. I45

16. Ibid, ch I4 P. I65

17. Ibid, ch 75 P. P. 809-10

18. Ibid, ch 75 P. 810

19. Ibid, ch I2 P. P. I45-6

20. Ibid, ch 25 P. 291

21. Ibid, ch II P. I28
22. Ibid, ch 36 P. 390
23. Ibid, ch 25 P. 291
24. Ibid, ch 40 P.P. 435-6
25. Ibid, ch 36 P. 388

(The New American Library Inc. Siguet Classics, U.S. 1965)

Book I ch 7 P.P. 68-69

27. *Middlemarch*, ch 45 P. 67
28. *Daniel Deronda* ch 20 P.P. 258-59
29. *Adam Beda* ch 17, P. 180
30. Ibid, ch. 8 P. 100
31. Ibid, ch 17 P. 180
32. *Middlemarch* ch 61 P. 668
33. Ibid, ch 24 P. 281
34. Ibid, ch 18 P. 209
35. Ibid, ch 66 P. 724
36. Ibid, ch 3 P. 53
37. Ibid, ch 6 P. 79
38. Ibid, ch 45 P. 66
39. Ibid, ch 7 P. 90
40. Ibid, ch 4 P. 64
41. *Adam Bede* ch 55 P. 494
42. Ibid, ch 17 P. 180
43. Ibid, ch 6 P. 81
44. Ibid, ch 6 P. 84
II - THE PROTAGONISTS

1°) The basic selection -

Beyond the agents and voices, we find the protagonists who form the arena in which the moral struggles are played out. These characters, unlike those we have seen, are ends in themselves, not functions or means to an end. George Eliot's novels exist to reveal their moral dilemmas and conflicts; and characteristically, she has several of these moral centres interacting while competing for our attention and sympathy.

The chief feature which gives expression to Eliot's vision lies in the strict selection she makes of which characters and which events she is prepared to reveal in full. This preliminary selection, necessarily made by any artist, is easily overlooked in Eliot's novels, possibly owing to the amplitude and solidity of her work. But let us not be dupes. Eliot's selection is of crucial importance. There are quite a few aspects of human nature which are rigidly excluded from her work. For instance, no one in her novels is consciously selfish; the least lovable characters are merely half-aware of the pain they cause others.
Tulliver in The Mill on the Floss is almost a freak for expressing real hatred, but then his feelings are constantly thwarted and mitigated in the course of events. Apart from him, no one feels the sudden violent passions of anger, or jealousy, or revenge. There is no sadist or masochist. No one is savage. No one depraved.

Characteristically, Eliot's main characters are in some way or other concerned with wisdom. Actually most of her novels are written round a character who either is earnestly in quest of wisdom, or accidently comes to some understanding. And in most of the cases, love or marriage constitute the catalytic elements of those experiences.

2°) - Thematic approach

In her presentation of the protagonist, we are constantly shown examples of the kind of person Eliot, as a speculative moralist, is actually writing about. I shall thus adopt a thematic approach to analyse the characters as they enact the theme.

1 - Quest of Wisdom -

*Middlemarch* has a definite subject: an ardent young girl framed for a larger moral life than circumstances often would provide, yearns for a motive for sustained
spiritual effort but is given no opportunity. Eliot, in other words undertook to depict the career of another Saint Theresa.

Dorothea Brooke is a Saint Theresa, with a passionate and ideal nature which demands an epic life. But she is born out of due season into this period of faiths which are disintegrating, and of social forces which are still unorganised. Dorothea finds no epic life but one of mistakes. She fancies she is about to escape into a world of large ideas and far-reaching actions. She is to sit at the feet of a master and prophet, who, by a binding doctrine shall compell her own small life and faith into connection with the vast and amazing past; and she will occupy that life with action at once rational and ardent. In her conviction to have found "the prophet", she enthusiastically marries Casaubon. But this strange prophet, with his Xisuthrus and Fee-fo-fum, is but a pedant bringing to the great spectacle of life nothing but a small, hungry and shivering self. His consciousness is never transformed into the vividness of thought, the ardour of a passion, the energy of an action. He is scholarly but uninspired, ambitious but timid scrupulous and dim-sighted: "She says he has a great soul. A great bladder for dried peas to rattle in", says Mrs Cadwallader (1). For poor Dorothea who thought Mr Casaubon's mind an "ungauged reservoir" with a "labirynthine extension" (2) it is hard to be confronted with the reality revealing her prophet and master as "a shadow of a man" (3)
a "parchment code" (4), according to Sir James Chettain, and "a cursed white-blooded pedantic coxcomb" according to Will Ladislaw. The irony culminates when Mrs Cadwallader makes fun of Mr Casaubon's studies. She says: "Somebody put a drop under a magnifying-glass, and it was all semicolons and parentheses" (5), and again, "He (Mr Casaubon) dreams footnotes, and they run away with all his brains. They say, when he was a little boy, he made an abstract of "Hop o' my Thumb", and he has been making abstracts ever since" (6). In brief, Dorothea's marriage was a mad illusion. And as things stand, she finds no consequent doctrine of human life. No satisfying action is possible for her. Here indeed, a disappointment with much of the dignity of tragedy. From her ideal, she falls back on the yearnings of common women, the need to bless one being, and to receive the love of one heart: Saint Theresa becomes the wife of Will Ladislaw. It strikes us as an oddity in Eliot's scheme that she should have chosen just Will Ladislaw as the creature in whom Dorothea was to find her spiritual compensations. Our dissatisfaction with him is provoked in great measure by his insubstantial character. He lacks sharpness of outline. We are unable to believe in him as we believe in Dorothea, in Lydgate, and in Mr Casaubon. It is true that Will is meant to be a light creature though with a large capacity for gravity (for he finally gets into Parliament). But still, despite some charming and eloquent touches here and there from the author, Will remains vague and
impalpable to the end. He is definitely not the ideal foil to Mr Casaubon, which Dorothea's soul must have imperiously demanded. And if the author of the key to all Mythologies' sinned by lack of ardour, neither has Ladislaw the concentrated force our essential in the man chosen by so noble a heroine. The impression once given that he is a dilettante is never properly removed. There is something of a poetic justice for near-sighted Dorothea who marries a dilettante. It is perhaps her retribution for having once admired a false God.

Doubtless we are less content with Ladislaw on account of the solid presence of Lydgate, the real hero of the story. Indeed the central theme receives a second illustration in Middlemarch: Lydgate, who has received a true vocation, and whose intellectual passion predestines him to fame in the world of scientific research. But his ambition is destroyed by an enemy in the shape of a woman with "swan-like neck" "perfectly turned shoulders", "eyes of heavenly blue", "hair of infantile fairness", in short an angelic nymph, yet who hides behind this mask a soul both hard and sordid. George Eliot, with a hand tender and yet unflagging, has traced the dull decay of ardour in a spirit framed for the pursuit of great ends. The scientific fibre of the London physician who has obtained an excellent practice, and written a Treatise on Gout, is murdered by a woman Rosamond, indeed, is his basil plant, which flowrishes
admirably on the murdered man's brains. The most successful passages in the novel are perhaps those painful fireside scenes between Lydgate and his miserable little wife. The author's rare psychological penetration is lavished upon this veritably mulish domestic flower. The impressiveness and (as regards to Lydgate) the pathos of these scenes is deepened by the low key in which they are pitched. It is a tragedy based on unpaid butcher's bills, and the urgent need for stringent economy. The author has meant to be strictly realistic and to adhere to the lot of the common people.

She has given us in Lydgate and Rosamond, a powerful representation of that typical human drama; i.e. the struggle of an ambitious soul with sordid disappointments and vulgar embarrassments.

Both Lydgate and Dorothea are frustrated in their vocation by a combination of milieu and individual failings - in Lydgate's case his "spots of commonness", in Dorothea's her "too theoretical nature". Subordinate characters, like Fred, are made happy in Eliot's novels. Only those with superior natures suffer. Dorothea's wide charity finds no direct expression. Lydgate's scientific interest in public health meets only blank incomprehension and effective resistance, not only from all ranks in the medical hierarchy but from almost every element in the town. But if such characters as Lydgate and Dorothea prospered, there would be no story. Eliot insists that such characters should suffer,
and above all, in marriage. Retribution is the constant theme and motive of Eliot's art. The retribution here is a visitation upon matrimonial blindness or folly. Dorothea's folly is to choose Casaubon and her retribution is to foresee from that moment the slow march to tragic disappointment: "No one would ever know what she thought of a wedding journey to Rome" (8). The case is worse with Lydgate who wishes to become a second Bichat. It is worse, because his vicious wife outlives him; whereas Mr Casaubon dies and makes room for Ladislaw.

Modern Theresas are central figures in Eliot's novels. Although she has them suffer under retribution, we sense that she cannot seriously blame someone who wants to do right but is unable to find a satisfactory method of doing it. Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* is another Saint Theresa. She "wanted some explanation of this hard, real life ... Some key that would enable her to understand" (9). But despite her good disposition, her excess of affection and her strong need to be loved continually lead her into blunders and misfortunes. This happens mainly because she is surrounded by narrow-minded, uncomprehensive people - a typical social contest for a Saint Theresa. At the close of the story, Maggie gets her brother's forgiveness which is vital to her. We doubt however if she reaches any high understanding, let alone, that she would exploit it, since she gets drowned soon after her reconcile-
tion with her brother.

Whether her name is Dorothea, Maggie, or Lydgate, and wherever the fault lies, our Therias, we must admit have some difficulty in fully manifesting their goodness. Frustration and disappointment are their lot. From these one might gather that George Eliot draws a perverse pleasure from presenting such elevated natures being victimized, even martyred. But we must realise that if inferior natures escape the difficulties, it is precisely because they have inferior minds. For there are problems which are perceptible only to some consciences. And to be fully sensitive to the deepest searchings of heart, soul and intellect is to possess a high claim on our respect.

2 - Struggle to Wisdom -

George Eliot's ironic presentation of characters vainly in search of wisdom is balanced by the presentation of frivolous and ignorant characters eventually coming to some understanding as by accident. Before they can attain wisdom, those characters have to struggle, to undergo multiple changes throughout the novel. And Eliot patiently masterly, drifts us along the meanders of their petty souls, until we issue on a larger, straighter kind of stream.

Gwendolen is another victim of folly in marriage.
but her motive is less noble than that of Dorothea. Gwendolen is a spoiled child who, in her fear of the loneliness and vastness of the universe over which she can exert no influence, makes a selfish plunge against all her instincts of right and purity, into a marriage in which she fancies she can get her own way. But she has riveted on herself the grasp of a evil nature which she cannot influence at all, but who, on the contrary, soon becomes a source of fear and an object of hate. Gwendolen's pride and later humbleness, her agony of helpless hatred for her husband, are drawn with bitter strength. At times, the author seems to wish to leave the impression that Gwendolen deserves her lot. But then, she does not deserve it. Her sin is to be handsome and to know it. She is young and rather hard, sprightly and rather domineering. We feel somehow that she could have made a better match with the aristocratic boa-constrictor, Grandcourt. But at all costs, Gwendolen's dormant moral nature must be awakened.

She is almost as much tormented by her lay confessor, her spiritual guide, Deronda, as by her tyrannical husband, Grandcourt. To Deronda, she reveals how a sudden, paralysing impulse had kept her from throwing a rope to her drowning husband. Deronda half reassures her by observing that Grandcourt might have sunk anyhow with a cramp, and then, he practically intimates Gwendolen to treat herself all the same as a murderess in heart and intention, and to
flagellate her soul, which she duly does, and her life is broken for a time.

It is important here to note one of the main features in George Eliot's "dramatis persona": it is the presence of a character endowed with innate wisdom. He is not to be contrasted to, or paralleled with, the other characters. His part is to be an exemplar and a guide. So is Deronda, as suggests the kind of relationship between himself and Gwendolen. We can observe in the course of the story, a disposal of events which always brings Gwendolen within reach of Deronda's influence when she most needs it. Innately, Deronda has a pure sympathetic nature; his freedom from egoism is a possession which has come to him without a struggle. Deronda is free from all taint of personal ambition and the sorrow of anticipated failure like such characters as Lydgate. To Deronda the ideal of manhood in its fullness of power and beauty, the ideally perfect lot is assigned. He, even as a child, is sensible to the existence of independent centres of self outside himself, and can transfer his own consciousness into them. He is thus predestined to be a saviour and redeemer, the most precious of man's spiritual possessions. The main forces which operate in Daniel Deronda are sympathies, aspirations, ardours, and the ideas associated with these. Deronda is roused from his meditative numbness, his diffused mass of feeling is rendered definite, and is impelled in a given direction. His days become an ordered
sequence bound together by love and duty, his life is made one with the life of humanity. The central conception of *Daniel Deronda* is religion, or, at least, George Eliot's conception of religion - that which fills all her writings - the religion of humanity. For to George Eliot, as expressed through Daniel Deronda's mission, the religious life is that which transcends self, and which is lived in submission to the duties imposed upon us by the past, the chains of those who surround us in the present, and those who shall succeed us in time to come. To be the centre of the multitude, the heart of their hearts, the brain from which all thoughts take form - that is the best and purest joy which a human being can know.

But in characters like Daniel Deronda who are thoroughly perfect, it becomes difficult to determine the precise outline of their personality. Grandcourt, who is the absolute of egoism, is recognized to be human. But Deronda, sensitive at every point with life which flows into and from him in beneficient energy, is a pallid shadow rather than a man!

Anyway whatever the blemishes of Daniel Deronda no one can deny that the history of Gwendolen's moral collapse and regeneration is traced with a great insight and mastery. Nothing is more convincing in Eliot's study of characters as relationships, than the relation between
Gwendolen and Deronda. The dialogue between Gwendolen and Deronda in the last Book is Eliot's miniature masterpiece. It would be hardly possible to exceed the pathos of the parting interview, when Gwendolen suddenly realizes that Deronda is not only engaged to another woman, but is also about to leave for the East, to absorb himself in a life in which she has no interest or concern. Poor Gwendolen is utterly shattered. The relationship between the two is of a subtle nature. Their relations exclude passion. There is a delicacy in the painting both of her forlorn sinking of the heart and of his natural tenderness for her. The new soul born in within Gwendolen through remorse and penitential sorrow is sustained in its clinging infantile weakness by someone strong and tender, a living man, who is to her the best, the most real, the most worshipful of all things known. That man becomes her external conscience, while her inner conscience is still able to do no more than open wondering eyes, half dazzled by the light, after its long, dark, and withering imprisonment in the airless cell of egoism. And when good has firmly gained the victory in her, only then is the sublime, enlightening presence of Deronda withdrawn, to make room for a more spiritual, independant guidance.

With some reserve, Dinah Morris can be paralleled with Daniel Deronda if it were not for the ironic light which Eliot constantly throws upon her. She is a preacher and the effect of her preaching, at one moment in the book,
is to make Bessy Cranage repent in terror, but this does not last. As soon as Dinah leaves the district, Bessy reverts to her former ways. And Deronda who assures us he is not a priest, has an encroaching influence upon Gwendolen. Deronda and Dinah Morris have certainly not taken form in the same mould, but the main ingredients they are made of are of the same nature. There is in Dinah Morris the young Methodist a close agreement between her distinguished natural disposition and the action of her religious faith. Inevitably, she is bound to be taxed as a tendency from Eliot's part to idealize her. But frankly speaking, if by nature Dinah had been passionate, rebellious, selfish, one would better value her self-abnegation. One would look upon it as the genuine fruit of a profound religious experience. But as she stands, heart and soul going smoothly hand in hand, it is clear that her religious conversion is the mere intensification and consecration of pre-existing inclinations. It would have been more striking if this conversion had been a total change in Dinah's moral dispositions, so that her new life could have been the more sincere as the old one had less in common with it. But then George Eliot's dramatic personae would have been incomplete without a character naturally, permanently enlightened. So that the blind is to be acted by someone else, for there must be a blind who eventually sees after many an ordeal. That is to be Adam Bede. He is not a perfect blind but he duly plays his part. We might object to Adam Bede's inability to be tempted as a blot to
his full realization as a human being. Yet, we feel less uneasy about Adam than about Dinah; this for the reason that he develops more as the book progresses. He undergoes a process common to many of George Eliot's Characters, a kind of education through suffering by which he is brought to realize that his initially-held rules and moral categories are too rigid and are inadequate to the complex facts of experience which successively confront him. This process, of course, culminates in his disillusionment over Hetty, but it has started much earlier in the novel with his father's death; thus at the funeral, with compunction, he thinks: "Ah! I was always too hard ... It's a sore fault in me as I'm so hot and out a' patience with people when they do wrong, and my heart gets shut up against em, so as I can't bring myself to forgive'em. I see clear enough there's more pride nor love in my soul, for I could sooner make a thousand strokes with th' hammer for my father than bring myself to say a kind word to him... It seems to me now, if I was to find Father at home to-night, I should behave different; but there's no knowing perhaps nothing'ud be a lesson to us if it didn't come too late" (10).

The tone of this passage is appropriate both to Adam's moralizing nature in general, and to the solemn occasion in particular while its redevance to the main issues of the book, particularly to the Arthur-Hetty relationship, is obvious. But Dinah being what she is cannot participate in this kind of process. The fact that she was born, or
created, wise makes her essentially static. But the turn her story takes at the end of the novel causes same discomfort: when she marries Adam. There is certainly nothing wrong with the marriage itself; but we are taken unawares, precisely because Dinah does not develop, but simply changes in the last book; and George Eliot cannot gloss over that psychological discontinuity. The latent conflict between a religious vocation and a desire for marriage is completely played down, almost suppressed, and this results to an air of contrivance which mars the last Book. Deronda marries but this was an expected sequence of events.

However, all these are details. But in this part of the work concerned with George Eliot's characters struggling for wisdom, the most important thing to retain is that these are the real exemplars. Eliot's outlook being essentially didactic, we must recognize that the Adams and the Gwendolens, because they are not perfect, because they are weak, are the most striking and efficient examples of a better human life possible. No one can be blamed for being weak, provided he endeavours to better himself.

3 - The Lost Ones -

We have seen how some of George Eliot's protagonists are endowed with innate wisdom, while some others become wise through struggle. But in George Eliot's universe, it is the same as in real life: it is not to all characters
that it is given to reach that elevated moral stage.

Against those who earnestly search and do not find it, are set those who have no concern whatsoever with wisdom. Hetty Sorrel is their representative. Not only does she make no attempt towards wisdom, but even after many an ordeal, after many an opportunity to reform, she remains unchanged. Of all George Eliot's female figures, Hetty is the least ambitious and on the whole, the most successful. A lesser artist would have made this trifling country girl develop into a heroine. But Hetty's conduct throughout is thoroughly consistant. The part of the story which concerns her is much the most moving, and touching; and there is something infinitely tragic in the reader's sense of the contrast between the sternly prosaic life of the good people about her, their wholesome decency and their noonday probity and the dusky path through the woods along which poor Hetty is tripping, lightfooted, to her ruin. The author has escaped the facile error of representing Hetty as in any degree made serious by suffering. She is vain and superficial by nature; and so she remains to the end.

4. - Conclusion -

George Eliot's heroines are all of an excellent quality. An indefinable moral elevation is the general sign of Eliot's admirable creatures, and in the representation of
this quality in its superior degrees the author seems to have remained unsurpassed. To render the expression of the soul, whether it belongs to a man, or to a woman, requires a deep insight of mankind and a cunning hand. Through her protagonists, George Eliot most effectively presents her favourite themes and finely conveys her moral outlook.
Notes on 'The Protagonists'

1. Middlemarch ch 6 P. 42
2. Ibid, ch 3 P. 46
3. Ibid, ch 8 P. 94
4. Ibid, ch 8 P. 94
5. Ibid, ch 8 P. 96
6. Ibid, ch 8 P. 96
7. Ibid, ch 12 P. 139
8. Ibid, ch 28 P. 310
9. The Mill on the Floss, 3, P. 301
10. Adam Bede ch 18 P. 198
a) INCIDENT

Incidents are used as a persuasive technique. They explain and justify the different turnings of action and lend verisimilitude to the course of events.

The incidents, naturally are as distinctive as the characters. In George Eliot's novels, there are no adventures, almost no scenes of violence, no picaresque episodes or isolated romances. The substance of the book lies in the slowly ripening, intermittent, half-unconscious things like disillusion, the search for insight, growing affection, reformation, or above all, temptation. It is necessary here to distinguish incidents from situations, for every memorable phase of a novel is not necessarily a striking event. It may equally well be a deadlock where nothing happens or can happen. This is to say that the course of events impresses the reader sometimes by moving on, and sometimes by not moving on; an impasse may be peculiarly important, since it may lead to discussions between characters in which the author can transmit her vision to her reader with great immediacy and power. But scenes usually present occasions
on which characters deliver themselves of utter aphorisms. And what the characters contribute is thus closely linked with what the incidents of the story contribute to the story. In short, incidents are the pillars of, and prepare the reader for, the scene, which offers, as we will see, many possibilities to George Eliot's rendering of contrasts, conflicts and decisions. It is in scenes such as these that the story takes a decisive turn.

The main function of incident is to give to the reader, an impression of reality; to build up a natural process. If we are not convinced that events move slowly and steal upon us unawares, there is Lydgate's courtship of Rosamond in which the author subtly points out that "in the meanwhile the hours were leaving their little deposit and gradually forming the final reason for inaction, namely that action was too late" (1); elsewhere we have the slow accumulation of his debts; or the gradual seduction of Hetty by Arthur. And, as the narrative constantly stresses, what has happened is irrevocable. But often, despite the character's will, not withstanding his intervention even, the course of events remains unalterable. Tragic, ironical twists of Fate then play a large part in the stories. Mrs Tulliver tries to persuade her husband to come to a reconciliation with Mrs Glegg, and tries to persuade Wakem not to buy up their mill. Each time, she causes precisely what she hopes to avoid. Arthur Donnithorne tries to confess his
love affair to Mr Irwine, and then he changes his mind. An incident. Philip Wakem is ill. An incident. And Lucy Dean decides to go shopping. Just another incident. But these happen on the last day that Maggie and Stephen have to resist their attraction for each other. It is obvious that this is a genuine ironical twist of Fate, and not a mere coincidence. Finally there are innumerable incidents that suggest a continuity between human life and the rest of nature. Let us take one example of this from *Middlemarch*: Lydgate nearly eludes Rosamond, but "a chance turn of events caught him at the eleventh hour". Eliot comments: "That moment of naturalness was the crystallizing feather-touch: it shook flirtation into love" (2).

But the main point of incident is naturally moral. George Eliot's device of using incident as an example of what constitutes good or bad conduct is well-known. In *Daniel Deronda*, Gwendolen tells Deronda that she has seen, in her recent sad experiences specimens of the kind of conduct she must avoid - seen them as if shown her for her instruction by an angel. Still, in *Daniel Deronda*, Klesmer the famous musician, has agreed to consider Mirah's singing abilities:

"I shall be very grateful", said Mirah, calmly, "He wants to hear me sing, before he can judge whether I ought to be helped".
Deronda was struck with her plain sense about these matters of practical concern (3). And, clearly enough, the reader is meant to be struck as well. We have another incident in which, it is clear, George Eliot is not magnifying Gwendolen's conduct. It is a dialogue between herself and her mother.

"Pray go to church, mama", said Gwendolen.
... "I prefer seeing Herr Klessner alone".
"That is hardly correct, I think" said Mrs Davilow, anxiously.
"Our affairs are too serious for us to think of such nonsensical rules", said Gwendolen, contemptuously.
"They are insulting as well as ridiculous".
"You would not mind Isabel sitting, with you? She would be reading in a corner".
"No, she could not: she would bite her nails and store. It would be irritating. Trust my judgment, mama. I must be alone".
Gwendolen had her way, of course ... (4).

But sometimes, George Eliot gives the events she narrates a more interesting and deeper moral significance. When this is so, what happens is not a model for us to adopt or reject; but an event in a situation, or a situation in itself - an impasse, say - that lays bare the fundamental issues in all conduct of any significance, and illuminates those essential and unchanging factors present in any moral choice.
b) - SETTING -

While the main point of incident is, as we have seen, moral, the scenic background can do much to enrich our understanding or modify our feelings about the way of the world. It also has in its way, a contribution to Eliot's persuasive technique.

There is no denying that the suggestiveness of action and incident is enriched by setting them in a carefully evocatively described scene. Scenery, when well described, stirs our emotions and invests the description with a moral significance. George Eliot's treatment of scenery reveals her conviction that in many ways, scenery reveals the course of nature; and that scenery is something that readily creates the very emotions and attitudes she wishes to create.

Let us now make a closer consideration of the use she makes of scenery in her novels.

Indeed, a description of nature can be moving. But it also can be more than that. The scene in which Adam and Seth find their father drowned in the brook is more than a mere description. It is a presentation of a careful fusion of peasant custom and superstition, of country scenery and the event itself, all combined so that it seems both
probable and significant. Adams has been working alone all night long on a coffin his father had promised for the following day, but had neglected because of his inability to resist having a drink. So he had resolved to go out. First we see Adam and Seth cheerfully carrying the coffin away very early next day: red sunlight, flowery lanes and fields, singing birds, "the fresh youth of the summer morning ... peace and loveliness, the stalwart strength of two brothers in their rusty working, clothes, and the long coffin on their shoulders" - "It was a strangely mingled picture"(5) But Seth soon changes our view of the image:

"But see what clouds have gathered since we set out. I'm thinking we shall have more rain. It'll be a sore time for th'haymaking if the meadows are flooded again. The brook's fine and full now: another day's rain'ud cover the plank, and we should have to go round by the road" (6).

At that instant, they find their father's body floating in the current, wedged by a willow tree. It was "a smart rap, as if with a willow - wand" (7) that Adam had fancied he heard against the door, as he worked on into the previous night; we saw him then, caught up in the ancient rustic superstition, and wondering if the odd sound was really an omen. The scenery is not simply to make the incident vivid, but to reflect and elucidate its "mingled"
youth and age, gaiety and tragedy, beauty and drabness. The total effect is a way of controlling what the reader experiences, over a wide front, in such a way as to convey the author's outlook on life through the one event. Sometimes Eliot achieves this through the setting alone:

"I like to go and work by a road that'll take me up a bit of a hill' (Adam says), and see the fields for miles round me... or a town, or a bit of a steeple here and there. It makes you feel the world's a big place, and there's other men working on it... besides yourself.

His brother Seth, the Methodist agrees:

"I like th'hills best, when the clouds are over your head and you see the sun shining ever so far off... It seems to me as if that was heaven where there's always joy and sunshine, though this life's dark and cloudy" (8).

The conversation here makes the technique explicit and reveals particularly that scenes evoke emotions not in vacuo but through their factual detail. Here, we have the cosmic picture in the description of Fred and Rosamond riding to Stone Court "through a pretty bit of midland landscape... meadows and pastures... Little details gave each
field a particular physiognomy, dear to the eyes that have looked on them from childhood: the pool ... the great oak ... the huddled roofs and fences of the homestead without a traceable way of approach. The grey gate and fences against the depth of the bording wood; and the stray hovel, its old thatch full of mossy hills and valleys ... these are the things that make the gamut of joy in landscape to middleland-bred souls" (9). The ride itself has almost become incidental: the description is of central importance and its aim is to make us understand the system of nature, and therefore love it more perhaps.

To finish my remarks on incident and scenery in relation to scene, I will only recall that they are the main ingredients which give George Eliot's stories, a natural colour through their qualities of persuasion.

What now remains is the use George Eliot makes of scenes in her novels. The scene is another important literary device manipulated by George Eliot so that it should suit her artistic purposes. Indeed the scene offers, as we said earlier, an opportunity to give a natural but crucial twist to the story; here the character seems to be more responsible than the author. Secondly, a careful positioning of the scene in the novel can be very effective.
I - CRISIS AND DECISION -

George Eliot manages through incident and scenery to give an impression of inevitability which is not rigid, neither is it artificial.

Her characters make a moral tradition for themselves, and their deeds determine them, but since the characters are morally "iriscent" there is a certain stage when the determination is held in suspense. She needs a strong suggestion of plausible alternatives at these moral crossroads where redemption and damnation are equally likely. The most obvious examples are Maggie Tulliver, Will Ladislaw, Gwendolen, and Arthur Donnithorne.

Maggie's vision of possibility is conveyed in the imagery of the river: its enchantment, its power, its isolation, its languor. She yields to Stephen's song and is "borne by a wave too strong for her", then "by the Tide". It is with sharp perceptiveness that George Eliot portrays the moral chaos that takes possession of Maggie's mind. Instead of waltzing, Stephen walks with Maggie into the conservatory, gazing at her, but silent. "The hovering thought that they must and would renounce each other made this moment of mute confession more intense in its rapture "(10). As she reached for a flower, Stephen in " a mad impulse" kissed her arm. The violence of her resentment is
a sign of the depth of her passion for him; for soon she felt a twinge of remorse not from the offence made to her person, but from the "sin of allowing a moment's happiness that was treachery to Lucy, to Philipp - to her own better soul" (12). The next day, Philip's company comforts her with a deceptive feeling that "her better soul" has regained its mastery. Yet, a few days later, in the lane at Basset, when she could have freed herself at once from Stephen's importunity by saying" that her whole heart was Philip's, her lips would not utter that, and she was silent" (13). We can see her, alone in her room, making the strongest resolutions, but when Stephen appears the violence of her desire so overwhelms her that she cannot see her conduct in perspective at all. She lives only in the present, and in the present she is conscious only of being happy and must at all costs prolong her happiness. And that tendency unconsciously determines her choice. In putting "pity and faithfulness and memory" before love, she can only - illogically - beg Stephen to "help me, because I love you" ... (14). Maggie was compromised by her own divided nature. Stephen's sincere letter (of which only two paragraphs are quoted), is quite moving; it was the "tone of misery" in it that made the balance tremble during Maggie's "last conflict". When Stephen said, "Call me back to life and goodness! write me one word - say "come!". In two days I should be with you!" (15), Maggie started from her seat to reach for pen and paper. But she did not write. It was her worst temptation; and when it was over she burned
Stephen's letter. There is only one main guiding principle which justifies Maggie's decisions and that is the past. It is for her a period of happiness and security. She decides to leave Philip because "I desire no future that will break the ties of the past" (16). And she rejects Stephen at Mudport because to marry him would "rend me away from all that my past life has made dear and holy to me" (17). She also refuses to leave St Ogg's after the scandal because she would be "cut off from the past". And in her last temptation victory was won by "memories that no passion could long quench: the long past came back to her, and with it the fountains of self-renouncing pity and affection of faithfulness and resolve" (18).

When Gwendolen waits for Grandcourt's offer of marriage, we know well that she has already made up her mind to refuse. But we also know that in fact, she is experiencing a genuine, strong moment of indecision. Before and after Gwendolen's choice, George Eliot closely tracks Gwendolen's vacillating thought, and she hints once or twice that Gwendolen's earlier decision is weakening. The tension begins in the chapter-motto of chapter 26, which takes on an ironical resonance when we move to the next chapter. It runs:

He brings white asses laden with the freight of Tyrian vessels, purple, gold, and balm, to bribe my will:
I'll bid them chase him forth Nor let him breathe
the taint of his surmise on my secure resolve.

But until Grandcourt begins to speak, Gwendolen's mind is apparently made up. She is going to refuse him. That vision of possibility is gradually dissipated as Grandcourt asks her questions she cannot answer, and this because she is, significantly, beginning to be literal-minded. She finds it unsafe to give a "yes" or "no" answer when he asks if she is "reckless about him". After the next "Is there any man who stands between us?" she feels herself "against a net". This feeling of helplessness is the turning-point. But then, another possibility springs up: Grandcourt speaks of riding away, and Gwendolen is quite surprised at her own reaction:

Almost to her astonishment, Gwendolen felt a sudden alarm at the image of Grandcourt, finally riding away. What would be left her then? Nothing but the former dreariness. She liked him to be there. She snatched at the subject that would defer any decisive answer (19).

The deferred answer - the evasive reference to her mother's losses - is the beginning of her capitulation. She is caught off guard quite unawares, and she has to reconsider her earlier decision. In fact, at this stage, within herself, she has decided ... to accept him. This is
a scene that manages to convince by its immediacy that this is indecision, "the alternative dip of counterbalancing thoughts begotten of counterbalancing desires". In George Eliot's moral universe, Gwendolen has to commit herself and choose.

A similar option must be present whenever a novelist succeeds in dramatizing the tension of conflict and choice.

Lydgate and Ladislaw, at one stage in Middlemarch are held in moral suspense, and it is then that they come for the first time into a formally emphatic relation. Lydgate is offered two possibilities: stay in Middlemarch and hope for redemption; or leave Middlemarch and acknowledge his defeat—which is Rosamond's victory. Ladislaw for his part, though with less strength, is also torn between staying and going. His departure is brought into direct relation with Lydgate's.

When Lydgate spoke with desperate resignation of going to settle in London, and said with a faint smile, 'we shall have you again, old fellow', Mill felt inexpressibly mournful, and said nothing. Rosamond had that morning entreated him to urge this step on Lydgate; and it seemed to him as if he were beholding in a magic panorama a future where he himself was sliding into that pleasureless yielding to the small solicita-
tions of circumstance, which is a commoner history of perdition than any single momentous bargain.

We are on a perilous margin when we begin to look passively at our future selves, and see our own figures led with dull consent into insipid misdoing and shably achievement. Poor Lydgate was inwardly groaning on that margin, and Will was arriving at it (20).

Here we see, the possibilities coincide. But Lydgate's courageous decision will turn out to be a failure. The crisis gives Will's character a measure of realistic solidity which counter-acts the glamour and innocence with which the imagery surrounds him.

Fate is seen as fragile, success as variable. The rigid moral process is there, but so is the precariousness of chance.

There is also a striking example which shows, as is the case with Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss*—that decisions for George Eliot's characters are seldom fully deliberate, but she does present scenes where, even with the failure, or, in some cases, avoidance of consciousness, crucial decisions are in effect made. It is the scene which presents Lydgate's engagement to Rosamond. The "decision" is not premeditated, yet George Eliot renders successfully the psy-
chological process in each character: we have Lydgate covering his embarrassment by speaking "almost formally", Rosamond unable to conceal her distress, and its effect on Lydgate. As a result: "That moment of naturalness was the crystallizing feather-touch: it shook flirtation into love" (21). The drama of such a scene is not conveyed in actions as on the stage, or even in certain scenes in *Adam Bede* or *The Mill on the Floss*; we are given here only one line of direct speech. Description and comment mainly convey the scene, yet at the same time, it does achieve a peculiar kind of concreteness and immediacy.

The last example of crisis and decision, we will draw from the remaining of the four books: *Adam Bede*. Arthur Domithorne had several occasions to avoid the circumstances which drew him into sexual relations with Hetty Sorrel. He was aware that he should have confessed to Mr Irwine and confide to him his feelings about Hetty. He was on the verge of doing so. But he chose not to. When George Eliot's characters come to a point at which they must make a crucial decision, she does not mean the decision to be a mere formality, naturally. On the contrary, The balance between the two possibilities present must deeply involve the character so as to create a genuine conflict in his mind.

Maggie was free to avoid getting into the boat with Stephen. Gwendolen had an opportunity not to marry
Grandcourt, and Arthur to confess to Mr Irwine; Had not Lydgate been so weak with the "fair" sex, he would have been able to avoid his burden by not flirting with Rosamond in the first place. But they all yield to their natural inclinations without fully understanding them.

This is how a character, for George Eliot, becomes what he makes himself. And through him the story as a whole seems to follow a completely natural and logical course.
II - SCENE AND TIME SEQUENCE -

All narratives create some kind of time scheme. The art of narrative, at its lowest, implies a simple sequential interest. But Eliot's moral emphasis adds an important element of causality to the sequential interest. As soon as the art of narrative advances beyond a mere temporal sequence, a new kind of interest is set up. The narrative is based on juxtapositions, parallels, contrasts, anticipation, and recollection. Typically of G. Eliot too, we have concurrent stories interweaving within the same book. Such a method also demands the elaboration of a pattern of interest in which the author's control of time obviously plays an important part.

We are not concerned, in this study, with George Eliot's treatment of time in general. Our study here is restricted to the position of the scene in Eliot's novel; its effect and purpose. George Eliot does not follow the simple sequential time in which this happens, and then that because of this or that. In other words, chapter 4 is not necessarily the logical continuation of Chapter 3 and so on. What we want to detect here, therefore, is why action in chapter 6 and chapter 30 are simultaneous while the action in chapter 10 precedes or follows both; why five consecutive chapters are lodged within one single hour of time, and why whole years elapse within a single sentence; why
chapters 8 and 9 are about totally different situations. In short, we are concerned with the function fulfilled by the position of a scene within its context and within the book as a whole.

In *The Mill on the Floss*, we have two parallel stories that relate to the same character: Maggie as a child and Maggie as an adult. Eliot links the two with a comment: "Life did change for Tom and Maggie, and yet they were not wrong in believing that the thoughts and loves of these first years would always make part of their lives. We could never have loved the earth so well if we had no childhood in it." (22). The unity of the book is reinforced by the frequent anticipation of Maggie's tragedy through Mrs Tulliver who at one point says: "Ah!, I thought so - wanderin' up an' down by the water like a wild thing: she'll tumble in some day" (23), and at another, to little Maggie: "Where's the use o' my telling you to keep away from the water? You'll tumble in and be drowned some day, an' then you'll be sorry you didn't do as mother told you" (24).

The recollection of Maggie's childhood further establishes the unity of the book: "I desire no future that will break the ties of the past", she would do nothing that would "rend me away from all that my past life has made dear and holy to me", and in her last temptation, she
was overcome by "memories that no passion could long quench: the long past came back to her". Unity is ensured not only by anticipation and recollection - we also have it in the person of the adult Maggie in whom we still find the child. To clarify this idea we can draw a parallel between two crucial scenes:

Perhaps the suspense did heighten Maggie's enjoyment when the fairy time began; for the first time, she quite forgot that she had a load on her mind - that Tom was angry with her; and by the time "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir" had been played, her face wore that bright look of happiness, while she sat immovable with her hands clasped... But when the magic music ceased, she jumped up, and running towards Tom, put her arm round his neck and said: "Oh, Tom, isn't it pretty?" (25).

and:

Stephen rolled out with saucy energy

Shall I, wasting in despair,

Die because a woman's fair?

and seemed to make all the air in the room alive with a new influence ... and Maggie, in spite of her resistance to the spirit of the song and to the singer, was taken hold of and shaken by the invisible influence was borne along by a wave too strong for her (26).

and by now, we are made quite familiar with the meaning of the last image.
In *Adam Bede*, there is one main story, that of Adam and Hetty, involving other characters, namely Arthur Donnithorne and Dinah Morris, the young methodist. And because Eliot's emphasis is always on the moral aspect, in her description of Hetty and Dinah, we can almost say that she exhausts all her narrative possibilities to make a clear distinction between the two separately or together. The parallels and contrasts between these two characters are enforced in a number of ways, sometimes indirectly, sometimes fairly obviously, and sometimes quite explicitly.

