

A STUDY OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVELS

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Threes Indah Sulistyuningati**

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Yogyakarta



Approved by

I. G. Soliman 7

(Rev. Bro. E. E. Dolan S.J.)
Major Sponsor

II.

W. Hendrix

(Bro. M. J. Henderson S.J.)
Sponsor

IKIP Santa Maria,

Ant. J. ...

(Rev. Fr. J. Kadawan S.J.)
Rector

(Seppone Paolo Jaccarino Ph.D.)
Head of the Department of English

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Threes I.S.

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INTRODUCTION

The actual aim of this thesis is to present a simple evaluation of some novels by George Eliot. In analysing these literary works the writer of this thesis finds some great values which are very useful both for the readers and for herself.

The first value that can be drawn by reading this thesis is the understanding of English culture. It is very essential for the preparation of an English teacher who can not directly learn from English speaking country. The language teacher should understand the structure of the foreign culture and of the communication between cultures.¹ This understanding will surely be a great help in the teaching the language to the students.

The other value which can be procured from this study is the understanding of human nature. It is known that George Eliot's work is popular and useful for understanding daily communication among human beings. This insight is also a great need for a teacher who wants to know and understand her students thoroughly.

It is this insight that brings the writer to choose the works of George Eliot. Most of George Eliot's novels analyse human nature which is viewed from the psychological and moral point of view. Besides being a woman herself, the writer is eager to know the literary quality of a women novelist's work, and she finds that the author's own nature suits her taste.

The method that the writer applies in this study is an analysis of five selected novels. These novels

¹Neer, Raja T. ; Teaching and Learning English, London: Longman Group Limited, 1972, p. 159.

deal with the psychological and moral matters. Accordingly the writer will concern herself with the following books: Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss, Silas Marner, Middlemarch and Daniel Deronda.

CHAPTER I

GEORGE ELIOT'S LIFE

George Eliot, whose real name was Mary Ann or Marian Evans, was born on November 22, 1819, at Arbury Farm Chilvers Coton in Warwickshire, England. She was the youngest child of Robert Evans and his second wife. The father, a builder and carpenter, managed the estate of Francis Newdigate. When Mary Ann was born, the two children of the first marriage were nearly grown up, and soon left the house. Her early childhood was spent with her sister Christiana, and her brother Isaac, at Griff, a house at the Arbury estate. The youngest child in such a family sometimes feels anxious that there is no one who cares for her. Father and mother had their own business, brother and sister had also their own outdoor activities. A less sensitive girl would not have been so affected by such circumstances, but Mary Ann was a sensitive and passionate girl. She deeply needed someone to adore- someone who would love, appreciate and support her. At first her father filled this role, and then her brother, Isaac. But at eight years of age he went to school and stayed at the boarding-house of boys, so he got used to a man's world. As he returned for the holidays he was often impatient towards her little sister. But Mary Ann learned how to handle her disappointment; she kept a wooden doll in the attic, on which she outlet her anger by hammering some nails into its head and by beating it against the pillars. When her anger had calmed

down, however, she soothed and bandaged the doll.

Mary Ann was an ugly and untidy child, and her grown-up portraits show no great improvement. On the other hand Christiana was pretty and neat. She was the favourite of the mother for she was useful in the house, while Mary Ann was often very naughty, spending her time on reading instead of helping. Because of this she was quite aware of her defect. She became diffident and very sensitive. However, she was not always unhappy, for she lived in a good house with its farm buildings, garden and pond, and she was free to go around. Moreover her father often took her with him as he travelled about the estate. While standing between his knees, she learned a great deal about country people and their lives. Concerning her happy childhood she said,

need too all my good and blest hours of infantine content.

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square,) p. 14.)

In fact she was like most children, sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy.

Because Mrs. Evans was not in good health and to lighten her burden, the two girls were sent to school at a very early age for Mary Ann. At first they went to a small school at Attleboro where she suffered from the cold and night terrors; and then to a larger school at Huncoton. Here she made great friends with Miss Lewis, her school teacher. The latter was a fanatic of the Evangelical Movement. Mary Ann, in her adolescence, was strongly influenced by Miss Lewis. Her nature was deeply religious and her chief interest was

goodness. When she was fifteen, her mother died, and soon afterwards Christiana married. So Mary Ann had to leave school and take charge of the house and of her brother and father. During her leisure time she visited the poor, and did her share of work at the clothing Clubs and other charities of the neighbourhood. The young Mary Ann went seriously through these boring duties together with the older women. She actually craved for a richer life, and for a chance to use her ability. She wrote in her own biography,

You may try, but you can not imagine what it is to have a man's force of genius in you; yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl.

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, chp. I, p. 25.)

But in her spare time she took lessons in Italian, German and music. She always read greedily, but there was no one to whom she could talk about books and ideas. She only wrote to Miss Lewis. From the age of seventeen until twenty-five Miss Lewis became the chief outlet of her ideas. Her deep sense of duty and her strong Puritanism made her steadfast in her self-sacrifice. She could not go out to the world, for she had a duty to look after her father. In the afternoon she often walked alone by the canal and thought of her life. She was always anxious that she could not achieve anything during her youth. She said:

The only thing that I should care to dwell on would be the absolute despair I suffered of ever being able to achieve anything.

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, chp. I, p. 28.)

At this time in her life she was not even able to enjoy

an occasional holiday, for when at nineteen she paid a first visit to London with Isaac, she refused to go to the theatre. She wrote in her strict moral way way to Miss Lewis,

I was not at all delighted with the stir of the Great Babel.

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life ;
Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers ;
Franklin Square, chp. I, p. 28.)

She was already influenced by Miss Lewis's Evangelicism. Before her nineteenth birthday, she wrote,

May I seek to be sanctified wholly!

(ibid., p. 32)

(ibid., p. 32)

Her world opened when she was twenty-two. Isaac was married, and he took over from his father both the Arbury estate and the house at Griff. Robert Evans and his daughter moved to Coventry. In that town she could enter into the great world. For the first time she made friends whom knew her interests. These were Charles Bray, whose book, "The Philosophy of Necessity" was published in that year; his wife, Sara Hennel, whose brother Charles Hennel had written "an Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity" which Mary Ann had already read. To the new friends Mary Ann seemed a gentle and modest girl, but soon they were surprised because she had a vast knowledge that made her distinguished from the common young women of the neighbourhood. When she was adult, she was still not pretty. Her head was big and her face looked grave. Her contemporaries said that her eyes were beautiful and there was great sweetness in her voice and smile. But she had no self-confidence for she was too conscious of her being considered ugly.

Soon she associated with the Brays and was en-

couraged by their moral support; and at last she solemnly renounced her faith. It was a great blow to her father who even threatened to sell the house and to go to live with Christiana. Being obstinate with her certitude, she accepted the challenge. She took lodgings in Coventry and earned her living by teaching. After three weeks she was reconciled with her father, returned home and accompanied him to church on Sundays. She said in one of the letters written soon after this experience;

The first impulse of a young and ingenuous mind, is to withhold the slightest sanction from all that contains even a mixture of supposed error. When the soul is just liberated from the wretched giant's bed of dogmas on which it has been racked and stretched ever since it began to think, there is a feeling of exultation and strong hope. We think we shall run well when we have the full use of our limbs and the bracing air of independence. ... But a year or two of reflection, and the experience of our own miserable weakness, which will afford to part even with the crutch of superstition, must, I think, effect a change. Speculative truths begin to appear but a shadow of individual minds. Agreement between intellects seems unattainable, and we turn to the truth of feeling as the only universal bond of union.

(Anonymous., *A Life of George Eliot*,
New York: P.F. Collier & Son, p. xi)

She remained with her father until he died which was when she was thirty years old.

During this time she ^{was} able to finish her writing in the form of letters. She then translated Strauss' "Das Leben Jesu". It took her two years and often bored her. This was a miserable time in her life and she was amused merely by the Brays and Hennells. Not long after it she began to translate Spinoza's "Tractatus Theologicus Politicus", a work which she completed but never published. Her father, in his approaching death, often could not be left alone for an hour. She also suffered from long frustration and lack of support. She loved her

father deeply and his weak body tore her heart,

What I shall be without my father? it will seem as if
a part of my moral nature was gone!

(Cross, J.V., *George Eliot's Life*, Vol.
I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Frank-
lin Square, chp. III, p. 148.)

After his long illness Robert Evans died, and she seemed
relieved although she was sad. The Brays took pity on her,
so they asked her to go for a holiday with them. She
stayed at Geneva for eight months, a time of spiritual
rest.

When she returned to England, she met at the Bray's
house John Chapman, who had just become editor of the the
Westminster Review. He gave her some books to review.
Later on she was offered to be the assistant editor. She
was paid for her work, so she could earn her own income.
She then went to live in London, stayed with the Chap-
mans and started her new work. She felt delighted with
it, but Chapman's wife was jealous of her. His relation-
ship with Mary Ann, although they were not lovers, was
warm, for they had the same interests. Actually Chapman
was at the time having an affair with his children's
governess, a pretty silly girl, who also lived in the
house. But Mrs. Chapman seemed to tolerate the girl, and
both of them drove Mary Ann out. In her anger she re-
turned to Coventry and the Westminster Review became
disordered without her. Finally after Chapman conspe-
nised with her wife, Mary Ann agreed to come back. She
lived two years in Chapman's house, meeting the interest-
ing social life of London.

Now Mary Ann had entered the London literary life.
She met Dickens, Froude, Ruskin, Harriet, Martineau, Grote
and J.S. Mill. She then became a great friend of the phi-

Joseph, Herbert Spencer. His influence was very important to her, for it ^{was} he who first suggested to her that she might try to write fiction, and it was he who introduced Lewes to her. Lewes was an ugly, lively, amusing, warm-hearted man, a very high-class journalist who was ververy sure of his subject. He was a brilliant editor; he was really a man who elicited good work from other people. At that time he was editing the "Leader", the first critical magazine which appeared in England. He was unhappily married, for his young wife had an affair with Thornton Hunt, and he was the father of two children who had Lewes's name. But according to the law Lewes could not get a divorce. He still supported his wife and children but lived apart from them.

Mary Ann and Lewes fell deeply in love, and she had to make a moral choice which might change her whole life. All her relatives didn't agree with her illegal union with Lewes, but her life, love and future depended on him. She agreed to live with him as his unmarried wife. In the summer of 1854, they went abroad together for a honeymoon. During her early marriage she spent much of her time on reading.

It is surprising to see from her letters and her journal how much she read, and how completely she kept on the highest levels of literature in the books she selected. The masters of the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, German, Spanish, and English literatures were all read by her, and always in the original. Her acquaintances with the best thought of the world must have been very extensive; and this applies to philosophy, science, and art, as well as to literature.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot
P.F. Collier & Son, New York, p.xiii)

Mary Ann's sensitiveness and diffidence needed someone like Lewes to rely on. She was no longer lonely. She gained what her nature craved for. In 1856 she began her

career as a novelist under the pseudonym of George Eliot.

September, 1856, made a new era in my life, for it was then I began to write fiction. It had always been a vague dream of mine that some time or rather I might write a novel. ***It happened to be among the papers I had with me in Germany, and one evening at Berlin something led me to read it to George. He was struck with it as a bit of concrete description, and it suggested to him the possibility of my being able to write a novel, though he distrusted- indeed, disbelieved in my possession of any dramatic power. *** He began to say very positively, 'You must try and write a story'. ***

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot,
New York: P.F. Collier & Son, p. xiv)

But surely under her weakness, the need for support helped her to understand the dependence of human beings on one another, and all her novels reveal this.

Her works are:

- 1846 Strauss' Life of Jesus (translated)
- 1854 Ludwig Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity (translated)
- 1858 Scenes of Clerical Life
- 1860 The Mill on the Floss
- The Lifted Veil, Brother Jacob (Blackwood)
- 1861 Silas Marner
- 1863 Renola
- 1865 Felix Holt
- 1868 The Spanish Gypsy
- 1869 Agatha (a poem)
- 1872 Middlemarch
- 1874 Jubal and other poems
- 1876 Daniel Deronda
- 1879 Impressions of Theophrastus Such

All her novels were written during the twenty - three years of her life with George Lewes. In 1878 two years after the publication of DANIEL DERONDA, Lewes died. It was a great blow to George Eliot. For weeks after

her husband's death she shut herself up and saw no one. She only cared to see John Walter Cross who had just lost his mother. So both of them seemed to fulfil each other. On May 6, 1880, they were married. But the marriage could not cure her from her shock of Leves's death, for six months later she died.

CHAPTER II

THE NOVELS CHOSEN FOR THIS STUDY

- ADAM BEDE (1859)
- THE MILL ON THE FLOSS (1860)
- SILAS MARNER (1864)
- MIDDLEMARCH (1871 - 1872)
- DANIEL DERONDA (1874 - 1876)

ADAM BEDE

In this book the author gives an excellent picture of English country life among the humble classes. Being a farmer's daughter herself, George Eliot is able to explicate the complete picture of a farmer's life.