The juxtaposition of chapters 7 and chapter 8 which are simultaneous points out the first obvious contrast between Hetty and Dinah. In chapter 7, we are presented Hetty in Arthur's presence the general atmosphere is worldly. Hetty is coquette and Arthur is not exactly indifferent to Hetty's beauty. With the author's "you shall hear now what (Irwine and Dinah) had been saying to each other" (while we were with Hetty and Arthur), we pass on to chapter 8 which presents Dinah and Irwine in highly spiritual conversation. Eliot generally chooses to set both Dinah and Hetty into action at the same moment but always in different settings or spheres, so as to set forth a clearer contrast between the nature of their activities being mainly concerned with their thoughts. We have an example in the way they respectively spend their time from Wednesday
afternoon to thursday evening inclusive. The news of the
death of Thias Bede will allow Eliot to "place" Dinah and
Hetty in contrasting lights. Dinah's reaction to the death
of Adam's and Seth's father is sincere: "Ah, their poor
mother aged mother!" said Dinah, dropping her hands and
looking before her with pitying eyes, as if she saw the
object of her sympathy ... "I must go and see If I can
give her any help" (27). Then "Oh, how dreadful!" said
Hetty, looking serious, but not deeply affected; and as
Mally now entered with the dockleaves, she took them silen­
tly and returned to the dairy without asking further ques­
tions" (28) (ch.8). So ends Ch. 8. And chapter 9 begins :

While she adjusted the broad leaves ... I am
afraid Hetty was thinking a great deal more of the
looks Captain Dannithorne had cast at her than of
Adam and his troubles.

Two thirds of the chapter are taken up with the
description of her selfish dreams. Eliot concludes : "In
this state of mind, how could Hetty give any feeling to
Adam's troubles, or think much about poor old Thias being
drowned? Young souls, in such pleasant delirium as hers
are as unsympathetic as butterflies sipping nectar, they
are isolated from all appeals by a barrier of dreams - by
invisible looks and impalpable arms. At exactly the same
instant (Ch.10), we see Dinah being sympathetic, soothing
Lisbeth and comforting her sons, Adam and Seth.
The following day, Thursday, Dinah spends in the Bedes' cottage, actively preparing the meals and cleaning the house. We learn that she is to get back to the Hall Farm in the evening (Ch.11). The chapters 12 and 13 relate Hetty's timetable on that very Thursday which as we know, Dinah spends in the cottage. The morning sun of Thursday darts on Arthur's conflicting thoughts: to give up Hetty or to yield to the devise to see her again. We know the decision when we find him on Hetty's way to Mrs Pomfret's (Ch.12) and this marks the first step of Hetty's downfall. In chapter 13, Arthur is found waiting for her again on her way back to the Hall Farm. They commit themselves with a kiss.

Hetty's and Dinah's return home coincide in chapter 14, it is an occasion for both to be fused into a contrast, first physical and then moral: "It made a strange contrast to see that sparkling self-engrossed loveliness looked at by Dinah's calm pitying face" (29). Dinah's remark to Hetty is unconsciously ironical as she observes:

"You look very happy to-night, dear child", she said ... she paused a moment, but Hetty said nothing. "It has been a very precious time to me", Dinah went, "last night and to-day-seeing two such good sons as Adam and Seth Bede. They are so tender and thoughtful for their aged mother" (30).
And then we think of the nature of Hetty's happiness...
As all this seems rather confusing, we shall resort to a
diagram for an attempt to clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>(Wordly picture of Hetty and Arthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Spiritual scene with Irwine and Dinah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Late afternoon</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>(Hetty set up in her selfish, fauciful world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Dinah sympathizing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Dinah preparing breakfast and cleaning the house at the Bede's. She will stay there till evening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hetty and Arthur meet in the wood on her way to Mrs Pomfret's (Dinah still in the cottage).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arthur and Hetty commit themselves (Dinah probably about to leave the cottage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Night</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dinah and Hetty meet on their mays home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In "the two bedchambers" (ch.15), Eliot draws an explicit contrasting parallel between the two girls:

Hetty and Dinah both slept in the second story in rooms adjoining each other, meagrely furnished rooms, with no blinds to shut out the light, which was now beginning to gather new strength from the rising of the moon-more than enough strength to enable Hetty to move about and undress with perfect comfort. She could see quite well the pegs in the old painted linen-press on which she hung her hat and gown; she could see the head of every pin on her red cloth pin-cushion; she could see a reflection of herself in the old-fashioned looking-glass, quite as distinct as was needful, considering that she had only to brush her hair and put on her night-cap. A queer old looking-glass! Hetty got into an ill temper with it almost every time she dressed. It had been considered a handsome glass in its day (...). But Hetty objected to it because it had numerous dim blotches sprinkled over the mirror, which no rubbing would remove, and because instead of swinging backwards and forwards, it was fixed in an upright position, so that she could only get one good view of her head and neck, and that was to be had only by sitting down on a low chair before her dressing-table at all, but a small old chest of drawers, the most awkward thing in the world to sit
down before, for the big brass handles quite hurt her knees, and she couldn't get near the glass at all comfortably. But devout worshippers never allow incoveniences to prevent them from performing their religious rites, and Hetty this evening was more bent on her peculiar form of worship than usual.

Having taken off her gown and white kerchief, she drew a key from the large pocket that hung outside her petticoat and, unlocking one of the lower drawers in the chest, reached from it two short bits of wax candle - secretly bought at Treddleston - and stuck them in the two brass sockets. Then she drew forth a bundle of matches and lighted the candles; and last of all, a small red-framed shilling looking-glass, without blotches. It was into this small glass that she chose to look first after seating herself. She looked into it, smiling and turning her head on one side, for a minute, then laid it down and took out her brush and comb from an upper drawer. She was going to let down her hair, and make herself look like that picture of a lady in Miss Lydia Donnithorne's dressing-room. It was soon done, and the dark hyacinthine curves fell on her neck. It was not heavy, massive, merely rippling hair, but soft and silken; at every opportunity into delicate rings. But she pushed it all backward to look like the picture, and form a
dark curtain, into relief her round white neck. Then she put down her brush and comb and looked at herself folding her arms before her, still like the picture... Oh yes! She was very pretty. Captain Donnithorne thought so. Prettier than anybody about Hayslope - prettier than any of the ladies she had ever seen visiting at the Chase - and prettier than Miss Bacon, the miller's daughter, who was called the beauty of Freddleston...

But Hetty seemed to have made up her mind that something was wanting, for she got up and reached an old black lace scarf out of the linen-press, and a pair of large ear-rings out of the sacred drawer from which she had taken her candles. It was an old scarf full of rents, but it would make a becoming border round her shoulders, and set off the whiteness of her upper arm. And she would take out the little ear-rings she had in her ears - and put in those large ones. They were but coloured glass and gilding, but if you didn't know what they were made of, they looked just as well as what the ladies wore. And so she sat down again, with the large ear-rings in her ears, and the black lace scarf adjusted round her shoulders. She looked down at her arms: no arms could be prettier down to a little way below the elbow - they were white and plump, and dimpled to match her checks; but towards the wrist, she thought with vexation that they were
coarsened by butter-making and other work that ladies never did...

No eyelashes could be more beautiful than Hetty's; and now, while she walks with her pigeonlike stateliness along the room and looks down on her shoulders bordered by the old black lace, the dark fringe shows to perfection on her pink cheek...

Hetty stood sufficiently in awe of her aunt to be anxious to conceal from her so much of her vanity as could be hidden without too great sacrifice. She could not resist spending her money on bits of finery which Mrs Poyser disapproved; but she would have been ready to die with shame, vexation, and fright if her aunt had this moment opened the door, and seen her with her bib of candle lighted, and strutting about decked in her scarf and ear-rings. To prevent such a surprise, she always bolted her door, and she had not forgotten to do so to-night. It was well: for there now came a light tap, and Hetty, with a leaping heart, rushed to blow out the candles and throw them into the drawer. She dared not stay to take out her ear-rings, but she threw off her scarf, and let it fall on the floor, before the light tap came again. We shall know how it was that the light tap came, if we leave Hetty for a short time and (come) to Dinah,... to her bedroom, adjoining Hetty's.
Dinah' delighted in her bedroom window. Being on the second story of that tall house, it gave her a wide view over the fields. The thickness of the wall formed a broad step about a yard below the window, where she could place her chair. And now the first thing she did on entering her room was to seat herself in this chair and look out on the peaceful fields beyond which the large moon was rising, just above the hedgerow elms. She liked the pasture best where the milch cows were lying, and next to that the meadow where the grass was half-mown, and lay in silvered sweeping lines. Her heart was very full, for there was to be only one more night on which she would look out on those fields for a long time to come; but she thought little of leaving the mere scene, for, to her, bleak snowfield had just as many charms. She thought of the dear people whom she had learned to care for among these peaceful fields, and who would now have a place in her loving remembrance for ever. She thought of the struggles and the weariness that might lie before them in the rest of their life's journey, when she would be away from them, and know nothing of what was befalling them; and the pressure of this thought soon became too strong for her to enjoy the unresponsive stillness of the moonlit fields. She closed her eyes, that she might feel more intensely the presence of a love and sympathy deeper and more tender than was
breathed from the earth and sky. That was often Dinah's mode of praying in solitude. Simply to close her eyes and to feel herself enclosed by the Divine Presence; then gradually her fears, her yearning anxieties for others, melted away like ice-crystals in a warm ocean. She had sat in this way perfectly still, with her hands crossed on her lap and the pale light resting on her calm face, for at least ten minutes, when she was startled by a loud sound, apparently of something falling in Hetty's room. But like all sounds that fall on our ears in a state of abstraction, it had no distinct character... She rose and listened but all was quiet afterwards, and she reflected that Hetty might merely have knocked something down in getting into bed. She began slowly to undress; but now, owing to the suggestions of this sound, her thoughts became concentrated on Hetty... This blank in Hetty's nature, instead of exciting Dinah's dislike, only touched her with a deeper pity. By the time Dinah had undressed and put on her nightgown, this feeling about Hetty had gathered a painful intensity; her imagination had created a thorny thicket of sin and sorrow, in which she saw the poor thing struggling torn and bleeding, looking with tears for rescue and finding none. She felt a deep longing to go now and pour into Hetty's ear all the words of tender warning and appeal that rushed into her mind... Still she hesitated;
she was not quite certain of a divine direction... Dinah was not satisfied without a more unmistakable guidance than those inward voices. There was light enough for, if she opened the Bible, to discern the text sufficiently to know what it would say to her. She knew the physiognomy of every page, and could tell on what book she opened, sometimes on what chapter, without seeing title or number. It was a small thick Bible, worn quite round at the edges. Dinah laid it sideways on the window edge, where the light was strongest, and then opened it with her forefinger... she had opened on that memorable parting at Ephesus, when Paul had left bound to open his heart in a last exhortation and warning. She hesitated no longer, but, opening her own door gently, went and tapped on Hetty's... What a strange contrast the two figures made, visible enough in that mingled twilight and moonlight! Hetty, her cheeks flushed and her eyes glistening from her imaginary drama, her beautiful neck, and arms bare, her hair hanging in a curly tangle down her back, and the banbles in her ears. Dinah, covered with her long white dress, her pale face full of subdued emotion, almost like a lovely corpse into which the soul has returned charged with sublimer secrets and a sublimer love. They were nearly of the same height; Dinah evidently a little the taller as she put her arm round Hetty's waist and kissed her forehead...
"Dear Hetty"! she said, "It has been borne in upon my mind to-night that you may some day be in trouble—
trouble is appointed for us all here below, and there comes a time when we need more comfort and help than
the things of this life can give. I want to tell you that if ever you are in trouble, and need a friend that
will always feel for you and love you, you have got that friend in Dinah Morris ... Will you remember it, Hetty? "Yes" said Hetty, rather frightened. "But why should you think I shall be in trouble? Do you kow of anything?"

"... There is no man or woman born into this world to whom some of these trials do not fall, and so I feel that some of them must happen to you; and I desire for you, that while you are young you should seek for strength from your Heavenly father, that you may have a support which will not fail you in the evil day" ... ... Don't talk to me so, Dinah. Why do you come to frighten me? I 've never done anything to you. Why can't you let me be?"

Poor Dinah felt a pang. She was too wise to persist... She went out of the room almost as quietly and quickly as if she had been a ghost; but once by the side of her own bed, she trecb herself on her knees and poured out in deep silence all the passionate pity that filled her heart.

As for Hetty, she was soon in the wood again — her waking dreams being merged in a sleeping life scarcely more fragmentary and confused (31).
This scene may be slightly lengthy but it was necessary to quote it. First of all because it is a rich passage - symbols, metaphors, images -; secondly, because we could not possibly comment on, and analyse it in the abstract. Thus, the immediate juxtaposition of the two scenes presenting the two girls in isolation is the culminating point of their dissimilarity. We first have Hetty performing her ritual of self-worship as she parades in her cheap finery before the blotched mirror, and then we turn to the adjacent room where Dinah sits before her window and thinks of the natural scene, then of individuals, then of God, turning finally to particular concern and sympathy for Hetty, which is given direct expression in her attempt to communicate with her. The significance of the contrasting actions is clear, and made clearer by George Eliot's comments and analyses, but it is also placed in a context established by commentary which has already formulated the contrast in chapter 14: "It was a strange contrast to see (Hetty's) sparkling self-engrossed loveliness looked at by Dinah's calm pitying face, with its open glance which told that her heart lived in no cherished secrets of its own, but in feelings which it longed to share with all the world". Our understanding the significance of this double scene does mostly depend on the way it presents itself with that juxtaposition; and on its position within the book as a whole, for we can observe here that the juxtaposition of this chapter with its immediate successor enforces another parallel: Dinah, at
this point, is to Hetty what Irwine is to Arthur. This interlocking of parallels which creates the narrative pattern is intimately related to the effect of interconnected but everwidening perspectives. In this network of connections between the two girls, time is important. For example Dinah leaves the Bede's cottage, returning from her errand of mercy (14), at exactly the same time as Hetty parts from Arthur on the first stage of her downfall (ch.13), as we have already observed. Hetty's good angel Dinah leaves for Snowfield (ch.11) at about the same time as her bad angel Arthur leaves for Eaglesdale (ch.16). It is in November that Adam becomes engaged to Hetty; it is in the following November that he marries Dinah. Dinah leaves Snowfield for Leeds on the same day as Hetty, pretending to visit her at Snowfield, sets out to find Arthur at Windsor. And many more ...

One of the main emotional effects of this kind of pattern is clearly that of irony; the reader perceives what the characters do not, precisely because he is in the position to make connections. He has a panoramic view of the whole framework. But this wider knowledge throws a sombre, ironical light on the action of the novel. The most interesting example of this is in that section which is least straightforward in its chronology, Book V. As we read this part, we encounter first Adam vainly searching for Hetty,(who is vainly searching for Arthur), we hear of her arrest and witness her trial. It is only through the evidence given at the trial and through Hetty's subsequent confession to Dinah that we...
learn what happened to Hetty after her return from Windsor. Meanwhile Arthur having apprised the Old Squire's death, has been journeying homewards, pleasantly anticipating the future and little knowing what the future holds in store for him. Apart from the irony directed on Arthur, one other ironical stroke of fate emerges with appalling clarity from the disordered chronology; in Ch. 39, Adam not knowing of Hetty's crime and arrest, tells Irwine: "You was t'ha' married me and Hetty Sorrel, you know, sir, o'the 15th o' this month". The 15th of March is, in fact, the date fixed for Hetty's execution. Adam spends the preceding night with Bartle Massey:

Sometimes he would burst out into vehement speech:
"If I could ha'done anything to save her - if my bea­ring anything would ha'done good... but t'have to sit still, and know it, and do nothing... it's hard for a man to bear... and to think o'wath might ha'been now; if it hadn't been for him... O God, it's the very day we should ha'been married" (32).

No other way could be more emphatic. What I wish to stress is the submerged parallels and the unemphatic ironies. Once again, we will resort to a diagram to outline the action of the novel at the one point where the technique of straight-forward narration is complicated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>27 Feb.</td>
<td>Hetty sleeps at Stoniton on her way back from Windsor. A baby is born during the night. (Sarah Stone's evidence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>28 Feb.</td>
<td>Adam goes to Snowfield in search of Hetty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>8.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>28 Feb.</td>
<td>Hetty leaves the lodging with her baby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>evening</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>28 Feb.</td>
<td>Adam returns to Oakbourne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Adam goes to Stoniton to search for Hetty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>John Olding sees Hetty; hears the baby crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Olding finds the dead baby. He and the constable search for Hetty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Night</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Adam sees the coachman who drove Hetty to Stoniton on the 12th February.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Hetty is arrested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Adam searches for Hetty at Stoniton; gives up and starts to go home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reshuffling the events in this way reveals what the arrangements of the narrative conceals, reveals for example how nearly the paths of Adam and Hetty cross, how nearly he saves her from her fate, since on Monday, March 1st, when Hetty abandons her child just outside Stoniton, Adam comes to Stoniton from Oakbourne in search of her. Brought to light in this way the facts pose an interesting problem with regards to the author's choices. And to be frank, we can assume that an ordinary, non-analytical reading of the novel does not make the reader aware of these facts, which, we can also assume with confidence, George Eliot was very well aware of. The unique detail and precision of time and the careful construction of the narrative must force us to that conclusion.

I would like to stress that *Adam Bede* differs from the rest of George Eliot's fiction only in degree, not in kind. None of the other novels exhibits the same astonishing chronological detail but all of them are equally rewarding when subjected to the kind of analysis attempted here. In *Adam Bede*, juxtapositions and parallels abound because there is only one main strand of story. So the author is more at ease to juxtapose and parallel and contrast ad libitum with the most effective result as much for the local meaning as for the main issue. But in *Middlemarch*, where we deal with so many concurrent stories, surely that method would have been obtrusive, if not confusing. At any
rate, *Middlemarch* surpasses all of George Eliot's novels in the matter of interweaving different stories. There are four main stories to dispute the first place in order of importance. The title of the Book is not delusive indeed, for we are practically presented the whole community of Middlemarch through the leading characters, who are strategically placed in Middlemarch, geographically speaking. So there is humdrum Middlemarch. This interweaving of concurrent stories is characteristic of later George Eliot. Each story is stretched through the whole novel and is intermittently dealt with; and we have actions infinitely interacting, for, obviously the stories are not dealt with in isolation, but they rather constitute, what has been so justly labelled the web; George Eliot's web. From that web we will snatch two threads in the shapes of Lydgate and Dorothea. Somewhere else in this study, we analysed these two in relation but it was from a different aspect and for a different purpose. Our problem here is to know how they come to be related, how they come to stand as clear, obvious parallels, and why don't we think of drawing a parallel between Dorothea Brooke and Fred Vincy for example? We can already remark that the parallel does not emerge "naturally" from analogous situations experienced by both, for these are not obvious at the first perusal to the common reader. Yet, when we get to make the first relationship between the two, then we become more and more aware of the author's ingenious but insistent invitation on that path; then we notice that she
always presents one in relation to the other in a very quiet though often clumsy way. Thus their emotional lives are presented parallely. In chapter 11 (Lydgate is introduced in chapter 10, to Dorothea and to the reader), we are told that Lydgate "had been Miss Vincy above his horizon almost as long as it had taken Mr Casanbon to become engaged and married" to Dorothea. Then in the same chapter - following Lydgate's introduction - we are told that chapter 5 - long before Lydgate's introduction - and chapter 11 are simultaneous. Eliot thus gains time by presenting the stage of Lydgate - Rosamond relation at the time Dorothea is preparing for her wedding (Ch.5):

Rosamond silently wished that her father would invite Mr. Lydgate ... But she would not have chosen to mention her wish to her father ... An alderman about to be mayor must by-and-by enlarge his dinner-parties, but at present there were plenty of guests at his well-spread table.

That table often remained covered with the relics of the family breakfast long after Mr Vincy had gone with his second son to the warehouse ... This was the case one morning of the October in which we have lately seen Mr Casanbon visiting the Grange; and though the room was a little overheated with the fire, which had sent the spanie panting, to a remote corner, Rosamond for some reason, con-
continued to sit at her embroidery longer than usual, now and then giving herself a little shake, and laying her work on her knee... (33).

But for Eliot who always orientates the relationship of her characters in view of a moral prospect, this kind of parallel so thinly restricted to time, is much too abstract and sterile. So she creates a tangent which would draw the two characters into closer relationship; a tangent which naturally stretches through the book. This tangent is to be the object of our study, because it enables Eliot to control the parallel formed by Lydgate and Dorothea. Now let us see—how it works. It will be necessary, before anything, to identify the tangent: it manifests itself in the shape of Lydgate's evaluation of women.

We first have Eliot's hint and anticipatory remark that:

Miss Brooke was not Mr Lydgate's style of woman any more than Mr. Chicheley's. Considered indeed, in relation to the latter whose mind was matured, she was altogether a mistake, and calculated to shock his trust in final causes, including the adaptation of fine young women to purple-faced bachelors. But Lydgate was less ripe, and might possibly have experience before him which would modify his opinion as to the most excellent features in woman" (34).
'Alea jacta est.' Our main concern from this moment on is to see whether or not Lydgate will alter his judgement; why, and how. Then Eliot, states the fact in chapter II that 'Lydgate, in fact, was already conscious of being fascinated by a woman strikingly different from Miss Brooke'. And knowing what we know of Miss Brooke so far regarding her physical qualities and moral dispositions, we tend to remain sceptic as to Lydgate's choice.

Then we have the first stage of Lydgate's reconsideration of his judgment, or at this stage, he is at least stricken by Dorothea's devotion to her sick husband - and this incident occurs before Lydgate's own marriage - and Eliot anticipates Lydgate's memories:

For years after Lydgate rembered the impression produced in him by this involuntary appeal - this cry from soul to soul, without other consciousness than their moving with kindred natures in the same embroi­led medium, the same troublous fitfully - illuminated life (35).

Lydgate eventually marries that woman so "strikin­gly different from Miss Brooke" Miss Rosamond Vincy. This could cause but a catastrophe. In his matrimonial unhappiness he gradually changes his criteria of a good woman. Thus in chapter 58, Lydgate compares Rosamond with the two extreme
representatives of women in his knowledge:

Rosamond did not look at her husband, but presently rose and took her place before the tea-tray. She was thinking that she had never seen him so disagreeable. Lydgate turned his dark eyes on her and watched her as she delicately handled the tea-service... For the moment he lost the sense of his wound in a sudden speculation about this new form of feminine impassibility revealing itself in the sylph-like frame which he had once interpreted as the sign of a ready intelligent sensitiveness. His mind glancing back to Laure while he looked at Rosamond, he said inwardly, 'would she kill me because I wearied her?' and then "it is the way with all woman". But this power of generalizing which gives men so much the superiority in mistake over the dumb animals, was immediately thwarted by Lydgate's memory of wondering impressions from the behaviour of another woman - from Dorothea's looks and tones of emotion about her husband when Lydgate began to attend him - from her passionate cry to be taught what would best comfort that man for whose sake it seemed as if she must quell every impulse in her except the yearnings of faithfulness and compassion. These revived impressions succeeded each other quickly and dreamily in Lydgate's mind while the tea was being brewed. He had shut his eyes in the last instant of
reverie while he heard Dorothea saying, "Advise me - think what I can do - he has been all his life labouring and looking forward. He minds about nothing else - and I mind about nothing else'.

That voice of deep-souled womanhood had remained within him as the enkindling conceptions of dead and sceptred genius had remained within him (is there not a genius for feeling nobly which also reigns over human spirits and their conclusions?): The tones were a music from which he was falling away - he had really fallen into a momentary doze, when Rosamond said in her silvery neutral way, here is your tea, Tertius, setting it on the small table by his side, and then moved back to her place without looking at him (36).

It is only after he has recognized the true values in a woman that he is made to benefit from the virtues of a woman endowed with them, namely Dorothea who brings him material and moral comfort at the moment he needs them most. And Eliot comments:

It was the first assurance of belief in him that had fallen on Lydgate's ears. He drew a deep breath, and said "thank you". He could say no more: it was something very new and strange in his life that these few words of trust from a woman should be so much to him (37).
And we have the miraculous effect of trust and understanding in Lydgate's confession to Dorothea that:

You have made a great difference in my courage by believing in me. Everything seems more bearable since I have talked to you (38).

Note that these last scenes appear in chapter 76, that is, towards the close of the book. George Eliot has carefully inserted these scenes in the massive *Middlemarch*; and we can see here that in spite of their interacting with other stories, they can still be placed in time and space with perfect integrity. I particularly want to draw attention on the gradual narrowing of the parallel. In the last stage of Lydgate and Dorothea's relationship, the parallel literally fuses into one line. The interest of this tangent in Eliot's handling of scene and time is that it offers a multitude of possibilities. First of all, it contributes to the unity of the book... Secondly, it lends a measure of flexibility to Eliot's swerve from one scene to another, from a one character to another. And thirdly it permits an effortless control on the parallels.

Naturally we find in *Middlemarch* in the other devices used in the other books. There are contrasts, not necessarily between characters, as we have seen in *Adam Bede*; because here we mostly deal with ideas, one single character
can be the object of many contrasts. We have for instance a bitter contrast between Dorothea's expectations in her marriage and what the reality comes to.

We have Lydgate's scientific ambitions turn into self-destruction. We have the juxtaposition of chapter 20 and chapter 21. In chapter 20, Dorothea and Casanbon become fully aware of the disparities between them both. In chapter 21, Will Ladislaw and Dorothea find in one another, corresponding qualities. And so on.

In *Daniel Deronda*, we have not only the characteristic interweaving of different narrative strands but also a complicated temporal pattern which begins in a dramatic present and then makes a series of excursions into the past lives of Gwendolen and Deronda, always returning to the same present. Obviously such a pattern is a fruitful source of temporal contrasts and parallels. An interesting one is that which occurs if we compare chapter 10 with chapter 17. Gwendolen meets Grandcourt at about the same time (July) as Deronda saves Minah from committing suicide. The interacting destinies of these two share the same starting point in time; this cannot be coincidence. The tangent here is formulated in Eliot's own words in chapter 36: "the coercion is often stronger on the one who takes the reverence. Those who trust us educate us. And then perhaps in that ideal consecration of Gwendolen's some education was being prepared for Deronda". Then their relationship is defined, and
their destinies is traced in miniature. But the parallel here works the other way round: it spreads apart towards the end. I would like to isolate the chapters 37 and 38 because to my mind they appear to be the best example of George Eliot's effective juxtaposition of scenes. They are not real scenes in the proper sense of the term but they present two different minds in action. Both are considered in isolation. I dare say we have two halves of one soul desperately looking one for the other, and the juxtaposition of the two chapters enables us to anticipate the match. Let us rather leave it to George Eliot. These are the end of chapter 37 and the beginning of Chapter 38. Not to miss the way the two chapters are connected inter alia:

Perhaps the ferment was all the stronger in Deronda's mind because he had never had a confident in whom he could open himself ... He had always been leaned on instead of being invited to lean. Sometimes he had longed for the sort of friend to whom he might possibly unfold his experience: a young man like himself who sustained a private grief and was not too confident about his own career; speculative enough to understand every moral difficulty, yet socially susceptible, as he himself was, and having every outward sign of equality either in bodily or spiritual wrestling; - for he had found it impossible to reciprocate confidence with one who looked up to him. But he had no expecta-
tion of meeting the friend he imagined. Deronda's was not one of those quiveringly-poised natures that lend themselves to second-sight.

And chapter 38 begins:

"Second-Sight" is a flag over disputed ground. But it is matter of knowledge that there are persons whose yearnings, conceptions-way, travelled conclusions—continually take the form of images which have a foreshadowing power: the deed they would do starts up before them in complete shape, making a coercive type; the event they hunger for or dread rises into vision with a seed-like growth, feeding itself fast on unnumbered impressions. They are not always the less capable of the argumentative process, nor less same than the commonplace calculators of the markets: sometimes it may be that their natures have mainfold openings, like the hundred-gated Thebes, where there may naturally be a greater and more miscellaneous inrush than through a narrow beadle-watched portal. No doubt there are abject specimens of the visionary, as there is a mini-mammal which you might imprison in the finger of your glove. That small relative of the elephant has no harm in him; but what great mental or social type is free from specimens whose insignificance is both ugly and noxious? One is afraid to think of that the genus
"patriot" embraces; or of the elbowing there might be at the day of judgement for those who ranked as authors, and brought volumes either in their hands or on trucks.

This apology for inevitable kinship is meant to usher in some facts about Mordecai, whose figure had bitten itself into Deronda's mind as a new question which he felt an interest in getting answered. But the interest was no more than a vaguely expectant suspense: the consumptive-looking Jew, apparently a fervid student of some kind, getting his crust by a quiet handicraft, like Spina, fitted into none of Deronda's anticipations.

It was otherwise with the effect of their meeting on Mordecai. For many winters while he had been conscious of an ebbing physical life, and a widening spiritual loneliness, all his passionate desire had concentrated itself in the yearning for some young ear into which he could pour his mind as a testament, some soul kindred enough to accept the spiritual product of his own brief, painful life, as a mission to be executed. It was remarkable that the hopefulness which is often the beneficial illusion of consumptive patients, was in Mordecai wholly diverted from the prospect of bodily recovery and carried into the current of this yearning for transmission. The yearning, which had panted upward from out of overwhelming discouragements, had grown into a hope - the hope
into a confident belief, which, instead of being checked by the clear conception he had of his hastening decline took rather the intensity of expectant faith in a prophecy which has only brief space to get fulfilled in.

Some years had now gone since he had first begun to measure men with a keen glance, searching for a possibility which became more and more a distant conception. Such distinctness as it had at first was reached chiefly by a method of contrast: he wanted to find a man who differed from himself. Tracing reasons in that self for the rebuffs he had met with and the hindrances that beset him, he imagined a man who would have all the elements necessary for sympathy with him, but in an embodiment unlike his own: he must be a jew, intellectually cultured morally fervid - in all this a nature ready to be plenished from Mordecai's; but his face and frame must be beautiful and strong, he must have been used to all the refinements of social life, his voice must flow with a full and easy current, his circumstances be free from sordid need: he must glorify the possibilities of the Jew, not sit and wander as Mordecai did, hearing the stamp of his people amid the signs of poverty and waning breath.

The main interest of this extract undoubtedly lies in the juxtaposition of the two chapters. But at the same time, the richness of the passage in contrast and parallels and imagery cannot pass on unnoticed.
Many more examples could be cited, but these, I think, should suffice to show that George Eliot's setting of the scene — if I may so express myself — in time and space within the framework of the novel is never gratuitous. The first scene may appear irrelevant until we find its echo in the very last scene of the book. The juxtaposition of the scenes in Chapter 8 and chapter 9 might seem uncongruous, but look closer! And why is it that the scenes in chapter 3 and chapter 40 are simultaneous? Well, just start the book again and read chapter 40 straight after chapter 3, and tell us how you enjoy it that way. Then if you are honest, you will inevitably admit all what you miss by re-making the book. For you do re-make it in changing the initial sequence, that on which lies Eliot's all merit, for Eliot's control of the whole novel is temporal; the relationship of part to whole is governed by its sequential position so that what the story means is largely determined by the way in which it unfolds in time. And as a matter of fact, she practically scatters fragments of events throughout the novel in order to achieve both richness and clarification, and she succeeds. After all "Why should a story not to be told in the most irregular fashion that an author's idiosyncrasy may prompt, provided that he gives us what we enjoy?" (39), Yes, why not? Take it from Eliot.
Notes on 'Scenic Presentation'

1. Middlemarch ch 12 P. 146
2. Ibid, ch 31 P. 335
3. Daniel Deronda ch 37 P. 524
4. Ibid, ch 23 P. 293
5. Adam Bede ch 4 P. 60
6. Ibid, ch 4 P. 61
7. Ibid, ch 4 P. 58
8. Ibid, ch II P. 123
9. Middlemarch ch 12 P. 130
10. The Mill on the Floss Book VI ch IO P. 462
11. Ibid, VI, IO, P. 463
12. Ibid, VI, IO, P. 463
13. Ibid, VI, II, P. 470
15. Ibid, VII, 5, P. 538
16. Ibid, VI, IO, P. 465
17. Ibid, VI, I4, P. 502
18. Ibid, VII, 5, P. 539
19. Daniel Deronda ch 27 P. 346
20. Middlemarch ch 79 P. 840
21. Ibid op cit. cf note 2
22. The Mill I, 5, P. 48
23. Ibid, I, 2, P. 17
24. Ibid, I, 2, P. 18
25. Ibid, I, 9, P. P. 103-104
26. Ibid, VI, 7 P. 437
27. Adam Bede, ch 8 P.98
28. Ibid, ch8 P.101
29. Ibid, ch 14 P. 142
30. Ibid, ch 14 P. 143
31. Ibid, ch 15 P.P. 149-159
32. Ibid, ch 46 P. 434
33. Middlemarch ch ii P. 124
34. Ibid, ch IO P. I20
35. Ibid, ch 30 P. 324
36. Ibid, ch 58 P. 638
37. Ibid, ch 76 P. 819
38. Ibid, ch 76 P. 825
39. Miriam Allot, Novelists ou the Novel: 'Narrative Technique'  
Chapter III

Imagery

I - Definition -

According to S.H. Burton in "the Criticism of Prose", "imagery basically is a verbal appeal to the reader's sense perceptions. Whenever a writer uses words that awaken in the reader's memory or imagination a concept of the senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing, or movement, he is using an image. We can, therefore, classify images according to the sense perception to which they appeal; sight (visual images); taste (gustatory images); smell (olfactory images); touch (thermal or tactile images); movement (kinaesthetic images). Then he adds that "the sense perceptions stirred to life in the reader's memory or imagination by the writer's image may themselves symbolise emotions and or ideas. If this happens, then the function of the image is symbolic."

Here is a diagram showing the process:

```
| Image | [sense-perceptions] | Emotions/Ideas |
```

For many writers, imagery is a major means of arousing emotions and ideas appropriate to their subject matter and reinforcing their purposes. They seek to fuse with the
sense perception element of their images, an emotional and intellectual complex harmonious with their overall aim and apt to their immediate purpose.

In clearer terms, we may say that where the image is mainly descriptive its effectiveness is limited to its sensuous element. Where the image is mainly symbolic its power resides in the emotional and intellectual complex that it transmits via its sensuous element.

Granted these preliminaries, we may now turn to Eliot's personal approach to this device.

II - IMAGISTIC PROCESS IN ELIOT'S FICTION -

Eliot's manipulation of imagery is complex, and intricate. I do not have the pretention, in this study to detect every single aspect of her technique. I certainly missed so much, and perhaps the best. All I can aspire to with some confidence is the presentation of an oversimplified classification of her different approaches to imagery. These are numerous but I retained three: the vertical, the horizontal and the concentric.

1°) - Vertical approach -

I labelled "vertical" the approach relating imagery
to its total linguistic context. If we take the literal meaning as the first level of the scale and the metaphorical as its summit, we then can expect an ascending and descending movement.

a) - *Ascending Correspondance*: in the ascending movement of the image, we go from the purely literal to the highly metaphorical, that is, we have a literal description of a fact entailing a metaphorical function. An example from *The Mill On the Floss* will clarify this. When Maggie slips as she is getting into the boat with Stephen or when she tells Tom: "I was carried too far in the boat to come back on Tuesday" (3), we may feel that the extended non-literal sense of her slipping or her being carried too far is given validity because these phrases occur in a textural context given depth.

b) - *Descending Correspondance*: Sometimes Eliot reverses the process and transforms what has metaphorically been expressed into an actual event. This reversal is often finely exploited for the purpose of anticipatory irony. Thus in *Adam Bede*, Dinah in the following terms, is thinking about Hetty:

Her thoughts became concentrated on Hetty - that sweet young thing, with life and all its trials before her - the solemn daily duties of the wife and mother -
and her mind so unprepared for them all, bent merely on little foolish, selfish pleasures, like a child hugging its toys in the beginning of a long toilsome journey in which it will have to bear hunger and cold and unsheltered darkness (4).

"The journey of life" is the kind of platitude that naturally finds its place in Dinah's meditation; it is in no way uncongruous here; it is even so commonplace that we hardly notice it, despite its unusual elaboration. But it is a metaphorical foreshadowing of the actual journey Hetty will make to Windsor and back; so, life catches up with the metaphor.

This interplay of literal and metaphorical is not necessarily ironical. At the end of chapter 18, we leave Hetty in a disillusioned state, in a "moment of bare, wintry disappointment and doubt". This clearly contrasts with Adam's metaphorical vision of Hetty at the beginning of the next chapter:

"It was summer morning in his heart and he saw Hetty in the sunshine; a sunshine without glare - with slanting rays that tremble between the delicate shadow of the leaves (5)."

In the next chapter, this vision is literally fulfilled:
He could glance at her continually as she bent over the fruit, while the level evening sunbeams stole through the thick apple-tree boughs, and rested on her round cheek and neck as if they too were in love with her.

In all these examples we have a close interdependence of imagery with its literal counterpart. The way in which such images breed and develop, crossing the boundaries between mental and physical, imagined and actual, literal and metaphorical, is one of Eliot's devices to give depth and richness to the naturalistic substance of her novels.

2°) - Horizontal Process -

Because one of her imperatives is 'Only Connect', the interweaving of concurrent stories, the emphasis on cause and effect, the placing and relationships of characters, the social analysis, the operations of the omniscient author, all these, as well as the use of imagery, reflect George Eliot's concern with the various processes of life we will call "connections".

The imagery of entanglement is the textural counterpart of the novel's structure. Its process is horizontal, a continuum. Eliot traces a virtual line which is the theme, or life process. On that line, she builds up a chain, the links of which are stories, incidents, characters, situation, lan-
guage, imagery, in short all the composants of a novel. And so we have on the first level, all the different links tied up to one another, and so "connected". And on the second plan we have them all following the line. In other terms, they are all directed towards the same scope. The particular advantage offered by this horizontal process in terms of imagery is that one strand of language connects with, or crosses, another; so that, at whatever point we start, we are led, by intersections and interactions, to perceive the pattern of the whole.

At least at two points in *Middlemarch*, George Eliot uses one of her favourite connective images to express not just her deepest sense of what life in all its complications is like, but also her awareness of the novelist's duty to give form and significance to the flux and chaos of existence; at the same time she acknowledges that the flux and the chaos will always remain.

But to avoid being ourselves entangled in our analysis, it seems advisable to sum ourselves up at this level and retain so far:

- In the first place, that Eliot has a chaotic vision of life owing to all its complications; then she visualizes life as an ensnaring thing, because there is no possible independence; and eventually life is a continuum because it follows its
inexorable process.

- Secondly, that all this is expressed in the novels through images drawing their source from a literal chain or a web. Their accumulation, which has a hypnotic effect, fills the novel with a solid sense of connections.

- Third and lastly, that the very structure of the novel can be - and often is - the utmost expression or representation of George Eliot's concept of life process: a continuum at a large scale, to be distinguished from the continuation of details, trifles. One example expressing both the image and the concept which are seminal of a large part of Middlemarch's texture is to be found at the beginning of chapter 15 in which George Eliot has been commenting on Fielding's use of digressions. She explains:

  I at least have so much to do in unravelling certain human lot, and seeing how they were woven and interwoven, that all the light, I can command, must be concentrated on this particular web, and not dispersed over that tempting range of relevancies called universe (7).

Again, at the opening of the Finale, when justifying her sense of that continuum of time in which her novels are placed, that sense of an over-arching and enveloping human context, which must transcend any one novel, she states:
Every limit is a beginning as well as an ending. Who can quit young lives after being long in company with them, and not desire to know what befell them in their after-years? For the fragment of a life, however typical, is not the sample of an even web: promises may not be kept, and an ardent outset may be followed by declension; latent powers may find their long-waited opportunity; a past error may urge a grand retrieval (8).

There are many different kinds of webs in Middlemarch. We have:

That stretching into the past:
Mentally surrounded with that past again, Bulstrode had the same pleas—indeed the years had been perpetually spinning them into intricate thickness, like masses of spider-web, padding the moral sensibility (9).

That stretching into the future, and spun by Lydgate and Rosamond. Commenting on the courtship of Dorothea and Casaubon, Eliot asks: "Has any one pinched into its pilulous smallness the cobweb of prematrimonial acquaintanceship?" and our answer is: certainly not Lydgate and Rosamond. On again in chapter 36:

"Young love-making—that gossamer web! Even the
points it clings to - the things whence its subtle interlacings are swung - are scarcely perceptible; momentary touches of finger-tips, meetings of rays from blue and dark orbs, unfinished phrases, lightest changes of cheek and lip, faintest tremors. The web itself is made of spontaneous beliefs and indefinable joys, yearnings of one life towards another, visions of completeness, indefinite trust. And Lydgate fell to spinning that web from his inward self with wonderful rapidity ... As for Rosamond, she was in the water-Lily's expanding wonderment at its own fuller life, and she too was spinning industriously at the mutual web"
only lose their way but actually seek to loose it, Casaubon in order to purge himself of the suspicion that all his scholarly endeavours are futile Bulstrode in order to free himself of his guilty past.

Similarly, the web as an ensnaring thing merges naturally with other images of entanglement and enslaving relations. Dorothea feels that way when she has to face the fact that her husband's ambitions may govern her even from the grave:

Neither law nor the world's opinion compelled her to this - only her husband's nature and her own compassion, only the idea and not the real yoke of marriage. She saw clearly enough the whole situation, yet she fettered: she could not smite the stricken soul that entreated hers (10).

Because the horizontal process is more striking in Middlemarch than in Eliot's other novels, we will restrict our examples to that work. Here is a further example of another strand of language being connected with the image of entanglement. There are two crucial scenes in which Farebrother warns Lydgate that independence is necessary to his scientific integrity; he must not get entangled:

"You must keep yourself independent. Very few men
can do that. Either you slip out of service altogether and become good for nothing, or you wear the harness and draw a good deal where your yoke-fellows pull you" (11).

What Lydgate must avoid is Middlemarch intrigue, getting into debt and binding himself with the wrong kind of family ties. And of course it is in precisely these three ways that he entangles himself. Already, by the time of Farrebrother's warning, "Lydgate was feeling the hampering threadlike pressure of small social conditions, and their frustrating complexity" (12). At this point of history in Middlemarch, professionally and personally, he is caught up in the gossip of Middlemarch; and we know that gossip is an important factor in the interwoven strands of the novel. Besides, it is given a precise image in the picture of Mrs Taft "who was always counting stitches and gathered her information in misleading fragments caught between the rows of her knitting "(13). And since Lydgate is only one stitch in the pattern of Middlemarch, his flirtation with Rosa cannot remain a private affair:

It was not more possible to find social isolation in that town than else-where, and two people persistently flirting could by no means escape from the various entanglements, weights, blows, clashings, motions, by which things severally go on (14).
We have seen how his engagement to Rosamund fits in this pattern, and the web of love they spin soon turns into something else under the pressure of married life. Marriage closes upon Lydgate like a trap; he is soon bowing his neck under the yoke" \((15)\), soon afraid of sinking "into the hideous fettering of domestic hate" \((16)\). And (like Fred) he makes momentary and futile attempts to escape:

Under the first galling pressure of foreseen difficulties, and the first perception that his marriage, if it were not to be a yoked loneliness, must be a state of effort to go on loving without too much care about being loved, he had once or twice tried a dose of opium \((17)\).

But he has to learn to carry his burden the best he can, to comply with Rosamond's "dumb mastery" and the hampering, entangling, pressure of the world, conciliation finally with the web.

This kind of language, which is only occasionally elaborated into over metaphor and which is unobtrusively but insistently expressed in the twistings and turnings of the life portrayed, reflects perhaps the deepest and most inclusive function of George Eliot's imagery.
3°) - The concentric Approach -

It consists in placing a character in an ironic perspective:

- At the first stage we have the pattern of the situation (legend, symbol).

- At the second, we have the character identifying himself. It is important here to take the character's reaction into account because at this stage of identification, the situation is "actual" in his mind though in the story it is restricted to verbal actualisation.

- At the first stage, we have the character presented in the actual situation. And his vision might or not be fulfilled.

Thus on the whole, we have three apparently independent stories but which insert one into the other and so from the symbolic or ideal, to the actual, via psychological.

One of the rare examples of this is to be found in the Mill on the Floss. The process starts when Tom says:

"When I'm a man, I shall make a boat with a wooden house on the top of it, like Noah's ark, and keep
plenty to eat in it - rabbits and things - all ready
And then if the flood came, you know, Bob, I shouldn't
mind ... And I'd take you in if I saw you swimming"(18).

At this stage, we have on the first level Noah's
legend, and on the second, Tom's identification to Noah,
and his virtual experience of the situation. And when the
flood actually comes, Bob is already in one boat, while in
the other, Maggie is paddling to Tom's rescue :

"Soon, from the window of the attic in the central
gable she heard Tom's voice, "who is it? Have you brought
a boat?"
"Yes, Tom; God has taken care of me to bring me to you.
Get in quickly" (19).

The irony of the outcome has no special importance
here. The main thing is that we have had three different re-
flections of the same situation, we have completed our chi-
nese set : a story within a story within a story.

All these granted, we shall now pass on to George
Eliot's sources of imagery. Our analysis of the use and
functions of imagery will be made in the patterns of the
above techniques. In this part, we shall deal with the kind
of imagery which is constant in all George Eliot's novels.
III - ELIOT'S SOURCES OF IMAGERY - ITS USE AND FUNCTION -

1°) - Imagery drawn from Nature -

George Eliot's imagery obviously embodies her conception of the way human beings are rooted in nature. And since most of her novels take place in rural environments it is only natural that her characters should be defined in those terms.

a) - Man in Nature - Imagery in George Eliot's novels has several functions. In the following instances it is one means of characterization. Adam sees life in terms of his trade, Mrs Poyser in terms of the farm-yard, Barthe Massey in terms of the school-house. But what they have in common, of course, is imagery drawn from nature. Hayslope is a rural community, close to the soil, and thus this kind of imagery derives naturally from the realistic portrayal of the actual process of life. It is also a kind of language which the character also shares with the author; and the language of nature pervades and envelops the whole novel, underlying the community of man with man; of human animal and inanimate life, stressing the order and continuity of things and reinforcing the awfulness of what is unnatural.

This language operates in a complex way. The weather and the landscape are never described for their own
sake in *Adam Bede*; they are always closely linked with human activities, with sowing, hay-making harvesting. And while they may be described in non-metaphorical terms they often fill a function similar to that of metaphor, in that they image or embody some major theme of the novel. The description of Arthur's birthday provides a good example for this:

> Nature seems to make a hot pause just then: all the loveliest flowers are gone; the sweet time of early growth and vague hopes is past; and yet time of harvest and ingathering is not come, and we tremble at the possible storms that may ruin the precious fruit in the moment of its ripeness (20).

This passage reflects exactly the development of human relationship in the story. Arthur and Hetty too have reached this point. This note finds an echo at the beginning of chapter 27, in a passage which explicitly denies any crude kind of pathetic fallacy but which allows a quasi-metaphorical extension of meaning, the statement of themes seem to be worked out in purely human terms:

> "The eighteenth of August was one of these days when the sunshine looked brighter in all eyes for the gloom that went before. Grand masses of cloud were hurried accross the blue, and the great round hills behind the chose seemed alive with their flying shadows; the
sun was hidden for a moment, and then shone out warm again like a recovered joy; the leaves, still green, were tossed off the hedgerow trees by the wind; around the farmhouses there was a sound of chapping doors; the apples fall in the orchards; and the stray horses on the green sides of the lanes and on the common had their manes blown about their faces. And yet the wind seemed only part of the general gladness because the sun was shining. A merry day for the children, who ran and shouted to see if they could top the wind with their voices; and the grown-up people too were in good spirits inclined to believe in yet finer days, when the wind had fallen. If only the corn were not ripe enough to be blown out of the husk and scattered as untimely seed!

And yet a day on which a blighting sorrow may fall upon a man. For if it be true that Nature at certain moments seems charged with a presentiment of one individual lot, must it not also be true that she seems unmindful unconscious of another? For there is no hour that has not its births of gladness and despair, no morning brightness that does not bring new sickness to desolation as well as new forces to genius and love. There are so many of us and our lots, are so different, what wonder that Nature's wood is often in harsh contrast with the great crisis of our lives? We are children of
a large family, and must learn as such children do, not to expect that our hurts will be made much of — to be content with little nurture and caressing, and help each other the more (21).

There is a great deal to admire here - the easy modulation from description to comment, the local felicity of "untimely seed" (it is about now that Hetty's child is conceived), the way in which "blighting sorrow" is revived by its context and so on. But the important thing about the passage is its function within the total work.

If landscape and weather are closely related to human activities, then man is consistently seen in natural terms. Human life and growth are part of a larger natural process:

We can never recall the joy with which we laid our heads on our mother's bosom or rode on our father's back in childhood. Doubtless that joy is wrought up into our nature, as the sunlight of long-past mornings is wrought up in the soft mellowness of the apricot (21).

The story itself is seen in these terms; at the end, with the marriage of Dinah and Adam, Irwine asks himself "what better harvest from that painful seed - time could there be than this?" (23).
Natural imagery has one other main function in *Adam Bede*, it helps to convey the impression of a lengthy process, in a short time. In the last chapter, George Eliot is at pains to try to distract our attention from her contriving hand by conspicuously interesting us in Adam's courtship of Dinah as a process of nature. She puts a special emphasis on this and forces on us the knowledge of "the slight words, the timid looks, the tremulous touches, by which two human souls approach each other gradually, like two little quivering rainstreams, before they mingle in one" (24).

Here she uses the same method for Adam and Dinah as she has already used for Arthur and Hetty when she describes how they "mingle as easy as two brooklets that ask for nothing but to entwine themselves and ripple with overinterlacing curves into the leafiest hiding-places" (25). (ch.12).

Again, describing Adam's feelings, for the same effect, she writes:

Strange, that till that moment the possibility of their ever being lovers had never crossed his mind, and yet now, all his longing suddenly went out towards that possibility. He had no more doubt or hesitation as to his own wishes than the bird that flies towards the opening through which the daylight gleams and the breath of heaven enters.
The automnal Sunday sunshine soothed him, but not preparing him with resignation to the disappointment of his mother - if he himself - proved to be mistaken about Dinah. It soothed him by gentle encouragement of his hopes. Her love was so like that calm sunshine that they seemed to make one presence to him, and he believed in them both alike. And Dinah was so bound up with the sad memories of his first passion that he was not forsaking them, but rather giving them a new sacredness by loving her. Nay, his love for her had grown out of that past: it was the noon of that morning (26).

Eliot here is trying to justify Adam's sudden love for Dinah and to prepare us for the subsequent marriage. But in this she fails, for we are all the same taken unawares when that marriage comes about.

But if this attempt at foreshortening by the assimilation of human love to natural process is not quite successful in Adam Bede, it is remarkable in the Mill on the Floss: Stephen and Maggie are "borne along by the tide" - as indicates the chapter heading - And Maggie's moral and emotional drift is conveyed in terms of the river as we have seen earlier, until both literally and metaphorically she and Stephen, yielding to their desires, pass the point of no return.
To end up with the assimilation of human love to natural process, let us take one last example from **Middle-March**. It is a passage we have already quoted but for another purpose. This passage confirms Eliot’s reluctance or incapacity to describe scenes of passion, or the evolution of passion. She avoids this by using a pre-selected natural imagery. In this case it is the web.

Young love-making - that gossamer web! Even the points it clinge to - the things whence its subtle interlacings are swung - are scarcely perceptible; momentary touches of finger-tips, meetings of says from blue and dark arbs, unfinished phrases, lightest changes of cheek and lip, faintest tremors. The web itself is made of spontaneous beliefs and indefinable joys, yearnings of one life towards another, visions of completeness, indefinite trust. And Lydgate fell to spinning that web from his inward self with wonderful rapidity ... as for Rosamond, she was in the water-lily's expanding wonderment at its own fuller life, and she too was spinning industriously at the mutual web(27).

Water is another source of imagery common to all George Eliot's novels.

The **Mill on the Floss** has a solid unity in imagery; its source is the river. The river in this novel is cen-
is truly there as a literal fact; it is all-pervading and to a large extent it governs the lives and destinies of all the characters in the novel. It is the source of Mr Tulliver's ruin. And that of Bob Jakin's livelihood; and from beginning to end it governs Mary's life. Related to the river thus are a large number of images. As an example this passage from Book VI:

Maggie's destiny, then, is at present hidden, and we must wait for it to reveal itself like the course of an unmapped river. We only know that the river is full and rapid, and that for all rivers there is the same final home" (28).

The book is literally soaked through, if I may say so, with the frequent use of water imagery. We are told of the body of a water-snake as a "serpentine wave"; of the words that "fell on Tom like a scolding liquid"; a few lines later, he finds himself, "suddenly transported from the easy, carpeted ennui of study - hours at Mr Stelling's ... to the companionship ... of bawling men thundering down heavy weights at his elbow " (29). And we are made familiar with uses of language such as "flood of emotion", "current of feeling", "stream of vanity"; music is visualized as a water element: Maggie says that "music seems to infuse strength into my limbs and ideas into my brains".
In *Adam Bede*, the river is the cause of Mr Bede's—Adam's father—death. Accordingly, "Adam's mind rushed back over the past in a flood of relenting and pity" (30). And the pool in the wood represents Hetty's suicidal aspirations: she was "looking before her with blank, beautiful eyes; fancying herself at the edge of a hidden pool, low down; wondering if it were very painful to be drowned" (31). Later:

"She sat still again looking at the pool. The soothed sensation that cause over from the satisfaction of her hunger, and this fixed dreamy attitude, brought on drowsiness, and presently her head sank down on her knees (32).

Later, she "sank down on the straw with a sense of escape ". After, we are told that she escaped " from the brink of the black cold death in the pool".

With the inclusion of a connotative heading like "Meeting streams", *Daniel Deronda* stands no chance to escape water imagery. Thus we have Deronda "rowing his dark-blue shirt and skull-cap, his curls closely clipped, his mouth beset with abundant soft waves of beards (ch.17). His shirt has the colour of the sea, while his curls are in harmony with the movement of the litoral waves. And we are told of "the vocal sounds (that) came with more significance than
if they had been an insect — murmur amidst the sum of current noises" (ch.17). And again: "Deronda of late, in his solitary excursions (on the river), had been occupied chiefly with uncertainties about his own course " and we might add: not the river's. The "course" here is used in the same sense as Tom uses it in Thé Mill on the Floss: When he says to Maggie:

"There are but two courses for you to take: either you vow solemnly to me with your hand on my father's Bible that you will never have another meeting or speak another word in private with Philip Wakem, or you refuse and I tell my father every - thing" (34).

In this passage, the word course is restricted to a pattern of behaviour, in Daniel Deronda, it is the course of life in general.

But I think that Middlemarch is the novel in which Eliot makes a lavish use of water imagery, and this the more as it is restricted to two only characters: symbolic Mr Brooke, who "is a very good fellow, but pulpy; he will run into any mould, but he won't keep shape" (35). But only once is poor Mr Csanbon referred to as an "ungauged reservoir" and we know that it is an irony. But apart from that and alas! more realistically, he is referred to as a "dried bookworm" "a mummy", "a great bladder for dried peas to rattle in", "a dry region", "a shallow rill", as one with the heart
"not of the melting sort", or one who "does not want drying", or "chooses to grow grey crunching bones".

In short, water and its antitheses make recurrent literal or metaphorical apparitions in the four novels we are concerned with here. It certainly is not by chance that each of them includes a Book or a chapter with a heading referring to water. We have, in a chronological order:

- "The Bitter Waters Spread" (Adam Bede Bk V, ch.XL).
- "Borne Along By the Tide" (The Mill on the Floss Bk 6, chapter 13).
- "Miss Brooke" (Middlemarch, Book one).
- "Meeting Streams" (Daniel Deronda Book Two)

From the water, let us step back onto the earth, under which Eliot finds another natural imagery. This time we deal with "roots". Hetty Sorrel in Adam Bede is so easily alienated because she lacks roots—another commonplace which is given new metaphorical body in the novel:

There are some plants that have hardly any roots; you may tear them from their nook or rock or wall, and just lay them over your ornamental flower plot, and they blossom none the worse. Hetty could have cast all her past life behind her, and never cared to be reminded of it again" (36). While Mrs Poyser's conviction is that:
"I should be loath to leave th'old place and the parish where I was bred and born, and father afore me. We should leave our roots behind us, I doubt, and never thrive again" (37).

Now, we are explained in the Mill on the Floss, the reason why Mrs Poyser "should loath to leave th'old place"; it is because:

There is no sense of easelike the ease we felt in those scenes where we were born, where objects became dear to us before we had known the labour of choice, and where the outer world seemed-only an extension of our own personality, we accepted and loved it as we accepted our own sense of existence and our own limbs. Very commonplace, even ugly, that furniture of our early home might look if it were put up to anction; an improved taste in upholstery scorns it; and is not the striving after something better and better in our surroundings, the grand characteristic that distinguishes man from the brute - or, to satisfy scrupulous accuracy of definition, that distinguishes the British man from the foreign brute? But heaven knows where that striving might lead us if our affections had not a trick of twinning round those old inferior things if the loves and sanctities of our life had no deep immovable roots in memory (38).
This is why Tom " was thinking that he would buy his father's mill and land again when he was rich enough and improve the house and live there; he should prefer it to any smarter newer place" (39). Also, we can understand Mr Tulliver feeling "the strain of this clinging affection for the old home as part of his life, part of himself. He couldn't bear to think of himself living on any other spot than this" (40).

Will Ladislaw who "has the sort of enthusiasm for liberty, freedom, emancipation" (41) is referred to with scorn because he is a foreigner- who for the Middlemarchers, is the equivalent of being rootless. "He is said to be of foreign extraction" (42). Note the particular force given to the word "extraction". Only something rooted or solidly fixed can be extracted. Mr Brooke gives a logical response to that image when he announcesto Mr Casanbon that:

"Mr Ladislaw wishes to have some fixed occupation. He has been blamed, he says, for not seeking something of that kind, and he would like to stay in this neighbourhood because no one cares for him elsewhere" (43).

So, feeling and attachment work as fertilizers for roots to take on, as is made explicit in Will's entreaty to Dorothea:
"I have been blamed for thinking of prospects, and not settling anything. And there is something offered to me. If you would not like me to accept it, I will give it up. Otherwise I would rather stay in this part of the country than go away. I belong to nobody anywhere else" (44).

But if Will is looking for a good and solid ground to invest his affection in, "this blessed persistence in which affection can take root had been wanting in Gwendolen's life" (45). In her own home, she was "like a princess in exile" (46); so much she was detached. At this stage she is the selfish, spoiled child. But her attitude towards her root alters with her moral evolution. In the moment preceding her regeneration, Gwendolen had a

wakeful vision of Offendene and Pemicote under their cooler lights. She saw the grey shoulders of the downs, the cattle specked fields, the shadowy plantations with rutted lanes where the barked timber lay for a wayside seat, the neatly-clipped hedges on the road from the parsonage to Offendene, the avenue where she was gradually discerned from the windows, the hall-door opening, and her mother or one of troublesome sisters coming out to meet her. All that brief experience of a quiet home which had once seemed a dullness to be fled from, now came back to her as a restful escape, a station where she found the breath of morning and the
unreproaching voice of birds (47).

As to Daniel Deronda, he has, from his early childhood, ever been in quest of his roots:

Daniel fancied, as older people do, that everyone else's consciousness was as active as his own on a matter which was vital to him... How could he be like his mother and not like his father? His mother must have been a Mallinger, if Sir Hugo were his uncle. But no! His father must have been Sir Hugo's brother and have changed his name, as Mr Henleigh Mallinger did when he married Miss Grandcourt.

But then why had he never heard Sir Hugo speak of his brother Deronda, as he spoke of his brother Grandcourt? Daniel had never before cared about the family tree... But now his mind turned to a cabinet of estate maps in the library, where he had once seen an illuminated parchment hanging out, that Sir Hugo said was the family tree. The phrase was new and odd to him - he was a little fellow then - and he gave it no precise meaning (48).

But he somehow felt that it had some connection with lies present rootlessness. That is why he never was at rest until he found his origin, his root.
We should distinguish between those occasions where images referring to animals form part of the natural flavour of a character's speech - to Mrs Payser men are "dumb creatures" and Barthe Massey thinks of his pet bitch as "the woman in the house" and his reflections on canine nature are also his reflections on female nature - and those when they form part of the author's commentary or analysis. In this latter case, they are nearly always mocking or ironic, pointing either to similarities between the human and the animal creation of which the characters themselves are unconscious, or to discrepancies which are not entirely to man's advantage. And behind their comic or ironic aspects, these commentaries and analyses carry the wider perspective and a greater weight of moral judgments.

Here are some analogies:

1°) Men and animals alike are helpless face to the natural process:

But all this while Mrs Tulliver was brooding over a scheme by which she, and no one else, would avert the result most to be dreaded, and prevent Wakem from entertaining the purpose of bidding for the mill. Imagine a truly respectable and amiable hen, by some portentous anomaly, taking to reflection and inventing combinations by which she might prevail on Hodge not to wring her neck, or send her and her chicks to market; the result could hardly be other than much cackling and fluttering (49).
The same theme is found in *Middlemarch* but is expressed in evolutionary terms:

We know what a masquerade all development is, and what effective shapes may be disguised in helpless embryos. In fact, the world is full of hopeful analogies and handsome dubious eggs called possibilities (50).

2°) Man, like the animal, is to exploit instinctively, the ability Nature endows him with:

Perhaps it was because teaching came naturally to Mr Stelling, that he set about it with that uniformity of method and independance of circumstances, which distinguish the actions of animals understood to be under immediate teaching of nature (51).

And again:

Besides, how should Mr Stelling be expected to know that education was a delicate and difficult business? Any more than an animal endowed with a power of boring a hole through a rock should be expected to have wide views of excavation (52).

3°) The instinct of conservation is deep-seated in man and animal:

When the animals entered the Ark in pairs, one may imagine that allied species made much private remark on each other, and were tempted to think that so many forms feeding on the same store of fodder were eminently superfluous, as tending to diminish the rations! (I fear that the part played by
the vultures on that occasion would be too painful for art to represent, those birds being disadvantageously naked about the gullet, and apparently without rites and ceremonies).
The same sort of temptation befell the Christian Carnivora who formed Peter Featherstone's funeral procession (53)...

But Eliot seems to say that the human predators are but miserable cowards:
Tom, terrorizing the farmyard animals, indicates, thus early, that desire for mastery over the inferior animals—wild and domestic, including cockchapers, neighbour's dogs, and small sisters—which in all ages has been an attribute of much promise for the fortunes of our race. Now, Mr Pullet never rode anything taller than a low pony, and was the least predatory of men... (54).

One notices the carefully casual inclusion of "small sisters" and the way in which the first sentence spills over into "predatory" of the second.
But Eliot, always careful to strike a balance, uses the same imagery to assert antithetical moral judgments: thus we have animal imagery to characterize the charm of young children; they are like animals in their innocence:
"We learn to restrain ourselves as we get older. We keep apart when we have quarrelled, express ourselves in well-bred phrases, and in this way preserve a dignified alienation, showing much firmness on one side, and swallowing much grief on the other. We no longer approximate in our behaviour
to the mere impulsiveness of the lower animals, but conduct ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilized society. Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his, and kiss his ear in random, sobbing way, and there were tender fibres in the lad that had been used to answer Maggie's fondling ... (55).

The spontaneity and tenderness of children is here a judgment on the repression and restraint of adult life, though Eliot is aware of the fact that adults behaving like this would be damagingly immature or simply ludicrous.

Most of Eliot's egoists are characterized in part by animal imagery, what may seem attractive about them (their "kittenish" or "puppyish" characteristics) is not necessarily charming, or flattering, for it can easily turn into an index of their moral inadequacy. The clearest example of this is certainly Hetty who was like a kitten, and had the same distractingly pretty looks" (56) and hers was a spring-like beauty, it was the beauty of young frisking things" (57). But this note changes after her seduction, in her journey to and from Windsor she is gradually alienated from human nature until she seeks shelter in a sheepfold; finally with the murder of her child she is alienated from nature itself.

In the prison "Hetty kept her eyes fixed on Dinah's face - at first like an animal that gazes, and gazes, and keeps aloof" (58). She herself has been looked at earlier "with a slow bovine
gaze" (59). Deronda is offered a more lyrical sight as his eyes met Mirah's, for "her look was something like that of a fawn or other gentle animal before it turns to run away: no blush, no special alarm, but only some timidity which yet could not hinder her from a long look before she turned" (60). In all these examples, men are compared to animals, or present certain aspects which characterize animals. But there is here an extreme example in which men are assimilated to animals trying to become human. In *Adam Bede*, ch. 21, we have Barthe Massey's mature students who look as if three rough animals were making humble efforts to learn how they might become human. Note that they were not just downright animals, but "rough animals".

**c - Man and childhood -**

To come back to Hetty, her moral life is not conveyed only in terms of animals. She is also viewed as one child in Nature's large family. Thus the childishness of Hetty is equally insisted on, not only to point the pathos of her plight, but also to convey her moral narrowness. She is literally almost a child as Adam points out on many occasions - she is only seventeen when the action takes place. We have seen that Dinah thinks of her as a poor child, ill-equipped to deal with the demands of maturity. When she reads Arthur's letter she sees in the mirror "a white marble face with rounded childish forms, but with something sadder than a child's pain" (61), and when she is pregnant, she feels "something else would happen - to set her free from this dread" In young, childish, ignorant souls
there is constantly this blind trust in some unshapen chance" (62) (This, in Hetty is a diminished parallel to Arthur's egoistic belief in the intervention of Providence). The most important here is that if, at first in prison she is like an animal, later when she has repented and confessed, she obeys Dinah "like a little child". In this way, we see the central metaphor of Nature's family, radiate throughout the book. Perhaps it is not by chance that Dinah (like Arthur and Hetty) is an only child and an orphan; and that of the three of them, she is the only one that has learnt the lesson of the large family" not to expect that our hurts will be made much of - to be content with little nurture and caressing, and help each other the more" (63).

Falling back into childhood is a positive evolution in George Eliot's moral process, as we have just seen with Hetty in Adam Bede: For children are wonderfully spontaneous and innocent, and they know no inhibition whatever. In the reconciliation of Maggie and Tom, at the very end of the book, we are told that: there had risen in (grown-up) Tom a repulsion towards Maggie that derived its very intensity from their early childish love in the time when they had clasped their tiny fingers together" (64).

But what separates them also unites them; the above passage finds an answer at the moment when they drown, living through again in one supreme moment the days when they had clasped their little hands in love and roamed the daisied fields together (65).
Maggie and Tom have so reconquered their childhood, at whatever risk of sentimentality. At the end of Daniel Deronda, Gwendolen after her moral regeneration, is a kind of child. Gwendolen's relationship to Deronda throughout the book is that of a pupil and master, a confessee and confessor, a child and his mentor. The culture of that relationship bears a fruit, and that is Gwendolen's new soul. Gwendolen is therefore in a way re-born and her soul is as delicate and fragile and well-disposed as that of a child. To Deronda she says: "Tell me what I can do"; "I want to be good"; "What ought I to do?" (66), and Deronda advises her to start a new life:

"This sorrow, which has cut down to the root, has come to you while you are so young—try to think of it, not as a spoiling of your life, but as a preparation for it. Let it be a preparation, a vision of possible degradation; think that a severe angel, seeing you along the road of error, grasped you by the wrist, and showed you the honour of the life you must avoid. And it has come to you; in your spring-time. Think of it as a preparation. You can, you will, be among the best of women, such as make others glad that they were born" (67).

Note the emphatic position of "Cut down to the root" in elliptic. Now that she is unrooted, she has to start afresh, on another ground, another basis. "Severe angel" here fits well in a language to children. And the final "born" enjoys all its literal and metaphorical strength, because all the passage is full of quiet, unobstrusive metaphors. As she learns Deronda's departure, she looks at him "with lips childishly parted".
Afterwards

Sobs rose, and great tears fell fast. Deronda would not let her hands go—held them still with one of his, and himself pressed her handkerchief against her eyes. She submitted like a half-soothed child, making an effort to speak (68).

At the close of their last interview, we witness two children parting:

"She bent forward to kiss his cheek, and he kissed hers. Then they looked at each other for an instant with clasped hands, and he turned away (69).

But for the addition of "and he turned away", this scene would have strongly suggested the last scene between Maggie and Tom. At a greater scale, Deronda is the newly-revealed child of his Nation, and Gwendolen a young bird, newly got out of her egoistic shell and eager to adapt herself to the world, no matter how difficult this might be, no matter how long it might take.

As for Dorothea, she is "la femme-enfant" who experiences her fall from innocence to experience. Her process is almost static because she only switches from childishness to childlikeness, and there is a number of childish associations clustering round her character.

1°) **Childish association**: We are told that

Dorothea retained very childlike ideas about marriage...
The really delightful marriage must be that where your
husband was a sort of father (70).

Her age is made much of: for Sir James, she is a "Desdemona" (71) for others "she is too young to know what she likes" (72). Eliot herself does not miss an occasion to put an emphasis of Dorothea's age, as suggests the following passage:

For Dorothea, after that toy-box history of the world adapted to young ladies which had made the chief part of her education, Mr Casanbon's talk about his great book was full of new vistas (73).

For Sir James, Dorothea is irresponsible:

It was wicked to let a young girl blindly decide her fate in that way, without any effort to save her (74).

She is inexperienced:

To Dorothea's inexperienced sensitiveness, it seemed like a catastrophe, changing all prospects (75).

But this seems to be the starting point to maturity:

However just her indignation might be, her ideal was not to claim justice, but give tenderness (76).

And since only real, mature women are capable of tenderness, we are allowed therefore to deduce that Dorothea has attained maturity. Thus, she has lost her "ideal": her Paradise in her marriage to Casanbon. But she has gained experience.

2°) Childlike associations: If Dorothea is childish with Casanbon, she is childlike in her relationship with Will. An example:

"I am indebted to the rain, then. I am so glad to see you".

Dorothea uttered these common words with the simple sincerity of an unhappy child; visited at school (77).
Another example which suggests youth:

Each looked at the other as if they had been two flowers which had opened then and there (78)

Again, later we find them:

looking at each other like two fond children who were talking confidentially of birds (79)

And later still, at the moment of their crisis:

Dorothea darted instantaneously from the window, Will followed her, seizing her hand with a spasmodic movement; and so they stood, with their hands clasped, like two children, looking out on the storm (80).

We are somehow made uneasy by this persistent childlike behaviour. For we saw Dorothea as maturing through the painful education of her marriage to Casanbon. We saw her as growing out of her initial childishness. That she should have her present conduct with Will is almost felt as a regression from her hard-won maturity. However, Ladislaw has a vision of their world: a totally inadequate and unreal image of that archetypal childhood state, Paradise:

All their vision, all their thought of each other, had been as in a world apart, where the sunshine fell on tall white lilies, where no evil lurked, and no other soul-entered. But now - would Dorothea meet him in that world again? (81).

Of course, she does, and they comfortably live in her Paradise Regained.
Human and natural, moral and animal, civilized and primitive are all interwoven in George Eliot's images, for her imagery embodies her conception of the way human beings are rooted in nature and are the very expression of Nature.

2 - IMAGERY DRAWN FROM ART

a - Theatre

One of the great, commonplace images by which man has explored his sense of himself and his role in the world is best expressed in the speech beginning "All the world's a stage" from "As you like it". In spite of its simplicity, this famous speech is part of a fairly complicated dramatic situation; there is Jacques, a character within the play, commenting on life in terms of an extended analogy between the real world and the theatre. It is as though he had reversed the normal relationship between actor and audience. "You sitting out there in the theatre", he is implying that the spectators, who think they are merely watching a play, are in fact characters in some great drama of life and are each acting their own roles, so that 'he' and 'they' stand on the same point and that consequently what they are enjoying as a fiction is really a true image of their own condition.

This notion that the world is a stage and that we are all acting our own parts in the great drama of life is not,
we can see, George Eliot's invention. It would take far too long to trace its history, but I quoted Shakespeare here only to stress that this notion would have been commonplace by the time George Eliot came to write. Especially as Thackeray, her immediate predecessor, had also exploited the same theme. The idea is, just as a dramatist creates his play, so God creates the world and allots to all of us our respective roles. This is indeed a very pessimistic notion because it implies that our parts are predetermined, written for us. But the point of this notion is primarily a moral one— even if our parts are written for us, then how well we play them is incumbent to us alone. The analogy preserves man's moral dignity and significance; we can still tell a good actor from a bad actor, a good man from a bad man. The novelist stands in much the same relation to the novels as God stands to the world, with the difference that where God is totally invisible behind his creation, the novelist sets the scene, and expatiates on his characters. Here is for example an extreme instance of Thackeray's deliberate intrusion into his work. It is an extract from the prologue to *Vanity Fair*, called "Before the curtain":

As the Manager of the Performance sits before the curtain on the boards, and looks into the Fair, a feeling of profound melancholy comes over him in his survey of the bustling place. There is a great quantity of eating and drinking making love and jilting, laughing and the contrary, smoking, cheating, fighting, dancing and fiddling: there are bullies pushing about, bucks ogling the women, knaves picking pockets, policeman on the look-out, quacks (other quacks, plague take them!) bawling in front of their booths,
and yokels looking up at the tinselled dancers and poor old rouged tumblers, while the light-fingered folk are operating upon their pockets behind. Yes, this is VANITY FAIR; not a moral place certainly; nor a merry one, though very noisy. Look at the faces of the actors and buffoons when they come off from their business; and Tom Fool washing the paint off his cheeks before his seats down to dinner with his wife and the little Jack Puddings behind the canvas. The curtain will be up presently, and he will be turning over head and heels, and crying "How are you?".

This prologue, with its melancholy, is echoed in the famous conclusion of the novel:

"Ah! Vanitas Vanitatum! Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? Or, having it, is satisfied? - Come children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out.

Thus, far from being an intrusive flow, Thackeray's performance as stage manager is necessary for the success of his art and his moral purpose. By his deliberate, self-regarding showmanship he does directly what Shakespeare does obliquely through Jacques, a character; he opens the frontiers between the worlds of literature and life so that actor and audience, character and reader, may more easily communicate and interact.

I have briefly glanced at Thackeray's use of omniscient narration simply to show that there was a tradition which
George Eliot inherited but only modified. A tradition which had already made use of the analogy between life and drama. The stoicism and the melancholy inherent in the life-stage analogy would accord naturally with George Eliot's mood. The role of the actor contained within the play of life would adapt very well to George Eliot's vision of man as both free and yet determined.

Perhaps we should now deal with the more obvious and local ways in which the life-drama analogy manifests itself in George Eliot's fiction. For, like Thackeray's, her novels are full of imagery and other linguistic patterns which depend on the basic idea. All the world's a stage! These linguistic patterns naturally vary a great deal in importance and function. As usual, we shall treat imagery from the literal pattern to the more imaged.

I - LITERAL NARRATIVE

At the first level the linguistic patterns may become part of the literal narrative, enacting what images can only suggest. To illustrate this, we have the conclusion of The Mill on the Floss which enacts the anticipatory images of flood and natural catastrophe. Another example is found in Middlemarch, with Lydgate's youthful infatuation with the French actress, Madame Laure. She murders her husband and this act is not to be distinguished from theatrical performance. But then, one tends to think of that "charming stage Ariadne", Rosamond Vincy -
who "was by nature an actress ... : she even acted her own character, and so well, that she did not know it to be precisely her own" (83) - and link her with Madame Laure. We so gather that if Madame Laure murders her husband quickly, then Rosamond's marriage to Lydgate is a slow-motion murder, as Lydgate comes close to realising in chapter 81:

"Lydgate had accepted his narrowed lot with sad resignation. He had chosen this fragile creature, and had taken the burden of her life upon his arms. He must walk as he could carrying that burden pitifully (84).

II - ALLUSION

This imagery may manifest itself in the shape of allusion in which the sense of similitude or disparity, or a mixture of both, may be the important factor. And so we have Mr Tulliver linked with Hotspur; Maggie with Sir Andrew Aguecheek; Dorothea with Antigone and Imogen.