With the farmer's life as a background, the author shows how Adam Bede gets entangled into a problem of love with the most beautiful girl in the village. He has to liberate himself from the false bonds to the girl, but he has to undergo suffering first. In his trials he gets involved in a conflict with his landlord who is also his rival.

The author gives a happy ending to this novel although after some tragic events. However, she also manages to insert her moral-psychological conflict into the story. It is the aim of the author to throw light on the concrete responses of man to the conflict between conscience and temptation. At the same time the author points out clearly the right and wrong attitudes of man in facing trials. All in all, the author also emphasizes the lack of faith in Divine Providence so that man easily falls into temptation.

The central character is Adam Bede, a young carpenter and builder of twenty six. About him the author gives a special descriptive paragraph in the first page of the book.

It was to this workman that the strong baritone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer, singing, ... Such a voice could only come from a broad chest, and the broad chest belonged to a large-boned muscular man nearly six feet high, ... The sleeve rolled up above the elbow showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long, supple hand, with its broad finger-tips, looked ready for works of skill.

In his tall stalwartness Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his name; but the jet-black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper cap, and the keen glance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly marked, prominent, and mobile eye brows, indicated a mixture of Celtic blood. The face was large and roughly hewn, and when in repose had no other beauty than such as belongs to an expression of good-humoured, honest intelligence.

(ADAM BEDE, chp. I, p. 19)

Being the foreman he takes his responsibility very seriously. His life passes in humble everyday work but he always does it well. Mr. Irwine, the rector, acknowledges Adam's merit as an exemplary young man:

'...He is one of those to whom honour is due, and his friends should delight to honour him. I know Adam Bede well-I know what he is as a workman, and what he has been as a son and brother-and I am saying the simplest truth when I say that respect him as much as I respect any man living. ...'

And some lines further Adam says:

'...You think, if undertake to do a bit o' work, I'll do it well, be my pay big or little-and that's true. I'd be ashamed to stand before you here if it wasn't true. ...'

(ADAM BEDE, chp. XXIV, p. 242)

The author really does her best to make her main character look most eminent. She says that Adam is not an ordinary man. His intelligence and his creative

competence place him in the first rank of her heroes and heroines.¹ Here is the author's own comment on Adam:

Adam, you perceive, was by no means a marvellous man, nor, properly speaking, a genius, yet I will not pretend that his was an ordinary character among workmen; and it would not be at all a safe conclusion that the next best man you may happen to see with the basket of tools over his shoulder and a paper cap on his head has the conscience and the strong sense, the blended susceptibility and self-command of our friend Adam. He was not an average man. ...

(ADAM BEDE, chp. XII, p. 194)

P L O T

ADAM BEDE has a romantic plot, although it is drawn from the author's childhood's experience. But the whole story is tightly knit because everything is orderly placed. However, some part of the plot is rather unbelievable. It is surprising that the people around Hetty did not know about her pregnancy before the birth of the child, probably at that time the dresses were so wide that they could hide her condition. But it can still be detected from her whole appearance. Why are people so ignorant that they can see it? Mrs. Poyser, who is usually keen in observing Hetty, does not know it either. The folk are innocent, therefore they have not any suspicion of Hetty who after all comes from a good family.

The novel is divided into six books, and each is subdivided into chapters, so on the whole there are fifty-five chapters. The episodes that make up the plot are:

- Adam was attracted to Hetty, but he did not know that she loved Arthur, the landlord's heir, for she continued to give him her attention.

¹Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1970, p. 183.

- Adam began to suspect Hetty when he found the the
locket that was too expensive for her to buy.
- His suspicion became true as he caught Hetty and
Arthur redhanded making love in the Grove woods.
He got so angry that he had a fierce fight with
Arthur. Adam made him promise not to approach
Hetty anymore.
- Adam became engaged to Hetty, but she was already
pregnant. So she fled away from him when the
wedding day came near.
- Finally she had to depart from the village, and
Adam was married to Dinah, a preaching woman who
had given up her career.

The motive for the incidents is Adam's false bonds to
Hetty and his great compassion for her. From the outset
of the action it is obvious that Adam only saw her from
her attractive appearance. His love for her sprang from
his interest in her beauty. Adam closed his eyes for her
real personality. In his youth he was full of romantic
ideas. He believed that she would be a good wife under
his protection, though she was very childish.

But Adam's mother knew that she was not the kind
of girl for the common people. Her beauty had become her
chief pride, although it did not suit with her real con-
dition as a poor orphan. Moreover, she used the beauty as
a means for attracting young men. Adam was one of her
victims. For those reasons the mother did not agree when
Adam wanted to marry her. But Adam did not believe his
mother; he still made many efforts to approach Hetty. His
chance came when she found out that Arthur had deceived
her completely.

Adam Bede had a great compassion for his fellow-
men's sufferings and sorrows. He came to Hetty as her

saviour, and then asked her to be his wife. Other people in his position would not have done as he did; they would certainly have humiliated her who had made love with a man above her class. Indeed Adam was blind in his decision.

However, the source of the tragic event did not come from Adam. He really meant the marriage seriously; but Hetty took it as a great chance of escaping from her critical situation.

In the end he realized that his unreasonnable compassion had brought himself into a tragic marriage with Hetty. As he liberated himself from her he found his happiness in the true woman.

SETTING

The author gives detailed attention to the setting, she describes it in the first page of the story:

This is what I undertake to do for you, reader. ... I will show you the rosy workshop of Mr. Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder in the village of Hayslope, as it appeared on the eighteenth of June, in the year of our lord, 1799.

(p. 19)

George Eliot really concentrates on the setting of place. The reader can imagine exactly what each place looks like, for she illustrates it in complete detail, such as the Hall Farm (p. 74), which she describes from the gate up to the very site of the furniture. Furthermore, she also describes of what each furniture is made, how it is polished, and how a person looks or how he behaves. She describes all descriptions in poetic words. Here is her description of a little girl:

The small, chirruping voice that uttered this request

came from a little sunny-haired girl between three and four, who, seated on high chair at the end of the ironing-table, was ardently clutching the handle of a miniature iron with her tiny, fat fist, and ironing rags with an assiduity that required her to put her little tongue out as far as anatomy would allow.

(p. 78)

In fact, the author has a special aim by concentrating on the setting. She uses it to create vivid atmosphere, but not only for the sake of atmosphere, it also says much of the major characters. The setting clarifies the surroundings of the characters so that by those means the development of the story can appear more distinctly. Therefore, the setting can be an expression of the person's character.

The author tells the story using descriptions. She does not give much dialogue, she only gives her own comments on each character, and the reader knows the characters through the comments. It is very rare to find an author giving comment in order simply to explain or analyse; even where explanation and analysis are present.

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

The book, published in 1860, discusses the problem of brother and sister in an unharmonious family. Once, after a fierce conflict Tom drives his sister away from home and does not want to admit her as his sister.

George Eliot, in this novel, puts Maggie in a critical situation so that she has to make a moral choice between her love and her family. Here in her greatest despair the author lets Maggie search for strength from "the Eternal Power".

However, at the end of the story, George Eliot does not give any solution to the problem of how to live as

a consequence of a moral choice. But she lets brother and sister be reconciled before facing a tragic death. At this moment they are really inseparable from each other in their affection.

The central character is Maggie Tulliver, an affectionate young girl with dark eyes and brown skin. It is not long that she can enjoy her happy childhood, for at the age of thirteen she has to suffer from the troubles of her family. She would have been a happy girl, had her brother loved and treated her kindly.

Her habit of going for a stroll alone at the Red Deeps is urged by the inward need for peace of mind. She always feels restless at home. She longs for a cheerful atmosphere that gives a change to her sad, monotonous life.

P L O T

The plot of the novel is realistic. It is taken from the author's personal experience. The whole story is tightly knit, because each incident fits into its place. But how the author ends the story is somewhat unnatural. The death of Maggie and Tom that is caused by the sudden heavy floods looks rather artificial.

The novel is divided into seven parts which are subdivided into fifty-five chapters. The incidents that make up the plot are:

- We get a description of Maggie's affection for Tom, but his behaviour often made her disappointed.
- Maggie got acquainted with Philip, but because their fathers were enemies, they were forbidden to get along together.
- After her father's death Maggie stayed with Lucy,

her cousin. Here she met Stephen, Lucy's boy - friend. They fell in love.

- Maggie ran away with Stephen, but after spending a night with him she realized that she had been wrong, so she went back to Lucy, Philip and her family.
- Tom was very angry with her, so that he did not want to admit her as his sister.
- A heavy flood came and swept away the whole town, Maggie managed to save Tom, but both of them were eventually drowned together.

The motive for the incidents is Maggie's struggle to seek her brother's affection. Despite of his cruelty Maggie keeps on loving him right to the end of her life.

Maggie was the adoring little sister of the family. As a little girl she was already very sensitive and diffident. She used to cling to her father and brother. She was emotionally dependent 'with an insatiable appetite for affection'. Here is the author's illustration how Maggie craved for affection from her 'idols':

When Maggie laid down her work at night, it was her habit to get a low stool and sit by her father's knee, leaning her cheek against it. How she wished he would stroke her head, or give some sign that he was soothed by the sense that he had a daughter who loved him! But now she got no answer to her little caresses, either from her father or from Tom - the two idols of her life.

(p. 279)

But what made her disappointed was that the sweet love of her father was now mingled with the bitterness of life. Moreover, Tom was weary and silent when he was at home. He did not care for her any longer. These same scenes were revolved over and over again in her mind until they distressed the blooming soul in her preadolescence. At a

young age she already felt pessimistic in having to face life. She revealed to Philip that she could not put up with life:

...I used to think I could never bear life if it kept on being the same every day, and I must always be doing things of no consequence, and never know anything greater. ...¹

(p. 325)

In spite of the great need for affection, she had one more special distinction from other girls, that was her 'soul's hunger for ideal exaltation'.¹ This dangerous symptom was not recognized by her family. Of course, she could not find an outlet among her own environment. The friendship with Philip could not satisfy her, on the contrary it drew her deeper into dreams. When she met Stephen she soon fell in love with him. It was not surprising at all; her weakness for Stephen was the reflection of her ideal exaltations.

So, if we sum up the plot again, we can say that Maggie's love for Tom is stronger than her love for herself. For the sake of Tom she willingly sacrificed the man she loved, and eventually she risked her own life to save Tom from the heavy floods. At last Maggie got his love; their love was unseparable forever.

They sat mutely gazing at each other: Maggie with eyes of intense life looking out from a weary, beaten face - Tom pale with a certain awe and humiliation. Thought was busy though the lips were silent: and though he could ask no question, he guessed a story of almost miraculous divinely-protected effort. But at last a mist gathered over the blue gray eyes, and the lips found a word they could utter: the old childish - 'Maggie!'

Maggie could make no answer but a long deep sob of that mysterious wondrous happiness that is one with pain.

(p. 509)

¹Leavis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 55.

SETTING

The title of the story denotes a good description of the setting of place. Really the whole incident of the story takes place near the Mill and the river, Floss. In chapter I of the story the author gives a complete description of Dorlcote Mill and the river Floss that flows along the town of St Ogg's. Here it is clear that from the outset of the story the author has a special purpose towards the Floss and the Mill.

According to the introduction of the book, the title THE MILL ON THE FLOSS has a certain symbolism. The Floss symbolizes the current of life. Maggie is swept along by a current of circumstances she can neither resist nor control. Her whole life is affected by the quarrel with the water power. Her father got ruined because of the water problems. She was carried out to sea with the man she loved and should not love. The catastrophe came as the river of life overwhelmed her. THE MILL ON THE FLOSS is really a story of the human soul which is swept along by the stream of life.

Furthermore, it is also the FLOSS that makes Maggie love Tom very much. We may wonder why she can love her brother very much while he often vexes and embitters her life. It is clear when we read this sentence:

'...but then you know, the first thing I ever remember in my life is standing with Tom by the side of the Floss, while he held my hand: everything before that is dark to me ...'

(p.289)

It was said when Philip asked her about her love for Tom. Her answer shows that to her Tom is the one who let her be acquainted with the rush of life; before that she did

not understand what life was.

In this story, George Eliot has a fondness for using boats and water. In addition, she ends the story by having the main characters drowning together, but as a result the story becomes unrealistic. To make it natural, she uses her author's privilege to warn the reader beforehand through Mrs. Tulliver. The latter is often anxious about Maggie's safety in connection with the river, for example:

'You'll tumble in and be drowned some day, an' then you'll be sorry you didn't do as Mother told you.'

(p. 9)

'...they'll be brought in dead and drowned some day.'

(p. 94)

'Goodness heart! she's got drowned!' exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver.

(p. 32)

As far as we can gather from the story the author does not concentrate on the setting of time. There is, in fact, a certain setting of time in the story, that is on the first page of the story. The author writes the starting time: of this February. But it does not bear any significant influence on the story.