III - FULLY DEVELOPED IMAGES

At the third level, the linguistic patterns may take the form of fully developed images. George Eliot uses the life-drama analogy to point out one of her main moral themes. Appearance and reality may be an exhausted ground in fiction, but George Eliot is particularly concerned to point out the dangers in the self-dramatizing, narcissistic nature of her
egoists. These characters see life as conforming to their own wishes and imagine themselves at the centre of the stage. Here, I think, we must allow in as a reinforcing - thread images which refer to other areas of the imaginative life, particularly to life seen as romantic fiction. The most important example is the role of Gwendolen Harleth in *Daniel Deronda*. The narrowness of Gwendolen's egoistic outlook is conveyed in theatrical imagery; hers was a "consciousness which was busy with a small social drama almost as little penetrated by a feeling of wider relations as if it had been a puppet show" (85). Characteristically, Gwendolen takes Deronda for an extension of her self. In other words, he exists exclusively for her. But Deronda, for his part, has his own aspirations which he tries to fulfil. The moment he finds his identity coincides naturally with Gwendolen's awakening to the truth about Deronda's real function, or mission in life:

The world seemed getting larger round poor Gwendolen, and she more solitary and helpless in the midst. The thought that he might come back after going to the East, sank before the bewildering vision of these wide-stretching purposes in which she felt herself reduced to a mere speck. There comes a terrible moment to many souls when the great movements of the world, the larger destinies of mankind, which have lain aloof in newspapers and other neglected reading, enter like an earthquake into their own lives - when the slow urgency of growing generations turns into the tread of an invading army, or the dire clash of civil war, and grey fathers know nothing to seek for but the corpses of
their blooming sons, and girls forget all vanity to make lint and bandages which may serve for the shattered limbs of their betrothed husbands ... That was the sort of crisis which was at this moment beginning in Gwendolen's small life: she was for the first time feeling the pressure of a vast mysterious movement, for the first time being dislodged from her supremacy in her own world, and getting a sense that her horizon was but a dipping onward of an existence with which her own was revolving ... she could not spontaneously think of (Deronda) as rightfully belonging to others more than to her. But here had come a shock which went deeper than personal jealousy - something spiritual and vaguely tremendous that thrust her away, and yet quelled all anger into self-humiliation (86).

The cosmic or geographical imagery is used to summarize the difference between Gwendolen, to whom the world has been a stage, and its people an attentive, partial audience; and Deronda, who has made it the scene of his restless explorations in London and Europe. As a matter of fact, Gwendolen's character is clustered with theatrical associations. Here for instance, they help to establish her ignorance. On a naturalistic level, Gwendolen is a fumbling amateur compared with Herr Klessmer, an eminent musician, or Deronda's mother, or even Mirah; the paramount of her achievement amounts only to graceful posturing in charades (which are to drama as Gwen is to real life). Her professional hopes are shattered by Klessmer who tells her to "clear your mind of these notions,
which have no more resemblance to reality than a pantomime" (87). It is also in terms of a pantomime that Gwen's relations with Rex are defined:

The elders were not in the least alive to this agitating drama which went forward chiefly in a sort of pantomime extremely lucid in the minds thus expressing themselves, but easily missed by spectators (88).

Her playing at life is not more successful than her theatrical ambition. Because she sees life essentially as a play, she attempts to practise her art on Grandcourt, the results can only be catastrophic. But try she does and at first Grandcourt is prepared to play the game, to accept her on her own terms:

Grandcourt preferred the drama; and Gwendolen, left at ease, found her spirits rising continually as she played at reigning (89).

Gwendolen seems satisfied. She "was just then enjoying the scenery of her life" (90); she was "the heroine of an admired play without the pains of art" (91). Soon, she realizes, however, that she had more than met a fit partner in her husband. Grandcourt, to whom appearances are of prime importance, tells her in her own terms:

"Oblige me in future by not showing whims like a mad woman in a play ... you will please behave as becomes my wife and not make a spectacle of yourself" (92).

And painfully keeping up appearances is what Gwendolen's married life amounts to. No matter the role, Gwendolen is bound to "play":

"..."
Constantly she had to be on the scene as Mrs. Grandcourt, and to feel herself watched in that part by the exacting eyes of a husband who had found a motive to exercise his tenacity — that of making his marriage answer all the ends he chose, and with the more completeness the more he discerned any opposing will in her. And she herself, whatever rebellion might be going on within her, could not have made up her mind to failure in her representation (93).

The image of the theatre is of course a natural vehicle for expressing the favourite theme of illusion and reality. On Gwendolen's wedding day:

When her husband said "Here we are at home" ... it was no more than the passive acceptance of a greeting in the midst of an absorbing show. Was not all her hurrying life of the last three months a show, in which her consciousness was a wondering spectator? (94).

Deronda tells her that "some real knowledge would give you an interest in the world beyond the small drama of personal desires" (95); that "real knowledge" Gwen can only acquire through suffering and by realizing that her part in the drama of life is not the glamorous and applauded thing she took it to be.

As always, we have the literal counterpart of the image pattern. There is Herr Klessmer, the eminent musician who says that:

"No man has too much talent to be a musician. Most men have too little. A creative artist is no more a mere musician than a great statesman is mere politician. We are
not ingenious puppets, who live in a box and look out on the world only when it is gaping for amusement. We help to rule the nations and make the age as much as any other public men. We count ourselves on level benches with legislators. And a man who speaks effectively through music is compelled to something more difficult than Parliamentary eloquence" (96).

There is Deronda's mother in whom life and the stage are one and continuous - "I am not a loving woman. That is the truth. It is a talent to love - I lacked it. Others have loved me - I have acted their love" (97). And there is Minah who tends to see things in terms of her experience of the theatre: Her peculiar life and education had produced in her an extraordinary mixture of unworldliness, with knowledge of the world's evil, and even this knowledge was a strange blending of direct observation with the effects of reading and theatrical study. Her memory was furnished with abundant passionate situation and intrigue, which she never made emotionally her own, but felt a repelled aloofness from, as she had done from the actual life around her. Some of that imaginative knowledge began now to weave itself around Mrs Grandcourt (98).

Life overtakes the theatre for Minah: "What I have read about and sung about and seen acted, is happening to me" (99).

And finally, on a strictly physical level, we have Hans Meyrick always caught up in theatrical attitudes. Let us quote a few examples at random: "Hans pretended to speak with a gasping
sense of sublimity, and drew back his head with a grown", "Hans threw himself into a tragic attitude, and screamed"; "Here Hans laid down his pencil and palette, threw himself backward into a great chair, and hanging limply over the side, shook his long hair half over his face, lifted his hooked fingers on each side of his head, and looked up with comic terror"; "Hans stood with his thumbs in the belt of his blouse listening to this speech, his face showed a growing surprise melting into amusement, that at last would have its way in an explosive laugh"; "Hans turned to paint as a way of filling up awkward pauses"; "Hans with provoking coolness, laying down his tools, thrusting his thumbs into his belt, and moving away a little, as if to contemplate his picture more deliberately" (100). This aspect of his character takes effect only when these are used cumulatively, for they are sustained by no comment. But here is Minah to sum him up:

"He passes from one figure to another as if he were a bit of flame where you fancied the figures without seeing them ... he is so wonderfully quick. I used never to like comic things on the stage - they were dwelt on too long; but all in one minute Mr Hans makes himself a blind bard; and then Rienzi addressing the Romans, and then an opera-dancer, and then a desponding young gentleman" (101)

She adds: "Mr Hans (was) going through a sort of character piece without changing his dress". Thus Hans's play is acted on a superficial, physical level. He represents the farce while all the others we have seen act in dramas and tragedies.
The idea of life being a stage and its associated imagery are fairly consistent throughout George Eliot's fiction. One recalls Hetty Sorrel weaving her romantic dreams; she finds a match in Arthur Donnithorne:

"It's a little drama I've got up in honour of my friend Adam. He's a fine fellow and I like the opportunity of letting people know that I think so".

"A drama in which friend Arthur piques himself on having a pretty part to play", said Mr Irwine, smiling (102).

Throughout the novel Arthur is "too much preoccupied with the part he was playing" (103). Again, how to forget that even in the ardour of Maggie's renunciation "her own life was still a drama for her in which she demanded that her part should be played with intensity (104). Or again, one thinks of Rosamond who "even acted her own character, and so well, that she did not know it to be precisely her own". It might not be superfluous to observe here that the distinguishing feature of this analogy as it is used in Middlemarch is that it is applied impartially to all the characters. Thus Casanbon is uneasily aware of the "cold, shadowy, unaplausive audience of his life" (105), and much the same thing - though with opposite effects applies to Fred Vincy:

Even much stronger mortals than Fred Vincy hold half their rectitude in the mind of the being they love best. "The theatre of all my action is fallen", said an antique personage when his chief fortunate who get a theatre where the audience demands their best. (106).
The analogy is also used to prevent any idealization of hero and heroine. Mrs Cadwallader is not totally wide of the truth about Dorothea's complacency in martyrdom when she remarks that Dorothea is "playing tragedy queen and taking things sublimely" (107); And Will asks Dorothea: "Would you turn all the youth of the world into a tragic chorus, wailing and moralizing over misery?" (108). As for Will Ladislaw, he is one of those "characters which are continually creating collisions and modes for themselves in dramas which nobody is prepared to act with them" (109); especially if he is striking as "a sort of Byronic hero - an amorous conspirator" (110). He is "without any neutral region of indifference in his nature, ready to turn everything that befell him into the collisions of a passionate drama" (111).

IV - NEUTRAL WORDS

Finally, the linguistic patterns may, on the contrary, reside in quiet, neutral words - words like scene, or theatre, or tragic - which in themselves entail no great analogical potential, but which may acquire a pseudo-metaphoric charge from being put into relation with cognate but more sophisticated linguistic patterns. Those neutral words generally indicate one of the followings:

- perturbations of the mind. For example: "Maggie was ... intensely conscious of some drama going forward in her father's mind" (112).
- liveliness of imagination: "Hetty her cheeks flushed and her eyes glistening from her imaginary drama" (113).
- the implication of the characters in the great general course of human nature and society: "The tragedy of human life" in Adam Bede, or "War, like other dramatic spectacles might possibly cease for want of a public" in the Mill on the Floss.

The above instances have a double function: they serve to extend the life-drama analogy to even more neutral terms - words that, taken in isolation, might seem to have nothing to do with the analogy. And they also provide a back-ground from which George Eliot can slide unobtrusively into rather more developed images illustrating the same point. And we have, at random: "the stranger ... had been interested in the course of her (Dinah's) sermon, as if it had been the development of a drama - for there is this sort of fascination in all sincere impremeditated eloquence, which opens to one the inward drama of the speaker's emotions" (114); "Inartistic figures crowding the canvas of life without adequate effect ... play no small part in the tragedy of life" (115); "plotting covetousness and deliberate contrivance, in order to compass a selfish end, are nowhere abundant but in the world of the dramatist; they demand too intense a mental action for many of our fellow-parishioners to be guilty of them" (116). This last example will make it obvious that the life-drama analogy works in terms of distinctions as well as similitudes. George Eliot is careful to point out the ways in which all the world is not a stage. This is important in many ways - for example, some of her
characters come to grief because they think of life wrongly in terms of this analogy. But when she singles out the ways in which life is not a stage, she brings to our minds those points where the analogy is valid, and because of her careful discrimination, convinces us the more easily of their validity.

The basic reason why life-drama analogy is successfully exploited as a device to suggest the nature of man's conditional freedom is that this analogy, as we said earlier, is not isolated, but linked up with all those other images of natural process which we have analysed earlier. We are thus inevitably brought back to the way in which at a linguistic level images and ideas intersect and interact; we see how the different threads are woven together into her "tangled skein". The intersection may be at the level of those neutral terms, so casual and brief that they never strike us in their cumulative work. Thus the one word scene may point in two directions, towards the natural scene and towards the stage. "Marty and Tommy ... saw a perpetual drama going on in the hedgerows " (117); "the drama that was going on was almost as familiar as the scene" (118); "a green hollow (was) almost surrounded by an amphitheatrical of the pale pink dog-roses" (119) - such phrases are literal or are dead metaphors. But they form an unobtrusive background to rather more developed images of the same thing. And we thus move gradually from neutrality to something more partial like this:

Scenes which make vital changes in our neighbours' lots are but the background of our own, yet like a particular aspect of the fields and trees, they become associated for
us with the epochs of our own natural history, and make a part that unity which lies in the selection of our keenest consciousness (120).

Here scene is pregnant with dramatic force from its context; the gentry are looking down on the tableau-like procession at Feartherstone's funeral: "the country gentry of old time lived in a rarefied social air: dotted apart on their stations up the mountain they looked down, with imperfect discrimination on the belts of thicker life below".

And from this, we ascend to something slightly more developed. George Eliot describing St Oggs society says:

And the present time was like the broad plain where men lose their belief in volcanoes and earthquakes, thinking tomorrow will be as yesterday and the giant forces that used to shake the earth are for ever laid to sleep (121).

Comparing St Oggs society with deserted Rhone villages, she says:

I have a cruel conception that these lines those ruins are the traces of mere part of a gross sum of obscure vitality that will be swept into the same oblivion with the generations of ants and beavers.

And straightaway she applies this to the Dodsons and the Tullivers, switching from the imagery of recapitulation to the image of the stage; "this old-fashioned family life on the banks of the Floss, which even in sorrow hardly suffices to life above the level of the tragi-comic".
This relation of Nature to stage becomes more emphatic; thus within one paragraph, Mr Tulliver is described in these terms: And Mr Tulliver, you perceive, though nothing more than a superior miller and maltster, was as proud and obstinate as if he had been a very lofty personage, in whom such dispositions might be a source of that conspicuous, far-echoing tragedy, which sweeps the stage in regal robes, and makes the dullest chronicler sublime... There are certain animals to which tenacity of position is a law of life — they can never flourish again after a single wrench; and there are certain human beings to whom predominance is a law of life... (122).

The rest of this paragraph, which modulates between these two views of Tulliver as tragedy king and as tenacious animal, states a very common theme in George Eliot's fiction: The pride and obstinacy of millers, and other insignificant people, whom you pass unnoticingly on the road every day, have their tragedy too; but it is of that unwept, hidden sort, that goes on from generation to generation, and leaves no record... (123).

George Eliot insists firmly on the fact that tragedy is to be found not merely in high-life romance or in extreme situations, but in homely and monotonous existence, in the great, ordinary course of everyday human life. All the world is a stage; George frequently uses the life-drama analogy to generalize her theme to implicate her readers, to appeal to common human nature. Thus she speaks, for example, of "that partial, divided action, of our nature which makes the tragedy of human lot" (124); such appeals are common in her fiction. And she can involve us in her vision of humdrum tragedy by
linking the life-drama analogy with imagery drawn from Nature:

Some discouragement, some faintness of heart at the new real future which replaces the imaginary, is not unusual, and we do not expect people to be deeply moved by what is not unusual. That element of tragedy which lies in the very fact of frequency, has not yet wrought itself into the coarse emotion of mankind; and perhaps our frames could hardly hear much of it. If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity (125).

In other words, it is natural that life should be tragic; to have said that calmly, without undue emphasis, to have given this recognition its proper place and proportions within our total awareness of life, in all its mysterious complexity—this is one of George Eliot's greatest achievements. It is part of the moral nature of her fiction; she strips away a little of our "wadded stupidity" and enables us a little better to bear the burden of human reality. And she does more than merely say this, we can almost say that she enacts it, incarnates it in the structure of her stories, the nature of her characters and, ultimately, in the complete patterns of her language.
What we must also bear in mind as far as life-drama goes - is that Eliot uses the life-drama analogy to point one of her main moral themes: the dangers in the self-dramatizing narcissistic natures. It is there also that the life-drama analogy begins to tangle with the thread of Nature in George Eliot's fiction. For if characters dramatize themselves, then as we saw earlier, Nature is "that great tragic dramatist" (126). And if characters, because of their impulse to dramatize, deceive both themselves and others, so Nature may deceptively blend appearance and reality. When the stranger at Dinah's preaching thinks that "Nature never meant her for a preacher", George Eliot comments:

Perhaps he was one of those who think that Nature has theatrical properties, and, with the considerate view of facilitating and psychology, "makes up" her characters so that there may be no mistake about them (127).

We ought to be careful about the use of "make up" here. Nature does, in one sense, make us up, endow us with hereditary attributes, compound, what we really are. But the reality of our natural make-up is not to be confused with mere appearance, with "make-up" in the theatrical, grease-paint sense of the phrase. George Eliot's novels are full of similar warnings about the deceptions of the surface:

Every man under such circumstances is conscious of being a great physiognomist. Nature, he knows, has a language of her own, which she uses with strict veracity, and he considers himself an adept in the language ... Nature has her language, and she is not unveracious; but we don't
know all the intricacies of her syntax just yet, and in a hasty reading we may happen to extract the very opposite of her real meaning (128).

This view is exploited and sustained in all George Eliot's novels. Here are a few examples from the four novels.

In The Mill on the Floss, Mr Tulliver talking of books, says: "One mustn't judge by th'outside. This a puzzling world" (129).

Man also is a book to be read. But the majority of the characters judge others by inference:

- Mrs Pullet had always thought it strange if Tom's excellent complexion, so entirely that of the Dodsons, did not argue a certainty that he would turn out well? (130).

- Mrs Tulliver says:
  "When I was young a brown skin wasn't thought well on among respectable folks' (131).

- Maggie bursts out:
  "I'm determined to read no more books where the blond-haired women carry away all the happiness. I should begin to have a prejudice against them" (132).

We can understand Maggie's reaction when we come to consider the lots of the dark-haired or dark-skinned. Here we have Mr Featherstone making "haste ostentatiously to introduce" blond Rosamond "as his niece, though he had never thought it worth while to speak of Mary Garth in that light" (133), no wonder, "she had the aspect of an ordinary sinner: she was
brown; her curly dark hair was rough and stubborn; her stature was low" (134). Mrs Vincy confesses: "I must say I think Mary Garth a dreadful plain girl - more fit for a governess" (135). Mrs Farebrother reasons more sensibly. Talking of Mary, she remarks that "we must not always ask for beauty, when a good God has seen fit to make an excellent young woman without it. I put good manners first and Miss Garth will know how to conduct herself in any station" (136). Rosamond also holds the same language, but she does not mean what she says: "No one thinks of your appearance, you are so sensible and useful, Mary. Beauty is of very little consequence in reality" (137), and as she says this, "her eyes swerve towards the new view of her neck in the glass". Because she was beautiful and wondervilly blond, most men in Middlemarch... held that Miss Vincy was the best girl in the world, and some called her an angel", but George Eliot is careful to stress that her "eyes of heavenly blue (were) deep enough to hold the most exquisite meanings an ingenious beholder could put into them, and deep enough to hide the meanings of the owner if these should happen to be less exquisite". Gwendolen was like a princess in exile" : she was beautiful and her social status was below the worth of her beauty. As for Hetty Sorrel, only her physical looks allows her to pretend to anything beyond a girl of her condition.

Thus, because our appearance supposedly determines our life, and Nature is the author of our appearance, so Nature would determine us. At least that is what all these characters as well as ourselves, the readers would seem to infer. In this we are wrong, seems to say George Eliot. The way things
work is not as easy as that. Yet, although George Eliot pushes her analogy beyond the pointing of a moral theme on into the area of metaphysical speculation - area into which I happily do not need to venture here - she uses it to suggest those aspects of man's life in which he figures as a determined creature, the nature and expression of her determinism is felt to be sincere, acceptable. We feel this for many reasons; she disperses her Determinism over a wide range of characters - we do not feel that any one of them is singled out; then on a local level, her expression is full of tact; then in its context, we respond to her remark about destiny as a trope. She is careful to allow for some reciprocal action of character and circumstance. "Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds". She defends her view in The Mill on the Floss.

But you have known Maggie a long while, and need to be told, not her characteristics, but her history, which is a thing hardly to be predicted even from the completest knowledge of characteristics. For the tragedy of our lives is not created entirely from within. "Character", says Novalis in one of his questionable aphorisms - "Character is destiny" But not the whole of our destiny. Hamlet, Prince of Danmark, was speculative and irresolute, and we have a great tragedy in consequence. But if his father had lived to a good old age, and his uncle had died an early death, we can conceive Hamlet's having married Ophelia, and got through life with a reputation of sanity notwithstanding
and some moody sarcasms towards the fair daughter of Polonins, to say nothing of the frankest incivility of his father-in-law (138).

Our deeds thus "determine us as much as we determine our deeds". As much, but no more; the very syntax suggests how scrupulously the balance of force is preserved. Throughout her novels she stresses the intermeshing of the human will with all those forces she sometimes sums up as Nature or Destiny. This is manifest in the following dialogue between Philip and Maggie:

"Our life is determined for us - and it makes the mind very free when we give up wishing, and only think of bearing what is laid upon us, and doing what is given us to do".
"But I can't give up wishing", said Philip impatiently.
"It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are thoroughly alive" (139).

b - Music

If the world's a stage for which Nature provides actors and setting, what is it that remains for the analogy to be complete? Obviously the language. In a play or in a novel, we have monologues, and dialogues, and the stage manager, or the omniscient author, to tell us about the action, the characters' motives and their feelings. In life, we are restricted to dialogue which we take with a grain of salt, mainly. So that inference plays the biggest part in our attempts to speculate into our neighbours' motives and feelings. However, that is not our problem here. What I actually want to get at is that there is, happily another mode of expression, less
straight-forward and yet most truthful, to say nothing of the lyricism of its form. I name music.

Music is a universal means of expressing emotion and feeling. In George Eliot's novels, that essential function is preserved, basically, but, as we will see, she uses that device for several purposes, and in the most economical way. We shall adopt here our usual vertical approach to imagery, which goes from concrete or literal to metaphorical.

At the very bottom of the scale we have music in the form of songs. They can be used for a further delineation of a character's moral attitude. As an example we have Adam's song in chapter one of Adam Bede. The song enunciates his own line of conduct and his moral attitude:

Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth ...

Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noonday clear.

Let all thy converse be sincere
Thy conscience as the noonday clear;
For God's all-seeing eye surveys
Thy secret thoughts, thy works and ways (140).

Songs can also reveal the character's state of mind. Seth Bede is losing any hope of being Dinah's lover; and in his half-despair, he sings a hymn which suits his state of mind:

...
Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by thee:
Joyless is the day's return
Till thy mercy's beam I see:
Till thou inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

Visit, then, this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief—
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,
Scatter all my unbelief.
More and more thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day. (141)

In the same light, we also have in Dinah's hymn,
the reflection of her inner conflict between her human love
for Adam and her religious vocation. She sings:

Eternal Beam of Light Divine,
Fountain of unexhausted love,
In whom the Father's glories shine,
Through earth beneath and heaven above;

Jesus! the weary wanderer's rest,
Give me thy easy yoke to bear;
With steadfast patience arm my breast,
With spotless love and holy fear.
Speak to my warring passions, "Peace!"
Say to my trembling heart, "Be still!"
Thy power my strength and fortiness is,
For all things serve thy sovereign will (142).

To confirm our interpretation of the songs Eliot comments:
I cannot pretend that Seth and Dinah were anything else than Methodists - not indeed of that modern type which reads quarterly reviews and attends in chapels with pil­ lared porticoes, but of a very old-fashioned kind. They believed in present miracles, in instantaneous conver­sions in revelations by dreams and visions; they drew lots, and sought for Divine guidance by opening the Bible at hazard; having a literal way of interpreting the Scriptures, which is not at all sanctioned by approved commentators" (143).

Finally, and still in the same spirit, songs help to establish or render the general state of mind of a group or a multitude, to fix the general atmosphere in a community. Psychologically speaking, the last, popular song in Adam Bede conveys the moral healthiness of the community of Hayslope after the tragedy. It shows that things have come back to normal:

Here's a health into our master,
The founder of the feast;
Here's a health into our master,
And to our mistress!
And may his doings prosper,
Whatever he takes in hand,
For we are all his servants,
And are at his command.

Then drink, boys, drink!
And see ye do not spill,
For if ye do, ye shall drink two,
For 'tis our master's will. (144)

Then we have a song as a medium through which a character expresses his feelings, a kind of outlet even. But here, the song is addressed directly to the object of one's thought and a response is expected. We have Seth again, using (with impunity) a hymn, to declare his love to Dinah. He says: "I often can't help saying of you what the hymn says"

In darkest shades if she appear,
My dawning is begun;
She is my soul's bright morning-star,
And she my rising sun (145).

(Dinah responds by the negative.)

We are told in Daniel Deronda, that Klesmer "knew very well that if Miss Arrowpoint had been poor he would have made ardent love to her instead of sending a storm through the piano" (146).

Let us consider this passage from The Mill on the Floss. Philip says:
"It's from the "Somnanbula" - "Ah! perché non posso odiarti?"

I don't know the opera, but it appears the tenor is telling
the heroine that he shall always love her though she may
forsake him. You've heard me sing it to the English words,
"I love thee still."

It was not quite unintentionally that Philip had
wandered into this song, which might be an indirect expres-
sion to maggie of what he could not prevail on
himself to say to her directly. Her ears had been open
to what he was saying, and when he began to sing, she
understood the plaintive passion of the music. That pleading
tenor had no very fine qualities as a voice, but it was
not quite new to her ... There seemed to be some reproach
in the words - did Philip mean that? She wished she had
assured him more distinctly in their conversation that
she desined not to renew the hope of love between them,
only because it clashed with her inevitable circumstances.
She was touched, not thrilled by the song; it suggested
distinct memories and thoughts" (147).

And just before that, we are told that when invited to sing,
Philip
had brightened at the proposition, for there is no feeling
perhaps, except the extremes of fear and grief, that does
not find relief in music, that does not make a man sing
or play the better; and Philip had an abundance of pent-
up feeling at this moment, as complex as any trio or quartet
that was ever meant to express love and jealousy, and resi-
gnation and fierce suspicion, all at the same time (148).
We also have Stephen's apparently casual and innocent singing:

The thirst that from the soul deth rise,

Doth ask a drink divine (149).

Lucy, Philip and Maggie are present, and we know that the
song appeals to Maggie. Lastly, we have Will's solitary infatu-
tuation for Dorothea. But Dorothea is not there to hear him -
which stresses the fact of their estrangement - The mere thought
of seeing Dorothea and annoying Casanbon makes him all song:

O me, O me, what frugal cheer
My love doth feed upon!
A touch, a ray, that is not here,
A shadow that is gone:

A dream of breath that might be near,
An only-echoed tone,
The thought that one may think me dear,
The place where one was known,

The tremor of a banished fear,
An ill that was not done -
O me, O me, what frugal cheer
My love doth feed upon! (150)

Then we have music as a means of characterization.
Characters are judged or valued in relation to their attitude
towards, or reaction to music.
Music is a vehicle for emotion. From that clue, George Eliot feels free to delineate a character's degree of emotivity. We know for example that "Mr Casanbon is not fond of the piano" (151), and this attitude further accentuates the impassiveness of his personage; Dorothea's impression of the great organ at Freiberg is: "it made me sob" (152), and we can infer from that reaction that she is highly emotive. For George Eliot, to be sensitive to music is a positive quality, for "the possession of (his) unique "piece of music" was a proof that Mr Pullet's character was not of that nullity which might otherwise have been attributed to it" (153), and the evidence shows itself in the shape of a music box.

Because love, beauty and romance are described in terms of music, reciprocally, imagery drawn from music expresses love, beauty and romance.

Of the first, that is, love, we have this passage from The Mill on the Floss:

Surely the only courtship unshaken by doubts and fears must be that in which the lovers can sing together. The sense of mutual fitness that springs from the two deep notes fulfilling expectation just at the right moment between the notes of the silvery soprano, from the perfect accord of descending thirds and fifths, from the preconcerted loving chase of a fugue, is likely enough to supersede any immediate demand for less impassioned forms of agreement. The contralto will not care to catechize the bass; the tenor will foresee no embarrassing dearth of
remark in evenings spent with the lovely soprano. In the provinces, too, where music was so scarce in that remote time, how could the musical people avoid falling in love with each other? Even political principle must have been tempted to fraternize in a demoralizing way with a reforming violoncello. In this case, the linnet-throated soprano, and the full-toned bass, singing,

With three delight is ever new,
With three is life incessant bliss,
believed what they sang all the more because they sang it (154).

Music, thus is the language of love. We can appreciate in this passage, the clever interplay of words. The song here almost represent the sexual act.

Still in the light of love (not necessarily sexual) being expressed in terms of music, here is Will Ladislaw thinking of Dorothea:

It would be a unique delight to wait and watch for the melodious fragments in which her heart and soul came forth so directly and ingeniously. The Eolian harp again came into his mind (155).

Love is music.

Beauty is music too. We are told that Minah's "little laugh might have entered into a song" (156). I dare say
this denotes the beauty of her laugh. Lydgate defines beauty in the same terms. Of Rosamond, he thinks

She is grace itself; she is perfectly lovely and accomplished. That is what a woman ought to be: she ought to produce the effect of exquisite music (157).

And finally romance is nothing but music. As an example, let us consider this unique passage, which is music down to its very movement. Stephen and Maggie have just gone into the boat and they are slowly "borne along by the tide":

They glided rapidly along, Stephen rowing, helped by the backward-flowing tide, past the Tofton trees and houses-on between the silent sunny fields and pastures, which seemed filled with a natural joy that had no reproach for theirs. The breath of the young, unwearied day, the delicious rhythmic dip of the oars, the fragmentary song of a passing bird heard now and then as if it were only the overflowing of brim-full gladness, the sweet solitude of a twofold consciousness that was mingled into one by that grave untiring gaze which need to be averted - what else could there be in their minds for the first hour? Some low, subdued, languid exclamation of love came from Stephen from time to time as he went on rowing idly, half automatically; otherwise, they spoke no word, for what could words have been but an inlet to thought? And thought did not belong to that enchanted haze in which they were enveloped; it belonged to the past and the future that lay outside the haze.
The horizontal process is the method Eliot uses in music imagery, most economically. Maggie's moral development - from her temptation to her downfall, via her inner conflict - is entirely described and defined in terms of music imagery. But to render this effective, George Eliot clusters Maggie with musical associations. Her character is thoroughly defined in terms of music, including her weak points and her virtues.

Already, in her childhood, she shows a wild interest in music. Her sensitiveness to music is awakened in her early years. Thus, at Christmas,

There had been singing under the windows after midnight - supernatural singing, Maggie always felt in spite of Tom's contemptuous insistence that the singers were old Patch, the parish clerk, and the rest of the church choir; she trembled with awe when their caroling broke in upon her dreams and the image of men in fustian clothes was always thrust away by the vision of angels resting on the parted cloud. The midnight chant had helped as usual to lift the morning above the level of common days (158).

And at Uncle Pullet's, as she listened to the music box:
Perhaps the suspense did heighten Maggie's enjoyment when the fairy tune began; for the first time, she quite forgot that she had a load on her mind - that Tom was angry with her; and by the time 'Hush, ye pretty warbling choir' had been played, her face wore that bright look of happiness, while she sat immovable with her hands clasped, which sometimes comforted her mother with the sense that
Maggie could look pretty now and then, in spite of her brown skin. But when the magic music ceased, she jumped up, and running towards Tom, put her arm round his neck and said, "Oh, Tom, isn't it pretty?" (159).

This overflowing of affection roused by music is to be found still in the older Maggie. Then, much later, as she reads from a book about religion, "A strange thrill of awe passed through Maggie while she read, as if she had been wakened in the night by a strain of solemn music" (160).

Her feeling towards music is shared by Philip Wakem:

"The greatest of painters only once painted a mysteriously divine child; he couldn't have told how he did it, and we can't tell why we feel it to be divine. I think there are stores laid up in our human nature that our understandings can make no complete inventory of. Certain strains of music affect me so strangely; I can never hear them without their changing my whole attitude of mind for a time, and if the effect would last, I might be capable of heroisms".

"Ah! I know what you mean about music - I feel so", said Maggie, clasping her hands with her old impetuosity.

"At least", she added in a saddened tone, "I used to feel so when I had any music; I never have any now except the organ at church" (161).

(here appreciate Eliot's technique quietly assembling two forms
of art and drawing an analogy between both). Later, Stephen asks Maggie:

"Wouldn't you really like to be a tenth muse, then, Maggie?" said Philip, looking up in her face as we look at a first parting in the clouds that promise us a bright heaven once more.

"Not at all", said Maggie, laughing. "The muses were uncomfortable goddesses, I think - obliged always to carry rolls and musical instruments about with them. If I carried a harp in this climate, you know, I must have a green-baize cover for it, and I should be sure to leave it behind me by mistake" (162).

It is very natural that her inner conflict between breaking off with Philip and not doing so is rendered through music imagery:

Maggie shook her head slowly, and was silent under conflicting thoughts. It seemed to her inclination that to see Philip now and then, and keep up the bond of friendship with him, was something not only innocent, but good; perhaps she might really help him to find contentment as she had found it. The voice that said this made sweet music to Maggie, but athwart it there came an urgent monotonous warning from another voice which she had been learning to obey: the warning that such interviews implied secrecy, implied doing something she would dread to be discovered in, something that, if discovered, must cause anger and pain and that the admission of anything so near doubleness
would act as a spiritual blight. Yet the music would swell out again, like chimes borne onward by a recurrent breeze, persuading her that the wrong lay all in the faults and weaknesses of others (163).

Now that Maggie's character is firmly established in terms of music, the action properly speaking can start, that is Maggie's moral voyage. But then again, before everything, Lucy gives a hint which has a crucial importance to the turn Maggie's story takes. Lucy says:

"There is one pleasure I know, Maggie, that your deepest dismalness will never resist. That is music" (164).

From that moment onward, we can notice a gradually increasing sensitivity to music in Maggie.

We first have small but significant proleptic signs: "presently the rhythmic movement of the oars attracted her, and she thought she should like to learn how to row" (165), then we are told that "the music was vibrating her ... - Purcell's music, with its wild passion and fancy ... - She was in her brighter aerial world again" (166). She confides to Lucy that: "I think I should have no other mortal wants if I could always have plenty of music. It seems to infuse strength into my limbs and ideas into my brain. Life seems to go on without effort when I am filled with music. At other times one is conscious of carrying a weight" (167). One could almost say that music is her opiate. However, she reminds Philip of his
prophecy and thus gives the reason for her hunger of music:
"You used to say I should feel the effect of my starved' life, as you called it, and I do. I am too eager in my enjoyment of music and all luxuries, now they are come to me" (168).

Eliot comments:

When Maggie went up to her bedroom that night, it appeared that ... her eyes and cheeks had an almost feverish brillancy ... Had anything remarkable happened?
Nothing that you are not likely to consider in the highest degree unimportant. She had been hearing some fine music sung by a fine bass voice ... and she was conscious of having been looked at a great deal in rather a furtive manner ... with a glance that seemed somehow to have caught the vibratory influence of the voice. Such things could have had no perceptible effect on a thoroughly well-educated young lady with a perfectly balanced mind who had had all the advantages of fortune, training, and refined society ... 
In poor Maggie's highly-strung, hungry nature - just come away from a third-rate schoolroom, with all its jarring sounds and petty round of tasks - these apparently trivial causes had the effect of rousing and exalting her imagination in a way that was mysterious to herself (169).

Now that the reader is as much conditioned as Maggie herself, Stephen makes a symbolic entry into the scene as he "walks in with a roll of music in his hand" (170). Further music associations are made now and then on her character: as she learns about Philip's next arrival, she "gave a little start;
it seemed hardly more than a vibration that passed from head to foot in an instant" (171), later we are told that Maggie, "who had little more power of concealing the impressions made upon her than if she had been constructed of musical strings, felt her eyes getting larger with tears" (172).

If we consider Stephen's entry as the first act of Maggie's tragedy, then we have, in the second, her inner conflict. Stephen has become music incarnate, and Maggie's attempts to resist music are in fact her attempts to resist Stephen. The metaphor is clear here. Let us, rather, refer to the passage:

Maggie always tried in vain to go on with her work when music began. She tried harder than ever today, for the thought that Stephen knew how much she cared for his singing was one that no longer roused a merely playful resistance, and she knew, too, that it was his habit always to stand so that he could look at her. But it was of no use; she soon threw her work down, and all her intentions were lost in the vague state of emotion produced by the inspiriting duet - emotion that seemed to make her at once strong and weak: strong for all enjoyment, weak for all resistance. When the strain passed into the minor, she half started from her seat with the sudden thrill of that change. Poor Maggie! She looked very beautiful when her soul was being played on in this way by the inexorable power of sound. You might have seen the slightest perceptible quivering through her whole frame as she leaned a little forward,
clasping her hands as if to steady herself, while her eyes dilated and brightened into that wide-open, childish expression of wondering delight which always came back in her happiest moments (172).

When we think back of her reaction to the music box at Uncle Pullet's, we can then fully value her efforts and endurance here.

Lastly, in the third and final act, we have Maggie yielding to the song, that is, to Stephen:

Stephen rolled out with saucy energy,

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?

and seemed to make all the air in the room alive with a new influence (...) ; and Maggie, in spite of her resistance to the spirit of the song and to the singer, was taken hold of and shaken by the invisible influence, was borne along by a wave too strong for her (173)

It is in chapter "13" (significantly enough) that they are literally "borne along by the tide".

We demonstrated in the first part of this study that George Eliot, unlike her contemporaries, wrote from the head. But if her heart ever influenced her hand, for once even, it must have been in her treatment of music imagery.
Notes on 'Imagery'

I. S.H. Burton. The Criticism of Prose: 'Imagery'
(longueau Group Ltd: London, 1973) P. 43

2. Ibid, P. 43

3. Tho Mill VII, I P. 507

4. Adam Bede ch I5 P. I58

5. Ibid, ch I9 P. 205

6. Ibid, ch 20 P. 215

7. Middlemarch ch I5 P. I70

8. Ibid, Finale P. 890

9. Ibid, ch 6I P. 665

10. Ibid, ch 48 P. 523

II. Ibid, ch I7 P. 204

12. Ibid, ch I8 P. 210

13. Ibid, ch 26 P. 296

14. Ibid, ch 31 P. 328

15. Ibid, ch 58 P. 64I

16. Ibid, ch 65 P. 7I8

17. Ibid, ch 66 P. 720

18. The Mill I, 6, P. 57

19. Ibid VII, 5, P.P. 544,545

20. Adam Bede ch 22, P. 24I

21. Ibid, ch 27 P. 28I-282

22. Ibid, ch 20 P. 215

23. Ibid, ch 55 P. 503

24. Ibid, ch 50 P. 465

25. Ibid, ch 12 P. I34

26. Ibid, ch 5I P. 474
27. Middlemarch ch 36 p. 380
28. The Mill VI, 6 p. 420
29. Ibid III, 7 p. 260
30. Adam Bede ch 4 p. 62
31. Ibid, ch 37 p. 366
32. Ibid, ch 37 p. 367
33. Daniel Deronda ch 17 p. 228
34. The Mill, V, 4, P. 359
35. Middlemarch ch 8 p. 95
36. Adam Bede ch 15, pp. 154-155
37. Ibid ch 32 p. 334
38. The Mill II, 2, p. 164
39. Ibid, III, 5 p. 240
40. Ibid, III, 9 p. 279
41. Middlemarch, ch 37, p. 394
42. Ibid, ch 37 p. 393
43. Ibid, ch 37 p. 394
44. Ibid, ch 37 p. 403
45. Daniel Deronda ch 3 p. 50
46. Ibid, ch 3 p. 53
47. Ibid, ch 64 p. 831
48. Ibid, ch 16 p. 209
49. The Mill, III, 7 p. 260
50. Middlemarch ch 10, p. 109
51. The Mill II, 1 p. 149
52. Ibid, II, 4, p. 181
53. Middlemarch ch 35 p. 365
54. The Mill I, 9
55. Ibid, I, 5 P.P. 45,46
56. Adam Bede ch I9, P. 205
57. Ibid, ch 7 P. 9I
58. Ibid, ch 45 P. 424
59. Ibid, ch 37 P. 370
60. Daniel Deronda ch I7 P. 228
61. Adam Bede ch 3I P. 3I9
62. Ibid, ch 35 P. 349
63. Ibid, ch 27 P. 282
64. The Mill VII, 2 P. 523
65. Ibid, VII, 5 P. 546
66. Daniel Deronda ch 65 P. 837
67. Ibid, ch 65 P. 839
68. Ibid, ch 69 P.P. 877-8 &
69. Ibid, ch 69 P. 879
70. Middlewarch, ch I P. 32
71. Ibid, ch 8 P. 92
72. Ibid, ch 8 P. 93
73. Ibid, ch IO P.II2
74. Ibid, ch 29 P 3I9
75. Ibid, ch 20 P. 234
76. Ibid, ch 20 P. 234
77. Ibid, ch 37 P. 397-8
78. Ibid, ch 37 P. 398
79. Ibid, ch 39 P 427
80. Ibid, ch 83 P.868
81. Ibid, ch 82 P. 862
82. Barbara Hardy Critical Essays on George Eliot :
82. Idea and Image "the world g george Eliot"
   (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd : London 1970)
   P.P. 186-7
83. Middlemarch ch I2 P. I44
84. Ibid, ch 8I P. 85 8
85. Daniel Deronda ch I4 P.P. I85-I86
86. Ibid, ch 69 P.P. 875-6
87. Ibid, ch 23 P. 30I
88. Ibid, ch 7 P. 97
89. Ibid, ch 28 P. 36I
90. Ibid, ch 29 P. 372
91. Ibid ch 3I P. 404
92. Ibid, ch 36 P. 502
93. Ibid, ch 44 P. 608
94. Ibid, ch 3I P. 405
95. Ibid, ch 36
96. Ibid, ch 22 P. 284
97. Ibid, ch 5I P. 688
98. Ibid, ch 52 P. 7I6
99. Ibid, ch 6I P.P. 800-I
100. Ibid, ch 37 P.P. 516-7
101. Ibid, ch 37 P. 525
102. Adam Bede ch 22 P. 250
103 Ibid ch 27 P. 287
104. The Mill IV, 3, P. 308
105. Middlemarch ch 20 P. 234
106. Ibid, ch 24 P. 274
107. Ibid, ch 54 P. 58I
108. Ibid, ch 22 P. 252
109. Ibid ch 19 P. 223
110. Ibid, ch 38 P. 415
111. Ibid, ch 82 P. 860
112. The Mill III, 9 P. 281
113. Adam Bede ch 5 P. 159
114. Ibid, ch 2 P. 42
115. Ibid, ch 5 P.P. 74-5
116. The Mill I, 3 P. 30
117. Adam Bede ch 18 P.P. 188-9
118. Ibid ch 18 P. 187
119. The Mill V, I, P. 316
120. Middlemarch ch 34 P. 360
121. The Mill I, 2 P. 130
122. Ibid III, I P. 209
123. Ibid, III, I P. 209
124. Ibid, VII, 3 P. 526
125. Middlemarch ch 20 P. 226
126. Adam Bede ch 4 P. 49
127. Ibid, ch 4 P.P. 48
128. Ibid, ch I5 P. 153
129. The Mill, I 3, P. 24
130. Ibid, V, 2, P. 325
131. Ibid, VI, 2 P. 400
132. Ibid, V, 4, P. 349
133. Middlemarch ch I2 P. I44
134. Ibid ch I2 P. I40
135. Ibid ch II P. I29
136. Ibid ch 63 P. 694
I37. *Middlemarch* ch I2 P. I40
I38. *The Mill* VI, 6 P. 420
I39. Ibid V, I P. 317
I40. *Adam Bede* ch I P.P. I8,24
I41. Ibid, ch 38 P. 373
I42. Ibid, ch 30 P. 463
I43. Ibid, ch 3 P. 47-48
I44. Ibid, ch 53 P. 490
I45. Ibid, ch 3 P. 46
I46. Ibid, ch 22 P. 282
I47. *The Mill* VI, 7 P.P. 436, 437
I48. Ibid, VI, 7 P. 435
I49. Ibid, VI, I3 P. 482
I50. *Daniel Deronda* ch 47 P. 512
I51. *Middlemarch* ch 7 P. 89
I52. Ibid, ch 7 P. 90
I54. Ibid, VI, I P.P. 383-4
I55. *Middlemarch* ch 2I P. 24I
I56. *Daniel Deronda* ch 37 P. 52I
I57. *Middlemarch* ch II P. 120
I58 *The Mill* II, 2 P. 487
I59. Ibid I, 9 P.P. IO3-4
I60. Ibid, IV, 3 P. 305
I61. Ibid, V, I P. 320
I62. Ibid, V, 4 P. 348
I63. Ibid, V, I P.P. 3I8, 3I9
164. Ibid, VI, 2 P. 391
165. Ibid, VI, 3 P. 399
166. Ibid, VI, 3 P. 402
167. Ibid, VI, 3 P. 403
168. Ibid, VI, 7 P. 433
169. Ibid, VI, 3 P.P. 401-2
170. Ibid, VI, 6, P. 423
171. Ibid, VI, 6, P. 425
172. Ibid, VI, 7, P. 429
173. Ibid, VI, 7, P.P. 435-6
174. Ibid, VI, 7, P. 437
I - DEFINITION -

Symbolism allows an author to link the limited world of his characters to the one of the great systems of values, so that the reader is able to compare what happens in the novel with its original parallel. Specific actions in the story illustrate general patterns of behaviour, and the private character acquires a new importance when he is seen in the light of his symbolic counterpart. Novelists have gone to the Bible and to classical mythology as sources of myth, creating characters who are closely identifiable with biblical or mythological figures and events, and Eliot is one of these novelists.

If Eliot's use of classical mythology is limited to simple, though edifying, allusions, it is a different thing with the Bible which she extensively and finely exploits for the different purposes of her work. She enriches her novels with actions, ideas, and especially scenes, invested with meanings which are easily associated in our mind with actions, ideas, and scenes we find in the Bible. The Bible however does not constitute the sole kind of symbolism she makes use of in her novels.
Indeed she also resorts to another category of symbolism, that of her own creation, and which is thence specific to her. But before we make any attempt to study the latter, we will first examine her use of the conventional symbol.

II - CONVENTIONAL SYMBOL : ELIOT AND THE BIBLE -

*Adam Bede* is the richest in the presentation of scenes inspired by the Bible. And the biblical parallel serves either to give solemnity to the scene, or to cast an ironic light on it. Sympathy is a feeling which George Eliot wanted all men to be governed by. She was convinced that every man was accessible to it, and the main purpose of her work was to stir the numbed heart, to vibrate in all men the fibre of sympathy, no matter how stiff, no matter how tough. *Adam Bede* is thus a fervent appeal to sympathy among men. In *Adam Bede* we come to judge a character from his attitude toward his neighbour's suffering. We saw how their respective reactions to the news of Thias Bede's death served as a means of contrasting the moral attitudes of Hetty and Dinah; we also witnessed with some emotion, the deep concern of the whole community of Hayslope at Hetty's tragedy, and there are many other examples. What I want to show is that the sense of solidarity, of communion, in short, of sympathy, is made emphatic at every opportunity and in every aspect, that is, physical, spiritual, moral. The most articulate example of this is to be found towards the end of the book. *Adam Bede* has been informed of Hetty's crime and treachery. In his sorrow, he grows hard
and unforgiving. Bartle Massey, the schoolteacher and Mr Irwine the preacher, both friends of him, apply themselves to awaken him to the fact of Hetty's own suffering and misery. The rendering of this gradual relenting is remarkable. Because the sight of Hetty is unbearable to him, he feels some apprehension to go and witness Hetty's trial. As Massey relates the trial to him, "Adam's heart beat so violently he was unable to speak - he could only return the pressure of his friend's hand" (1). Massey and himself feel deeply about Hetty and the communication here is physical. Then Bartle Massey invites him to share some bread and wine, and it is significant that this is offered by Mr Irwine - the priest.

"And now" (Barthe Massey) said, rising again, "I must see to your having a bit of the loaf, and some of that wine Mr Irwine sent this morning. He'll be angry with me if you don't have it. Come, now", he went on, bringing forward the bottle and the loaf and pouring some wine into a cup, "I must have a bit and sup myself. Drink a drop with me, my lad - drink with me" (2).

But Adam at this stage is not ready to perform the Holy Communion. He has still too much bitterness in him. So he refuses to eat and to drink. Barthe Massey expresses his regret and compassion in terms of figures: "I'd have given up figures for ever only to have had some good news to bring to you, my poor lad" (3). And when we think that he is a school-teacher, we then fully value the extent of his sacrifice and appreciate his deep concern. In fact, the whole
chapter is filled with communion associations: "drink a drop with me", "everybody in court felt for him (Mr Poyser) - it was so like one sob, the sound they made where he came down again", "the blow falls heavily on him as well as you", "drink some wine now, and show me you want to bear it like a man". Here Eliot says that "Bartle had made the right sort of appeal. Adam, with an air of quiet obedience, took up the cup and drunk a little". This marks the second phase of the communion. Adam here drinks to communicate symbolically with Mr Poyser. When Adam finally resolves to go and see Hetty into court, it is as if he had come out of his depression a new man, thoroughly regenerated:

"Mr Massey", he said at last, pushing the hair off his forehead, "I'll go back with you. I'll go into court. It's cowardly of me to keep away. I'll stand by her - I'll own her - for all she's been deceitful. They oughtn't to cast her off - her own flesh and blood. We hand folks over God's mercy, and show none ourselves. I used to be hard sometime: I'll never be hard again. I'll go, Mr Massey - I'll go with you".

After his decision to go and stand by Hetty, Bartle and himself drink and eat some more bread and wine as though to baptise the wiser man he has become:

"Take a bit, then, and another sup, Adam, for the love of me".

And Eliot comments:

"Nerved by an active resolution, Adam took a morsel of bread and drank some wine. He was haggard and unshaven, as he had been yesterday, but he stood upright again,
and looked more like the Adam of former days (4). And the chapter closes on this full performance of the Holy Communion and the contrast between inner and outer Adam.

Still in the light of reunion, reconciliation and sympathy, we have in chapter 47 (the Last Moment), the mock marriage of Adam and Hetty under the direction of Dinah. Hetty is judged and sentenced to death the very day she and Adam should have been joined in matrimony by Mr Irwine. In the evening, Adam comes to visit Hetty in prison where Dinah is trying to give her some comfort and make her repent. The marriage is ironically performed in terms of forgiveness.

When their sad eyes met - when Hetty and Adam looked at each other - she felt the change in him too, and it seemed to strike her with fresh fear. It was the first time she had seen any being whose face seemed to reflect the change in herself: Adam was a new image of the dreadful past and the dreadful present. She trembled more as she looked at him.

"Speak to him Hetty", Dinah said;
"Tell him what is in your heart"
Hetty obeyed, like a little child.
"Adam ... I'm very sorry ... I behaved very wrong to you ... will you forgive me ... before I die ?
Adam answered with a half-sob,
"Yes, I forgive thee Hetty. I forgave thee long ago".

It had eemed to Adam as if his brain would burst with the
anguish of meeting Hetty's eyes in the first moments, but the sound of her voice uttering, these penitent words touched a chord which had been less strained. There was a sense of relief from what was becoming unbearable, and the rare tears came— they had never come before, since he had hung on Seth's neck in the beginning of his sorrow.

Hetty made an involuntary movement towards him, some of the love that she had once lived in the midst of was come near her again. She kept hold of Dinash's hand, but she went up to Adam and said timidly, "Will you kiss me again, Adam, for all I've been so wicked?". Adam took the blanched wasted hand she put out to him, and they gave each other the solemn unspeakable kiss of a life-long parting (5).

This is a beautifully pathetic scene in which Dinah the preacher reconciles, spiritually unites, Adam Bede and Hetty Sorrel before God.

The last emphatic expression of communion between men appears near the end of the novel, in "The Harvest Supper" (ch. 53) which in fact is the Last Supper. It is the ultimate symbol of man's reconciliation with himself, with his fellow men and with Nature. Before the supper, we naturally have something similar to the Epiphany something revelatory of God's presence among men:
As Adam was going homeward, on Wednesday evening, on the six o'clock sunlight, he saw in the distance the last load of barely winding its way towards the yard-gate of the Hall Farm, and heard the chant of "Harvest Blome"! rising and sinking like a wave. Fainter and fainter, and more musical through the growing distance, the falling dying sound still reached him, as he neared the Willow Brook. The low westering sun shone right on the shoulders of the old Binton Hills, turning the unconscious sheep into bright spots of light; shone on the windows of the cottage too, and made them a-flame with a glory beyound that of amber or amethyst. It was enough to make Adam feel that he was in a great temple, and that the distant chant was a sacred song.

As to the supper proper,

It was a goodly sight - that table, with Martin Poyser's round good-humoured face and large person at the head of it, helping his servants to the fragrant roast beef and pleased when the empty plates came again. Martin, though usually blest with a good appetite, really forgot to finish his own beef to-night - It was so pleasant to him to look on in the intervals of carving and see how the others enjoyed their supper (6).

But we do not have only symbolic scenes, we also encounter characters who are obvious symbolic figures. Mr Irwine, for example, is a Christ-figure. The sacrifice
of his life lies in the fact that he chooses not to marry, in order to meet the material needs of his sisters and mother, for his income is limited. And Eliot endeavours to make more of a self-sacrifice which she means to take greater proportions in our estimation, than we would objectively allow, and she comments:

"To speak paradoxically, the existence of insignificant people has very important consequences in the world. It can be shown to affect the price of bread and rate of wages, to call forth many evil tempers from the selfish and many heroisms from the sympathetic, and, on other ways, to play no small part in the tragedy of life. And if that handsome, generous-blooded clergyman, the Rev. Adolphus Irwine, had not had these two hopelessly maiden sisters, his lot would have been shaped quite differently: he would very likely have taken a comely wife in his youth, and now, where his hair was getting grey under the powder, would have had tall sons and blooming daughters - such professions, in short, as men commonly think will repay them for all the labour they take with all his three livings no more than seven hundred a-year, and seeing no way of keeping his splendid mother and his sickly sister, not to reckon a second sister, who was usually spoken of without any adjective, in such ladylike ease as became their birth and habits, and at the same time providing for a family of his own-he remained, you see, at the age of eight-and-forty, a bachelor, not making any merit of that renunciation, but saying laughingly if any one alluded to it, that he made it an excuse for many indul-
191

gences which a wife would never have allowed him. And
perhaps he was the only person in the world who did not
think his sisters uninteresting and superfluous; for his was
one of those large-hearted, sweet-blooded natures that
never know a narrow or a grudging thought; ... but ... of
a sufficiently subtle moral fibre to have an unwearying
tenderness for obscure and monotonous suffering (7).

Throughout the novel, Mr Irwine has a beneficient
moral influence over the other characters. He is trust-
worthy. Anyone in distress comes to him. In that too, he
stands for the Messiah. He is the way, the truth and the
life. He who comes to him is saved. Arthur refuses to go
to him in due time and he experiences the catastrophic con-
sequences. To Irwine, Adam humbly and candidly confesses:
"I come to you, sir, as the gentleman I look up to most of
anybody " (8). Then he tells Irwine that Hetty has run away.
And much to his surprise (but not to ours) Irwine tells him
the "how" and "why" of Hetty's prolonged absence : ("Seek,
and you shall find"). In Irwine, Adam has found more than
the truth, he has found the warmth of a friend's helping
hand.

In her way, Hetty parodies Caen pursued by the vi-
sion of God's eye after the murder of his brother Abel. And
as Hetty unfolds her experience to Dinah, we gradually asso-
ciate her with Caen who symbolizes the first stage of the
work of the Nemesis, that which is performed between the
culprit and his own conscience. In the following extract, we can observe how Hetty, obsessed by her crime and persecuted by her conscience, comes to amplify and distort the vision of the world around her. She sees the "eye" of justice everywhere, and she hopelessly, pathetically, keeps moving on:

"I came to a place where there was lots of chips and turf, and I sat down on the trunk of a tree to think what I should do. And all of a sudden I saw a hole under the nut-tree, like a little grave. And it darted into me like lightning - I'd lay the baby there and cover it with the grass and the chips. I couldn't kill it any other way. And I'd done it in a minute; and, oh, it cried so, Dinah - I couldn't cover it quite up - I thought perhaps somebody'ud come and take care of it, and then it wouldn't die. And I made haste out of the wood, but I could hear it crying all the while; and when I got out into the fields, it was as if I was held fast - I couldn't go away, for all I wanted so to go. And I sat against the haystack to watch if anybody'ud come. I was very hungry, and I'd only a bit of bread left, but I couldn't go away. And after ever such a while - hours and hours - the man came - him in a smock-frock, and he looked at me so, I was frightened, and I made haste and went on. I thought he was going to the wood and would perhaps find the baby. And I went right on, till I came to a village, a long way off from

X The first italic is Elio's.

The rest is mine
the wood, and I was very sick, and faint, and hungry. I got something to eat there, and bought a loaf. But I was frightened to stay. I heard the baby crying, and thought the other folks heard it too - and I went on. But I was so tired, and it was getting towards dark. And at last, by the roadside there was a barn - ever such a way off any house - like the barn in Abbot's Close, and I thought I could go in there and hide myself among the hay and straw and nobody'ud be likely to come. I went on, and it was half full o'trusses of straw, and there was some hay too. And I made myself a bed, ever so far behind, where nobody could find me; and I was so tired and weak, I went to sleep ... But oh, the baby's crying kept waking me, and I thought that man as looked at me so was come and laying hold of me. But I must have slept a long while at last, though I didn't know, for when I got up and went out of the barn, I didn't know whether it was night or morning. But it was morning, for it kept getting lighter, and I turned back the way I'd come. I couldn't help it, Dinah; it was the baby's crying made me go and yet I was frightened to death. I thought that man in the smock-frock'ud see me and know I put the baby there. But I went on, for all that. I'd left off thinking about going home - it had gone out o'my mind. I saw nothing but that place on the wood where I'd buried the baby ... I see it now. Oh Dinah! shall I allays see it?" (9).
The verdict (ch. 43) or Hetty's judgment is full of apocalyptic connotations: "The place of the trial was a
grand old hall, now destroyed by fire. The midday light
that fell on the close pavement of human heads was shed
through a line of high pointed windows, variegated with
the mellow tints of old painted glass. Grim, dusty armour
hung on high relief in front of the dark oaken gallery at
the farther end, and under the broad arch of the great
millioned window opposite was spread a curtain of old tapes-
try covered with dim melancholy figures, like a dozing in-
distinct dream, of the past" (10).
Further down in the same chapter, Hetty is assimilated to
a demon.

If biblical reference is abundant and more articu-
late in Adam Bede, it is not lacking in the other novels.
In The Mill on the Floss whose main theme is forgiveness
and reconciliation, we witness the violation of one of the
Ten Commandments. It is a case of a father - Mr Tulliver -
instructing his son - Tom - and making him swear on the
Bible that he will never forgive his worst enemy - lawyer
Wakem -. The son promises and writes the pledge in the
Bible. A capital blasphemy. This is certainly audacious of
George Eliot, but we must also admit, knowing our author,
that this outrage to the Bible is an effective way of cou-
veying the extent of Mr Tulliver's hatred for Wakem. I will
quote the passage relating that scene whose high immorality
is balanced by Maggie's reprobation, and in which we are
clearly expected to adopt Maggie's attitude.
"And you mind this, Tom - you never forgive him, neither, if you mean to be my son. There'll maybe come a time when you make him feel - it'll never come to me. I'n got my head under the yoke. Now write, write it i' the Bible".

"Oh father, what? said Maggie, sinking down by his knee, pale and trembling." It's wicked to curse and bear malice".

"It isn't wicked, I tell you", said her father fiercely. "It's wicked as the raskills should prosper - it's the devil's doing. Do as I tell you, Tom. Write".

"What am I to write, Father?" said Tom with gloomy submission.

"Write as your father, Edward Tulliver, took service under John Wakem, the man as had helped to ruin him, because I'd promised my wife to make her what amends I could for her trouble, and because I wanted to die on th'old place where I was born and my father was born. Put that i'the right words - you know how - and then write, as I don't forgive Wakem, for all that; and for all I'll serve him honest. I wish evil may befall him. Write that".

There was a dead silence as Tom's pen moved along the paper; Mrs Tulliver looked scared, and Maggie trembled like a leaf.

"Now let me hear what you've wrote", said Mr Tulliver, Tom read aloud, slowly.
"Now write, write as you'll remember what Wakem's done to your father, and you'll make him and his feel it, if ever the day comes. And sign your name, Thomas Tulliver".

"Oh no, father, dear father!" said Maggie, almost choked with fear. "You shouldn't make Tom write that".

"Be quiet Maggie! said Tom. "I shall write it" (11).

This scene is unique in George Eliot's work. No other character in any of George Eliot's novels uses such language.

In Middlemarch, biblical symbolism is immersed in the whole structure of the book. It is latent but obviously present. Here we do not have scenes, or parables, but simple imagery endowed with symbolic extension. This use of imagery is embryonic in Adam Bede (cf "The Verdict"). It reaches fullness of expression in Middlemarch. We have imagery reminiscent of Genesis, Exodus, Epiphany and finally Apocalypse.

Because

The main theme in Middlemarch is that of purpose, of construction, we naturally have metaphors of shaping and making, and framing. These are to convey the idea of purpose. They pivot on notions of pattern or rule, measure or structure. They are all words used in metaphors which, explicitly or by implication, reveal the individual directing his destiny by conscious, creative purpose toward the end of absolute human order; we have metaphors of shapelessness with their antitheses "a kind Providence furnishes the limpest personality with a little gum or starch in the form of tradition". Opposed to them are the many metaphors of the
unorganised, of chaos, mainly of the human mind, which, at
the worst like Mr Brooke's availing nothing perceptible in
the body politic, is a mess. These many metaphors of chaos
as opposed to order are in fact humourously dramatized by
Mr Brooke's "documents" which need arranging but get mixed
up in pigeon-holes; and Mary Garth's "red fire which
seemed like a solemn existence calmly independent of petty
passions, the imbecile desires, the straining often worthless
uncertainties, which were daily moving her contempt";
After,

The group of metaphors belonging to the Genesis, we
have another group of metaphors which belong to the Exodus.
The Exodus is, as we all know, the emigration of the Hebrews
from Egypt, the land where they were maintained in slavery.
In *Middlemarch*, we have figures which oppose freedom to va-
rious forms of restraint - burdens, ties, bonds, and so on:
Ladislaw calls himself "Pegasus", and every form of prescri-
bed work "harness", and Causabon gives the cue, "I shall let
him be tried by the test of freedom"; Towards the end,
Dorathea observes on the road outside her window "a man" with
a bundle on his back and a woman carrying her baby" (12), and
still nearer the end, when Lydgate has "accepted his narrowed
lot" (there will be no way out, no exodus for him), that is,
the values of his childbride, he thinks "he had chosen this
fragile creature, and had taken the burden of her life upon
his arms. He must walk as he could, carrying that burden pity-
fully" (13). All these are metaphors pushed on to explicit
symbolism. The oppositions in these metaphors of antithesis
are the classic opposition between What Is and What Should Be;
between the daily prosaic realities of a community like Middlemarch (Egypt) and the "higher" realities of that "New Jerusalem" toward which Dorothea and others are "on the road". Everyone and everything in this novel is moving on a "way". Life is a progress, and in the novel, it takes various shapes, it is a road, a stream, a channel, an avenue, a way, a journey, a voyage, a ride, a vista, a chain, a line, a course, a path, a process. At the end of the novel, Eliot in a religious spirit, suggests that "Every limit is a beginning as well as an ending. Everything strains forward. Consciousness is a stream" (14).

In Dorothea's mind, there "was a current into which all thought and feeling were apt sooner or later to flow the reaching forward of the whole consciousness toward the fullest truth, the least partial god" (15). "Character too" we are told, "is a process" and it is a process which we recognize by achievement - "the niceties of inward balance, by which man swims and makes his point or else is carried headlong" (16). Eliot's characters think their existence as "the stream of life in which the stream of life we trace", but the personal life finally flows into the "gulf of death", but the general stream flows on, through vistas of endlessly unfolding good, and that good consists of individual achievements of "the fullest truth, the least partial good" of Lydgate's individually made points. This is a progressive view of human history.

Like the restraint - freedom antithesis, these metaphors of progress entail metaphors of hindrance to progress.
The individual purpose is sometimes confused by "a social life which seemed nothing but a labyrinth of petty courses, a walled-in maze" (17); sometimes by the inadequacy of the purpose itself as Casaubon, who "was lost among small closets and winding stairs" (18); experience and circumstance over and over become "yokes" which slow the progress, for there are those always "who carry a weight of trials"; one may toil "under the fetters of a promise" or move, like Lydgate, more haltingly than one had hoped under the burden of a responsibility.

At the end come the metaphors we will label the "muted" apocalypse. The recurrence of the words up, high and higher used in metaphorical contexts is equalled only, perhaps, by the use of the word light, until one feels a special significance in "giving up" and in all the faces that beam, all the ideas that flash across the mind, and the things that are all the time being "taken" in that light or in this light. Fire and light play an important metaphorical role in this phase where things are gloriously transformed, transfused or transfigured. Perception here is thought of as revelation, and minds and souls are always "opening" to their flux. Things are incessantly "manifested" or "made manifest", as if life were a perpetual epiphany."Revelation" is made endless use of. And when perception is not a "revelation", it is a "divination"; characters here would rather "divine" than "recognize". It is here that we come upon George Eliot's unquestionably favourite word, and
the centre of her most persistent metaphors. For the word "sight" or "feeling" she almost substitutes the more pregnant, portentous word "vision". Visions are of every possible kind, from dim to bright to blinding, from testing to guiding. The simplest sight of the physical detail may be a vision; every insight is of course a vision, usually an inward vision. When perception is revelation, then it is, secondarily, nourishment, and the frequency of metaphors in which perception is conceived as spiritual food and drink, and of all the metaphors of fullness, filling, and fulfilment, is inevitable. It is likewise energizing in various figurative ways.

We have illumination, revelation, fulfilment. One phase remains in this pattern of a classic religious experience; that is expectation. Metaphors of expectation are everywhere; we shall represent them in their most frequent form, a phrase so rubbed by usage that it hardly seems metaphorical at all. It is "to look forward", and it appears on nearly every page in Middlemarch, a commonplace there too, yet it is much more than that, it is the clue to the whole system of metaphor we have attempted to sort out; it is the clue to the novel, the clue to the mind.

The following passage exhibits a series of metaphorical habit representing George Eliot's selectivity:

Mr Casanbon's talk about his great book was full of new vistas; and this sense of revelation, this surprise of a nearer introduction to Stoics and Alexandrians, as people who had ideas not totally unlike her own [Dorothea's] kept
in abeyance for the time her usual eagerness for a binding theory which could bring her own life and doctrine into strict connection with that amazing past and give the remotest sources of knowledge some bearing on her actions ... she was looking forward to higher initiation in ideas, as she was looking forward to marriage, and blending her dim conceptions of both ... All her eagerness for acquirement lay within, that full current of sympathetic motive in which her ideas and impulses were habitually swept along. She did not want to deck herself with knowledge - to wear it loose from the nerves and blood that fed her action; and if she had written a book she must have done it as Saint Theresa did, under the command of an authority that constrained her conscience. But something she yearned for by which her life might be filled with action at once rational and ardent and since the time was gone by for guiding visions and spiritual directors, since prayer heightened yearning but not instruction, what lamp was there but knowledge?" (19).

This one paragraph nearly contains all of them: metaphors of unification and its antithesis, that of restraint-freedom, that of progress, that of apocalypse. This passage is not in the least exceptionnal. The elements here are separated into a series to demonstrate how completely they gradually embody a pseudo-religious philosophy, how absolutely expressive is a metaphor, and how systematic it can become. This is a novel of religious yearning without religious object.
The unification it aspires to is the unification of human knowledge in the service of social ends; the antitheses which obstruct it are the antitheses between man as he is and man as he could be in this world; the hindrances to life as progress are man's social, not his moral, flaws; the purposive dedication of individuals will overcome those flaws; we see the fulfilment of all truly intellectual passions, for the greater glory of man.

The novel is pervaded by religious reference. All characters fall into various "religious" postures: Dorothea, the central character has the true "religious" dedication, Casanbon is a false prophet; Bulstrode is a parody-prophet, Lydgate is the nearly true prophet - a "scientific Phoenix" - somehow deflected from his prophecy; Ladislaw is the true prophet. He is systematically assimilated to the Christ, and the analogy would be complete but for the omission from his figure, of the supremely important element of Christ's sacrifice. This is not surprising in a novel which is about progress without guilt.

Even things in Middlemarch are invested with religious import. The political newspapers The Pioneer and the Trumpet are parodies of the progress metaphors for the first, and of the apocalyptic for the second. Even the Weights and Scales, that modest rural tavern, evokes the sense of balance. Along with its wretched tenant, the miserable farm called Freeman's End constitutes an eloquent little drama of the freedom - restraint metaphors.
Because Daniel Deronda deals with Judaism, we cannot possibly expect the profusion of Christian symbols, nevertheless we have in the figure of Mordecaï, the universal symbol of a prophet, a true prophet, a man almost physically consummated by the flame of his ardour.

III - SPECIFIC SYMBOL -

From what we have seen above, we can deduce that a system of symbolism basically depends on the existence of a commonly known body of ideas or beliefs. But these are not necessarily conventional. In this part of the study of Eliot's symbolism, we are going to see how an author comes to create his own system of symbolism. The process consists in the use of repeated images woven into patterns who move towards symbolism.

Several scenes in George Eliot's novels present symbolic objects which are not parts of larger patterns. Generally, these objects are made symbolic by association with actions whose moral significance is clear; natural and domestic objects are thus given conceptual import for the symbolic enactment of moral qualities. A familiar example is George Eliot's use of two of her standard properties, the mirror and the window, associated with the self-absorption of egoism and the outward orientation of its antithesis. We saw how the two are immediately juxtaposed in ch.15 of Adam Bede "The Two Bed-chambers", where we watched Hetty as she was performing her
ritual of self-worship before the mirror, while in the adjacent room, Dinah, sitting before her window was thinking of the lot of mankind. Here the two objects - mirror and window - are used as a means of characterization. They serve the same purpose in Middlemarch too. Fair and vain Rosamond would preferably sit in a place from where she can catch her image once in a while in a mirror. Of wise Dorothea, we are told that her drawing-room had "two tall mirrors and tables with nothing on them - in brief, it was a room where you had no reason for sitting in one place rather than in another" (20). In Daniel Deronda this symbol is used economically because its presence at once conveys Gwendolen's egoism. Thus, Gwendolen's different reactions to it mark the different phases of the change she undergoes. In the first scene, she actually kisses her image. The satisfaction she draws from her beauty is an opiate to her sorrow:

Gwendolen knew nothing of such inward strife. She had a naïve delight in her fortunate self, which any but the harshest saintliness will have some indulgence for in a girl who had every day seen a pleasant reflection of that self in her friend's flattery as well as in the looking-glass. And even in this beginning of troubles, while for lack of anything else to do she sat gazing at her image in the growing light, her face gathered a complacency gradual as the cheerfulness of the morning. Her beautiful lips curled into a more and more decided smile, till at last she took off her hat, leaned forward and kissed the cold glass which had looked so warm. How could she believe in sorrow? (21).
This early scene becomes a point of reference for indicating the changes which take place in Gwendolen. Thus when her family's financial down-fall has darkened her prospects, "the self-delight with which she had kissed her image in the glass had faded before the sense of futility" (22). As she is forced to assess the resources which may be used in her present situation, she examines her image again, not with delight but with an attempt at cool appraisal, thinking "I am beautiful - not exultingly, but with grave decision" (23). Later, after her marriage to Grandcourt, she "no longer felt inclined to kiss her fortunate image in the glass; she looked at it with wonder that she could be so miserable" (24), and a moment later we see her "looking at herself in a mirror - not in admiration, but in a sad kind of companionship" (25). Finally, further diminished by the misery of her marriage and the effort of disguising the whole thing, she places her large drawing room "like an imprisoned dumb creature, not recognizing herself in the glass panels" (26). This series of parallel scenes traces the change in Gwendolen and then ends as her self-concern, whether in delight or misery, finally yields to the sense of a larger world beyond her which Deronda brings.

The window is almost never used in that economic way. Its function is always local. The window almost always translates the character's detachment from his immediate environment, that is the projection of himself into another world. This, often to elude an unpleasant or oppressive reality. In short it conveys any state of mind from bewilderment to relief, hope to despair
and vice-versa. Here are a few examples gathered at random.

Dejected Rex in Daniel Deronda "sat still and looked out of the bow-window on the lawn and shrubs covered with hoar-frost ... He felt as if he had had a resurrection into a new world" (27). Middlemarch is the richest in the symbolic use of the window. A character's reaction or non-reaction to the window can convey his attitude to, or interest in, the world around him. We are told that "with his taper stuck before him he (Casanbon) forgot the absence of windows, and in bitter manuscript remarks on other men's notions about the solar deities, he had become indifferent to the sunlight" (28); while Dorothea, "as she laid the cameo-cases on the table in the bow-window, ... unconsciously kept her hands on them, immediately absorbed in looking out on the still, white enclosure which made her visible world" (29). And her indifference to the scene offered by the window shows that she is wrought-up: "the open bow-window let in the serene glory of the afternoon lying in the avenue, where the lime-trees cast long shadows. But Dorothea knew nothing of the dazzling sunrays: if there were discomfort in that, how could she tell that it was not part of her inward misery?" (30). Often with Dorothea, the window becomes the antithetic symbol of claustrophobia. For her, "the mere chance of seeing Will occasionally was like a lunette opened in the wall of her prison, giving her a glimpse of the sunny air" (31). As Will enters Dorothea's house, Eliot finds it necessary to mention the presence and the position of the window: "... the boudoir ... had ... also a bow-window looking out on the avenue. But when Pratt showed Will Ladislaw into it the window was open" (32). When Will asks her whether she minds him going away, in her bewilderment "she
was not aware how long it was before she answered. She had turned her head and was looking out of the window on the rosebushes, which seemed to have in them the summers of all the years when Will would be away" (33). Much later, in Will's presence, as she was at pains to repress her love and could hardly overcome her emotion, she was "walking towards the window, yet speaking and moving with only a dim sense of what she was doing" (34). Elsewhere we are told that "while Bulstrode wrote, Lydgate turned to the window thinking of his home - thinking of his life with its good stard saved from frustration, its good purposes still broken" (35). Later, when Dorothea beseeches him to tell the whole truth about Raffles' death, "Lydgate started up from his chair and went towards the window, forgetting where he was" (36). As we can see, the window in George Eliot's fiction is almost never a simple contingent architectural detail.

The river is another of George Eliot's created symbol which appears in all her novels. This natural element is mainly used as a symbol of purification. In some cases, it first works as a Nemesis, and then as a purifying element. The river in Adam Bede stands as a Nemesis for Thias Bede, an irresponsible father who goes out drinking when he should be at work. He is drowned on his way back home, certainly too drunk to cross the river steadily. Nemesis is the river for Grandcourt as well, that aristocratic boa-constrictor, who finds death in deep water. In both cases (especially in Grandcourt's), we can almost say - without any pretention to be ourselves better mortals - that the river purifies Nature by anihilating those pernicious elements.
Mirah wants to drown herself to put an end to her miseries, but because she is too pure a soul, Deronda is made to come just in time to save her. Maggie and Tom Tulliver are drowned, but in their case it is more a baptism of a "new life" than a purification. It is a baptism of new understanding, though all the same we cannot help feeling as Voltaire's Micromegas that "A peine a-t-on commencé à s'instruire un peu que la mort arrive avant qu'on ait de l'expérience" (37). But Eliot wanted it that way, and our part is only to accept.

If the mirror, the window, and the river are George Eliot's favourite symbols, common to all her novels, we find some other objects specific to two novels, and used as symbols - and not in the least unsuccessful. Other metaphors thus tend to be, or to become, explicit symbols of psychological or moral conditions, and they actually tend to function in such a way as to give symbolic value to much action, as Dorothea's pleasure in planning buildings: "a kind of work which she delighted in", and Casambon's desire to construct a "key to all Mythologies".

Insignificant objects may by their context, be symbolically extended. Until Hetty's pregnancy is obvious, one of the few oblique signs of her seduction is the fate of her pink silk handkerchief. But this is linked up with the finery she adores, the cheap jewellery she wears in her bedroom, giving way to Arthur's presents as later she dresses for his birthday feast:
But there was something more to be done, apparently, before she put on her neckerchief and long sleeves, which she was to wear in the day-time, for now she unlocked the drawer that held her private treasures. It is more than a month since we saw her unlock that drawer before, and now it holds new treasures, so much more precious than the old ones that these are thrust into the corner. Hetty would not care to put the large coloured glass earings into her ears now; for see! she has got a beautiful pair of gold and pearls and garnet, lying snugly in a pretty little box lined with white satin (38).

These jewels significantly reappear later in the novel as a material index of Hetty's dwindling dreams and hopes. As a matter of fact, she has eventually to use them in order to afford her homeward journey from Windsor. The hard facts of life overtake the pretty emblems of romance. But the jewellery does not, like the neckerchief, function simply as a means of hinting at that part of the story which cannot be explicitly told, it also allows, by extension, for contrasts of character. It is indeed significant that Arthur gives Dinah no finery, no ornament, but his watch and chain, which are useful items. Again, when Adam goes to Hall Farm to court Hetty, he gives her not jewels, but a rose which, he adds prudently and significantly: "you can put it in water after" (39). But Hetty's mind is on Arthur and she can only treat Adam's gift as she would Arthur's:

Hetty took the rose, smiling as she did so at the pleasant thought that Arthur could so soon get back if he liked. There was a flash of hope and happiness in her mind, and with a sudden impulse of gaiety she did what she had very often done before - stuck the rose in her hair a little
above the left ear. The tender admiration in Adam's face was slightly shadowed by reluctant disapproval (40).