The author concentrates on the setting of scenes. The scenes are very lively described. They are described because the scenes tell much about the actions and the reactions of the central character. The reader who reads the story will surely not forget the scene when Maggie tries to run away from home and arrives at the Gypsy's place; or the famous scene: 'Boat along by the Tide' that reveals the moral and psychological conflict she has to face; or the scene that tells her struggle to overcome the last conflict.

Based on the explanation above we can draw the conclusion that the setting of scenes can influence the actions of the characters, in this case the main character. This character is affected by the setting so much that she can not escape from the situation. The scenes are viewed as something over which the individual, in this case, Maggie, has no control, and this affects her. Her elopement with Stephen is a vivid example of the great impact of the situation upon the character's attitude.

SILAS MARNER

In this book, first published in 1861, the author presents the story of the crisis of Silas Marner, 'a young man of exemplary life and ardent faith'. (p. 7) In his despair, after being cast out by his church's community, he buried himself in Raveloe, where no one recognized him. For fifteen years he lived in isolation, cut off from the outside world.

But in the midst of his greatest sorrow, he was saved by his love towards an orphaned child. In his relation with the child, Silas Marner began to find back his trust, love and faith towards the world.

The central character is Silas Marner, a man of forty, with pallid face, protuberant and short-sighted brown eyes (p. 43). He lives alone in his small cottage at Stone Pit, far from the noisy town, Rainbow. He does not care for his body so that his figure becomes bent: 'as a handle or a crooked tube, which has no meaning standing apart' (p. 23). He is not old yet, but his withered and yellow complexion gives such an expression. When he is not yet forty, the children already call him 'Old Master Marner' (p. 23).

It is very interesting to trace the development of his moral attitude after his arrival at Havelock:

In the beginning he was reserved, silent, and never communicated with his neighbours (p.2). 'No coppers stepped across his doorsill' (p.5). He hated the thought of the past: church, fellowship, and woman; 'there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship towards the strangers' (p.13). He worked in his loom for sixteen hours a day. 'His life had reduced itself to the functions of weaving and boarding' (p.21). He had no aim for his life; what he desired was only to collect as much money as possible. His life had been cut off from faith and love (p.22).

Later on in his relation with the child there was a gradual natural break up of his moral attitudes. Warner began to think about the meaning of this life, from which for fifteen years he had lived apart as if from a strange thing. In terms of money, he lost all ideas of boarding. The habit had been stopped since his gold was lost (p.169). Next, in terms of faith, when the child was baptized, he appeared for the first time in the church again, though he had no distinct opinion about the baptism, and the church-going. He did it only for the sake of his child, 'the child created fresh and fresh links between his life and the lives from which he had hitherto shrunk continually into narrower isolation' (p.161). Finally, he was able to admit to himself that the world was not all together bad as he had always thought. He admitted to Mrs. Dolly Winthrop:

'Nay, nay,' said Silas, 'you're i' the right, Mrs. Winthrop-you're i' the right. There's a good i' i' this world-I've a feeling o' that now; and it makes a man feel as there's a good more nor he can see, i' spite o' the trouble and the wickedness. The drawing o' the

lots is dark; but the child was sent to me; there's dealings with us-there's dealings.'

(p. 104)

P L O T

The plot of the novel can be said to be a mixture of the real and the fantastic. It is taken from the author's expanding imagination. Reveloe itself is a fictitious village, but the author places it in the realistic setting of the Midlands. However, the whole story is tightly knit because the author is able to weave the two sorts of plot into a neat whole. Silas Marner is used by the author as the uniting agent of the double-plot.

At first sight it seems that there are still two plots in the story. They are the story of Godfrey and the story of Silas. Godfrey's story is realistic so that we have no difficulty in accepting it. The story of Silas is based on reality but there is some interference of the fantastic elements, so that there is still a taste of the fantastic. But if the reader reads the story thoroughly he will find that the plot is well integrated. In fact, the author is very successful in weaving the diverse actions into a single fine plot.

There are some connections between the central characters of the plots, Silas Marner and Godfrey. Apparently these characters alternate in their happiness. Both are the child's fathers. Silas accepts the child and she makes his life happy. On the other hand Godfrey refuses the child and this wrong action makes him unhappy. Silas ends his barren life because he finds the child. Godfrey begins his life with guilty feelings in his heart because he will not acknowledge his daughter. Silas turns away from his previous life because he is hurt by society.

Godfrey turns away from his immature life because he is hurt by his guilt.

If the plot is examined in connection with the conflicts that are involved in it, the striking point is that Silas Marner is in a state of escape. Following the development of the action, we notice that he tries to escape from his past life. That is why he lives alone in a deserted place. He feels more secure and peaceful in his solitude. He turns his back to the world, because he has learnt that society and his fellowmen have only caused suffering.

From the outset of the story we can see his total aversion of human relations.

So had his way of life- he invited no comers to step across his doorsill, and he never strolled into the village to drink a pint at the Rainbow, or to gossip at the wheelwright's; he sought no man or woman, save for the purposes of his calling, or in order to supply himself with necessaries; ...

(p. 5)

Once his good intention is misunderstood by people, he completely shuts himself off from them. Here is the description of why he withdraws from his good activities:

But the hope in his wisdom was at length changed into dread, for no one believed him when he said he knew no charms and could work no cures, and every man and woman who had an accident or a new attack after applying to him, set the misfortune down to Master Marner's ill-will and irritated glances. Thus it came to pass that his movement of pity towards Sally Oates, which had given him a transient sense of brotherhood, heightened the repulsion between him and his neighbours, and made his isolation more complete.

(p. 21)

So his first aversion is toward society.

But he actually undergoes a crisis of belief in himself from the point of view of his defects. First of all, he suffers from short-sighted eyes. But the striking



matter is his catalepsy. It is this disease which is the source of his bad luck. An accident happened long ago when he was still active in his church; as he attended a prayer meeting:

It was at this point in their history that Silas's cataleptic fit occurred during the prayer-meeting; and amidst the various queries and expressions of interest addressed to him by his fellow-members, William's suggestion alone jarred with the general sympathy towards a brother thus singled out for special dealings. He observed that to him, his trance looked more like a visitation of Satan than a proof of divine favor, and exhorted his friend to see that he hid no accursed thing within his soul.

Silas, feeling bound to accept rebuke and admonition as a brotherly office, felt no resentment, but only pain, at his friends doubts concerning him; ...

(p. 10)

It was a cruel fact for him that since the event all his close friends, even his girl-friend behaved differently to him. It causes his inferiority complex towards his fellowmen.

Next, we notice the third conflict that has a connection with his girl-friend's attitude. She put an end to their engagement and married William. This brings on the crisis of Silas' belief in himself in relation with women. He is indifferent to women so he never gets married;

...it was seen clear to the Raveloe lasses that he would never urge one of them to accept him against her will-...

(p. 5)

His last conflict is religious, he does not want to go to church because it reminds him of his past. But actually he is not sure of the existence of God. His belief is weak. He has not any acquaintance with the Christian belief, as we see from this statement:

He was puzzled and anxious, for Dolly's word "christened" conveyed no distinct meaning to him. He had

only heard of baptism, and had only seen the baptism of grown-men and women.
 "What is it as you mean by 'christened'?" he said, at last, timidly. ...

(p. 159)

Since he was declared guilty soon he lost his weak faith. He thought God was unjust, because the drawing of the lots proved him guilty. This is his last words before he turns from God:

"...for all that; there is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent."

(p. 14)

So, if we sum it up again, we can say that Silas has undergone a serious crisis of belief. He has a conflict with God, with his fellowmen and himself. His sickness is so bad that there is no doctor able to cure him; no one but God can cure him. But the author puts it in the right place, Silas is redeemed through the miracle of Eppie, the child. Thus, the plot of this story is the plot of Harner's redemption.

SETTING

As has been said the setting of place, Raveloe, is a fictitious setting. But what the author meant by Merry England is the English Midlands, a fertile and joyful land. We can follow the author's description of the setting which she wrote in the beginning of the story.

And Raveloe was a village where many of the old echoes lingered, undrowned by new voices. Not that it was one of those barren parishes lying on the outskirts of civilisation-inhabited by meagre sheep and thinly scattered shepherds: on the contrary, it lay in the rich central plain of what we are pleased to call Merry England, and held farms which, speaking from a spiritual point of view, paid highly-desirable tithes.

(p. 4)

In this novel, the author does not give detailed attention to the setting. She only presents a comparison between Raveloe and Lantern Yard where Silas came from. But in each place the illustration gives an impression that the place is a happy one.

MIDDLEMARCH

In this book, the author discusses the problems of a woman who lives for illusions. While trying to realize her illusions, Dorothea is entangled into a conflict between her idealization and the reality.

She enters into a tragic marriage. Her husband is selfish and his love for her is mainly based on the desire to gain a companion for his aging years. Both Dorothea and Casaubon mistake the egocentric motives for an indication of love.

The central character is Dorothea Brooke, a young girl of eighteen. Concerning her character the author gives a descriptive paragraph at the beginning of the story:

Miss Brooke had the kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. Her hand and wrist were so finely ~~cut~~ formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the Sheshaed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible, ... She was usually spoken of as being remarkably clever, but with the addition that her sister Celia had more common sense.

(p. 7)

She is an obstinate girl, but her obstinacy is based on her firm belief in her own moral and intellectual integrity. But it is a pity that she does not relate her ideals to the real circumstances. Her marriage to Casan -

ben is a proof of her stubbornness to stick to her high principles.

P L O T

MIDDLEMARCH has a tightly-knit plot. Although the four actions are diverse and complex George Eliot is able to unite them successfully into one main plot. It really shows her ability to create a tightly knit structure out of diverse materials. Moreover, from the beginning up to the end of the story Dorothea is given the main role as a principal character. Being the principal character she serves as the main thread knitting the novel's plot.

The plot consists of eight parts that are divided into eighty-five chapters. These are the incidents that make up the plot:

- In her girlhood Dorothea with her heroic ideals dreamt of making the world happy.
- She got married to an old scholar in order to be able to carry out her ideals.
- She was disappointed because in marrying him she could not accomplish these ideals, on the contrary she had to be satisfied with what she got as an old man's wife.
- She wanted to help her husband's cousin by giving him some money, but Casaubon interpreted this help as a symptom of love for Ladislaw. So he made his last will in such a way that they could not marry each other, otherwise Dorothea would lose all her fortune.
- She became a widow. She showed her strength and generosity by helping poor people.
- Eventually she chose to marry Ladislaw although she had to live in poverty and give up all her

nobility.

As I have stated above, the main plot is the action concerning Dorothea, for she is the author's heroine. Moreover, the action is the most developed and important in the story. But it is necessary to consider the other three plots too, because they also have important elements, and support the working of the theme. They are the stories of Lydgate, Bulstrode and Mary Garth.

Among the sub plots, first of all we take that of Lydgate, for it supports the main plot strongly and develops it well. Lydgate is an important character too but less important than Dorothea. He is also the victim of illusions. In his marriage he has to accept the reality that Rosamund is not an ideal wife, but a selfish woman. She has married him for his money and the social position he might give her.

In the beginning of his career Lydgate faces a psychological problem.¹ He has to choose between 'moral integrity and opportunistic motives', and he chooses the latter. He lets his true feelings for Farebrother be overcome by the consideration of the benefits Bulstrode can give. Dr. Lydgate worked under Bulstrode in the new hospital. The hospital needed a suitable clergyman for sick people. Bulstrode tried to put in Mr. Tyke but people who opposed him chose Mr. Farebrother who was Bulstrode's enemy. Dr. Lydgate himself got along very well with Farebrother. He knew that he had to choose the latter, but that would have meant an obstacle to his career as a young doctor, because he would then oppose Bulstrode, his benefactor. So for the sake of his profession he chose Tyke although Farebrother would have been the better

¹ Johnston, Brian., *Middlemarch Notes*, Canada: Coles Notes, 1974, p. 35.

choice. Here is the author's description of Lydgate's feelings:

Lydgate immediately wrote down "Tyke". ***
He was really uncertain whether Tyke were not the more suitable candidate, and yet his consciousness told him that if he had been quite free from indirect bias he should have voted for Mr. Farebrother. The affair of the chaplaincy remained a sore point in his memory as a case in which this petty medium of Middlemarch had been too strong for him. How could a man be satisfied with a decision between such alternatives and under such circumstances?

(chap. XVIII, p. 170)

The Bulstrode plot is mainly concerned with the hypocrisy which desires for wealth and respectability. The plot is a variation of the author's concern with selfishness as we find in Casaubon and Rosamund. Bulstrode, a man of weak character, uses his belief as a means to disguise his greed of wealth and power. This desire leads him to evil actions. It is displayed by his indirect responsibility for Raffles' death and Lydgate's disgrace.