The diamonds in Daniel Deronda also exemplify George Eliot's characteristic, subtle and inevitable use of symbolism. They are Grandcourt's mother's diamonds "long ago" given to Lydia to wear. His asking them back for Gwendolen is his means of announcing to Lydia that the relations they symbolize - marital - virtually - are to cease. Lydia refuses to give the diamonds up for they were given to her as his wife, and his wife she has been in all but legal form and social recognition. She eventually concedes and sends them to Gwendolen on the night of her wedding-day with an enclosed message that turns them to poison: "I am the grave on which your chance of happiness is buried ..." (41). And from that moment, the diamonds become for Gwendolen the consciousness of that past of Grandcourt's with Lydia which precludes any possibility of good married relations between him and herself. The first time she appears in public after her marriage, we see her wearing the diamonds and the author tells us that her "belief in her power of dominating had utterly gone". And again and again, with inevitable naturalness, the diamonds play their symbolic part. At the final stage, they come to represent Nemesis: they are what Gwendolen married Grandcourt for, and her punishment is having to wear them.

With this last image of Nemesis, we come to the conclusion to George Eliot's symbolism. Symbolism in Eliot's fiction is in service of her moral speculation.
With her, insignificant objects become explicit symbols of psychological or moral conditions, and simple mortals are pitched in a high, or even lower key, through their association to biblical figures. While we all easily acknowledge that the Bible as a source of symbol enriches, embellishes, elevates George Elliot's work, we are forced, after a closer analysis, to admit George Elliot's use of natural and commonplace objects as also part of the general strategy of style which does not call attention to itself but directs it toward the central human drama.

IV - SHIFT OF MODE -

It is all very well to build up a system of symbolism, whatever effective or sophisticated. But is it enough for the system to claim a right to perfection? To this we may answer "no", with some confidence. For one always ought to consider one delicate aspect which has its full importance: the degree of consistency, that is, in George Eliot's novels, the degree of realism, for realism is required by the fundamental moral purpose which underlies George Eliot's symbolism, and this tends to create a kind of conflict between symbolism and realism to which the author is confronted. Should the two be not well balanced, the whole thing could result in a damaging, obtrusive shift of mode. In this part of the study, we will interest ourselves in the consistency - if any - of George Eliot's mode.
To make this problem more concrete, we will begin by citing an example in which the balance between symbolism and realism is obtained in the most satisfactory manner. The use of water imagery for feelings is, we have seen, as much a part of George Eliot's basic imaginative vocabulary as the mirror and the window. In *Adam Bede*, ch. 17, Eliot says that "human feeling is like the mighty rivers that bless the earth", and this probably explains why Deronda is born toward his crucial encounters with both Mirah and Mordecai upon the river. But in none of these cases is there such an elaborate preparation for the investment of a literal object with conceptual significance as it is in *The Mill on the Floss*. In book VI, ch. 13, Maggie is both literally and figuratively "Borne Along by the Tide" past the point of no return. The scene has become symbolic, so that both levels - literal and figurative - are present in passages such as that where Maggie yearns to believe "that the tide was doing it all - that she might glide along with the swift, silent stream, and not struggle any more".

It is a symbolism which requires a delicate balance of the two levels. The overassertion of symbol will distort realistic probability, but if symbolic meaning is not fully present in the actual it remains on the usual contextual, auxiliary level.

Now, such a balance is rare in George Eliot's novels, which normally function in a more realistic mode, and when attained, as it is here it is in danger of toppling over into a situation where symbol is asserted at the expense of realism. This is what happen in the last chapter of *The Mill on the Floss*. 
The river has been restricted to association with Maggie's passion; the author's commentary has analysed the stream of feeling into some of its moral components: "The stream of vanity was soon swept along and mingled imperceptibly with that wider current" (42). Such contextual preparation still allows for some moments of double reference in the final chapter like those in the chapter "Borne Along by the Tide" where "there was no choice of courses, no room for hesitation, and she floated into the current". But as the passage drives closer toward the catastrophe, realism is increasingly subordinated to symbol.

The river, which has been equated to with Maggie's fatal passion remains a consistent symbol to the end, that is the catastrophe. But what is disturbing, on the realistic level, is the plausibility of that catastrophe. The boat carrying Tom and Maggie is overwhelmed by some strange "wooden machinery" sprung from God knows where, and which, in addition inexplicably moves at a faster rate than the boat when both are in the same current; and what is more, Tom is rowing, so that he should in fact be pulling away from that infernal machinery. This is evidently a purely symbolic contrivance, also revealed in the telling rare appearance of the pathetic fallacy: "the huge mass was hurrying on in hideous triumph" (43). Clearly, the ending of The Mill on the Floss involves a shift in mode, which here makes the ruin of the novel.

Daniel Deronda also is subject to such a damaging shift in mode. This is obvious in the parts dealing with Mordecai and with Deronda's growing sense of his mission.
To exemplify this, we will isolate the section in which Deronda and Mordecai meet at Blackfriars Bridge in Chapter 40. As in the case of the river in *The Mill on the Floss*, literal fact is given a prepared symbolic meaning, but instead of specific psychological associations we find vague and visionary ones. We are told that Mordecai "habitually thought of the Being answering to his need as one distantly approaching or turning his back toward him, darkly painted against a golden sky" (44), a scene associated with Blackfriars Bridge at sunset, as the Messianic figure becomes associated with Deronda. In the scene where they actually meet, reality is made to fulfill vision; all these images are made actual. The visionary of the scene is stressed. Mordecai feels "that his inward prophecy was fulfilled ... the prefigured friend had come from the golden background, and had signalled to him: this actually was: the rest was to be" (45). And we have a strong feeling that the scene presents, not a confrontation of realistically rendered individuals, but "a meeting-place for the spiritual messengers" (46). It is a scene of "moral fantasy", an attempt to lend conviction to the birth of a vocation which can only be expressed symbolically because it has no realistic counterpart. And just as in the end of *The Mill on the Floss*, when the narrative moves into a primarily symbolic level the resultant shift of mode does not carry George Eliot toward symbolism but into fantasy and romance. Such a shift is fatal to her realism.

These are just a few stylistic blots. The most important is the meaning, the message to mankind, which in George Eliot's novels, is invariably carried out.
Symbolism

I. Adam Bede ch 42 P. 405
2. Ibid, ch 42 P. 406
3. Ibid, ch 42 P. 406
4. Ibid, ch 42
5. Ibid, ch 47
6. Ibid, ch 53 P. 485
7. Ibid, ch 5 P.P. 74-5
8. Ibid, ch 39 P. 386
9. Ibid, ch 45 P.P. 428-31
10. Ibid, ch 43 P. 408,9
II. The Mill III,9 P.P. 283-4
12. Middlemarch ch 80 P. 846
13. cf note
14. Ibid, Finale P. 890
15. Ibid, ch 20 P. 47
16. Ibid ch 3 P. 51
17. Ibid, ch 3 P. 51 a
18. Ibid, ch 20 P. 229
19. Ibid, ch IO P.P. II2-I3
20. Ibid, ch 54 P. 585
21. Daniel Deronda, ch 20 P. 47
22. Ibid, ch 21 P. 270
23. Ibid, ch 23 P. 294
24. Ibid, ch 35 P. 477
25. Ibid, ch 35 P. 485
26. Ibid, ch 48
27. Ibid, ch 8 P. 117
28. Middlemarch ch 20 P. 230
29. Ibid, ch 28 P.P. 306-7
30. Ibid, ch 42 P. 463
31. Ibid, ch 37 P. 497
32. Ibid ch 54 P. 585
33. Ibid, ch 54 P. 587
34. Ibid, ch 83 P. 867
35. Ibid, ch 70 P. 760
36. Ibid, ch 76 P. 819
38. Adam Bede ch 22 P. 242
39. Ibid, ch 20 P. 218
40. Ibid, ch 20 P. 218
41. Daniel Deronda ch 31 P. 406
42. The Mill VI, 9, P. 457
43. Ibid VII, 5 P. 546
44. Daniel Deronda ch 38 P. 530
45. Ibid, ch 40 P. 550
46. Ibid, ch 40 P. 551
PART TWO

EVOLUTION OF SOME ASPECTS

OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NARRATIVE

TECHNIQUE
The most important thing in a work of art is that it should have a kind of focus, i.e. there should be some place where all the rays meet or from which they issue. And this focus must not be able to be completely explained in words. This indeed is one of the significant facts about a true work of art - that its content in its entirely can be expressed only by itself.

Leo Tolstoy (1)

------

Don't let anyone persuade you .. that strennons selec- tion and comparison are not the very essence of art, and that Form is substance to that degree that there is absolutely no substance without it. Form alone takes, and holds and preser- ves, substance.

Henri James (2)

------

Before everything, a story must convey a sense of inevitability: that which happens in it must seem to be the only thing that could have happened. Of course a character may cry: "If I had then acted differently how different everything would now be". The problem of the author is to make his then action the only action that character could have taken. (47)

Ford Madox Ford.
Now that we have surveyed Eliot's practice of fiction, we will now attempt to follow the evolution of her technique by tracking down the different phases of her narrative and descriptive methods. To do so more effectively, we will start by examining the structure of each novel, taking into account the kind of language, the narrative and descriptive methods which are being used.

CHAPTER I : STRUCTURE AND FORM

I - ADAM BEDE -

Structurally speaking, space and time are the two main materials exploited by George Eliot in the construction of Adam Bede. In Tolstoyan terms, we have two kinds focus.

1 - Space

The virtual world created in Adam Bede possesses two major divisions: the counties of Loamshire and Stonyshire (with their villages, Hayslope and Snowfield). Their quasi-symbolic names suggest, as we can see, that the two places stand in complete antithesis.
Most of the action of the novel takes place in Loamshire, in and around the village of Hayslope. Protected to the north from "keen and hungry winds" by the gentle heights of the Binton Hills, Loamshire is a sheltered and fertile land, a "region of corn and grass" where the farms (excepting those of such miscreants as Luke Britton) produce the necessities and, indeed, the luxuries of life in great abundance. Prosperity, if not omnipresent, is nevertheless common: poverty is rare. Exile from this snug world is regarded by its inhabitants as the worst evil that can befall them.

Throughout the novel, however, we are reminded of a different sort of country - Stonyshire, where the land, naked under the sky, is barren and "where the trees are few, so that a child might count them, and there's very hard living for the poor in the winter" (3). The people of Stonyshire earn their livelihood not by tilling a fertile soil but by digging deep beneath the earth's surface in rocky mines or by labouring in the dark mills of sooty cities like Stoniton. In this "dreary bleak place", poverty is the common lot of the people.

It is evident that George Eliot is using Dinah, Mrs Poyser, and the Bedes as a means of defining the symbolic relationship of Loamshire and Stonyshire. In fact, every character in the book is made to fit, at one moment or another, in one of the two countries. Hearing about the two countries from Dinah, we sense a hardness lurking at the core of Loamshire which is spiritually hollow. Yet the position taken by Mrs Poyser and the Bedes is not without merit: they are saying, although
each differently, that people who have known only a kind of attenuated existence are in no position to judge what life is, or should be. At the same time they fail to realize that hunger may be spiritual as well as physical. In these terms Loamshire is a hungry land, because some (at least) of its people, never having known privation and suffering, cannot therefore understand or sympathize with want, poverty, or even ugliness. Like Loamshire itself, such people may present to the world a beautiful, polished, or vital exterior, which nevertheless conceals a hardiness at the core. Chief among such characters in the book are Mrs Irwine, Squire Donnithorne, and Martin Poyser.

Mrs Irwine is a woman who judges by externals only: "Nature never makes a ferret in the shape of a mastiff. You'll never persuade me that I can't tell what men are by their outsides" (4). That she feels this way is partly the result of her own egotism: she is herself a very splendid old lady. Intelligent and penetrating, she has a "small intense black eye", so "keen and sarcastic in its expression" that she looks at times almost like a gypsy fortune teller. Judging others by their appearance, she is careful of her own, taking "a long time to dress in the morning". Of her son she is inordinately fond, even when she finds him on occasion too easy tempered. For her daughters, however, she cares less - she is, in fact, almost indifferent to them: they are plain and sickly, and "splendid old ladies ... have often slight sympathy with sickly daughters" (5).
Very much like Mrs Irwine, is old Squire Donnithorne. He too is outwardly a splendid person, careful in his dress, icy polite in his manners. "He was always polite", George Eliot writes, "but the farmers had found out, after long puzzling, that this polish was one of the signs of hardness. It was observed that he gave his most elaborate civility to Mrs Poyser ... inquiring particularly about her health ... Mrs Poyser curtsied and thanked him with great self-command, but when he had passed on, she whispered to her husband, "I'll lay my life he's brewin' some nasty turn against us. Old Harry does no wag his tail so for nothin'" (6).

As Mrs Irwine represents the hardness of one level of the Loamshire world and the Squire another, so Mr Poyser represents yet a third, and quite possibly the most important: that of Mrs Irwine and Squire Donnithorne lies on the genteel fringes of the novel, where it might be expected; Martin Poyser's hardness, however, lies at the book's vital center. Almost an exact duplicate of the prosperous world in which he lives, he gives no external evidence of hardness: well-fed, good-natured, he is an excellent husband and a loving father. But occasionally there are signs of severity in him, as for example in his attitude towards a neighbour, Luke Britton, "whose fallows were not well cleaned, who didn't know the rudiments of hedging and ditching, and showed but a small share of judgment in the purchase of winter stock" (7). Towards Britton he is absolutely unbending, "as hard and implacable as the north-east wind" (8). The reason is that the
slovenly farmer violates all the principles of good husbandry which Martin holds dear and which constitute a major part of his moral code, ranking second only to family honour. In a sense, therefore, we should be prepared for the complete lack of sympathy Martin exhibits toward Hetty when she too violates his moral code by bringing disgrace upon the family. Then, as a paterfamilias (but also clearly as representative of Loamshire) he is swift and unrelenting in his judgment of her. Yet his severity takes us by surprise, much as it does Mrs Poyser herself, who for once stands silent in awe of her husband.

These three characters, then, evidently stand in need of Dinah's message of sympathy and compassion. It would do them all good to live in Stonyshire for a while, to experience suffering and thereby add to the dimension of the head that of the heart - to become, in short, full human beings. This does not mean to become like Dinah. She is no more a complete personality at the beginning of the book than Hetty, for Dinah is all heart and passive receptivity; she lacks head. It does mean, however, to become like Mr Irwine, Barthe Massey, and Mrs Payser, all (significantly enough) Loamshire dwellers, but separated from their compatriots because, unlike them, each has known some form of suffering or privation and is therefore able, in George Eliot's terms, to sympathize with the misery of others.

Barthe Massey, whose past is a mystery, is lame. Mrs Payser, though sound of limb, has been in precarious health since
the birth of her youngest child, Totty. If Mr Irwine does not appear to have suffered very much himself, he has nevertheless known a good deal of vicarious misery, for both of his sisters are sickly and one, with whom he is invariably sympathetic, suffers from stunning migraines. Furthermore, he has had to forego marriage in order, ironically enough, to support in style a mother whose hardness toward her daughters is a source of constant distress to him.

Because of their knowledge of suffering these characters are compassionate: they possess the attributes of heart as well as head; their worldly knowledge and keen intelligence are always tempered by sympathy and love. This balance of head and heart is usually presented dramatically through characters' actions; we also hear of it directly from the author when, in speaking of someone like Mrs Poyser, she repeatedly links the words "keenness" and "mildness" (or the equivalent).

In the case of Mrs Poyser we are perhaps inclined to remember only that she is keen, agreeing with Mr Irwine that "her tongue is like a new-set razor" (9), or recalling the "freezing arctic ray" of her glance. But there is another dimension to her personality which we are never permitted to forget. From Adam, for example, we learn that if "her tongue's keen, her heart's tender" (10). It is as mother to the ever-naughty Totty that this combination of mildness and keenness, head and heart, is made most clear: the sight of her child riding secure on Adam's shoulders is pleasant to her: "Bless your sweet face,
my pet', she said, the mother's strong love filling her keen eyes with mildness" (11).

The same combination of keenness and mildness is characteristic of Mr Irwine too. We read that "there was a certain virtue in that benignant yet keen countenance, as there is in all human faces from which a generous soul beams out" (12). What is true of Irwine is equally true of Barthe Massey. As a teacher he is wrathful with erring youth; but with those mature men, common laborers, who come to him that they may learn to read, he is all patience and mildness; for them his face "wore the mildest expression: the grizzled bushy eyebrows had taken their more acute angle of compassionate kindness, and the mouth, habitually compressed with a pont of the lower lip, was released so as to be ready to speak a helpful word or syllable in a moment. This gentle expression was the more interesting because the school-master's nose, an irregular aquiline twisted a little on one side, had a rather formidable character; and his brow, moreover, had that peculiar tension which always impresses one as a sign of a keen impatient temperament." (13)

What George Eliot is presenting in these three characters, with their combination of keenness and mildness, the balance in them of head and heart is, we may say, a concept of maturity - what a fully developed human personality is, or rather ought to be, like. But now, one might ask where do these three characters fit in George Eliot's presupposed scheme.
To which we may answer that geographically speaking, they belong to Loamshire, and spiritually, to Stonyshire.

But none of the book's major characters - neither Hetty nor Adam nor Dinah - belong at first with Mr Irwine, Barthe Massey and Mrs Poyser, though some of them eventually join that company.

Hetty Sorrel, as her name suggests, is a perfect representative of the Loamshire - Hayslope world: she has its fertility, and she has its beauty, which nevertheless conceals an essential hardness. To think of Hetty as she first appears in the book is to think of her as being in certain places, themselves microcosms of Loamshire: the Hall Farm dairy, its garden, and the Grove of the Donnithorne estate. Each of these places has an individual aura, but all are suggestive (with their associated imagery of vegetation, light-color, warmth, coolness, and moisture) of fertility and growth. To each place Hetty is linked not only by her presence but also by parallel imagery: she too is described in terms of vegetation (flowers and fruit in particular), of light color, warmth, coolness, and moisture.

Furthermore, each of these places is appropriate to a particular phase of Hetty's involvement with Arthur. Their
first tête-à-tête occurs in the Hall Farm dairy. George Eliot emphasizes its cleanliness and purity, but remains, by virtue of its own nature and the associated imagery, subtly sexualized. More explicitly so is the setting of the rendezvous between Arthur and Hetty which takes place in the Grove of the Donnithorne estate. Eliot describes "a wood of beeches and limes with here and there a light, silver-stemmed birch - just the sort of wood most haunted by the nymphs: you see their white sunlit limbs gleaming athwart the boughs ... you hear their soft liquid laughter - but if you look with a too curious sacrilegious eye, they vanish behind the silvery beeches, they make you believe that their voice was only a running brooklet ...
It was not a grove with measured grass or rolled gravel ...
but with narrow, hollow-shaped, earthy paths, edged with paint dashes of delicate moss" (14).
When Adam comes to deliver the letter in which Arthur writes that he and Hetty must no longer think of themselves as lovers, Adam finds her in the garden of the Hall Farm. Here, in this "leafy, flowery, bushy time", all things grow together in "careless, half-neglected abundance" (15). One sees "tall hollyhocks beginning to flower, and dazzle the eye with their pink, white, and yellow ... syringas and gueldres roses, all large and disorderly for want of trimming ... leafy walls of scarlet beans and late peas ... a row of bushy filberts in one direction, and in another a huge apple-tree making a barren circle under its low-spreading boughs. But what signified a barren patch or two?" (16). It is appropriate of course that Hetty should be found among the hollyhocks and roses (herself so frequently described in terms of flowers, roses in particular). But if the
floweriness and fertility of the place are appropriate, so too is its rankness - growth without order or control.

A second link between Hetty and the Loamshire world is that of her beauty. It was, Eliot writes, "a spring-tide beauty; ... the beauty of young frisking things, round-limbed, gambolling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence - the innocence of a young stard - browed calf ... that ... leads you a severe steeplechase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog" (17). Such beauty at once suggestive of fertility and of the infantile, is difficult to comprehend in its effect: "It is a beauty like that of kittens, or very small downy ducks making gentle rippling noises ... or babies just beginning to toddle and to engage in conscious mischief - a beauty with which you can never be angry, but that you feel ready to crush for inability to comprehend the state of mind into which it throws you" (18). It is a false beauty, for it conceals in the case of Hetty a core of hardness, as does the beauty of Loamshire itself. In this respect, if on a different social level, she is similar to Mrs Irwine or to the squire, and it is significant that those who are like her see only her beauty: Mrs Irwine, for example, laments the fact that it "should be thrown away among the farmers" (19). But Mrs Payser is not deceived. She says that Hetty's heart is as hard as a pebble and that "things take no more hold on her than if she was a dried pea" (20). She is "no better nor a "cherry wi' a hard stone inside it" (21).
Hetty's hardness is that of childish or at best adolescent egocentricity: all people and events have value or significance only as they impinge upon the narrow circle of her own life; failing that, they are of no importance. At the news of Mr Bede's death, for example, Hetty is concerned only as long as she thinks it is Adam who is meant; when she discovers her error, she lapses into indifference. She cares little about the Hall Farm, and although dutiful towards her aunt and uncle, she exhibits no real affection for them. Totty, who serves so well as a measure of Mrs Payser's love, is an equally good measure of Hetty's inability to love - anyone besides herself, that is. Indeed, there is a muted but persistent strain of auto-eroticism in her: one thinks of her inordinate love of fine clothes and adornment, and of such scenes as those in which she appears as "the devout worshipper" before a mirror (22) and in which she turns up the sleeves of her dress and kisses her own arms "with the passionate love of life". Even her love for Arthur is tinged with the same quality: in him she finds, for a brief time at least, the objectification of her day-dreaming desires, but these in turn are only the projection in fantasy of her own ego, sexually translated. What she loves in him is not so much Arthur as her own self - as she wishes she might be.

Her emotional life is, in fact, a continuous fantasy, as George Eliot suggests with recurring dream and day-dream imagery, that Hetty is forever "taking holiday in dreams of pleasure" for her workaday life is partly accounted for in sociological terms: all the business of life was managed for her;
which in turn is only another way of saying that the Loamshire world (so sheltered and sheltering) has for personalities like those of Hetty and Arthur, which lack energy and will, the fatal power of keeping them forever children. Much of the tragedy - or catastrophe - of both Hetty and Arthur springs from the fact that they are wilful children performing adult actions in an age which is not golden; rather, to change the reference, it is a post-lapsarian world in which actions are neither innocent nor without consequences. Yet Loamshire is sufficient by close to being an "earthly paradise" that at times its inhabitants learn the truth only when it is too late. In one sense, therefore, Hetty is the victim as well as representative of the Loamshire world.

Dinah, early in the story, is aware of Hetty's position and she tries to prepare her for the possibility of pain in life, for the necessity of leaving her adolescent dreamworld, of growing up. She addresses Hetty in the same terms as she used in the sermon on the green. Like the villagers, however, Hetty remains deaf and for the same reasons: her world has never given her any evidence of the existence of suffering; or if it has, then in such fashion as to show that misery always comes to someone outside the sheltered protection of family or community. Thus her reaction to Dinah's words, like that of the villagers, is minimal - only a chill fear which remains vague and child-like.
We are scarcely surprised at Hetty's awakening having traumatic force. When she learns in a letter from Arthur of his determination to bring their affair to an end, all vitality is drained out of her: her face becomes "blanched", she feels "cold and sick and trembling" (23). Even, the light of day fails to cheer her, for it has become "dreary" (24) to her in her "dry-eyed morning misery" (25). Hetty's suffering is subsequently compounded by the knowledge that she is pregnant. Dread of disgrace and censure force her to flee Loamshire, and in so doing she leaves for the first time a garden world and enters a wasteland.

The reinforcing imagery George Eliot uses in presenting the account of Hetty's trip to Windsor and back is skilfully handled. The time of year is February, early in spring by Loamshire standards, but a spring without hope or promise. All the light and warmth of the earlier spring - summer world, with its flowers and fruit, hay and ripening grain are gone, and in their place bleak grayness pervades. Instead of images of shelter and containment, security and enclosure, George Eliot now uses those of the city, with its baffling maze of streets, of the long unending road, and of barren open fields. Much of Hetty's trip is made through rainy weather. She finds herself subject to coarse comments and is taken for a wild woman and beggar (26). Even the respite she knows at the inn in Windsor is only like that of a man who throws "himself on the sand, instead of toiling onward under the scorching sun" (27).
The effect of Hetty's ordeal is to externalize the hardness which, so far, has been concealed. Although at first her pregnancy had brought about a sudden burgeoning of "womanliness" (28), when she bears the child and then (if unintentionally) kills it, she turns emotionally almost to stone: she confesses to Dinah that when she returned to the place where she had left the baby and saw that it was gone, "I was struck like a stone, with fear ... My heart went like a stone" (29). Mr Irwine reports the change to Adam, who sees it for himself at Hetty's trial: she is now a "pale, hard-looking culprit" (30).

Most of the Loamshire world is appalled by the hardness Hetty exhibits, seeing how it has made something inhuman of her. Few of them realize, however, how much they are implicated in her condition; nor can any of them actually help Hetty, since they are unwilling either to forgive or comfort her. But Dinah, the outsider from Stonyshire, where forgiving love can exist because suffering is known, is able to restore Hetty to humanity - to a better humanity, at least, than that which she had been endowed with by her own world.

For the scene of regeneration, Gorge Eliot takes us, through ever-increasing darkness, into the deep interior of the prison, where in a tiny stone cell (a fine objective correlative of Hetty's heart) she has Dinah confront Hetty. No attempt of Dinah's to get Hetty to speak is at first effective; she remains as unresponsive as a stone. Finally Dinah resorts to prayer. In it the two dominant images of the chapter - hardness
and darkness - merge: Dinah calls upon the Lord to take away the darkness enveloping Hetty and to melt the hardness of her heart. The prayer is efficacious. Hetty is led to confess, spilling forth the whole pitiable tale of her journey in the wasteland, of bearing the child, and then, because she wanted so desperately to return to the world from which the fact of illegitimate life exiled her, leaving the baby in a shallow hole covered with leaves and chips in the hope that someone would find it. The confession, a sufficiently damning account of Hetty herself, is no less damning of the Loamshire world: "I daredn't go back home again - I couldn't bear it. I couldn't have bore to look at anybody, for they'd have scorned me" (31). Dinah, however, does not scorn her, but with loving sympathy comforts her. This is Hetty's regeneration.

To be frank it is not much of a regeneration, particularly when compared with that of Adam or even of Arthur; for although Hetty is no longer hard, she is able to ask Adam's forgiveness, and is willing in turn to forgive Arthur, the only new life she faces is that of exile. Absolved from execution, she is nevertheless transported to the colonies, where she dies some years later. George Eliot might just as well have had her hanged to begin with. On a literal level the punishment is not severe, but I feel that on the level of moral and psychological symbolism it is exceedingly harsh. As a matter of fact, it is at this point that Hetty becomes the victim of her creator; for, although allowance has been made, one is still left with the impression that toward the kittenish
Hetty there is some of the same hardness in George Eliot she deplored in others. That there could be no room for Hetty in Loamshire is, from a symbolic point of view, bad enough. That apparently there could be no room for her anywhere in George Eliot's scheme of things stands as an indictment against the ethic which the book suggests.

No one can sustain that Adam Bede is a perfect human being, fully mature in George Eliot's terms, from the beginning. He is a long way at first from being an Irwine, a Barthe Massey, or even a masculine counterpart of Mrs Poyser. Rather, because in him, the head monstrously outweighs the heart, he is kin to sharp old Mrs Irwine, the icily polite Squire Donnithorne, and the Martin Payser made implacable by slovenly husbandry and erring niece. Like them he may possess a full measure of keenness, but he does not even have Payser's jolly exterior. In chapter 4, Adam reveals himself as wrathful, proud, unyielding, hot and hasty, untolerant and essentially a humourless character.

Whenever, in George Eliot's moral world, there is such an imbalance of head and heart, the keenness is in danger of turning into hardness and pride. About Adam's pride there is little disagreement; we hear of it on all sides and are given frequent examples of it. The same is true of Adam's hardness, which consists in having "too little fellow feeling with the weakness that errs in spite of foreseen consequences. Without this fellow-feeling," George Eliot continues, "how are we to get enough patience and charity towards our stumbling, falling
companions in the long and changeful journey?" (32). The answer, implicit in the first part of Adam Bede, is that we do not. Repeatedly in the opening chapters of the book we see Adam, proudly in control of his own life, losing all patience with lesser mortals who stumble and fall - like his own father, for example. The function of old Thias Bede as a character is, indeed, precisely that of revealing the extent of his son's hardness. The same is true of Arthur (in part at least). Toward both men Adam is unforgiving, and even when he repents of his severity, the repentance is futile because it reflects no genuine increase in his capacity for sympathy.

The reason is that Adam is not fully involved emotionally with either his father or Arthur. As this is so, he can neither participate in their plight nor understand it. What is necessary for Adam (and here George Eliot permits herself the luxury of writing a prescription) is that he gets his heartstrings bound round the weak and erring, so that he must share not only the outward consequence of their error, but their inward suffering (33). Precisely such an emotional involvement exists for Adam in his relationship with Hetty. But this relationship is not a rational one; rather it is a passion which overmasters him. Adam's heartstrings are bound fast to Hetty. George Eliot has seen to that.

After Eliot has provided Adam with this full involvement, she next makes certain that he will suffer as a result, first by having him learn that Arthur is Hetty's accepted lover;
next by having him think Hetty has run away from their approaching marriage; and finally by having him learn of Hetty's being brought to trial in Stoniton for the murder of her child. There is plenty of suffering here, but Adam's response is different from that of Hetty: where she sank into stasis, he goes in the opposite direction toward violent action. Hetty fell below the level even of human craving, Adam lusts for revenge. The response of both is in keeping with their characters: Hetty, whose hardness is that of selfishness, has no will at all; faced with a situation she cannot handle, she is brought to a dead halt. Adam, whose hardness is that of pride, is all active will, and he lashes out. But the fierce desire for activity does nothing to mitigate his suffering, the marks of which, as in the case of Hetty, are revealed in the changes in his physical appearance.

Yet, there is the possibility, in terms of the novel, for regeneration through a human agent exercising the power of love. Adam's suffering is indeed a precondition of his regeneration. The agent is a double one: Mr Irwine and Barthe Massey. Both men, themselves fully mature (with their balanced keenness and mildness), do what they can to help Adam in his misery. Sensing in him a potentiality for violence and a desire to take vengeance on Arthur, they seek to divert him. Irwine uses the power of reason, arguing that to injure Arthur will not help Hetty and that passionate violence will lead only to another crime (34). Adam agrees, but it is acquiescence, not full acceptance. The latter is brought about by Barthe Massey who awakens
companions in the long and changeful journey?" (32). The answer, implicit in the first part of *Adam Bede*, is that we do not. Repeatedly in the opening chapters of the book we see Adam, proudly in control of his own life, losing all patience with lesser mortals who stumble and fall - like his own father, for example. The function of old Thias Bede as a character is, indeed, precisely that of revealing the extent of his son's hardness. The same is true of Arthur (in part at least). Toward both men Adam is unforgiving, and even when he repents of his severity, the repentance is futile because it reflects no genuine increase in his capacity for sympathy.

The reason is that Adam is not fully involved emotionally with either his father or Arthur. As this is so, he can neither participate in their plight nor understand it. What is necessary for Adam (and here George Eliot permits herself the luxury of writing a prescription) is that he gets his heartstrings bound round the weak and erring, so that he must share not only the outward consequence of their error, but their inward suffering (33). Precisely such an emotional involvement exists for Adam in his relationship with Hetty. But this relationship is not a rational one; rather it is a passion which overmasters him. Adam's heartstrings are bound fast to Hetty. George Eliot has seen to that.

After Eliot has provided Adam with this full involvement, she next makes certain that he will suffer as a result, first by having him learn that Arthur is Hetty's accepted lover;
Adam to full consciousness and makes him participate in a kind of Lord's Supper (35) which significantly enough takes place in Stoniton.

Adam's subsequent decision to stand by Hetty, an expression of his old love for her as well as his new willingness to involve his life with the suffering of others, has two consequences: it leads to his being able to forgive Arthur, and it makes him capable of a new sort of love, which emerges from sympathy.

For the carpenter Adam, Loamshire still remains the ideal place; but Stonyshire who has marked on him has irremediably become his second mother-land. Adam now belongs - in the same way as Mr Irwine, Barthe Massey, and Mrs Payser do - to the two worlds of Loamshire and Stonyshire. This alliance is further actualised in his union with Dinah, the main representative of the world of Stonyshire.

If Dinah belongs and represents the world of Stonyshire, she is nevertheless not a complete human being. She too lacks something at the beginning of the story. For despite her mildness and compassion, her selfishness and love of God, she has little genuine vitality - Dinah is all heart. She scarcely seems to breathe in the midst of her enduring calm and takes little or no nourishment - only scant victuals, as Mrs Payser would say. Confronted by a vigourous fruitful world, she retreats. The cause of her retreat is the fear of selfishness and hardness resulting from too great abundance of worldly goods. This much, at least, Dinah says herself.
Implicit in her fear is also, I think, a kind of unwillingness to become fully involved in life. She observes the human condition, with sympathy and compassion, it is true, but without involvement. Selfless is a word used frequently in describing her, but selfless means not only something different from selfish; it also means lacking in self. To lack this sense of human identify is to become something either less or more than human - an idiot, perhaps, or a divinity. Talking of herself to Mr Irwine, she says:

"I'm too much given to sit still and keep by myself: it seems as if I could sit silent all day long with the thought of God overflowing my soul - as the pebbles lie bathed in the Willow Brook. For thoughts are so great - aren't they, sir? They seem to lie us like a deep flood; and it's my besetment to forget where I am and everything about me, and lose myself in thoughts that I could give no account of, for I could neither make a beginning nor ending of them in words" (36).

Such a state represents a complete withdrawal from life, and withdrawal (or retreat) is characteristic of Dinah. Whenever, life begins to seem too pleasant and seductive, Dinah flees back to Stonyshire, barren and sterile under the "overarching sky" (37). The most notable of these strategic retreats occurs after Adam has told her of his love. Following his declaration, Dinah replies that she could return his love save for the fear that she would "forget to rejoice and weep with others", even "forget the Divine presence" (38).
Her peace and joy come from having no life of her own. Adam's love only raises the fear that she will forget Jesus, the man of sorrows, and become hard: "And think how it is with me, Adam: - that life I have led is like a land I have trodden in blessedness since my childhood; and if I long for a moment to follow the voice which calls me to another land that I know not, I cannot but fear that my soul might hereafter yearn for that early blessedness which I had forsaken; and where doubt enters there is no perfect love. I must wait for clearer guidance: I must go from you" (39). Here is clear expression of Dinah's fear of accepting full maturity; for the land which faces her (i.e. Loamshire and, of course, Adam) is a strange one, and who knows what life there may hold for her? Better, then, to return to the other land (Stonyshire and the self-contained world of childhood). There at least runs no risks. If Hetty was incapable of growing up, Dinah is afraid to.

We are not permitted to see the process by which Dinah is enabled to overcome her fear, which I consider it is a serious flaw in the novel. All we learn is, that having been told by Adam of his love for her and having admitted in turn a love for him, Dinah once more retreats to Stonyshire, not staying even long enough to participate in the Harvest Supper. Adam, after waiting for several weeks, is no longer able to endure the strain and sets out for Stonyshire to find her. As he leaves the Loamshire world and enters grey treeless Stonyshire, he is reminded of the painful past, but in an altered light, for he possesses what George Eliot calls a "sense of enlarged
being" (40), the consequence of the fuller life brought about by this suffering.

He sees Stonyshire now through Dinah's eyes, and if his vision includes the barren land, it also includes the wonderful flooding light and the large embracing sky.

Adam waits for Dinah to return from her Sunday preaching not at her home, but on a hill top. Here, in the midst of her world, he discovers that Dinah has undergone a change: the power of her love for him has, in a sense, overcome her fears; she feels like a divided person without him, and she is willing to become his wife. He therefore takes her back to Loamshire, whence she had so precipitately fled. It is not, however, to the green and golden world of June with which the book began; rather, to an autumnal mature world. Here, "on a rimy morning in departing November" (41) when there is a tinge of sadness in the weather as well as in the joy which accompanies the wedding, Adam and Dinah are married. It is fitting that the hint of sorrow should be present, for in the world which George Eliot reveals to us, life not only contains sorrow, it needs sorrow in order that there may be love.

The novel thus closes on the melting, through the marriage of Adam and Dinah, of the two worlds of Loamshire and Dinah. We must admit that this conclusion is most satisfactory as far as the unity of the book goes. But from the realistic point of view this ending might be objected to as being unnatural. We are here strongly aware of the author's contriving hand.
From the moral point of view, Adam is Dinah's match. But I feel somehow, that this is not a sufficient reason for marrying them. Their relationship excludes too many of those small qualities and defects which make real lovers charming and convincing. Adam and Dinah, each for their own part, grow and entertain pure, saintly love. Their marriage, from the dramatic point of view, seems an anti-climax.

2 - Time

*Adam Bede* does not evolve only in space. It also evolves in time, and in just the same purposive way as it does in space. The massively slow movement of *Adam Bede* is one other shape-making technique.

It is true that we are generally persuaded of the actual slow movement of rural life, and it is rural life - the life of villagers, tenant farmers, and peasantry - which George Eliot describes. The movement is one of a massive leisureliness which gathers as it goes a dense body of physical and moral detail, adding particle to particle and building layer upon layer with sea-depth patience.

We enter the description of the Hall Farm in Chapter 6 at "the drowsiest time of the year, just before hay-harvest" and at the drowsiest time of the day, too, for it is close upon three by the sun, and it is half-past three by Mrs Poyser's
handsome eight-day clock". Old Martin watches its hands, not through engagement with time but through disengagement from it; he pleases himself with "detecting a rhythm in the tick" as he does with watching the sun-gleams on the wall and counting the quarries on the floor. And again, in the passage describing the Poyser's on their way to church, we are told of "the excellent habit which Mrs Poyser's clock had of taking time by the forelock", so that, despite interruptions in their walk, they arrive at the village "while it was still a quarter to two" (42). The mechanism of the eight-day clock works in sympathy with the week, with the rhythm of workdays and Sabbath, and we are reminded in the same passage of that other scheduling of man's time which holds him to Sabbath observance no matter if the hay wants turning, for, as Mrs Poyser says, "as for the weather there's One above makes it, and we must put up wi't".