The author puts forward the plot of Mary Garth as a contrast to the other plots. Mary's relationship with Fred (which also includes Mr. Farebrother) shows that all problems can be easily solved if they are decided on the grounds of selfless consideration. Mr. Farebrother knows Mary's feelings for Fred, so he renounces his love for her in order to see her happy. Mr. Farebrother's love is selfless, it is quite different from the motive of Casaubon's love.

George Eliot represents the character of Mary Garth in contrast to Dorothea and Rosamund. The former is plain and simple but she can accomplish successfully what others can't.

From the point of view of the structure of the four plots we can say that MIDDLEMARCH has the best arrangement of plot among George Eliot's novels. She really

gives special care to the weaving of the multiple plots. In addition, she takes advantage of her description in order to clarify her characters; for example, the description of Casaubon's house shows the character of the owner. It is dark, melancholy and 'has an air of autumnal decline'. What is called the finest room still has no blooming life in it:

The chairs and tables were thin-legged and easy to upset. It was a room where one might fancy the ghost of a tight-laced lady revisiting the scene of her embroidery.

(p. 66)

Dorothea in her illusions does not see the real house; she perceives everything but thinks that it suits her well. Celia, however, at once compares it unfavourably with Sir James' house:

...the white freestone, the pillared portico, and the terrace full of flowers, Sir James smiling above them like a prince issuing from his enchantment in a rose-bush, with a handkerchief swiftly metamorphosed from the most delicately odorous petals- ...

(p. 67)

From the description above we can see how the description of one's place can help and give a vivid picture of one's character. So the author can economize her illustration of the character.

In this story, George Eliot tries to picture the complexity of life in a provincial city as she states in the subtitle of the novel: "A STUDY OF PROVINCIAL LIFE". Therefore, it is understandable that the novel's theme is really serious. It includes 'philosophical speculations' about life and its various problems. But the novel never becomes heavy or boring, because the seriousness is alternated with humorous comments, dialogues and characters.

The author's comments are frequently coloured by humour. This humour can be found in the words and images which are carefully chosen. Mr. Casaubon, a dry old man, tries to be romantic bridegroom. He utters this to Dorothea during their honeymoon.

"Among the sights of Europe, that of Rome has ever been held one of the most striking, and in some respects, edifying. I will remember that I considered it an epoch in my life when I visited it for the first time; ...I think it is one among several cities to which an extreme hyperbole has been applied-'See Rome and die;' but in your case I would propose an emendation and say, 'See Rome as a bride, and live henceforth as a happy wife.' "

(p. 131)

The author comments:

Mr. Casaubon pronounced this little speech with the most conscientious intention, blinking a little and swaying his head up and down, and concluding with a smile.

(ibid)

To give enough variation the author also spreads witty dialogues through the novel. The following is the dialogue between Dorothea and her sister, Celie.

When the two girls were in the drawing-room alone, Celie said-

"How very ugly Mr. Casaubon is!"

"Celie! He is one of the most distinguished-looking men I ever saw. He is remarkably like the portrait of Locke. He has the same deep eye-sockets."

"Had Locke those two white moles with hairs on them?"

"Oh, I daresay! when people of a certain sort looked at him," said Dorothea, walking away a little.

"Mr. Casaubon is so sallow."

"All the better, I suppose you admire a man with the complexion of a cachou de lait."

(p. 19)

The appearance of a minor character such as Mr. Featherstone also creates a kind of humour. He likes to make fun of his relatives who are very greedy of his wealth. The revelation of the last will after his death is quite exciting; it is like a detective story.

DANIEL DERONDA

In this novel, George Eliot presents the story of Gwendolen Harleth. In facing a hard trial for the first time in her life, she became very despondent. In her despair she got married to a rich man. But after the marriage she found that her husband was a tyrant, who made her subject to lasting fear.

She was on the edge of a total surrender to evil, had she not listened to her own conscience. Under Daniel Deronda's care and consolation, she gradually recovered some peaceful mind state.

The central character is Gwendolen Harleth, a spoiled girl of twenty. On the first page the author introduces her heroine by raising these questions through Daniel Deronda, when he met her at the gambling table:

Was she beautiful or not beautiful? and what the secret of form or expression which gave the quality to her glance? was the good or evil dominant in those beams? Probably the evil; else why was the effect that of unrest rather than of undisturbed charm? Why was the wish to look again felt as coercion, and not as a longing in which the whole being consents?

(p. 5)

Gwendolen Harleth is indeed a beautiful girl and her beauty is very striking, which is why she is quickly popular at every place wherever she lingers. The author equips her with a special 'dynamic quality' and this quality attracts Deronda's attention. But he does not fall in love with her. On the contrary, he is always in her mind since this first meeting. She tries to appeal him by her striking way of gambling so that she loses all her gains.

Her moral attitude:

In the beginning she was a highspirited and proud

girl. She never felt frightened or repentant of her decision. She was always sure of herself and ready to dominate others. Concerning her attitude the author writes as follows:

She felt well equipped for the mastery of life. ..She meant to do what was pleasant to herself in a striking manner; or rather, whatever she could do so as to strike others with admiration and get in that reflected way a more ardent sense of living, seemed pleasant to her fancy.

(p. 38)

After her marriage there were unnatural changes in her attitude. She always felt frightened to look at her husband. She became completely submissive and always afraid to do anything against her husband's tyrannical will. She became very pessimistic. But there is a development in her self-consciousness: she began to realize her petty and impotent existence. She needed other people's help. Next, there was a growing interest in her fellowmen: she wanted to lessen her guilt by helping Mrs. Glasher's son. She did not desire to have a child for her self so that the inheritance could fall on Mrs. Glasher's son. (p. 676)

Finally, after undergoing some tragic events in her life, she could get rid of her strong egoism. In the end, on his wedding-day, Beronda got a letter from Guendolen telling him about her complete recovery from her psychological illness.

Do not think of me sorrowfully on your wedding-day. I have remembered your words-that I may live to be one of the best of women, who make others glad that they were born. I do not yet see how that can be, but you know better than I. . . I only thought of myself, and I made you grieve. It hurts me now to think of your grief. You must not grieve any more for me. It is better- It shall be better, with me. . .

(p. 815)

P L O T

DANIEL DERONDA has two major plots which are not so closely interwoven. They are the actions of Daniel Deronda and of Gwendolen. After reading the story thoroughly we can say that the first action can be the sub plot for it supports the development of Gwendolen's action.

If the story is closely examined the striking point is that the first volume relates a great deal of Gwendolen's story. The first volume of the book consists of four parts which are subdivided into thirty-four chapters. The author starts the story by putting forward Deronda and in the last chapter she comes back to him again.

The main plot, Gwendolen's plot, is realistic. The author's description of her heroine is so human that it seems as if she was alive, real and touchable. The reader can see thoroughly how the girl is known, felt and understood. All in all, we may point out some weak spot in the details, but the fact remains that Gwendolen's whole story is vividly told. Henry James says through Constantius in his "Conversation":

...It is so deep, so true, so complete, it holds such a wealth of psychological detail, it is more than masterly.

(Leavis, F.R., The Great Tradition,
"Daniel Deronda: A Conversation", p.294)

The author illustrates Gwendolen as a perfect picture of youthfulness with her eagerness, vanity and her sense of absoluteness. But she is really intelligent and full of tricks. When tragedy falls on her, she is on the verge of doing evil; she conceives a plan to murder her husband, but she survives merely by her conscience. It is very moving to follow how Gwendolen reacts to her fate and how her conscience grows under the tragedy. Under the

power of a cruel husband, she eventually conceives the plan to murder him but her conscience always warns her. Moreover, she remembers Deronda's words: to use her own fear as a 'safeguard' of her actions (p. 676). It is the survival of this tiny belief that has been put forward by George Eliot in this plot.

After all, the source of Gwendolen's tragedy is merely the diamonds. It is very ironical because she actually married Grandcourt for them, but she had her punishment by having to wear them. When she received them from Mrs. Glasher, she promised not to wear the cursed diamonds, but she could not oppose her husband's will to wear them. So the diamonds are the symbol of Grandcourt's tyranny. Gwendolen's power of domination had really gone with the symbol of her wearing of the diamonds. The diamonds also symbolize her recognition of Mrs. Glasher's existence and her past relation with Grandcourt. Because with the diamonds there was Mrs. Glasher's letter in which she stated that for her the diamonds meant the end of her tragic marriage, but for Gwendolen they meant the beginning of her tragedy.

The second volume of the story also contains four parts. In this volume the author represents a blended action of her heroine and Deronda, but mostly tells about the latter, which is hardly touched upon in the first volume.

The subplot of DANIEL DERONDA is romantic, because the characters that support the action are idealistic. Deronda himself is absolutely romantic, he is the very opposite of Gwendolen Harleth. The author treated him very finely; she meant apparently to make him 'a faultless human being'. I think the author meant to put him as the hero of this story, so she gave DANIEL DERONDA as the

story's title. But Deronda fails, he becomes obscure in comparison with the representation of Gwendolen. She is more human and prominent in her appearance. It is Deronda's fault that he has a role as an 'angel' helping everyone. Gwendolen, Mirah and at last Mordecai are all under his influence.

The plot of Deronda is unbelievable. How he found his mother, Princess Alcharisi, how his birth was hidden by Sir Hugo and eventually how the story of Mirah was related, all of them look artificial. In addition, how the author ends the story by sending Deronda to leave for the East is unreal. Deronda took the easy way to separate from Gwendolen who had been in love with him since the gambling affair. However, it is the author's 'art' to end her novel, and DANIEL DERONDA has the art although it is not so good as MIDDLEMARCH.

SETTING

The story took place at Offendene, Brussels and other places such as London. About the Offendene, the author pays detailed attention to its description. She describes how Gwendolen's family moves into the place, and how Gwendolen behaves when she sees the place for the first time. We can be acquainted with the heroine's behaviour from this description. Let us see a bit of the illustration; it was on the day of the first arrival.

"Well, dear, what do you think of the place?" said Mrs. Davilow at last, in a gentle, deprecatory tone.
 "I think it is charming," said Gwendolen, quickly.
 "A romantic place; anything delightful may happen in it, it would be a good background for anything. No one need be ashamed of living here." ...We ought properly to have been living in splendour, and have come down to this. ...

(p. 23-24)

The author also gives a full description of the

Abbey where Sir Hugo lives. This scene is told when the new couple, Grandcourt and Gwendolen paid a visit there. George Eliot illustrates all rooms in detail, from the living room up to the kitchen and stalls. Because of the complete descriptions the reader can imagine what the Abbey looks like, and as a result we can guess the inhabitants' character.

The setting of time is not given detailed attention. About the setting of time, she only writes: on a late October afternoon, but it does not influence the course of the story.

CHAPTER III

THE THEMES OF GEORGE ELIOT'S WORKS:

A. Suffering and salvation

B. Heart and head

A. Suffering and Salvation

According to the main idea in the author's mind that urged her to write the novel, her novels can be divided into two parts. The first part, *ADAM BEDE* and *SILAS MARNER* were published between 1859 and 1861. Both have a similar background drawn from country and village life in the English Midlands.

Her novels are inspired with the love of her fellowmen, and by her desire to make life brighter and purer. B. Hardy writes,

...This typicality is very important to George Eliot, in part because she wants, like Wordsworth, to write an unspecialized literature of man speaking to man, from and of what she constantly calls the 'human lot', ...

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", *The Victorians*, London: Sphere Books LTD., 1970, p. 188.)

The love of her fellowmen is her continual joy and inspiration to her, and it is shown in the way in which she deals with the defects and high ambitions of her characters. She longs for the good of the human race and this desire becomes the purpose and inspiration of her works.

She thoroughly believed in the sympathetic good there is in life, and she was anxious to increase the sum of it by every effort of her own. In the growth of the good she heartily had faith. ...In her belief the good is never wholly to blot out the evil and the painful, but it can reduce wrong to the lowest terms, and make the painful capable of being borne with patience.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. P. Collier & Son, p. lxvii.)

George Eliot really hopes to lessen man's suffering and pain. She reveals her thinking about these within the light of Christianity and pours it out in her two novels: ADAM BEDE and SILAS MARNER.

ADAM BEDE, published in 1859, is her first full length novel which made her a well-known novelist. At that time the author had reached the age of forty; it is commonly the productive state in human life. Actually she could have started her career earlier, but her diffident nature prevented her from showing her great ability. Soon after her union with George Lewes, who gave encouragement and support, her power appeared.

Before publishing this story she had told about its content that it would be 'full of the breath of cows and the scent of hay'. Although the plot is simple, for it tells about the life of an English village in 1799, it contains a universal theme.

The author got the origin of the story from her Methodist aunt. The latter told her a story of a visit to an ignorant girl who was punished to death for murdering her own baby. From this story appears the idea of Hetty Sorrel who is condemned to death for the murder of her illegitimate baby, and Dinah Morris, the Methodist preacher, who consoled her in the prison and made her confess her sins.