Therefore the eight-day clock, with its minute rhythms for an old man's ear, with its rhythm for the daily work that starts at half past four, when the mowers' bottles have to be filled and the baking started, and with its weekly rhythm for the Sabbath. The clock is a monument not to time merely as time, but the assured and saving values stored up through ages of experience. The pace of Adam Bede is therefore set to Mrs Poyser's clock, to all the slow toil and patient discipline that have made daylight and living valuable.
Mrs Poyser's clock at the Hall Farm, the clock which has sublimated all time into good, is set for daylight saving. It has the "excellent habit" of "taking time by the forelock" (43). Not so the clocks of the gentlefolk at the Chase. It is because *Adam Bede* is the story of the irreparable damage wrought on the community by a private moment's frivolity, that we do not wonder at the focus on watches and dials and especially Mrs Poyser's clock. Throughout that Thursday when Arthur meets Hetty in the wood twice, the clock is watched irritably. It is "about ten o'clock" when Arthur, time irritable and bored on his hands, goes to the stables; the "twelve o'clock sun" sees him galloping toward Norborne to see a friend but Hetty is on his mind; and "the hand of the dial in the courtyard had scarcely cleared the last stroke of three" when he is waiting at the gate of the wood. Hetty comes daily to learn lace mending of Mrs Pompret, the maid at the Chase, "at four o'clock," and she tells Arthur that she always sets out for the farm" by eight o'clock". They exchange a look: "What a space of time those three moments were, while their eyes met and his arms touched her!". Arthur meditates irresolutely "more than an hour" on the false impression he feels he has created in the girl; but the "time must be filled up", and he dresses for dinner, "for his grand-father's dinner-hour was six" (44); meanwhile Hetty too is watching the clock, and at last "the minute-hand of the old-fashioned brazen-faced timepiece was on the last quarter of eight". In the shadows of the wood he kisses her. Then he pulls out his watch: "I wonder how late it is ... twenty minutes past eight - but my
watch is too fast" (45). Back at the farm, Mrs Payser exclaims,

"What a time o'night time this is to come home, Hetty ... Look at the clock, do; why, it's going on for half-past nine, and I've sent gells to bed this half-hour, and late enough too ..."

"I did set out before eight, aunt", said Hetty, in a pet-tish tone, with a slight toss of her head. "But this clock's so much before the clock at the Chase, there's no telling what time it'll be when I get here.

"What! You'd be wanting the clock set by gentle-folks's time, would you? an' sit up burnin' candle, an' lie a-bed wi' the sun a-bakin' you like a cowcumber i' the frame? The clock hasn't been put forward for the first time to-day I reckon" (46).

Slower, organically, invisibly slow, are the months of Hetty's pregnancy; the Paysers' clock, the clock at the Chase, do not keep this time, with their eights, nines and half past nines. This other, deep, hidden, animal time drags the whole pace down to that of poor Hetty's "journey in despair", a blind automatism of animal night where the ticking of the human clock cannot be heard.

In fact, the massy line of the book is deflected to-ward the end. By Mrs Payser's clock, Hetty's last-minute reprieve cannot really be timed with a time integral to the rest of the novel, nor can Adam's marriage with Dinah, or Arthur's ill-
Notes on 'Structure and Form' Adam Bede


2. Mirian Allot, op. cit Henry James P. 235

3. Adam Bede ch 3 P. 45

4. Ibid, ch 5 P. 72

5. Ibid, ch 5

6. Ibid, ch 26 P. 273

7. Ibid, ch I4 P.P. I44

8. Ibid, ch I5 P.P. I44, 5

9. Ibid, ch 33 P. 336

10. Ibid, ch 53 P. 496

11. Ibid, ch 30 P. 310

12. Ibid, ch I8 P. I94

13. Ibid, ch 2I P. 227

14. Ibid, ch I2 P. I32

15. Ibid, ch 20 P. 213

16. Ibid, ch 20 P. 213

17. Ibid, ch 7 P. 91

18. Ibid, ch 7 P. 90

19. Ibid, ch 25 P. 265

20. Ibid, ch 3I P. 324

21. Ibid, ch 3I P. 325

22. Ibid, ch I5 P. I50

23. Ibid, ch 3I P. 319

24. Ibid, ch 3I P. 320

25. Ibid, ch 3I P. 320

26. Ibid, ch 37 P. 370
27. Ibid, ch 37 P. 360
28. Ibid, ch 34 P. 343
29. Ibid, ch 45 P. 431
30. Ibid, ch 45 P. 409
31. Ibid, ch 45 P. 428
32. Ibid, ch I9 P. 206
33. Ibid, ch I9 P. 206
34. Ibid, ch 39
35. Ibid, ch 42
36. Ibid, ch 8 P. 96
37. Ibid, ch 54 P. 499
38. Ibid ch 52 P. 479
39. Ibid ch 52 P. 481
40. Ibid ch 54 499 P.
41. Ibid ch 55 P. 501
42. Ibid ch I8
43 Ibid, ch I8 P. I90
44. Ibid, ch I2
45. Ibid, ch I3
46. Ibid, ch I4 P. I46
47. Mirian Allot, op. cit. P. 245
Notes on "Structure and Form": "The Mill on the Floss"

I - The Mill on the Floss Bk V, ch 7 P.P. 371-3

2. Ibid, VII, 5, P. 545
health, for they are no real "illumination" of the tragedy of Hetty. They are the artificial illumination which so many Victorian novels indulged in, in the effort to justify to man God's ways or society's ways or nature's ways. Yet, there still remains the ticking of the oak-cased clock, rubbed by "human elbow-polish", that paces the book through its greater part: the realization of value, clean as the clock-tick, radiant as the kitchen of the Hall Farm, fragrant as the dairy; and the tragic realization of the loss of human values however simple, in Hetty's abandoned foot-steps as she seeks the dark pool and caresses her own arms in the desire for life.

*Adam Bede* is built round two kinds of focus, but these are, unhappily, often too explicit where absolute discretion is of fundamental necessity for their fully artistic realization.

II - THE MILL ON THE FLOSS -

*The Mill on the Floss* is no less rich in structural intentions. Like *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss* has its focus. Naturally, it is directed on some specific characteristics which the main figures present and share. And, like in *Adam Bede*, but in a different way, the focus is directed on the movement of the novel. After dissecting the novel and verifying the soundness and fitness of the different parts, we shall look at the novel as a whole to appreciate its form.
The two leading characteristics of almost all the personages to whom we are introduced are honesty and pugnacity, and these flow from one and the same source.

A strong character, such as is here described, that feels its own strength, delights in it, and is proud of it, is honest, because dishonesty is a weakness not because it is an injury to others. The Dodson family are stingy, selfish wretches, who give no sympathy and require none, who would let a neighbour starve and let a brother be bankrupt when a very little assistance would save him from the disgrace; but they would not touch a penny that is not theirs, there is no legal act which they would not discharge, they would scorn the approach of a lie. They would be truthful and honest, not as a social duty, but as personal pride - because nobody should have it in his or her power to say that they were weak enough to neglect a manifest obligation.

From the same source of self-satisfied strength comes pugnacity in all its forms of rivalry and contradiction, jealousies and criticisms, lawsuits, and slanders, and blows. Everybody in this novel is repelling everybody, and life is, in the strictest sense, a battle. Even the good angel of the story, that little Maggie, who is full of affection and whose affection is continually leading her into blunders and misfortunes, is first of all introduced to us while she is indulging an unnatural ferocity towards her doll, whose head she is
punching - driving a nail into it. Her brother Tom, who is the next important character in the small community, is chiefly remarkable for self-assertion and hard-headed resistance of fate - his strong wrestling with adversity, and his anxiety to punish the slightest offence. Her father, Mr Tulliver, is pugnacity incarnate.

This life of proud self-assertion that on the bad side presents itself as incessant bickering, and on the best side appears as a devotion to justice and truth for selfish ends, may become interesting by being made heroic. But Eliot has attempted a more difficult task. She takes these characters as we find them in real life - in all their intrinsic littleness. She paints them as she finds them - snapping at each other over the tea-table, eying each other enviously at church; privately plotting how to astonish each other by some extraordinary display; putting the worst construction on every word and act; officiously proffering advice and predicting calamity; living with perfect content their sordid life of vulgar respectability.

The first half of the novel is devoted to the exhibition of this degraded species of existence, which is dissected with a masterly hand. Although it is the least exciting part of the work, it is the part of which the reader will carry away the most vivid recollection. The author has resolutely set herself the task of delineating without exaggeration, without extenuation, with minute accuracy, the sort of life which her country men lead.
It is difficult to describe adults leading a purely bestial life of vulgar respectability without rendering the picture simply repulsive. But the life of children is essentially an animal life. George Eliot relieves the repulsiveness of the insect life which she has exhibited in the Dodson Family by making her bigger insects evolve around these two little creatures, Maggie and Tom Tulliver. She paints childhood in all its prosaic reality, and with the most amusing fidelity. She describes the envies, and cruelties, and gluttonies that in men would be revolting, but are only grotesque in these funny little animals.

In the latter half of the novel, Maggie and Tom have ceased to be children; and here, also, we cease to be oppressed as before with that intolerable Dodson Family, who are likely to have a proud pre-eminence in fiction as the most thorny set of people ever introduced into George Eliot's tales.

2.

This novel is the least progressive of all George Eliot's studies in character and morality. It is possible to describe Maggie's progress in the diagrammatic form of such an ascent: her childhood is marked by the habit of creative and drugging fantasy, by the need to be loved and admired, by recklessness and absent-mindedness, by pride and masochism; she moves to more subtly effective fantasies in art and religion; her need to be loved and
admired is controlled and subdued, and modified by her need to argue her values, she softens her pride; but at the final stage, the weakness of her masochistic and unreal religiosity, her recklessness and dreaminess are finally triumphed over in the renunciation of Stephen: Maggie emerges from illusion and self-love. This account of her process is the more distorting for being faithfully close to the climaxes of the novel. What happens, however, is that the climaxes are reached and then denied. Maggie ascends and descends. It is a process more like an eddy than a directing current. The web is complex; just when Maggie seems to be most enticed by the old voice "that made sweet music", Eliot shows that the relation with Philip is made up of renunciation as well as indulgence. At each step of apparent progress, when Maggie says most-confidently, "I have made up my mind", she is shown, very quietly, as moving back on her word. This eddying process shows itself not only in each detail of apparent change, but throughout the whole broad pattern of growing up. The Maggie who pushed Lucy into the mud, who ran away, who used her doll as a scapegoat, who cut off her hair, who wanted to give Tom the bigger half of the jam-puff and immediately forgot his existence in devouring it this Maggie is still present in the older Maggie, with adult appetites, adult control over trivial acts, and adult lack of control over grave acts. Her experience changes: she finds that renunciation is hard and destructive, but her character is not transformed by this discovery. So, although the notion of Maggie's character is dynamic, it is no case of progress.
The stubborn and unchanging nature of character is shown dynamically, not statically, and the whole psychological notation of the novel keeps us in touch with mobility and complexity. This stubbornness is seen outside Maggie, for instance, in Tom, and perhaps most movingly in Mr Tulliver. One of the finest examples, I think, comes in the two adjacent scenes, which show Mr Tulliver's recovery after his stroke. One marks a crisis of change, the other undercuts and makes an almost cancelling movement:

When he was seated at table with his creditors, his eye kindling and his cheek flushed with the consciousness that he was about to make an honourable figure once more, he looked more like the proud, confident, warm-hearted, and warm-tempered Tulliver of old times than might have seemed possible to anyone who had met him a week before, riding along, as had been his wont for the last four years since the sense of failure and debt had been upon him, with his head hanging down, casting brief, unwilling looks on those who forced themselves on his notice. He made his speech, asserting his honest principles with this old confident eagerness, alluding to the rascals and the luck that had been against him but that triumphed over to some extent by hard efforts and the aid of a good son; and winding up with the story of how Tom had got the best part of the needful money. But the streak of irritation and hostile triumph seemed to melt for a little while into purer fatherly pride and pleasure...
The party broke up in very sober fashion at five o'clock ... and Mr Tulliver mounted his horse to go home and describe the memorable things that had been said and done, to "poor Bessy and the little wench". The air of excitement that hung about him was but faintly due to the good cheer or any stimulus but the potent wine of triumphant joy. He did not choose any back street today, but rode slowly, with uplifted head and free glances, along the principal street all the way of the bridge. Why did he not happen to meet Wakem? The want of that coincidence vexed him and set his mind at work in an irritating way. Perhaps Wakem was gone out of town today on purpose to avoid seeing or hearing anything of an honourable action which might well cause him some unpleasant twinges ...

Simmering in this way, Mr Tulliver approached the yard-gates of Dorlcote Mill, near enough to see a well-known figure coming out of them on a fine black horse. They met about fifty yards from the gates, between the great chestnuts and elms and the high bank.

"Tulliver", said Wakem abruptly in a haughtier tone than usual, "what a fool's trick you did - spreading those hard lumps on that Far Close. I told you how it would be, but you men never learn to farm with any method".

"Oh!" said Tulliver, suddenly boiling up. "Get somebody else to farm for you, then, as'll ask you to teach him".
"You have been drinking, I suppose", said Wakem, really believing that this was the meaning of Tulliver's flushed face and sparkling eyes.

"No, I've not been drinking", said Tulliver, "I want no drinking to help me make up my mind as I'll serve no longer under a scoundrel".

"Very well! You may leave my premises tomorrow; then, hold your insolent tongue and let me pass". (Tulliver was backing his horse across the road to hem Wakem in).

"No, I shan't let you pass", said Tulliver, getting fiercer.
"I shall tell you what I think of you first. You're too big a raskill to get hanged, you're -"

"Let me pass, you ignorant brute, or I'll ride over you".

Mr Tulliver, spurring his horse and raising his whip, made a rush forward, and Wakem's horse, rearing and staggering backward, threw his rider from the saddle and sent him sideways on the ground. Wakem had had the presence of mind to loose the bridle at once, and as the horse only staggered a few paces and then stood still, he might have risen and remounted without more inconvenience than a bruise and a shake. But before he could rise, Tulliver was off his horse too. The sight of the long-hated predominant man down and in his power threw him into a frenzy of triumphant vengeance which seemed to give him preternatural agility and strength. He rushed on Wakem, who was in the act of trying to recover his feet, grasped him by the left arm so as to press Wakem's whole weight
on the right arm, which rested on the ground, and flogged him fiercely across the back with his riding-whip. Wakem shouted for help, but no help came (2).

3.

The Mill on the Floss has a unity in imagery, as demonstrated elsewhere in this work, but it does not prepare us for the part played by the river in reaching the conclusion and solving the problem. What we are prepared for is the struggle between the energetic human spirit and a limited and limiting society: such struggles are not settled by floods.

The flood is the Providence of the novel. It would not be quite true to say that religion is rushed in at the end without being earlier involved with action and character. The community of St Oggs is most carefully analysed as a mixed pagan and Christian society, and a very large number of the characters is placed in religious tradition, belief and feeling. Maggie's religious experience is central to the novel, but I do not think it prepares us for the miraculous aura, however delicately adjusted, which surrounds her in the last pages. The chief defect - indeed, the only serious defect - in The Mill on the Floss is its conclusion. Such a conclusion is in itself assuredly not illegitimate, and there is nothing in the fact of the flood, to my mind,
essentially unnatural: I object to its relation to the preceding part of the story. The story is told as if it were destined to have, if not a strictly happy ending, at least one within ordinary abilities. As it stands, the denouement shocks the reader most painfully. Nothing has prepared him for it; the story does not move towards it, it casts no shadow before it. Did such a denouement lie within the author's intentions from the first, or was it a tardy expedient for the solution of Maggie's difficulties? This question the reader asks himself, but of course, he asks it in vain. The ending of *The Mill on the Floss* is religious or quasi-religious, and is marked by a strong emotional crescendo which betrays the uncontrolled urge to reach an end. George Eliot kills off Tom and Maggie, bringing them through the waters of the flood into each other's arms: there is the triumphant feeling after all that pain, and the triumphant discovery of meaning. The novel ends with a double Eureka feeling: the final embrace of the loved-one and the final vision of meaning. Tom Tulliver at last sees (and Maggie sees that he sees) "the depths in life, that had lain beyond his vision which he had fancied so keen and clear" (3). The imagery of blindness and good vision is there as in each novel.

Whether we see the novel as an imitation of reality or as an expressive form of creating virtual experience, it seems to fail for a good reason: the solutions and conclusions are so visibly needed by the artist, not by the tale. Thus, this novel is an instance of technique acting, not as discovery but as obscuring fantasy.
What turns a great psychological novel into a Providence novel at the end is not simply the magical coincidence of prayer and answer in the "water flowing under her": it is the appearance of exactly the wrong kind of problem-solving.

Throughout the novel have been established two chief implications in the action and relationships - implications which at times rise into explicit formulation: one, that "character is destiny - but not entirely so", which emphasizes not only social determinism and large human influence, but the sheer chanciness of life; the other, that "the highest election and calling is to do without opium", a belief central to Eliot's rejection of Christianity which remained with her all her life. It is all her novels; and it seems to be the standard by which maturity is described and measured in The Mill on the Floss.

Maggie's 'process' is, as we have remarked, more complex than any extracted pattern, but one of the strands in the extracted pattern must be her rejection of the opiates of day-dream, literature, and religion. When she is able to make no dream-world any more, and when literary dream-worlds fail her, she finds a new and subtly effective drug in the religion of self-denial. Philip - and the novel's course - make it plain to her that she is now substituting another harder fantasy for the older fragile ones. She acts her renunciations, and Philip's prophesies, while the novel's course reveals that she has fallen into the fantasy of choosing renunciations - little ones which will not hurt too much. The final experience is the lengthy painfullness of
renunciation, and by making her go through it a second time. She dramatizes, most movingly, the difference between giving up passion in passion and giving it up in deprivation. George Eliot is showing implicitly what she made Philip tell Maggie explicitly: that renunciation hurts; that pain is unpleasant; and deprivation is destructive. But what really offends our regard for aesthetic unity is Maggie's bad faith that contrasts too strongly with the authenticity of everything that comes before. She gives Maggie rewards and triumphs after all, not just by answering the despairing prayer, but by taking her to Tom and allowing her, before they drown together, to see that change of vision in his eyes. The novel has been about living without fantasy and opiate, and ends with a combination of several strong fantasies. There is the fantasy of death, the fantasy of reconciliation, and the fantasy of being finally righted and understood. This novel is sharply divided into realism and fantasy.

Character is the backbone of The Mill on the Floss; imagery, the harmonious substance of its body. But the whole thing is disastrously disfigured towards and by, its end. This blot, however, represents nothing in comparison with the great improvement we note here in George Eliot's structure. Indeed, the focus here is as quiet as can be. This implicitness is a step towards maturity.
George Eliot's later novels are complex. They attempt to embrace a broad diversity of characters and events; and it is not obvious what, if anything, she considers to be the unifying principle that should bring all the parts together into a unified whole. Henry James finds Middlemarch a "treasure-house of details, but ... an indifferent whole" (1). F.R. Leavis in the Great Tradition (2) is willing to cut away the "bad part" of Daniel Deronda and allow the story of Gwendolen to stand by itself. These views are not untrue. To my mind, they simply lack penetration. For only a hasty survey of George Eliot's works can give that impression of independent segments within the novel. But if one looks closer at these segments and then steps back to consider them as a whole, then, before one's eyes, will suddenly emerge a multitude of artistic intentions, a richness of design, in the purpose of the unity of the book.

Let us now examine the first of her later novels:

Middlemarch.

III - MIDDLEMARCH -

In Middlemarch, George Eliot has come a long way from the more or less obvious "relationship" between Stonyshire and Loamshire. In Middlemarch, the reader is offered little help: he must establish the relations as best as he can. In other words, the relation of Hetty Sorrel and Dinah Morris is made explicit; the relation of Casaubon and Lydgate is not. In her later fiction, George Eliot moves from easy and
explicit relations to obscure and implicit ones.

The Prelude introduces St Theresa and "later-born Theresas"; but the Prelude concludes without any word of advice on how it is related to the story of Dorothea Brooke which follows. The relationships between these two human lots develops stealthily in the novel; and the relationship is confirmed only in the Finale, where the "many Theresas" of the Prelude become "Dorotheas".

But a long way before we come to the Finale, we wonder, while the earlier chapters unfold themselves, what form the story is to take - that of an organised, moulded, balanced composition, gratifying the reader with a sense of design and construction, or a mere chain of episodes, broken into accidental lengths and unconscious of the influence of a plan. It so happens that the more we progress in our perusal, the more we develop the conviction that in Middlemarch there is no plan.

But if there is no plan, there is no confusion. The "three love-problems" are held firmly in hand. Dorothea and Lydgate, the Garth and the Vincy families, meet and part, they pair and quarrel, they suffer and resign themselves, in what the author calls an "embroiled medium". The busy idleness of Middlemarch, its trades, its politics, its vestry meetings, and its neighbouring magnates, only form the background to the three spiritual conflicts, the scenery among which three
souls spend some eventful years in working out their salvation and their neighbours', or in effecting with equal labour, something less than salvation for both. The story of these conflicts and struggles is the thread which unites the whole, and sympathy with its incidents is the force that reconciles the reader to the unusual strain upon his intellectual faculties. But the question still remains: how far do these three stories form the unity of the book, or more precisely how does George Eliot connect and relate the different parts of Middlemarch to make of it an organic whole.

Obviously, a work of the liberal scope of Middlemarch is likely to contain a multitude of artistic intentions, in terms of the unity of the book.
I think that the sole and unique unifying principle in Middlemarch is the principle of analogy, which is thoroughly and exhaustively exploited. Here George Eliot presses the reader to find relationships among the most seemingly disconnected events and unrelated characters. Now, how is this made manifest in the novel is to be our main concern.

If we look at Middlemarch through the prism of vocation, then we realize what an important part the stories of Lydgate and Dorothea play in the structure of the novel. Both have a similar brand of idealism operating in the different spheres of social reform and scientific research. Both are similarly "placed" : Dorothea is to Saint Theresa what Lydgate is to Vesalius. Both are frustrated in their vocation
by a combination of milieu and individual failings - in Lydgate's case his "spots of commonness", in Dorothea's her "too theoretical nature". Around these two, still in the light of vocation, cluster other characters. Casanbon's perversion of scholarship ends in a sterile parody of the real thing; Fred Vincy, urged to take holy orders avoids choosing a vocation that would be the wrong one for him; the Reverend Farebrother, who has done what Fred avoids doing but who, nevertheless, makes a decent job of his wrong choice and therefore is pre-eminently the man to advise Fred; Will Ladislaw is the man with no vocation at all, who dwindles from being a dilettante artist into a political journalist and ends up, unconvincingly, as a philanthropist. However, when we read the novel, we are concerned primarily with the relationship of each of these characters to the others, not with the relationship all of them to an imaginary thematic centre. What emerges is a set of variations, and it is not in any abstract statement, but in a richly depicted and subtly discriminated body of life that the strength of the novel lies.

Now, if we take the novel under the aspect of aspiration, we find out that Casanbon and Lydgate, who have very little to do with each other in the plot, are related by the analogy that both are searching for a kind of "primitive tissue" - Casanbon's "key to all Mythologies", Lydgate's medical research. In the same way, Rosamond Vincy and Madame Laure, who have nothing whatever to do with each other in the plot, are related by the analogy that both are like a kind of basil plant
which flourishes on a murdered man's brains: Madame Laure murders her husband for her own convenience, Rosamond forces Lydgate to give up his research and so "kills" the scientist.

In the way of human lots, we have the destinies of Featherstone and Casanbon converging. They have next to nothing to do with each other in the plot, but both die without having been able to deliver up their writings to the world in a decisive form: Featherstone while clasping the key to the chest containing his two wills; Casanbon after having exhausted himself on a work that is still in note-books.

Again, Lydgate's and Dorothea's stories are those of two rather sad fatalities, of two lives which, starting with more than ordinary promise, had to content themselves with very ordinary achievement, and could not derive unmixed consolation from the knowledge, which was the chief prize of their struggles, that failure is never altogether undeserved. The two failures, however, have in common but their irrevocable necessity.

Lydgate does not become thoroughly intelligible till the last chapter has been read in connection with the first: then he appears as a masculine counterpart to Dorothea with the relative proportions of head and heart reversed. (From one point of view, Dorothea's failure is the most tragic, for while Lydgate was drawn back by concrete human infirmity, the fault in Dorothea's case seems to be altogether in the nature and constitution of the universe, her devotion and purity of intention are altogether beautiful, even when, for lack of knowledge, they are expended in what seems to be the wrong place, but it is a sad reflection that their beauty must always rest on a basis of illusion because there is no right place for their bestowal).
Another unifying feature in this novel is that each serious character has a serious delusion. Dorothea believes that she can do good through learning; Lydgate thinks that the demands of science are compatible with those that Middlemarch makes of its physicians; Mr Casanbon nourishes the illusion that marriage with a beautiful and passionate young girl will bring him pleasure and repose; Bulstrode entertains the idea that he can make an inward moral restitution for the act of misappropriating his original fortune.

*Middlemarch* indeed emphasizes George Eliot's observation about the medium in which her characters move: "It is the habit of my imagination to strive after as full a vision of the medium in which the character moves as of the character itself" (3).

*Middlemarch* authorizes an extension of this principle. George Eliot has created a common medium which completely immerses most of the characters; for it is an oppressive provincial town. It is hard indeed to conceive how an individual can on this scene really originate anything. Dorothea's wide charity finds no direct expression; Lydgate's scientific interest in the town's health meets blank incomprehension and effective resistance, not only from all ranks in the medical hierarchy but from almost every element in the town, the oppressiveness of Middlemarch thus the basic source of frustration of the main figures. In other terms, all these frustrations have Middlemarch for a common denominator, hence a sense of unity.
Still, George Eliot's special success in *Middlemarch* is an extraordinary economy of means, for it appears when we look closely that the matter of the book is people's opinions about one another, and this particular method consists in contriving scenes in which the disparity between the intentions of agents and the opinions of observers is dramatically exhibited. This consistency of method accounts in its own way for our sense of the unity of a book which embraces a whole social order, and at least three principal stories.

What Eliot surveys is a landscape of opinion, for it is not the natural landscape that is dominant here. We have moved a step further into abstraction from the landscapes in *Adam Bede*, and those in *The Mill on the Floss*. In fact, there are only two fully realized natural landscapes, Lowick Manor and Stone Court, and in these cases the landscape is realized by an individual whose situation and interests make him aware of an external world at that particular moment. For the most part, we may characterize the book's use of the physical world by referring to Eliot's own sense of Warwickshire as a physical locale which has been wholly humanized, and to the Reverend Cadwallader's half-serious remark that it is a very good quality in a man to have a trout stream. This transposition of the natural into the moral and psychological is further illustrated by the novelist's use of snatches of poetry - Dorothea Brooke's hope for social betterment "haunted her like a passion" - and we may say that the affectionate sense of nature and the objects that man makes and handles which suffuses
Adam Bede has been deliberately subdued here. Nothing comparable to the description of Hetty Sorrel in Mrs Payser's dairy can enter into Middlemarch. Not because it is a more "intellectual" book, but because its immediacies are not things seen but things felt and believed. It is striking that we know almost nothing of the appearance of Middlemarch itself, although our sense of the life of the town as a community is very full indeed, ranging as it does from a pet-house to the Green Dragon, the town's best inn, from horse-dealers, auctioneers, and grocers to the lawyers, physicians, merchants, clergymen, and landowners. Although we see little of the activities of all these people we hear their voices, each pitched to the tone of its own desire, each capable of dropping suggestively our rising assertion on grounds which George Eliot shows to be wholly inadequate when related to the facts of the particular case.

Chapter 45 is a good example of the masterly way in which George Eliot can demonstrate the drifts and swirls of opinion through the town. In this account of various responses to Lydgate's principled refusal to dispense drugs himself, each of the voices establishes a character so fully and with such economy that it is hard to believe that Mawmsey the grocer, and Mrs Dallop of the Tankard have not always been known to us. Yet this single chapter does much more. In it we learn that the clouds of misapprehension and selfishness gathering about Lydgate cannot possibly be dispelled, that he is more
than likely to run into debt, and that his wife's awful insularity will resist his earnest and even his desperate attempts to penetrate it. Much earlier, that is, in chapter 15, Eliot had used her author's privilege to warn the reader of all these possibilities. "For surely all must admit that a man may be puppet and belauded, envied, ridiculed, counted upon as a tool and fallen in love with, or at least selected as a future husband, and yet remain virtually unknown - known whereby as a cluster of signs for his neighbours' false supposition" (4). The author, writing of Middlemarch, says: "I wanted to give a panoramic view of provincial life ..." (5), but what she does give is something far more active, far more in accord with the image of the web - as perhaps a vast switchboard in which every signal is interpreted differently by each receiver, and each receiver is in its turn capable of propagating in response a signal of its own with equally dissonant consequences. Yet in the end, roughly but surely, the dissonances die out and a concensus of sort emerges.

Some of George Eliot's devices to enforce her view of the landscape of opinion are transparently set before the reader's eyes: young Fred Vincy has long held expectations based on old Featherstone's will. Featherstone who lives to torment his relatives, teases Fred about a story that he has been trying to borrow money on post-obits. Fred is instructed to get a letter from the stiff-necked Bulstrode to the effect that this is not true. Old Featherstone is here made to demand of Fred Vincy more than Bulstrode's testimony as to the fact;
What he provides in fact is an occasion in which Fred is envisioned by another man—a account of one facet of his social being. The imaginative coherence of Middlemarch can be seen on many levels; on this instance old Featherstone's demand is the counter-part of what chiefly obsesses his last months: the effect that another document, his will, will produce on those who survive him. His opinion incidentally will emerge when his last will is read, and it will comfort no one on the Middlemarch scene. Fred, meanwhile, is buoyed up by an opinion generally held that he will inherit from old Featherstone: "In fact, tacit expectations of what would be done for him by Uncle Featherstone determined the angle at which most people viewed Fred Vincy in Middlemarch; and in his own consciousness, what Uncle Featherstone would do for him in an emergency, or what he would do simply as an incorporated luck, formed always an immeasurable depth of aerial perspective" (6).

All the characters thus evolve in the landscape of opinion. We must admit that there is nothing like gossip and opinion to connect characters and give a community a sense of unity.

If analogy and common medium are the most exploited devices in the service of the unity of the book, I think that the plotting does not make a lesser contribution. As a matter of fact, the plot of Middlemarch is carefully, exhaustively contrived. One, or more, of the characters in each of the four stories plays an important part in each of the other three. This is done for the unity of the book. But I cannot resist listing here, with regard to the plot, some of the
occasions for sympathetic concern in this novel: we wonder how will Dorothea awake to a consciousness of the meaning of her marriage to the pedantic Casanbon? Will Fred Vincy inherit old Featherstone's money? Failing that, will he reclaim himself and marry Mary Garth, or will Farebrother cut him out? Will Rosamond's "torpedo contact" paralyse her vigorous husband, Lydgate? Can he succeed in medical practice in the face of the bigotry of Middlemarch? Can he extricate himself from his debt? How will Bulstrode be found out, and what will happen to him and his wife? Will Lydgate eventually fall in love with Dorothea? And so forth...

Middlemarch indeed is "a treasure-house of details", but with its analogies, its common medium and its plot as unifying principles. It is really hard to see it as an "indifferent whole".

IV - DANIEL DERONDA -

The main new features Middlemarch exhibits are the inter-weaving of concurrent stories, and the movement from easy and explicit relations to obscure and implicit ones. Here, in our author's last novel, we find that implicitness further developed.

Daniel Deronda presents two human lots - Daniel Deronda's and Gwendolen Harleth's - running through the novel almost completely independent of each other.
The two characters exchange glances in the first scene, part, are not introduced to each other until Book IV chapter XXIX, and at the conclusion have parted forever. But once again analogy is the unifying principle of the novel. Indeed, what makes the two stories a "wholeness" is the complex of analogical relations between them. Both Daniel and Gwendolen are searching for a duty to submit to. Deronda finds his in his Jewish heritage; Gwendolen finds something less precise. However, we must recognize that by so reducing the interrelations in the plot itself, Eliot has pressed the principle of unity by analogy to an extreme. This will also account for our not being expansive on that aspect which is deprived of the richness it exhibits in Middlemarch.

Now, we shall examine Daniel Deronda as a new and the final phase of George Eliot's work.

There are both blemishes and beauties in Daniel Deronda which belong exclusively to this work. No book of George Eliot's before this has ever appeared so laboured, and sometimes even so forced and feeble, in its incidental remarks. None of the books we have yet examined does include so many original mottoes prefixed to the chapters which, instead of increasing our admiration for the book, rather overweight and perplex it. None of the books which precede this one has ever contained so little humour. No, doubt the reader feels the difference in all these respects between Daniel Deronda and Middlemarch.
On the other hand, no previous book of Eliot's, with, perhaps, the exception of Adam Bede, over contained so fine a plot, so admirably worked out. None of the books we have reviewed contains so many really fine characters, nor does it betray so subtle an insight into the modes of growth of a better moral life within the shrivelling buds and blossoms of the selfish life which has been put off and condemned. In Daniel Deronda, for the first time, the poetical side of George Eliot's genius attains adequate expression, through the medium which is proper to her - that of prose - and in complete association with the non-poetical element of her nature.

To discover the central motive of Daniel Deronda, it should be studied in connection with its immediate predecessor, Middlemarch. On first impressions the contrast is striking. In Middlemarch the prosaic or realistic element occupies a much larger place; a great proportion of the novel does not contain satire, because satire connotes the idea of exaggeration and malicious purpose. The chief figures - Lydgate, Dorothea - are enveloped by a swarm of subordinate characters, each admirably real, and to them we are compelled to give away a share of our interest, a share of our admiration, or detestation, or sympathy.

In Daniel Deronda, the poetical or ideal element decidedly preponderates. We should feel the needle-pricks of Mrs Cadwallader's epigrams an irritating impertinence. Our emotions are strung too tensely to permit us to yield an amused
tolerance to the fine dispersion of the idea in Mr Brooke's discourse. In place of a background of ugliness - the Middlemarch streets, the hospital, the billiard-room, the death-chamber of Old Featherstone, his funeral procession attended by Christian carnivora - we have backgrounds of beauty, the grassy court of the abbey enclosed by a gothic cloister, the July sunshine, and blown roses; Cardell Chase, the changing scenery of the forest from roofed grove to open glade; evening on the Thames at Richmond with the lengthening shadows and the mellowing light, its darkening masses of tree and building between the double glow of the sky and the river; the splendour of sunset in a great city, while the lit-up, expectant face is gazing from Blackfriars Bridge, westward, where the grey day is dying gloriously; the Mediterranean; its shores "gemlike with purple shadows, a sea where one may float between blue and blue in a open-eyed dream that the world has done with sorrow" (1).

These differences in externals correspond with the essential inward difference between the two works - the one, Middlemarch, is critical, while its successor aims at being in a certain sense constructive. Middlemarch closes with neither heroic joy nor noble tragic pain. The heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness of a Saint Theresa, foundress of nothing, "tremble off and are dispersed among hindrances instead of centering in some long-recognizable deed" (2). The intellectual passion which might have produced a Bichat has for net result a heavy insurance, and a treatise upon that
disease which owns a good deal of wealth on its own side. Heart and brain alike prove failures.

But Middlemarch is not the final word of our great imaginative teacher. Whether consciously so designed or not, Daniel Deronda comes to us as a counterpoise or a correlative of the work which immediately precedes it. There we saw how two natures framed for largely desinterested services to humanity can be narrowed - the one into the round of the duteous sweet observances of domestic life - the other into the servitude which the world imposes upon those who accept its base terms and degrading compensations. Here we are shown how two natures can be ennobled and enlarged; the one rescued through the anguish of man has power to bestow upon the soul of man, from self-centered insolence of youth, the crude egoism of a spoilt child; the other, a nature of finer mould and temper than that of Lydgate, with none of the spots of commonness in it which produced a disintegrating effect on Lydgate's action, but exposed through its very plenteousness and flexibility of sympathy to peculiar dangers - the danger of neutrality in the struggle between common things and elevated things which fill the world, the danger of wandering energy and wasted ardours; and from these dangers Deronda is delivered, he is incorporated into a great ideal life, made one with his nation and race, and there is confided to him the heritage of duty (bound with love) which was his forefathers', and of which it had been sought to deprive him.
When we speak of *Middlemarch* as more realistic, and the later novel as more ideal, it is not meant that the one is true to the facts of life and the other untrue; it is rather meant that in the one the facts are taken more in the gross, and in the other there is a passionate selection of these facts that are representative of the highest (and also the lowest) things. And it will not be irrelevant to observe here that the leading characters in *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* all escape the circle of the author's judgement. It is claimed for each of them that they aspire to escape into the great world. Dorothea is the partial exception. When confronted by her uncle, Casanbon, her sister Celia, or Chet-tham, she is fully controlled, fully understood. But Deronda is extravagantly moral and spiritual. Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw in their scenes together have the same defect.
IV - CONCLUSION -

From the techniques revealed by the study of the structure in George Eliot's novels, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the unifying principle in George Eliot's novels is the principle of analogy. She does not consider the beginnings and endings of her novels as important as the "inner relations". George Eliot held a clear, personal view about what unity in a work of art is: "an opera", she wrote "must be no mosaic of melodies stuck together with no other method than is supplied by accidental contrast ... but an organic whole, which grows up like a palm, its earliest portions containing the germ and prevision of all the rest" (1). Again, this early notion of unity underwent development, so that later in her work, it came to mean "the relationship of multiplex interdependent parts to a whole which is itself in the most varied and therefore fullest relation to other wholes" (2). At the end of her career, she had pressed her conception of form so far that the beginnings and endings of her novels had become a source of frustration.

Throughout her career George Eliot discourages the reader from giving as much significance to the beginning and ending as to the intrinsic relations of which these are only the outer limits. The first words of the first chapter motto of Daniel Deronda tell the reader that the poet can do nothing "without the make-believe of a beginning". She makes the point in a letter that "endings are inevitably the least satisfactory part of any work in which there is any merit of development" (3).
She speaks in a review of the "artificial necessities of a dénouement" (4). And she maintains that conclusion is the weak point of most authors, but some of the fault lies in the very nature of a conclusion, which is at best a negation" (5). Arthur Donnithorne's last-minute appearance, with Hetty's release, and the last chapter flood that drowns Maggie Tulliver are, as it were, the negation of form by outline, these we feel are brought about for reasons of necessity. Indeed, the conclusions are George Eliot's weak point in her novels; form for her must end where it does not really end. Every novel is torn ragged from its real context. The universe is a "tempting range of relevancies" (6). The Finale of Middlemarch is not a finale and begins: "Every limit is a beginning as well as an ending"; and in her huge last novel, Daniel Deronda, she seems to have felt bound to make some apology for the "artificial necessities" her conception of form has imposed on her. The motto to the first chapter refers to the "make-believe of a beginning", and it concludes, "No retrospect will take us to the true beginning; and whether our prologue be in heaven or earth, it is but a fraction of that all-pressing fact with which our story sets out" (7).