In this book the author puts as the major characters of the story Adam Bede and Hetty Sorrel. They have to suffer because their unexperienced emotional feelings are blind towards reality. Both are young and immature, and they usually seek what is beautiful, exalted and fine without thinking about its result. The noblest feeling of ecstasy is a great temptation to them. Sometimes the temptation is so appealing that they forget their common sense.

What happens to Adam and Hetty is also experienced by Arthur, both the seducer and the victim of Hetty's coquetry.

The author makes Adam as perfect as possible and this causes his own 'fail'. He thinks that human beings are as good and honest as himself; especially beautiful persons like flowers can not be cruel. To him evil is ugly and bad, and a beauty can never be evil. As a consequence he is deceived in real life by his narrow judgment.

Adam's relation with Hetty is not harmonious, for she never loves him. He can't see the proper situation, because his love and caction for her have blinded his thinking. He always sees her as the lovable girl who is fond of him. Even when she betrays him, he is still sure that such an innocent girl cannot commit such an evil:

"I know-I know that," said Adam. "I thought she was loving and tender-hearted, and wouldn't tell a lie, or act deceitful. How could I think any other way? And if he'd never come near her, and I'd married her, and been loving her, and took care of her, she might never ha' done anything bad. What would it ha' signified my having a bit o' trouble with her? It 'ud ha' been nothing to this."

(p. 408)

Adam is too good to be a 'common' man, so he has to suffer from his own goodness- but also from his own narrowness. However, the author does not let him be the victim of evil, for she believes in the salvation of mankind by the act of Providence.

We perceive that Adam is good and perfect. He bears his pain patiently. He never has any desire to take revenge upon Hetty. On the contrary he hates Arthur, but this is the result of his pity for Hetty. He cannot accept her ruin, so he tries to undo it by hitting the destroyer. But his good nature is always willing to forgive.

When they meet each other at the Grove for the second time, Adam's fury has already calmed down, and when Arthur regrets his deeds he forgives him and attempts to lighten his burden.

Hetty has to suffer from her false illusions and selfishness. She used to live in dreams, which is also recognised by E. Hardy who writes:

He
 Hetty Sorrel's narrow little fantasy life, with scarcely
 room in it for more than clothes and faces.

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books LTD., 1970, p. 186.)

In her girlhood she used to fancy herself a lady while she was only a maid. She became blinded by Arthur, who could never marry her, but his luxury and social position had darkened her narrow mind. If Adam had been able to offer such an attractive opportunity, she would certainly have accepted him. But eventually she agreed to marry him. If this matter is carefully observed, it is obvious that her selfishness became the main reason of accepting the offer. So it was her forced circumstances that urged her to marry Adam, otherwise she would surely have refused him. But Adam was not aware of his being a victim. Yet both Adam and Hetty have to undergo their pain first in order to realize their folly.

The author believes that suffering can bring man to God again. At first Hetty was still obstinate. She was ashamed of her own sins: she wanted to hide them from everyone even from God. But in her agony she was very afraid of death, and she could only expect help from her Creator. Eventually she was saved, for she confessed and asked God's mercy for all her sins.

During his relationship with Hetty, Adam had to face some hard situations. At first, he had to accept that

Hetty loved someone else. Then, on the day of his marriage to Hetty, he had to attend her trial that proceeded to the death penalty. At last he heard that Hetty had died of great sorrow. However, eventually Adam found his happiness in his marriage to Dinah, a kind-hearted woman who had made Hetty confess her sins.

At the end of her story the author gives her comment on Adam's happiness through the rector's voice. She puts Adam in hard situations but he can overcome them triumphantly, because of his faith and his great love towards his fellowmen.

...For he had seen Adam in the worst moments of his sorrow; and what better harvest from that ~~un~~ painful seed-time could there be than this? The love that had brought hope and comfort in the hour of despair, the love that had found its way to the dark prison cell and to poor Hetty's darker soul - this strong, gentle love was to be Adam's companion and helper till death.

(p. 471)

George Eliot's other novel has the same background as ADAM BEDE. SILAS MARNER published in 1864, is her shortest novel; it is a minor work. But it has a different taste from the previous one, for it is created from the extension of her own imagination. It is suitable for readers who get acquainted with her novels for the first time. According to Dr. Leavis it is a 'moralized fable', but it gets its own perfection in George Eliot's hand. The author told how the story came to her mind:

"It came to me first of all quite suddenly, as a sort of legendary tale, suggested by my recollection of having once, in early childhood, seen a linen-weaver with a bag on his back; but, as my mind dwelt on the subject, I became inclined to a more realistic treatment."

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. xlvii.)

But it is not true if SILAS MARNER is considered the nar-

rouest of her novels. In it she is able to keep in a 'delicate' balance between the real and the fable qualities and she achieves an artistic triumph.¹

SILAS WARNER also relates to the country and village life of the English Midlands in the early eighteenth centuries; during the Napoleonic war. The war time had established a 'status quo' which was considered to be permanent. The author describes the living in the rural areas where Silas Warner's society lived,

...the rich ate and drank freely and accepted gout and apoplexy as things that ran mysteriously in respectable families, and the poor thought that the rich were entirely in the right of it to lead a jolly life.

(p. 26)

The great difference in the life at Rainbow and Stone Pit where the villagers live does not have any effect upon the low people, including Silas. He ignores the outside world and prefers to be left alone with his own fate. Because he is not interested in human relations, he always isolates himself in his small hut counting gold. His life depended on matter for he had no spiritual faith.

Silas Warner was less fortunate than Adam. First he was cast out by his community, then betrayed by his best friend as well as his girl friend; whereas Adam suffered part because of his own fault and part because of others. Silas had to suffer from other people's faults which had ruined his life, but no one gave him moral support. He endured the trouble alone to the end; Adam had great sympathy from his society when he had to face his troubles because the Poisers were always behind him. Silas got a second blow when his gold was lost. No one shared his

¹Lippman, Bertram., and Shale, Jerome., Silas Warner, Study Master Notes, New York: American R.D.M. Corporation, 1966, p. 13.

fate there were even people who blamed him. Dolly Winthrop was the only one who consoled him, and she was insignificant. Silas had to suffer for a long time just because he couldn't prove his innocence. He was the victim of an unjust world. It hurt his heart and changed his whole life. At the end, when he had found his gold again, he went back to his old country; he wanted to show the truth about his being accused of the robbery.

Where can we find the author's point of view in this story? Her chief point lies in:¹

... the orderly sequence by which the seed brings forth a crop after its kind ...

(p. 243)

She proves her statement in the character of Silas Marner who determines his fate by his own conduct. Silas accepted his fate patiently and lived honestly. But his weakness is that he shut his door from the outside world; he would not communicate with humanity. He could ^{not} enjoy living with human beings, as a consequence he sought his amusement in other objects. He centred his life on gold, but it didn't bring him real happiness. On the contrary it led him to be a miser and he became the slave of material objects. Nevertheless, he still had affection towards his fellow-men. He could not bear to see people suffering. He helped a sick woman with herbs he got from his mother; and the incident brings him, for the first time since he has come to Raveloe,

a sense of unity between his past and present life, which might have been the beginning of his rescue from the insect-like existence into which his nature had shrunk.

(p. 49)

¹Lippman, Bertram., and Thale, Jerome., Silas Marner, Study Master Notes, New York: American R.D.M. Corporation, 1966, p. 13.

When he accused Jim Rodney of stealing his gold, he regretted it very much afterwards. The event reminded him of his own fate when he was accused fifteen years ago;

"I was wrong," he said- "yes, yes-I ought to have thought. There's nothing to witness against you, Jen. Only you'd been into my house oftener than anybody else, and so you came into my head. I don't accuse you-I won't accuse anybody-only," he added, lifting up his hands to his head, and turning away with bewildered misery, ...

(p. 72)

The loss of his gold was at first a misfortune but eventually a great blessing to him, for it brought him back to the world with human love. He then devoted his life to the orphaned child and got his happiness by her devotion. He procured his salvation through his love towards the child. She was the realization of his love; his trust towards man. She redeemed all his sufferings, as the author said,

As, the child's mind was growing into knowledge, his mind was growing into misery: as her life unfolded, his soul, long stupefied in a cold, narrow prison, was unfolding, too, and trembling gradually into full consciousness.

(p. 163)

Eppie comes to him as a miracle from heaven. She is sent to him as a Christmas gift. Salvation is the act of Providence, and it is not impossible.

Furthermore, through this story George Eliot wants to show that man cannot depend his life on material only, which is merely a mortal investment. Silas' faith is wavering; it is his main weakness. When he faces the trial, in his despair he soon loses his faith, and so also loses his compass in life. Really man should rely on immortal power!

B. Heart and Head

The second division of George Eliot's novels is based on the author's tendency to focus her heroines and heroes on a certain constant conflict between the idealizing heart and daily reality. E. Hardy also says,¹

George Eliot can see life as divided into poetry and prose, as a series of movements and losses, of moving from 'the poetry of girlhood' 'the poetry of love and marriage' 'the poetry of maternity' and 'the very poetry of duty' into the world of 'naked prose'. This kind of pattern can be very easily traced in most of her novels, as a process of illusion and vision which takes us from dream to dream until we are - at times by assumption rather than fictional demonstration - 'nearer reality'.

(p. 184)

It is true that George Eliot's novels contain 'this kind of pattern' that is entangled in the 'process of illusion'. It is wonderful that in her three novels: *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*, *MIDDLEMARCH*, AND *DANIEL DERONDA*, their central figures are all girls. They are on the way from 'girlhood' to 'love and marriage' and then eventually 'maternity'. They are involved in a similar conflict to that of the author, high spiritual emotion that leads to self-idealisation versus reality. And we take it as a unit of thought in tracing the three novels.

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

This novel bears an emotional tone. It is understandable, for it is filled with the author's direct experiences. Maggie Tulliver reflects her youth, and Lucy can be Christians, her own sister. So the story is nearly an autobiographical novel. To represent the vivid atmos-

¹ Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", *The Victorians*, London: Sphere Books LTD., 1970, p. 184.

where she applies her own environment such as the Mill and the Red Deeps. *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* is her second long novel which was published in 1860, a year after *ADAM BEDDE*. Its appearance proves that *ADAM BEDDE* is not an accidental work.

Maggie Tulliver is the heroine of the story. She is in her girlhood; it means that she is on the way to establish 'self-identity'. But she fails for she is entangled in a false concept of self-idealization. Maggie herself is not a common girl. She is the counterpart of the author.

She has the intellectual potentiality ... she has the desperate need for affection and intimate personal relations; and above all she has the need for an emotional exaltation, a religious enthusiasm, that shall transfigure the ordinariness of daily life and sweep her up in an inspired devotion of self to some ideal purpose.

(Leavis, F.R., *The Great Tradition*, Australia: Penguin Books, 1966, p. 52)

These superior privileges claim particular treatment, but unluckily her environment does not provide such encouragement. She has to fulfil her needs herself.

Actually she is still doubtful and uncertain of her ideas and actions. Since childhood she has been fully protected like a bird in a warm nest, but immediately her nest is severely damaged by storms. The great change is too sudden and early for such an unprepared and immature girl. She has to accept the reality of life which is full of perplexities for her young soul.

Maggie in her brown frock, with her eyes reddened and her heavy hair pushed back, looking from the bed where her father lay to the dull walls of this sad chamber which was the centre of her world, was a creature full of eager, passionate longings for all that was beautiful and glad; thirsty for all knowledge; with an ear straining after dreamy music that died away and would not come near to her; with a blind unconscious yearning for something that would link to-

gether the wonderful impressions of this mysterious life, and give her soul a sense of home in it.

(p. 237)

This 'blind, unconscious yearning' means that 'Haggie remains quite naive about its nature'. She is quite unable to analyse it; and has no capacity to digest it. She needs a guide but she finds no one. She looks for a power that can strengthen her to bear her unpleasant feelings.¹

With 'her soul's hunger and her illusions of self-flattery' she earnestly and continuously searched what she craved for. In her despair she rebelled against her lot: no opportunities and no self-achievements.

There was no music for her anymore- no piano, no harmonised voices, no delicious stringed instruments, with their passionate cries of imprisoned spirits sending a strange vibration through her frame.

(p. 235)

When she was exhausted she ran to dreams and books. But she could not be easily satisfied; her soul was already addicted to 'ideal exaltation'. "Christian Doctrine" could help no longer, dreams could not satisfy her, she longed for literature. Eventually she encountered "Thomas a Kempis" and soon she read,

...Blessed are those ears that receive the whispers of the Divine voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the world.

(p. 238)

After reading it she applied it to herself. At last she came to the conclusion that 'renunciation' ceased the entrance into that satisfaction which she had so long been craving in vain. Beforehand she knew nothing of doctrines, she was still like a blank paper that had full power to

¹ Lewis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Australia: Penguin Books, 1966, p. 55.



absorb everything that fell on it. She devoured the eagerly without knowing which part was suitable for her soul and mind. She continued reading,

...I have often said unto thee, and now again I say the same, Forsake thyself, resign thyself, and thou shalt enjoy much inward peace... Then shall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and superfluous cares fly away; then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

(p. 289)

At this step she was exactly like Dorothea, trying to accomplish 'the abandonment of egoism' and to seek 'martyrdom'. She then lived in the light of her new 'faith'.

Her companionship with Philip made her go deeper into her ideals, for he could be the object of her self-renunciation. Philip was like Will Ladislav, he was used by the author to give comments on her heroines. Philip criticised Maggie's shift from one dream to another. He showed her her lack of self knowledge, her false ideas .

"Yes, Maggie," said Philip vehemently; "and you are shutting yourself up in a narrow, self-delusive fanaticism, which is only a way of escaping pain by starving into dullness all the highest powers of your nature. ...Stupefaction is not resignation; and it is stupefaction to remain in ignorance-to shut up all the avenues by which the life of your fellowmen might become known to you. ...You are not resigned: you are only trying to stupefy yourself.

(p. 327)

She became doubtful for some moments because she felt some truth in Philip's words. But then she remembered,

"...I was never satisfied with a little of anything. That is why it is better for me to do without earthly happiness altogether ..."

(p. 327)

Dr. Lewis in his book remarks:

...The positive counterpart of renunciation ...is the exaltation, transcending all conflicts and quotidian staidnesses, that goes with an irresistibly ideal self devotion ...

(Lewis, F.S., The Great Tradition, Australia:Penguin Books, 1966, p. 57.)

Maggie's 'exaltation' is beyond her power. This ideal which leads to 'self-pity' is the result of her immaturity. Later on when meeting Stephen, all her ideals and illusions vanish; her immature mentality is not steadfast enough to face the great temptation. What should she do when a conflict between weak self-renunciation and a need of love attack her simultaneously? She is very upset to make the right decision, so she is soon trapped by Stephen's momentary charm. Luckily in her crisis she remembers all her struggles for the best and the highest. She has a fight between outer-self and inner-self before she can make the right choice. Here is the author's description,

... a choice of what? O God-not a choice of joy, but of conscious cruelty and hardness; for could she ever cease to see before her Lucy and Philip, with their murdered trust and hopes? ... she had let go the clue of life-that clue which once in the far-off years her young need had clutched so strongly.

(p. 462)

After encountering failure she admits that she really knows nothing of her new faith.

She had renounced all delights then, before she knew them, before they had come within her reach. Philip had been right when he told her that she knew nothing of renunciation: she had thought it was quite ecstasy; she saw it face to face now-that sad, patient, loving strength which held the clue of life-and saw that the thorns were for ever pressing on its brow. The yesterday, which could never be revoked-if she could have changed it now for any length of inward silent endurance, she would have bowed beneath that cross with a sense of rest.

(p. 462)

Nevertheless, it is very ironical that the concretisation of her best and highest is merely an elopement with Stephen. It seems that she not only deviates from her very renunciation but also gives way to her self-indulgence. It is quite contrary to her high ideals.

MIDDLEMARCH

The story of MIDDLEMARCH, published in 1872, is George Eliot's greatest novel. With its subtitle: A STUDY OF PROVINCIAL LIFE, it is deeper than the author's previous novels. The plot describes the life of prominent families in the city. They are the Brookes, Lydgates, Garths, and Bulstrodes. They blend together and become a fine unity in the plot. In her best the author not only wants to represent a picture of Middlemarch's social life but also a picture of life in general. The problems and conflicts we find in the story have a relation with the basic elements of life such as: love, money, ambition and religion.¹

MIDDLEMARCH shows that the author's power is not decreasing but on the contrary is 'at its highest'. In his view, Dr. Leavis writes,

...it will have been commented that MIDDLEMARCH, which, with FILIX HOLT between, comes in order of production after ROMOLA and doesn't at all represent a reversion to the phase of 'spontaneity', has for at least two decades been pretty generally estimated as one of the great masterpieces of English fiction.

(Leavis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Australia; Penguin Books, 1955, p. 46.)

Virginia Woolf also remarks:

It is not her power diminishes, for, to our thinking, it is at its highest in the mature MIDDLEMARCH, the magnificent book which, with all its imperfections, is one of the few English novels written for grown-up people.

(Anderson, Quentin., "George Eliot in Middlemarch" , From Dickens to Hardy, ed. Boris Ford, Baltimore , 1958, p. 293.)

It is the most comprehensive of her novels, because in it

¹Allen, Walter., The English Novel, London: Pelican Books, 1958, p. 230

she was able to integrate all the four major plots into a very neat network that represents the whole life and movement of opinions and events in a provincial city. The word 'mature' in Virginia Woolf's quotation seemingly contains a significant meaning. I think it means that George Eliot's ability as a novelist has achieved its peak. In it the author pours out her whole genius and mature power. She doesn't relate the country and village life as we find in her previous novels. She directs her view to the provincial life. Furthermore, Virginia Woolf says that it is written for 'grown-up people'. It is true for it deals with mature feelings and ideas. I think young people can't fully penetrate into the story; moreover, perhaps, they are not much interested in the spiritual, psychological and religious problems that run through the story. All in all, in order to keep her fans, George Eliot changed the scope of her view from a novelist of 'reminiscences' who writes out of her memories of childhood and youth to the intellectual.¹ She began to make up her novels using double or multiple plots.

We know that George Eliot loved 'nobility' and she tended to identify herself with her heroines. So when 'nobility' is put forward in connection with George Eliot, it is probable that most people think of Dorothea or Maggie Tulliver in her. Therefore, it is not surprising, if there are a lot of similarities in both characters. They are the products of George Eliot's own 'hunger of soul - another day-dream ideal self'.² And what she says of Dorothea may refer to herself.

1
Permanent rebellion, the disorder of a life without

¹ Lewis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 45.

² *ibid.*, p. 89.

some loving reverent resolve, was not possible to her

(p. 563)

However, not all she says about Dorothea is the reflection of the author's strength. The former is not the author's exact portrait; this next quotation from NIDELSPACH could not be applied to George Eliot herself:

No life would have been possible for Dorothea that was not filled with emotion.

(p. 715)

Of course, George Eliot was much concerned about feelings. In them, she found the 'sanctions' for religion. She said,

There is really no moral 'sanction' but this inward impulse.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. lxxxix.)

In spite of that the author is not as emotional as Dorothea who made her life dependent on feelings. George Eliot merely treated emotion as a guide of life but not as^a must. To Dorothea no life would have been possible that was not filled with emotion: her sensibility is very strong, and she responds from within her 'heart'. This emotional 'fullness' represented by Dorothea springs from her 'exalting-potency' and her day-dreaming, but both are not harmonious with intelligence and 'self-knowledge'. Everything that is resulted from the heroic ideals is not appropriate with the conditions of the real world.¹ Like Maggie, Dorothea has superior privileges including intellectual strength, and it encourages her to realize her ideals. She also gets high ideas from books; she even knows many passages from books such as "Pascal's Pensees" and a book by Jeremy Taylor by heart. Here is what the

¹Leavis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Penguin Books, 1966, p. 93.

author says about her:

Her mind was theoretic, and yearned by its nature after some lofty conception of the world which might frankly include the parish of Tipton and her own rule of conduct there; she was enamoured of intensity and greatness, and rash in embracing whatever seemed to her to have those aspects; likely to seek martyrdom, to re-tractions, and to incur martyrdom after all in a quarter where she had not sought it.

(p. 8)

People said she had gone to extremes so that she needed special care. But we should know what people commonly thought of women at that time,

Women were expected to have weak opinions; but the great safeguard of society and of domestic life was, that opinions were not acted on. Sane people did what their neighbours did, so that if any lunatics were at large, one might know and avoid them.

(p. 9)

Dorothea is more fortunate than Reggie Tulliver, for she gets sufficient education,

...both been educated, ...first in an English family and afterward in a Swiss family at Lausanne, ...

(p. 8)

Dorothea is deeper in her 'nobility's actions' ¹ because she had a good social position and enough money for her ambitious plans. But more important is that she is more religious, yet a wrong concept of faith. She is addicted to 'self-renunciation and self-mortification'. Sir James recognised it and asked Celia,

"Your sister is given to self-mortification, is she not? ... "I think she is, " said Celia, "... "She likes giving up."

¹Dorothea has a 'noble' ideal that is to promote the social improvement of her neighbourhood. This noble action involves drawing plenty of plans of cottages, helping poor people, and all that makes people happy.

Dorothea then gave her defence,

"If that were true, Celia, my giving up would be self-indulgence, not self-mortification. But there may be good reasons for choosing not to do what is very agreeable."

(p. 17)

The author used Will Ladislaw as she did to Philip. On one occasion when he met Dorothea in a *tete-a-tete*, he gave his judgment, "...She was an angel beguiled." On another opportunity he asked her view about art in general and about her sense of the aesthetic.

"I suppose I am dull about many things," said Dorothea, simply. "I should like to make life beautiful - I mean everybody's life.... It spoils my enjoyment of anything when I am made to think that most people are shut out from it."

"I call that the fanaticism of sympathy," said Will, impetuously. "...Would you turn all the youth of the world into a tragic chorus, wailing and moralizing over misery? I suspect that you have some false belief in the virtues of misery, and want to make your life a martyrdom."

(p. 199)

Dorothea, with her 'genius for feeling nobly' gets herself confused, and this appears in the vagueness of her 'day-dream self indulgence'.

From the beginning, however, Dorothea has been vague in her exaltation, that she 'was oppressed by the indefiniteness which hung in her mind, like a thick summer haze, over all her desire to make her life greatly effective'. (p. 173) This is the reason why she is inconsistent in carrying out her ideas. At one time she desires to be an 'Evangelical saint', so she resigns all her worldly pleasure. But afterwards she is attracted to the beauty of a ring and bracelet which to her opinion have supernatural, religious charm.

In the prelude, the author has destined Dorothea to be a heroine like St. Theresa. Her yearnings for social betterment 'haunted her like a passion'. To realize this

passion she was urged to marry Casaubon. But "these later-born Theroesas were helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul." (Prelude, p. 5) Dorothea only found great failures because the society and the church of the time did not encourage her ideals. In her time such a coherent faith was lacking because of the workings of industrial revolution.

Dorothea's main weakness is her turning to Ladislaw. This incident reminds us of Maggie's case with Stephen. We may wonder, does her turning to Ladislaw belong to her heroic performances? But our supposition is denied by this statement,

Still, she never repented that she had given up position and fortune to marry Will Ladislaw. ... They were bound to each other by a love stronger than any impulses which could have marred it.

(p. 735)

Yet it is rather unacceptable to see how the author always ends her heroines' adventures in that way. As an author, however, George Eliot has the privilege of determining the way in which the climax is given to her fiction. The way she represents the climax belongs to her art. But she ends the two novels in almost the same way, so that the reader could predict it. Fortunately she doesn't treat DANIEL DERONDA similarly; as she doesn't let Gwendolen Harleth marry Daniel Deronda.

George Eliot can penetrate women's feelings profoundly; it is not surprising as she is a woman herself. Woman is mostly overwhelmed by emotion, and George Eliot applies this aspect to all her heroines. From her novels we can notice that she believes in heroic ideals too but she wants there to be always a balance between what is in the heart and in the head. In her last novel, DANIEL DERONDA we find this conflict too.

DANIEL DERONDA

Four years after the publication of DANIEL DERONDA, in 1880 George Eliot died. It was her last work. It is not as good as MIDDLEMARCH but it is the work of a distinguished intellectual.¹ Henry James in his "Conversation on DANIEL DERONDA" speaks quite a lot of this work.

As I have stated in chapter II, DANIEL DERONDA has two major plots which are not so closely interwoven. Dr. Leavis says that DANIEL DERONDA should be divided into two: the best of it is the story of Gwendolen Harleth and the worst is Daniel Deronda's story. George Eliot's description of Gwendolen is the best among the descriptions of other heroines such as Maggie and Dorothea. Gwendolen with her weakness and selfishness is more human and real, thus, though the action of Daniel Deronda gives a defect the power of Gwendolen's story is able to cover the flaws of former's and because of it the story is still great.

Gwendolen Harleth is another heroine who suffers from self-idealization. But she is not Dorothea's nor Maggie's type; she is just the very opposite of the two. She is very egoistic, almost like Rosamund Vinoy but the former is more striking and intelligent. Her ideal is 'to be daring in speech and reckless in braving danger, both moral and physical' (p. 49). She likes being conspicuous and superior, and she will be easily offended if someone shows her flaws.