Other story-tellers center our hopes and fears in the happiness or unhappiness of their chief personages; a wedding or a funeral brings to an end at once our emotional disturbance. George Eliot is profoundly moved by the spectacle of human joy and human sorrow, death to her is always tragic, but there is something more tragic than cessation of breath,
and of the pulse; there is the slow letting go of life and the ultimate extinction of a soul; to her the marriage joys are dear, but there is something higher than the highest happiness of lovers. When Tom and Maggie sink in the hurrying Floss, there is left an aching sense of abrupt incompleteness, of imperious suspension, of intolerable arrest; and with this a sense of the utter helplessness of our extremest longings. This is cruel to our tender desire for joy. But in each tale of George Eliot's telling, if the question arises of the ruin or restoration of moral character, every other interest becomes subordinate to this.
Notes on Structure and Form: "Middlemarch"

2. George R. Greenger, op. cit. 66
3. J. W. Gross, ed. George Eliot's Life as related on her datters and journals. (London 1885) II, IO
4. Middlemarch ch. I5 P. I71

Notes on Structure and Form: Daniel Deronda

I - Daniel Deronda ch 54 P. 733
2. Middlemarch Prelude P. 26

Notes on The Conclusion to Form and Structure

2. Pinney, op. cit, P. 433
4. Arts and Belles Lettres 'Westminster Review' (1856) LXV P. 639
5. *Letters*, II, P. 324

6. *Middlemarch* ch I, P. 170

I - FIRST PHASE -

Mr Steiner writes of "the total lack of technique on George Eliot's part ... by interfering constantly in the narration, George Eliot attempts to persuade us of what would be artistically evident ... At other times George Eliot adds to her omniscience deliberate comments and summaries of events" (1). Then he adds that omniscience is an author's most lazy approach and that personal interference in the action must be compared to what occurs in a Chinese theatre where the manager comes on during the plays to change props. But we do not know which period or specific novel Mr Steiner referred to. If he meant George Eliot's technique in general, then his assertion is likely to raise violent controversy. But if he alluded to the first period, and more precisely, to Adam Bede, then he is liable to enjoy the acquiescence of the majority.

Mr Steiner's assertion is true to Adam Bede indeed. The ways in which George Eliot goes about defining the symbolic relationships of Loamshire and Stonyshire are occasionally clumsy. Like many another Victorians, Eliot does not hesitate to step in and speak directly to the point, telling us discursively, almost didactically, what Loamshire and Stonyshire
represent. Only now and then does she trust the really very powerful imagery associated with the two worlds to carry alone the weight of definition. More frequently, she compromises by creating a dramatic situation in which conversations of characters about Loamshire and Stonyshire have a defining function, while she herself keeps discreetly in the background.

For example, much of Dinah Morris's function in the first part of the book is best understood in terms of a surrogate definer. Herself a representative of the Stonyshire world, she nevertheless has family attachments to Loamshire, where her aunt and uncle manage a prosperous farm. Her position is ambiguous: because of her kinship to the Paysers she commands a certain respect; at the same time, the community is essentially distrustful of her, both as an outsider and as a Methodist. Thus, when Dinah goes to the village green in Hayslope to preach, every "generation ... from old "Feyther Taft" ... down to the babies." (2) is near at hand, but "all took care not to join the Methodists on the Green, and identify themselves in that way with the expectant audience, for there was not one of them that would not have disclaimed the imputation of having come out to hear the "preacher-woman"; they had only come out to see "what war a - goin' on, like" (3).

Most of the failures in Adam Bede derive from an instability in George Eliot's attitude towards her characters. The stylistic symptoms of this instability are easy to detect:
the first and rarest, is a certain stridency in George Eliot's address to the reader, marked by aggressive questions and emphatic assertions. A good example of this is to be found in chapter 29; it concerns Arthur's evasive rationalizations about Hetty:

"Are you inclined to ask whether this can be the same Arthur who, two months ago, had that freshness of feeling, that delicate honour which shrinks from wounding even a sentiment, and does not contemplate any more positive offence as possible for it? - who thought that his own self-respect was a higher tribunal than any external opinion? The same, I assure you, only under different conditions" (4).

Chapter 17 provides another example. George Eliot begins the chapter with a remarkable brightness that betrays her nervousness and uncertainty; she assumes a reaction from the reader about the Reverend Irwine which is supposed to follow:

"This Rector of Broxton is little better than a pagan!" I hear one of my readers exclaim" (5).

The infuriating thing about this, of course, is that she hears nothing of the sort; the reader is repelled by having his reactions determined for him; he feels himself, and not the character, to be a puppet manipulated by the author.

- The second symptom is a certain archness or whimsicality; in this example, from the end of chapter 3, it emerges mainly as a mock-modesty and an over-heavy irony:
Still - If I have not always been found in a direct ratio with a sensibility to the three concords, and it is possible - thank Heaven! - to have very erroneous theories and very sublime feelings (6).

- Finally, there is a rhetorical floridity which betrays George Eliot's uneasiness at being required to deal with passionate feeling; this, for instance, from chapter 12, describing Hetty and Arthur:

Love is such a simple thing when we have only one-and-twenty summers and a sweet girl of seventeen trembles under our glance, as if she were a bud first opening her heart with wondering rapture to the morning. Such young unfurrowed souls roll to meet each other like two velvet peaches that touch softly and are at rest; they mingle as easily as two brooklets that ask for nothing but to entwine themselves and ripple with ever-interlacing curves in the leafiest hiding-places (7).

But Adam Bede does not exhibit only failures of George Eliot's intrusive technique. There are gems like towards the end of ch. 26, Adam walks home, tormented by doubts about Hetty; he finally consoles himself and the author writes:

And so Adam went to bed comforted, having woven for himself an ingenious web of probabilities - the surest screen a wise man can place between himself and the truth (8).
This comment is potently and successfully placed; it arises naturally from the immediately preceding description and analysis of Adam's turmoil. Through the image of the web, it relates to one of the main strands of imagery and one of the main themes of the novel, and it makes, quietly and unemphatically, its own ironical point.

Adam Bede exhibits in the purest form those kinds of successes and failures most important in George Eliot's handling of the omniscient technique. Thereafter, as the technical assurance increases, her failures become fewer and less obvious.

There is for example, no equivalent to Hetty Sorrel in The Mill on the Floss. The treatment of Hetty Sorrel betrays the stage of the relatively inexperienced and imperfect novelist whose problem was how to express in the rich fulness of her art an impoverished reality without either appearing paradoxical or allowing her art to suffer an impoverishment corresponding to reality. She begins in chapters 9 and 15, with a full analysis of Hetty - which arouses objections - Later in the story Hetty is fully and dramatically presented. But even here, in the journey to and from Windsor, she is presented through action; only once, in the prison scene, does she achieve anything like adequate articulation of her experience, and this, contrasting so sharply with her previous moral inexpressiveness,
strikes us more forcibly than it should, since it throws too clear a light on Dinah's exhortation. This realization of Hetty comes late in the book.

But with Maggie Tulliver, George Eliot has learnt the lesson and the position is reversed; the first extended analysis of Maggie occurs only after her childhood is firmly established. With Hetty, analysis precedes the dramatic presentation, with Maggie, it accompanies and follows it.

The dominant convention of narration in Adam Bede as a whole is that of omniscience, and if there are some gems, blemishes abound.

But there is a successful use of the convention which is unique to The Mill on the Floss. The extended intrusion of the author in the opening chapters, the contemplation of her past and present selves create here an intimate and personal tone. The Mill on the Floss has remarkable dramatic continuity, in distinction from that descriptive, discursive method of narration exhibited in Adam Bede. The style in The Mill on the Floss is singularly apt and rich, and felicitous. Onward it flows and bears us along with an irresistible force, and before we can get tired of the sometimes prosy interlocutors of the drama, the author steps in and rouses our attention with a wise remark or a pleasant reflection that shows the extensive ness of her reading, the acuteness of her observation, the maturity of her thought and the maturing of her technique.
This aspect is extensively treated in the part relating to the structure of *The Mill on the Floss*. In that study, we saw how the author's comments and analyses were unobtrusively brought in.

Like in *Adam Bede*, she here seems better at making her characters speak than speaking herself. Indeed, as if her descriptions were not vivid enough, she prefers to make her characters speak for themselves, and the dialogue is sustained with marvellous ability. But here the slightest shades of difference between the characters are rendered with great subtlety. This is remarkably displayed in the representation of the odious Dodson family in which the family likeness is strictly preserved, while the individual traits are not lost.

II - SECOND PHASE -

In *Middlemarch*, George Eliot achieves the steadiness and clarity of ironic contemplation which belongs to full maturity. The steady, clear ironical gaze derives from the stability of the author - novel relationship, and it results in local touches that the early George Eliot would have found unthinkable: we cannot imagine the author of *Adam Bede* commenting on her description of an auction sale that:

"This was not one of the sales indicating the depression of trade; on the contrary, it was due to Mr Larcher's great success in the carrying business, which warranted
his purchase of a mansion near Riverston already furnished in high style by an illustrious Spa physician - furnished indeed with such large framefuls of expensive flesh-painting in the dining-room, that Mrs Larcher was nervous until reassured by finding the subjects to be Scriptural" (9).

Such a detachment and ease is a surprise but at the same time most a welcome one.

In several cases George Eliot opens a chapter with a paragraph or two of omniscient comment, all of which show a confidence and poise quite new to her art. Her comments and analyses, instead of being a bulk, here invest a definite function which shows a great technical advance.

The narrator's comments and analyses provide a supporting, illuminating context for scenes, reducing their responsibility for conveying meaning directly. Here, with little interruption by the narrator, we see dramatized various elements in the character of Dorothea and Celia's, with emphasis on certain of Dorothea's qualities especially her sensuous nature, of which she herself is not, or is imperfectly aware. But we are not wholly dependent on the dialogue and description to perceive these elements. The scene occupies only the second half of the chapter; the first has been devoted to an authorial exposition of the situation and characters of the two sisters. We are given, in the form of abstract analysis, information which will assist our understanding of later developments.
Thus, we are told that "Dorothea, with all her eagerness to know the truths of life, retained very childlike ideas about marriage" (10), preparing us for her response to Casanbon. The author's voice does not however remain outside, the scene. The relation of Dorothea sensuous and religious feelings is also suggested by the narrator's brief analytic commentary:

"They are lovely", said Dorothea, slipping the ring and bracelet on her finely-turned finger and wrist, and holding them towards the window on a level with her eyes. All the while her thought was trying to justify her delight in the colours by merging them in her mystic religious joy. (11).

The last sentence may be seen as a brief, unobtrusive appearance (or intrusion) of the contextual material in the scene. Only in retrospect do we recognize that the narrative has moved a degree toward omniscience, presenting Dorothea from the vantage point of a greater awareness of her motives than she herself enjoys.

For the reader prepared by the contextual examples of Dorothea's attitude towards riding, the comment comes as a reinforcement of his ironic view of her talk of "spiritual emblems" - referring to her beautiful gems.

So, comments are not ends in themselves. Nor are they objects for our contemplation. To be successful, they require clarity and simplicity, so that we can pass easily and
quickly over them, to reach the understanding of the main point which should be our primary preoccupation. But if we stop to question or even discuss the rights and wrongs of a particular comment, we shall find that it has turned into a dead-end, facing us with a sudden blank, or worse, leading us into a path diverging us from the line of the novel into the area of intellectual discourse unconnected with the body of particular life on the novel. We come back to Adam Bede to find an example of this kind of failure, at the end of chapter 5, in Eliot's defence of Irwine, the Rector of Hayslope. I quote this example here in order to make more obvious the maturity of Eliot's technique, by juxtaposing its use in the two phases of her work.

At first sight thus, chapter 5 seems to be a simple case of special pleading and on those grounds alone, is irritating. For so far in the novel, Irwine's character has aroused controversy neither among other characters, nor obviously in the reader. But Eliot, with her might and main, exhaustively indulges in his defence. But there is more to it than that, the interesting point is that the passage involves opinions and attitudes common in the novel and which we do not find offensive elsewhere. Eliot here is making a special plea for one of her characters and uses it only for sake of scoring a debating point. At first, she uses the familiar generalizing technique to set Irwine firmly as a representative figure of his likes. But then she concludes:
Such men, happily, have lived in times when great abuses flourished, and have sometimes even been the living representatives of the abuses. That is a thought which might comfort us a little under the opposite fact - that it is better sometimes not to follow great reformers of abuses beyond the threshold of their homes. But whatever you may think of Mr Irwine now, if you had met him that June afternoon riding on his grey cob, with his dogs running beside him - portly, upright, manly, with a good-natured smile on his finely turned lips as he talked to his dashing young companion on the bay mare, you must have felt that etc ... etc ... (12).

But nowhere in the novel are we concerned with great reformers of abuses, Eliot's advice is gratuitous and at the same time, we have been led away from Irwine towards a point which we cannot really relate to the novel. This is a pure and unfortunate example of digression. To come back to the point she digressed from, she abruptly jerks Irwine back to us through a device which merely emphasizes the wrong turning she had taken.

To this we oppose the scene in *Middlemarch* of Lydgate's engagement. The crucial movement from flirtation to love is presented in analysis as Lydgate, picking up Rosamond's chain-work, sees that she is weeping:

Remember that the ambitious man who was looking at those Forget-me-nots under the water was very warm-hearted and rash. He did not know where the chain went; an idea had
thrilled through the recesses within him which had a miraculous effect in raising the power of passionate love lying buried there in no sealed sepulchre, but under the lightest, easily pierced mould (13).

Here, George Eliot refers the reader to the established context of analysis for full understanding of Lydgate's behaviour. The function of tone in his comment is complex: at the same time that it urges sympathetic understanding of Lydgate's motivation, it prevents identification with him by associating the reader with narrator's superior point of view. The allusion which the imagery makes to the Resurrection is not a local irrelevance, it makes an implicit contrast between Lydgate and Casanbon, whose capacity for love is buried in a "sealed sepulchre" and who is repeatedly associated with images of deathly enclosure. This is an example of the good way in which the comment refers us to the narrative context.

In Middlemarch, we may locate analysis, and other functions of the author's commenting voice, on a scale of increasing abstraction.

At the most concrete level are dialogue and external description, from which we move to an internal view of the characters. There is no necessary reason why this last should be any more abstract than external, but with George Eliot it usually tends that way. Her usual stylistic device for presenting her character's mind is free, indirect discourse, which, because it consists of the narrator indirectly voicing the
character's thoughts, blends easily into analysis, where we clearly occupy a level of awareness above that of the character. From analysis we may move to further levels of generalization to comments which do not only apply to the particular scene before us.

This movement of increasing generalization may be observed within a single paragraph in chapter 7 of Middlemarch. The scene begins with an external view of a brief interchange between the newly engaged Casaubon and Dorothea, who, eager for the enlightenment she expects from his wisdom, asks whether, "to be more useful", she shouldn't learn some Latin and Greek so as to be able to read to him "as Milton's daughters did to their father". Casaubon finally grants that" it might be a great advantage if (she) were able to copy the Greek character, and to that end it were well to begin with a little reading" (14). The narrator then moves to an internal view of Dorothea, presenting her mental response and the state of mind which lies behind it:

Dorothea seized this as a precious permission. She would not have asked Mr Casaubon at once to teach her the languages, dreading of all things to be tiresome instead of helpful; but it was not entirely out of devotion to her future husband that she wished to know Latin and Greek. Those provinces of masculine knowledge seemed to her a standing ground from which all truth could be seen more truly. As it was, she constantly doubted her own conclusions,
because she felt her own ignorance: how could she be confident that one-roomed cottages were not for the glory of God, when men who know the classics appeared to conciliate indifference to the cottages with zeal for the glory? Perhaps even Hebrew might be necessary - at least the alphabet and a few roots - in order to arrive at the core of things, and judge soundly on the social duties of the Christian. And she had not reached that point of renunciation at which she would have been satisfied with having a wise husband; she wished, poor child, to be wise herself. Miss Brooke was certainly very naïve with all her alleged cleverness. Celia, whose mind had never been thought too powerful, saw the emptiness of other people's pretensions much more readily. To have in general but little feeling, seems to be the only security against feeling too much on any particular occasion (15).

From description of response the narrator moves to a brief analytical noting of motivation ("it was not entirely out of devotion to her future husband"...) and then into a progressively interiorized rendering of her attitude. From noting how things "seemed to her" we move to their unmediated semblance in the concluding sentences of free indirect discourse where the irony is all implicit in the naivete of her attitudes ("Perhaps even Hebrew might be necessary").

From this point where the internal view of this particular mental state has been fully established, the passage
continues in a series of ascending generalizations. First in analytical summary of Dorothea's attitude, the narrator's own voice clearly reappears as the tone adds pity to the irony: "And she had not reached that point of renunciation at which she would have been satisfied with having a wise husband: she wished poor child, to be wise herself". The narrator then begins to withdraw from the character, designating her more formally, and making a generalization in a comment which is now abstracted from the particular circumstances: "Miss Brooke was certainly very naïve with all her cleverness". We have been brought to an explicit statement of the obvious conclusion. But this judgement is not sufficiently balanced for George Eliot, it must be placed in perspective by further generalization, a perspective which is reached in a summary review of the contrast between the two sisters: "Celia, whose mind had never been thought too powerful, saw the emptiness of other people's pretensions much more readily'. The irony here suggests that Celia's greater safety depends on insulation in her narrow range of abstraction above the particular individuals who have been considered, applying the conclusions to the general human state: "To have in general but little feeling, seems to be the only security against feeling too much on any particular occasion". We have moved a great distance from the particular situation of a few lives. It is important to note how this level of abstraction is reached through a process of rendering, analysis, and progressive generalization, moving outward from the scene to its conceptual context.
It is equally important, at this level, to note how the use of analysis differentiates George Eliot's scenes from those closer to the drama, depending more on dialogue and description of behaviour, and which her early novels are rich in and make a success of. But from that point of view, Daniel Deronda is George Eliot's most successful novel. Nowhere is Eliot's genius more apparent than in the sensitive precision of her hold on dialogue: a hold which, with the variety of living tension she can create with it, is illustrated in the scene between Gwendolen and her mother, that follows on the arrival of Grandcourt's self-committing note (ch. 26), and in the decisive tête-à-tête with Grandcourt (ch. 27).

It is essentially in her speech that Gwendolen is made a concrete presence - Gwendolen, whose "ideal it was to be daring in speech and reckless in braving danger, both moral and physical", of whom it is hard to say whether she is more aptly described as tending to act herself or her ideal of herself; "whose lively venturesomeness of talk has the effect of wit" ("it was never her aspiration to express herself virtuously so much as cleverly - a point to be remembered in extenuation of her words, which were usually worse than she was").

It is in the scene between Gwendolen and Grandcourt that George Eliot's mastery of dialogue is most strikingly exhibited. We have it in ch. 11, on their being introduced to each other. It is shown in the rendering of dramatic tension in ch. 13, where Gwendolen takes evasive action in the face of Grandcourt's clear intent to propose. I will save quotation
for the marvellously economical passage (which is to be found in the part destined to Crisis and Decision in this study).

*Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* exhibit the same maturity in Eliot's narrative technique, so we will not linger on *Daniel Deronda* which presents the same uses of the technique. Both novels belong to Eliot's career at its maturest. But still, I would like to draw attention on Eliot's growing irony and humour in her narrative style. She is almost whimsical and seems to play with her narrative. There are two whole pages in which the talk is thus punctuated: Grandcourt says to Gwendolen Harleth:

"I used to think archery was a great bore", Grandcourt began. He spoke with a fine accent...
"Are you converted to-day?" said Gwendolen. (Pause, during which she imagined various degrees and modes of opinion about herself that might be entertained by Grandcourt)
"Yes, since I saw you shooting..."
"I suppose you are a first-rate shot with a rifle". (Pause, during which Gwendolen, having taken a rapid observation of Grandcourt, made a brief graphic description of him to an indefinite hearer).
"I have left off shooting"
"Oh, then, you are a formidable person: People who have done things once and left them off make one feel very contemptible, as if one were using cast-off fashions. I hope you have not left off all follies, because I practise a great many".
(Pause, during which Gwendolen made several interpretations of her own speech)
"What do you call follies?"
"Well, in general, I think whatever is agreeable is called a folly. But you have not left off hunting, I hear".
(Pause, wherein Gwendolen recalled what she had heard about Grandcourt's position, and decided that he was the most aristocratic-looking man she had ever seen).
"One must do something"
"And do you care about the turf? - or is that among the things you have left off?"
(Pause, during which Gwendolen thought that a man of extremely calm, cold manners might be less disagreeable as a husband that other men, and not likely to interfere with his wife's preferences).
"I run a horse now and then; but I don't go in for the thing as some men do. Are you fond of horses?"
"Yes, indeed: I never like my life so well as when I am on horseback, having a great gallop. I think of nothing I only feel myself strong and happy".
(Pause, wherein Gwendolen wondered whether Grandcourt would like what she said, but assured herself that she was not going to disguise her tastes)
"Do you like danger?"
"I don't know. When I am on horseback I never think of danger. It seems to me that if I broke my bones I should not feel it. I should go at anything that came my way".
(Pause, during which Gwendolen had run through a whole hunting season with two chosen hunters to ride at will).
"You would perhaps like tiger-hunting or pig-sticking. I saw some of that for a season or two in the East. Everything here is poor stuff after that."

"You are fond of danger, then?"

(Pause, wherein Gwendolen spectaculated on the probability that the men of coldest manners were the most adventurous, and felt the strength of her own insight, supposing the question had to be decided).

"One must have something or other. But one gets used to it"

"I begin to think I am very fortunate, because everything is new to me: it is only that I can't get enough of it. I am not used to anything except being dull, which I should like to leave off as you have left off shooting."

(Pause, during which it occurred to Gwendolen that a man of cold and distinguished manners might possibly be a dull companion; but on the other hand she thought that most persons were dull, that she had not observed husbands to be companions - and that after all she was not going to accept Grandcourt) etc ... etc ... (16).

The author is deliberately coming out constantly to present the character's mind. She is almost playful. The weight of the irony cannot be denied; but the playfulness of the form of this strange dialogue is not in keeping with the nature of the matter. Indeed George Eliot is using this method for serious, pathetic, even dreadful matter. But she uses it with signal power.
III - CONCLUSION -

To bring a conclusion to the evolution of George Eliot's narrative and descriptive method, we will simply recall the two main aspects which exhibit obvious changes:

1°) Her mode of characterization passes from dramatic self-revelation to realization of character through comment and analysis.

2°) Analysis and commentary, clumsy and often obtrusive in the early novels, becomes economically integrated into Eliot's technique up to the point to make the success of the narrative method of late Eliot.

Yet, though the method on her later novels is artistically mature, and satisfactory we do not enjoy the later novel as much as we do the early ones with all their defects. For if Eliot's early handling of analysis and comment is sometimes clumsy, she happily does not often recur to that mode of narration, whence the vividness, lightness, freshness and spontaneity of style which the reader favours. While in the later work, despite their economical use, analysis and comment engender heaviness of style through their frequency and the laboriousness of the language in which they are realised.
Notes on the descriptive Narrative methods


2. AB ch 2 P. 29

3. Ibid, ch 2 P. 30

4. Ibid, ch 29 P. 301

5. Ibid, ch 17 P. 174

6. Ibid, ch 3 P. 48

7. Ibid, ch 12 P. 134

8. Ibid, ch 26 P. 278

9. Middlemarch, ch 60 P. 648

10 Ibid, ch I P. 32

II Ibid, ch I P. 36

12 Adam Bede ch 5 P. 77

13. Middlemarch ch 31 P. 335

14 Ibid, ch 7 P. 88

15 Ibid, ch 7 P. 88

16 Daniel Deronda ch II PP. I46)47-48
I - ELIOT AND THE VICTORIAN READERS -

Before I conclude on this work as a whole, I would like to quote some Victorians criticisms on Eliot's novels. I selected those touching the aspects which interest us in this study.

On *Adam Bede* :

"The Athenaeum" 26 February 1859

"Adam Bede is a novel of the highest class. Full of quiet power, without exageration and without any strain after effect, it produces a deep impression on the reader, which remains long after the book is closed. It is as though he had made acquaintance with real human beings. (1)  

Geraldine Jewsbury

On *The Mill on the Floss* :

"The Spectator", 7 april 1860

The novelty and interest lie in the fact that in very few works of fiction has the interior of the mind been so keenly analysed ... There are parts of the story where the style gives a kind of consciousness of reality, as if you heard the words spoken by a voice shaken with the emotions so well
described; there are passages of dialogue where the love between men and women is expressed more naturally and powerfully, we think, than in any novel we ever read ... The beauty of (the) under-current of symbolism is that it is unexpressed ... Inferior to Adam Bede in the varied interest of three or four good characters, it is superior as a work of art; with a higher aim and that aim more artistically worked out (2).

"The Atlas", 14 April 1860

... The notion of predestined calamity, though never brought prominently forward, is vaguely hinted at from the commencement and never lost sight of throughout the narrative. A unity and completeness of effect is thus attained, as rare as it is excellent (3).

On Middlemarch:

"The Spectator", 1 June 1872

We all grumble at "Middlemarch"; we all say that the action is slow, that there is too much parade of scientific and especially physiological knowledge in it, that there are turns of phrase which are even pedantic, and that occasionally the bitterness of the commentary on life is almost cynical ... It is not in any degree true that the incidents are specially melancholy. On the contrary. The story is not at all of a gloomy description, and there are characters in it which
the reader enjoys as he enjoys a gleam of warm sunshine on a dull October day, especially that of Caleb Garth, the happy, eager, unworldly land-surveyor. Then again there are pictures showing a humour so large and delicate that that laughter which really brightens the spirits breaks out even if we are alone, ... Mr Brooke, and Mrs Cadwallader are enough to cheer the reader of any story, however intellectual ... Still, in spite of these snatches of warm sunshine, and of the frequent springs of delightful humour, - at the end of almost every part and every chapter, if not nearly every page, there comes an involuntary sigh ... Perhaps, however, the deepest symptom of melancholy in this book is the disposition so marked in it to draw the most reflective and most spiritual characters as the least happy (4).

"The Times", 7 March 1873

... No one can close Middlemarch without feeling that he has read a great book. He is impressed, and, perhaps, depressed, by its cruel likeness to life; for George Eliot does not bring in the golden age even at the end of the fourth volume, and nothing happens merely in order that the curtain may fall pleasantly (5).

Frederick Napier Broome.
On Daniel Deronda:

"The Spectator", 29 July 1876

There can be no doubt that in some, perhaps in many, respects, Daniel Deronda is a much less powerful book than Middlemarch, but in one respect certainly it is more so. To our minds, the deficiency in power is chiefly to be seen in the incidental remarks, the observations on life and character ... But ... whatever may be the faults of this last work of George Eliot's, we do not think that any of her books, not even "Adam Bede", has been so powerfully constructed in point of plot (6).

R.H. Hutton

"The Academy", 9 September 1876

Independently of its interest as a mere story and as a vehicle for reflections, Daniel Deronda is eminently interesting, because it presents in a fresh and brilliant light the merits as well as the faults of its writer - merits and faults which are here sharply accentuated ... On the one hand, we are prepared to find, and we do find, an extraordinarily sustained and competent grasp of certain phases in the character; a capacity of rendering minute effects of light and shade, attitudes, transient moods of mind, complex feelings and the like, which is simply unparalleled in any other prose writer; an aptitude for minting sharply ethical maxims; and a wonderful sympathy
with humanity, so far, at least, as it is congenial to the writer. On the wrong side of the account must be placed a tendency of talk about personages instead of allowing them to develop themselves, a somewhat lavish profusion of sententious utterance, a preference for technical terms in lieu of the common dialect which is the fitter language of the novelist (7).

George Saintsbury.
II - GENERAL -

There is no danger of arousing any controversy by saying that the works of the first period of George Eliot's career, *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*, have the unmistakable mark of genius. It is impossible to estimate the merit of the Poysters the Dodsons and the rest with all their surroundings and dependencies, for they are so real, so alive, that we irresistibly give them the total control of our laughter and sympathy, as we move among them. Over that world too, broods a certain romance, the only romance that George Eliot allowed herself: the romance of the past. These books are admirably readable and have no trace of pomposity or pretence.

Yet the loss of simplicity, the absence of charm, spontaneity and freshness are not a sufficient reason for asserting that the works of the later period of George Eliot's career show defect of general power. We must all admit, for example, that there are not many passages in modern fiction so vigorous as the description of poor Lydgate, whose higher aspirations are dashed with a comparatively vulgar desire for worldly success, gradually engulfed by the selfish persistence of his wife. On the contrary, the picture is so firm and so lifelike that one reads it with a sense of actual bitterness. In *Daniel Deronda*, we have in the story of Grandcourt and Gwendolen a singularly powerful study of domestic dangers. If there is some questioning of the limits of George Eliot's powers, or some misconception of true artistic conditions,
nobody can read these without the sense of having been in contact with a comprehensive and vigourous intellect, with high feeling and keen powers of observation. Indeed, we cannot help regretting the loss of the early charm and freshness. As we read *Adam Bede* or *The Mill on the Floss*, we are impregnated with and carried away by, the magic. It is only after the perusal that we recognize the power which these works imply. In *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*, we feel the power straightaway but vainly search for the charm. Such changes pass over any great mind which goes through a genuine process of development. It is not surprising that the reflective powers should become more predominant in later years; that reasoning should to some extent take the place of intuitive perception; and that experience of life should give a sterner and sadder tone to the implied criticism of human nature. We are prepared to find less spontaneity, less freshness of interest in the little incidents of life, and we are not surprised that a mind so reflective and richly stored should try to get beyond the charmed circle of its early successes, and to give a picture of wider and less picturesque aspects of human life. Surely this makes her work melancholy. It appears the more so because of her painful, uneasy turn for analysis; because she hears what she calls "the roar that lies on the other side of silence"; that is, the minute, unspoken play of motive that lies behind an ordinary conversation; and also the sorrows or bewilderments of simple inarticulate persons, like Hetty Sorrel. For this kind of analysis she has a genius.
If she is oppressive, it is due to the choice of her favourite theme: the woman in need of a confessor. Or, a woman with noble aspirations but somehow frustrated. It is in setting such characters before us that George Eliot has achieved her greatest triumphs, and made some of her most unmistakable failures. It is here that we meet the complaint that she is too analytic; that she takes the point of view of the confessor rather than that of the artist; and is more anxious to probe the condition of her heroines' souls, to give us an accurate diagnosis of their spiritual complaints, and an account of their moral evolution, than to show us the character in action.

But there again, every serious writer must derive his power from his insight into men and women. A Cervantes or Shakespeare or Thackeray or Dickens, command our attention by forcible presentation of certain types of characters; and, so far, George Eliot does not differ from her predecessors. Nor, again, would any truly imaginative writer give us mere abstract analyses of characters, instead of showing us the concrete person in action. If George Eliot has a tendency to this error, it does not appear in her early period.

So, what is it, in fact, that makes us conscious that George Eliot has a position apart; that in a field where she had so many competitors of no mean capacity, she stands out as superior to all of them; or that, whilst we can easily imagine that many other reputations will fade with a change of fashion, there is something in George Eliot's which we are confident will give delight to all generations?
To such questions, there is one obvious answer at hand. There are some parts of her writings upon which every competent reader has dwelt with delight and satisfaction, and which seem fresher and more charming whenever he comes back to them, for George Eliot herself knew in which fields her mysterious powers were at play. In those fields, she could excel, almost with an insolent facility.

Characterization is one of those fields. George Eliot's delineation of character is remarkably firm. "My artistic bent", she says, "is directed not at all to the presentation of eminently irreproachable characters, but to the presentation of mixed human beings in such a way as to call forth tolerant judgment, pity, and sympathy".

It is her intellect which is the source of her success. Her power of drawing conclusions gave her a naturally sharp eye for symptoms of moral strength and weakness, taught her to discern them in all their varying modes of expression. She could also distinguish between different varieties of the same characteristic; we saw for instance how Dorothea's sense of duty differed from Mary Garth's. She took advantage of her observation. She traced these expressions of virtue and weakness to their original source in the character, discovered the spark of nobility, the streak of weakness which were their origin. Finally, her disciplined generalizing intelligence taught her to see the significance of her discoveries. Having analysed a character into its elements, she was able to distinguish their relative force and position. She could deduce
its central principle so that, however complex and inconsistent it might appear, she saw it as a unity. It is this grasp of psychological essentials which gives her characters their reality. We understand them. We know just how each will react and why. We know exactly what special mixture of common human ingredients makes each character act differently from the rest.

Her power to describe mixed characters extends to mixed states of mind. Indeed, the field of her most characteristic triumphs is the moral battle-field. Her magnifying-glass can detect any sign of struggle, elucidate the position of the forces concerned, and reveal the line of their action. We are shown exactly how the forces of temptation deploy themselves for the attack, how those of conscience rally to resistance, the ins and outs of their conflict, how inevitably in the given circumstances one or the other triumphs. George Eliot is most remarkable in her picture of the process of moral defeat. The gradual steps by which Mr Bulstrode is brought to further Raffle's death, Arthur's gradual yielding to his passion for Hetty. Maggie to hers for Stephen. With an inexorable clearness she reveals how temptation insinuates itself into the mind. She describes how temptation retreats at the first suspicious movement of conscience, and how it comes back, disguised. With an equal insight, she can portray the moral chaos that takes possession of the mind after the wrong has been done. She exposes all the complex writhings of a disturbed spirit striving to make itself at ease on the bed of a disturbed conscience; the desperate reasoning by which
it attempts to justify itself; its inexhaustible ingenuity in blinding itself to unpleasant facts; the baseless hopes it invokes for its comfort. Eliot can distinguish precisely how different an act looks before it is committed, shrouded in the softening darkness of the secret heart; and after, exposed in all its naked ugliness to the harsh daylight of other people's judgment.

Another character that strikes us in this intellectual writer is an emotional quality. She excels in one specially difficult and risky kind of writing. She has a singular fondness for scenes that may be called confessionnal; where some limited character, or as she would say "nature", is spiritualised, if only for a moment, by a stronger and fuller one. This subject recurs again and again. In the interview in prison between Dinah Morris and Hetty, the dialect is evangelical. It becomes purely human and secular in the appeal made by Dorothea to Rosamond. It is none the less impressive. The dramatic truth and energy and the mastery of the right words where a word wrong would be a disaster, are undeniable.

George Eliot is unrivalled in her creation and working of the complications and consequences inherent in all relationships. It is by her clear perception of things, the precision with which she isolates them, that her scenes are made real to us. She further enriches her picture by indicating behind these visible features the causes, historic, social, and physical, from where they originate. She shows us not only the flower but its root, soil, and the weather which have
given it its peculiar colour and shape. We see it not only in the present but in the past; not just in isolation but in relation to the world around it. It is this perspective that gives outline to George Eliot's picture of the social structure. It is not a minute picture. George Eliot does not distinguish the different social positions of Dorothea Brooke and Rosamond Vincy with the wealth of illustrative superficial detail. She reveals them against their historical background. George Eliot's world is exhibited as an expression of the civilization of England at a particular phase of its development. We are shown how Dorothea's superior place in the social scale comes from the fact that she is the daughter of a land-owner in an agricultural district for centuries dominated by landlords; while Rosamond is only the child of a merchant in one of its towns. We are not only shown what we can see for ourselves, but can also use the author's acuteness and perception; George Eliot shows us what appears to the man who looks at her scene in the light of a knowledge of social history. From such a position in experience, George Eliot naturally sees society at a deeper level than its political, philosophical, religious abstractions indicate, and she sees her own society in her own choice of word, as "vicious". Her favourite metaphor for society is a "network", a "tangled skein", a 'tangled web". This is just, and it is the ground of her finest achievements. However, the metaphor, while having a positive usefulness in its indication of complexity, has also a negative effect. For it tends to represent social relationships as passive, acted upon rather than acting. "One fears" she remarks, "to pull the wrong thread,
in the tangled scheme of things". The caution is reasonable but the total effect of the image false. For in fact every element in the complicated system is active: the relationships are changing, constantly, and any action - even abstention.

A kinded irony is the source of George Eliot's few successful effects of pathos. There is a great deal of pathos in George Eliot's novels. Like most Victorian novelists, she likes to brighten her pages with a glistening sprinkle of tears. Now and then, with a singular suttlety, George Eliot touches our hearts. She always does it by the poignancy with which she brings out contrast between the ideal splendour of people's feelings and the commonplace weakness of their actual lives and characters.

George Eliot's intellectual approach is shown clearly not only in her serious characters but also in "characters parts". Characters such as Mrs Payser, or Mr Brooke, provide occasions for wiping our tears away, and restore our smile. They exist to exhibit George Eliot's humour rather than her understanding of human nature. We enjoy the vivid presentation of their idiosyncracies of speech and manner. They are unfailingly delightful, to my mind, and are among George Eliot's finest creations.

In spite of the variety of her talents and the width of her scope, her works comport amazing weaknesses. Indeed, if George Eliot is admirable in careful exposition of
characters, she is at a loss when dealing with catastrophes. There she suddenly weakens just when we expect her full powers to be exerted. This is conspicuous in The Mill on the Floss. It is easy to see why her form does not satisfy us. Life is chaotic, art is orderly. The novelist's problem is to evolve an orderly composition which is also a convincing picture of life. George Eliot sacrifices life to art. Her plots seem too neat and symmetrical to be true. We do not feel them to have grown naturally from their situation like a flower, but to have been put together deliberately and calculatedly like a building. For, in spite of her determination that her story should develop logically, she has not that highest forma faculty which makes development appear inevitable, she has to twist facts to make them fit her purpose: the marriage between Dinah and Adam, which provides the happy ending for Adam Bede does not strike us as inevitable; indeed, what we have learnt of Adam's taste in women leads us to think it highly unplausible. But the moral purpose which directs the story demands that Adam and Dinah, the two virtuous characters in the book, should be adequately rewarded for their virtue; and marrying them to each other seems the handiest reward in the circumstances. In order to achieve structural symmetry, George Eliot has been forced to release her vigilant grip on truth.

When all is said and done, it only remains to deplore the disproportion, in George Eliot's work, between the meagre effect of the whole and the vigorous character of the different parts. Our great consolation is that, in some aspects of her narrative technique, she remains unsurpassed.
Notes on the Conclusion:

1. Holmstrom: George Eliot and her Readers: A Selection; Contemporary Reviews with a Commentary' (Great Britain: William Clowes sous Ltd I966)
2. Holmstrom, op. cit, P.P. 25,26,27
3. Ibid, P. 30
4. Ibid, P.P. 78,79,80
5. Ibid, P. III
6. Ibid, P. 134-5
7. Ibid, P. 138
BIBLIOGRAPHY

On The Theory of the narrative technique:


Primary Texts:


Anthologies of Criticism


Selected Bibliography


Garret, Peter K. *Scene and Symbol From G. Eliot to J. Joyce* Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1969

Hardy, Barbara *Critical Essays on George Eliot* Broadway House Routledge Kegan Paul Ltd 1970

Hardy, Barbara, Tellers and Listeners: 'The Narrative Imagination' University of London, the Athlone Press 1975


Laing, R.D. Self and Others. U.S.A. Pelican Book 1971

Leavis, F. R. The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James Joseph Conrad


'George Eliot and Radicalisme' chap VIII P.P. 221-236