Her ill-manneredness was the product of false education. Like Rosamund, she was brought up as a spoiled girl. At home she was the 'princess', so she was used to

¹Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 45.

indulging her egoistic claims and 'exultations'. But surprisingly her mother was always agreeable; actually she was afraid to offend her. George Eliot illustrated Gwendolen's attitudes at home:

...It must be remembered that no one had disputed her power on her general superiority. As on the arrival at Offendene, so always, the first thought of those about her had been, what will Gwendolen think?—if the footmen trod heavily in creaking boots, or if the landlady's work was unsatisfactory, the maid said, "This will never do for Miss Harleth"; if the wood smoked in the bedroom fireplace, Mrs. Davilow, whose own weak eyes suffered much from this inconvenience, spoke apologetically of it to Gwendolen. ... Always she was the princess in exile, who in time of famine was to have her breakfast-roll made of the finest-bolted flour from the seven thin ears of wheat. ...

(p. 39)

Being never warned by the adults, Gwendolen was unconscious of her offending manner. As she grew up to be a striking beautiful girl, she also brought her behaviour to her social surroundings. Not many girls made friends with her and it seemed she did not like them either. Perhaps she was fond of gentlemen, 'but we know that she was in the least fond of them—she was only fond of their homage—and women did not give her homage.' (p. 111) On every public occasion she wanted to be the most popular among other guests. In spite of her intelligence she strove to be different from common girls. In addition, she was full of tricks to bring other people into trouble. Here she was with her mother before she met Grandcourt:

...Mrs. Davilow felt her ears tingle when Gwendolen, suddenly throwing herself into the attitude of drawing her bow, said, with a look of comic enjoyment:

"How I pity all the other girls at the Archery Meeting—all thinking of Mr. Grandcourt! And they have not a shadow of a chance."

Mrs. Davilow had not presence of mind to answer immediately, and Gwendolen turned around quickly toward her, saying wickedly:

"Now you know they have not, mamma. You and my uncle and aunt—you all intend him to fall in love with me."

Mrs. Davilow, piqued into a little stratagem, said:

"Oh, my dear, that is not so certain. Miss Arrowpoint has charms which you have not."

"I know; but they demand thought. My arrow will pierce him before he has time for thought. He will declare himself my slave-I shall send him round the world to bring me back the wedding-ring of a happy woman-in the meantime all the men who are between him and the title will die of different diseases-he will come back Lord Grandcourt-but without the ring-and fall at my feet. I shall laugh at him-he will rise in resentment-I shall laugh more..."

Was ever any young witch like this?

(p. 94)

She was a 'witch' as the author called her. She enjoyed it very much, if other people were hurt because of her pranks. But she did not realize her childish and foolish play.

Being aware of her superiority she did not want to lead the same sort of life as ordinary young ladies did, but she did not know how she could begin a new one. She was thinking of being extraordinary! (p. 64) She knew that her mother had suffered because of her mistaken marriage. So she decided not to suffer like her mother. 'True, she still saw that she "would manage differently from her mamma" (p. 77). She planned that she should make the best marriage: her husband had to be agreeable with her; she did not want to be like most wives, always submissive to their husbands. It seemed she found all she hoped for in Mr. Grandcourt.

...not she was sure, any subjugation of her will by Mr. Grandcourt. ...If she chose to take this husband, she would have him know that she was not going to renounce her freedom, or, according to her formula, 'not going to do as other women did'.

(p. 130)

Her foolish illusions were the result of her immaturity and her easy-going life. She was never trained to endure misery, to face reality. All her troubles were endured by her mother. So with false conceptions she entered her married life, thinking that in it she could satisfy her

egoism fully. George Eliot gave this description:

The prospect of marrying Grandcourt really seemed more attractive to her than she had believed beforehand that any marriage could be: the dignities, the luxuries, the power of doing a great deal of what she liked to, which had now come close to her, and within her power to secure or to lose, took hold of her nature as if it had been the strong odour of what she had only imagined and longed for before. ... Gwendolen wished to mount the chariot and drive the plunging horses herself, with a spouse by her side who would fold his arms and give her his countenance without looking ridiculous.

(p. 332)

But, in fact, her marriage meant that she had to dig a deep grave to bury her selfishness. She was even more unlucky than her mother or even Rosamund, for Grandcourt was very sadistic and tyrannical. She herself became a tragic figure, 'so much pride and courage and sensitiveness and intelligence fixed in a destructive deadlock through false valuation and self ignorance'.¹ Gwendolen with her 'witch's' notion wanted to deceive her husband but ironically she herself became the victim of Grandcourt's deceit. He knew that she had met his illegal wife, Mrs. Glasher before she married him. Both husband and wife entered the marriage with a secret longing for triumph; each wanted to dominate the other. What was in Grandcourt's mind when he married Gwendolen?

...his strongest wish was to be completely master of this creature - this piquant combination of maidenliness and mischief.

(p. 302)

During the short marriage Gwendolen soon learned that Grandcourt was the most unfeeling and unsympathetic husband. He was just the opposite from what she had dreamt before the marriage. As a wife, she could not understand him at all.

¹Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 129.

Grandcourt had become a blank uncertainty to her in everything but this, that he would do just what he willed.

(p. 591)

She was very submissive and eventually became frightened of his cold eyes. But she said to Daniel Deronda that she 'must go on'. It was too late to change her mind,

...she knows to the full the mistakenness of her assumptions and finds herself beaten at her own game.

(p.678)

But what we admire in her is her proud dignity, 'to bear the last gambling lost with perfect self possession'.¹ It is very tragic that a false marriage could change an exuberant lively girl into a submissive desperate wife.

¹ Lewis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 123.

CHAPTER IV

MORAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM IN GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVELS

It is often in George Eliot's mind that the only worthy end of all learning, of all science and of all life is that human beings should love one another better. She writes in one of her letters,

Culture merely for culture's sake can never be anything but a sapless root, capable of producing at best a shrivelled branch.

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 136.)

This attitude is her characteristic in every movement of her life and thought. She believes in culture, science, philosophy, art, and all that plays an important part in human life. And she values their power to help man to be able to enjoy life with purer satisfaction such more. Her love for human beings and her affectionate nature¹ urges her to analyse what causes man's pain and suffering. She feels she has a duty through her novels to mitigate human suffering because this 'mitigation' is most needed by all men.² So what she strives to insert in her books is the spirit of love and the capacity to feel with and for others and that is what she also aims at in her own life.

This idea leads her to be a 'moral teacher' in most of her novels. The purpose which leads her to it is also her love of 'truthfulness'. After the publication of ADAM BEDDE she wrote to Blackwood:

Truth in art is so startling that no one can believe in it as art, and the specified forms of religious

¹Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 11.

²Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P.F. Collier & Son, p. LXXV.

life which have made some of the grandest elements in human history are looked down upon as if they were not within the artist's sympathy and veneration and intensely dramatic reproduction.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York; P. F. Collier & Son, p. 28.)

Some years later she related her 'high sense of the worth of beautiful as presented in art':

"I think aesthetic teaching is the highest of all teaching, because it deals with life in its highest complexity. But it ceases to be purely aesthetic-if it lapses anywhere from the picture to the diagram-it becomes the most offensive of all teaching."

(*ibid.*, p.xciii)

She wishes to be 'an aesthetic' and not 'a doctrinal teacher'.

"My function is that of the aesthetic, not the doctrinal teacher.

(*ibid*)

But, in fact, what we find in her books is that she deliberately aims at being a moral teacher and at producing certain effects on the readers' lives. However, she chooses to do this through the emotions as she always repeats in her view that 'much of what men believe is determined by emotions'. And she sets her particular views on man's responsibility and his moral-psychological conflicts in life. Let us have a look at this point in her novels:

SILAS MARNER

The meaning of SILAS MARNER as a 'moralized fable' is obvious enough, and George Eliot discusses it from the point of view of Christianity. Silas collects the treasure which almost makes him turn into a materialist. He hoards the material treasure that can be damaged and lost. He then finds Eppie, a living treasure, that enables him

to regain his lost life.

It can be summed up that Providence is just. God helps to clear the innocent, but He also reveals the guilty. Silas was innocent, at last he could prove that he was not the thief who had stolen the church money. This fact is admitted by Mrs. Winthrop:

"...But what lies upon your mind-it's this, Master Harner: as, if Heaven above had done the right thing by you, They'd never ha' let you be turned out for a wicked thief when you was innocent."

(p. 181)

On the other hand, God reveals Dunstan's crime. Eventually people found his skeleton together with the stolen money in the pit. Godfrey also expresses this belief:

"Everything comes into light, Nancy, sooner or later, When God Almighty wills it, our secret are found out."

(p. 205)

In this story it seems the world is good and in order.

But nowadays people tend to ignore such a tale, because they experience the contrary. Their experience forces them to see that the world is not always good. Silas Marner gets his luck as a payment for his long suffering and good heart. But can men who don't have Silas' luck see the world as good? They will not believe that good defeats bad and evil, that a good man will be happy and a bad man will suffer. Their experience shows that corruption prevails in the world while on the contrary honesty might bring suffering. The story is actually a bit ^{simplistic}. But what George Eliot desires above all is that it should give courage and moral purpose to the world; as she writes to her publisher:

"I hope you will not find it a sad story as whole, since it sets- or is intended to set- in a strong light the residual influences of pure, natural human relations. The Genesis is very mild one. I have felt all through ... especially in all that relates to the psychology

of Silas, ...

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. xlvii.)

George Eliot is also interested in the working of the soul, so she tends to see the problem much in terms of psychology. Silas is first seen as a member of a church community. His best friend accused him of a theft, and as a result the community expelled him. He lost his faith and became a miser. After fifteen years living in isolation he found Eppie. His relationship with the child enabled him to feel delight in nature, love for others, satisfaction with himself, interest in the objects of everyday life and to regain his faith. According to Jerome Thale, George Eliot sees that our creeds, our beliefs in God, are not as true as facts but as symbols, as expressions of states of mind. Faith is 'the symptom of a healthy state of consciousness'.¹ In fact, to her, religion is simply a means of voicing the inward life.² Silas has lost his trust in his fellowmen, so to feel secure he keeps apart from them. He distrusts the world, for it has cheated him. His disbelief is the indication of some change in his personality which is the result of his bitter experience. So according to Jerome Thale, Silas has not lost a creed but 'a sense of the world'. After he found Eppie he regained what he had lost. He became a church goer again and this showed that he had returned to a better state of mind. He could feel and enjoy what was beautiful, for he had Eppie's love and devotion.

Actually in SILAS MARNER George Eliot wants to show

¹ Lippman, Bertram., and Thale, Jerome., Silas Marner, Study Master Notes, New York: American R.D.N. Corporation, 1966, p. 44.

² Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P.F. Collier & Son, p. lxxviii.

what is man's belief and what is man's attitude towards reality.¹ Silas Marner suffered disillusion during the time of his belief. So when he had to face the bitter reality, he got a terrible shock. His belief wavered and then was lost. But during his isolated life, he did not lose all his affection and feelings towards human life, he deliberately rejected them. However, once he helped an old woman who suffered from heart-disease and dropsy by giving her the herbs he had learned about from his mother. Later when his water-pot, which had come to be his most precious treasure since he lived in Raveloe, broke he collected the pieces, stuck them together and laid them in the old place. After all, his actual renewal occurred when Eppie came into his life. She was the agent who made him regain 'the sense of the world'; the author said:

As the child's mind was going into knowledge, his mind was going into meekness; ...

(p. 163)

Silas Marner's experience can be summed up as follows: how he comes to 'the sense of the world' which he can get from his experience.

ADAM BEDE

George Eliot created her favourite theme through Hetty and Arthur. They are the victims of self-indulgence. Both yield to temptation. But Hetty has to suffer most because she has fallen victim to the temptation and it is she who arouses the temptation in Arthur. She was still an ignorant girl who dreamt of luxury, but she knew

¹Lippman, Portman, and Thale, Jerome., Silas Marner, Study Master Notes, New York: American R. D. M. Corporation, 1966, p. 45.

that every man could be attracted to her through her coquetry. So she used it to attract Arthur. But unfortunately she was unaware of its danger and its consequence.

Arthur, her seducer, actually experienced a moral-psychological conflict before he fell himself to the temptation. After Mr. Irvine had warned him, he made many efforts to avoid meeting Hetty alone, by going away to Cavaine. Here the author illustrated his good intention:

Behind this explicit resolution there lay an implicit one. If he lunched with Cavaine and lingered chatting, he should not reach the Chase again till five, when Hetty would be safe out his sight in the house-keeper's room; and when she set out to go home, it would be his lazy time after dinner, so he should keep out of her way altogether. ...he had better not take any notice of her; it might put notions into her head, as Irvine had hinted; ...

(p. 121)

But soon he came back again from the Cavaine. He experienced a conflict of conscience, but let us see how he comes to this:

When Arthur went up to his dressing-room again after luncheon, it was inevitable that the debate he had had with himself there earlier in the day should flash across his mind; but it was impossible for him now to dwell on the remembrance....The desire to see Hetty had rushed back like an ill-stemmed current; he was amazed himself at the force with which this trivial fancy seemed to grasp him: he was even rather tremulous as he brushed his hair-poor! it was riding in that break-neck way. It was because he had made a serious affair of an idle matter, by thinking of it as if it were of any consequence. He would amuse himself by seeing Hetty today, and get rid of the whole thing from his mind. It was all Irvine's fault. 'If Irvine had said nothing, I shouldn't have thought half so much of Hetty as of Meg's lameness.'

(p. 122)

He was trapped by the temptation but still his good conscience warned him. He felt guilty;

...He was dissatisfied with himself, irritated, mortified. He no sooner fixed his mind on the probable consequences of giving way to the emotions which had stolen over him today-of continuing for such slight

caresses as he had been betrayed into already-then he refused to believe such a future possible for himself.

(p. 130)

Now he could not depend on his won strength. He knew he should ask for help to prevent him from falling again. He had to secure himself from any folly. In despair he remembered Mr. Irwine; he would tell him everything. But he did not dare to reveal it. He kept going on with excuses that each time he intended to mend his fault. But on the contrary he much more fell into it. Later on he became accustomed to it and was not aware that he had brought serious disgrace either on himself or on Hetty. When he defended himself against Adam's blame, he was already overwhelmed by his selfishness. Evil had conquered him.

George Eliot actually meant to show the two different types of moral character in Adam and Arthur; that one is benevolent and the other is selfish. This quotation shows Arthur's selfishness:

"Let me tell you, Adam," said Arthur, bridling his growing anger, and trying to recur to his careless tone, "you're not only devilishly impertinent, but you're talking nonsense. Every pretty girl is not such a fool as you, to suppose that when a gentleman admires her beauty, and pays her a little attention, he must mean something particular. Every man likes to flirt with a pretty girl, and every pretty girl likes to be flirted with. The wider the distance between them the less harm there is, for then she's not likely to deceive herself."

(p. 269)

Up to the last time when he had to part with Hetty he was still governed by his egoism. But as a consequence others felt hard to believe in his good will. When he was going to make a self sacrifice to redeem his wrong doing, Adam distrusted the plan:

Arthur's words had precisely the opposite effect to that he had anticipated. Adam thought he perceived in them that notion of compensation for irretrievable

wrong, that self-soothing attempt to make evil bear the same fruits as good, which most of all roused his indignation. He was as strongly impelled to look painful facts right in the face as Arthur would turn away his eyes from them. ...He felt his old severity returning as he said,--

"The time's past for that, sir. A man should make sacrifices to keep clear of doing a wrong; sacrifices won't undo it when it's done. When people's feelings have got a deadly wound, they can't be cured with favours."

(p. 471)

But eventually both of them were reconciled, for each had found a human feeling toward the other; especially Adam was always ready to forgive.

In the story the author puts Hetty as the cause of evil. Actually she was an innocent girl for she did not know about her wrong commitments. Her failure to capture Arthur and her new-born baby made her aware of the reality she had to face. Now she knew that she had been deceived. In great despair she intended to commit suicide but her cowardice made her waver with her own decision. She faced a moral-psychological conflict. Her morality was weak for she had experienced evil only late in her life. Her eyes were closed towards right or wrong. She was saved merely by her fear of death; here is the author's description:

The horror of this cold, and darkness, and solitude--out of all human reach--became greater every long minute; it was almost she were dead already, and knew that she was dead, and longed to get back to life again. But no: she was still alive: she had not taken the dreadful leap. She felt a strange, contradictory wretchedness and exultation: wretchedness, that she did not dare to face death; exultation, that she was still in life--that she might yet know light and warmth again.

(p. 343)

Her moral conflict returned again as she had to resolve the problem of her baby. She wanted to return, but her baby became her great obstacle. So her immature thought decided that she had to get rid of it. Actually she had not a heart to be a criminal; moreover, she had not meant to

do it. The murder was the result of her ignorance and her panic. She was still a little girl; in addition she was stupid and did not have strong faith. What made her dare to risk dangers was her false pride and obstinacy. We can follow the author's dramatic description of Hetty's confession:

...At last Hetty whispered,--

"I did do it, Dinah... I buried it in the wood ... the little baby ... and it cried ... I heard it cry... ever such a way off ... all night ...and I went back because it cried."

She paused, and then spoke hurriedly, in a louder, pleading tone,

"But I thought perhaps it wouldn't die--there might somebody find it, I didn't kill it--I didn't kill it myself, I put it down there and covered it up, and when I came back it was gone ... It was because I was so very miserable, Dinah ... I didn't know where to go ... and I tried to kill myself before, and I couldn't. Oh, I tried so to drown myself in the pool, and I couldn't. ..."

(P. 399)

When she could not find her baby she became very hysterical for she was haunted by the baby's crying.

"...I don't know what I felt till I saw the baby was gone. And when I'd put it there I thought I should like somebody to find it, and save it from dying, but when I saw it was gone I was struck like a stone with fear. ..."

(p. 401)

And she did not run away like any other murderer but waited there till she was caught.

George Eliot takes Hetty as an example of the victim of immature feelings and thoughts. But actually there are a lot of young people who experience Hetty's fate. They fall into the temptation of love, as they only measure it from the outer beauty and luxury. They don't realize that the union of two young people need much consideration. Both of them must be mature in thought and feeling, before they can engage in such an affair!

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

From the outset of the story George Eliot had placed Maggie in ^{an} unpleasant situation. Maggie craved for the love of her brother, Tom. Naturally she was disappointed, for he often ignored and despised her. Her mother also always disapproved of her behaviour and appearance. Her father was fond of her, but he could not be hers alone, for he was often absorbed in his own business. She had to quit school early at an age when she thirsted for knowledge, beauty and a wider life which she could not get from her narrow scope. She was then unofficially engaged to the first person who gave her love, knowledge and admiration. After that she fell into the hands of a rich young man who was Lucy's boy-friend, but who promised her the wider opportunities she longed for. But eventually she was able to defeat the great temptation, for she remembered Lucy and Philip's kindness; but the most important reason was she did not want to lose Tom's love.

Tom was the 'idol' of her life. When she could not hope any attention from him, she sought it in someone else. She found Philip, whom she had to reject, for he belonged to the family's enemies. But she continued her relationship with him secretly.

In one respect Philip was the same as she was; he was seeking someone who could love him instead of taking pity on him. He felt very diffident because he considered himself handicapped. Maggie also lacked self-confidence, for she thought herself plain and disliked. Philip, especially, longed for someone who cared for him, for he did not have a mother from the time he was a small child.

"...I have no friends to whom I can tell everything - no one who cares enough for me; ... show me that you

care for me-and that we may always be friends in heart, and help each other-then I might come to be glad of life."

(p. 332)

And it was Maggie's hope from him so that she said,

"I'm very thankful to you for thinking of me, ... I don't think any one ever did such a kind thing for me before ..."

(ibid)

Both felt that they found what they needed in each other and eventually it proceeded to love.

But apparently Maggie did not love him truly. He was her escape from her unpleasant feelings. She was still not sure of herself. She forced herself to love him because he supplied what she wanted at the time. She admitted that when Philip asked her the truth of her love:

"Indeed I do, Philip. What happiness have I ever had so great as being with you?-since I was a little girl-the days Tom was good to me. And your mind is a sort of world to me: you can tell me all I want to know. I think I should never be tired of being with you."

(p. 334)

From this statement it is clear that she received Philip's love in compensation for the loss of Tom's, and of knowledge. Her being in love with Stephen showed her uncertain love towards Philip.

What appealed to her from Stephen was that he promised her more opportunities in life; all chances that she never tested throughout her life.

... If the state of mind could have lasted, her choice would have to have Stephen Guest at her feet, offering her a life filled all luxuries, with daily increase of adoration near and distant, and with all possibilities of culture at her command ...

(p. 435)

After meeting Stephen she was very much shaken. Her idea of 'self-renunciation' which had been the clue of her life seemed to disappear; it was defeated by her sudden egoism.

She took pity on herself for her 'self-renunciation' and suffering:

... She had to suffer through many years of her life; and who had renounced anything for her? And when some thing like that fullness of existence-love, wealth, ease, refinement, all that her nature craved- was brought within her reach, why was she to forgo it, that another might have it, who perhaps needed it less?...

(p. 450)

While she felt oppressed with this strain, she could not afford to lose Stephen. While she was wavering, the author put her in the unavoidable situation. She could not refuse Stephen's request to go away together in a boat. All had been arranged and ready for her, so it made her unconscious of her own action as if she was influenced by 'a strong tonic-and she felt nothing else'. It is significant that we have a look at the passage that mostly describes her being 'borne along by the tide': ¹

And they went. Maggie felt that she was being led down the garden among the roses, being helped with firm tender care into the boat, having the cushion and cloak arranged for her feet, and her parasol opened for her (which she had forgotten)-all this by the stronger presence that seemed to bear her along without any act of her own will, like the added self which comes with the sudden exalting influence of a strong tonic-and she felt nothing else.

(p. 455)

When she woke up from her reverie, it was too late for her to return from the elopement. They had gone too far, so they had to spend a night in the vessel. Stephen continually tried to persuade her to marry him, but she struggled to overcome her emotion. At that moment she had to make a moral choice between her love for Stephen- which meant a separation forever from Tom, Philip and all she had loved- and her self renunciation from which she had

¹ Lewis, R. P., The Great Tradition, Australia: Penguin Books, 1966, p. 57.

not get any reward yet. Once she had been able to liberate herself from that tangle. It was her awareness and her love for Tom that had saved her. But when she was driven away by Tom and was not admitted as his sister anymore, her past emotion for Stephen came up again. She felt forsaken and lonely in her fall, and it was as if she had no one to protect her in the world. She became weak and hopeless. In that critical situation Stephen's letter came. Let us follow her struggle against the last conflict:

When Maggie first read this letter she felt as if her real temptation had only just begun. At the entrance of the chill dark cavern, we turn with unwarmed courage from the warm light; but how, when we have trodden far in the damp darkness, and have begun to be faint and weary-how, if there is a sudden opening above us, and we are invited back again to the life-nourishing day? ...All the day before she had been filled with the vision of a lonely future through which she must carry the burthen of regret, upheld only by clinging faith. And here-close within her reach-urging itself upon her even as a claim-was another future, in which hard endurance and effort were to be exchanged for easy delicious leaning on another's loving strength! And yet that promise of joy in the place of sadness did not make the dire force of the temptation to Maggie. It was Stephen's tone of misery, it was the doubt in the justice of her own resolve, that made the balance tremble, and made her once start from her seat to reach the pen and paper, and write 'Come!'

(p. 503)

But after a moment she put the pen down again. Her remembrance of Lucy's love and Philip's kindness calmed down her mind. She just expressed her passion in a sob. But eventually in her self-despair she cried:

"I will bear it, and bear it till death. ... But how long it will be before death comes! ..."

(ibid)

At the end the author did not allow her to resolve the moral conflict in which she had to live on and bear all its consequences. The author took pity on her by answering her prayer.



Dr. Leavis sees the similar element that runs through Maggie and Gwendolen's affair. The insight and understanding of moral-psychological conflict that come from Maggie's elopement with Stephen can be applied to the analysis of Gwendolen's acceptance of Grandcourt.¹

DANIEL BEROUDA

To understand Dr. Leavis' suggestion it is better to see Gwendolen's story from the outset of her acquaintance with Grandcourt. Her relationship with him was not serious, for from her part, seeing her mother's failure, she became reluctant to get married. But her family, especially her uncle encouraged her, because they considered Grandcourt as the best match. She herself was fond of popularity. What made her pay attention to him was his popularity; he was the choice of every girl in that village. So she would feel triumphant, if she was able to win him. She only meant to treat him as her toy, but later on she began to be fond of him, because he always did for her what she liked most. Now she became serious with him; she only had to wait for his offer. But the meeting with Mrs. Glasher forced her to give him up. Firstly, from her part she felt cheated, so she would insult herself if she accepted him. Secondly, for the sake of her promise to Mrs. Glasher she could never marry him. So to avoid him she ran away from her village.

However, she was not as fortunate a girl as she wished. Her family's lack of money compelled her to work as a governess. How could she accept such a low job, if she had always dreamt of being a prominent lady? But in

¹ Leavis, E. V., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 58.

the midst of her despair, Grandcourt's letter came. Let us follow her attitude when she had to answer his letter:

... Gwendolen let it fall on the floor, and turned away.

"It must be answered, darling," said Mrs. Davilow, timidly. "The man waits".

Gwendolen sank on the settee, clasped her hands, and looked straight before her, not at her mother. She had the expression of one who had been startled by a sound and was listening to know what would come of it. The sudden change of the situation was bewildering. A few minutes before she was looking on an inescapable path of repulsive monotony, with hopeless inward rebellion against the imperious lot which left her no choice: and lo, now, a moment of choice was come. Yet—was it triumph she felt most, or terror? Impossible... Here came the terror. Quick, quick, like pictures in a book beaten open with a sense of hurry, came back vividly, yet in fragments, all that she had gone through in relation to Grandcourt—the allurements, the vacillations, the resolve to accede, the final repulsion; the incisive face of that dark-eyed lady with the lovely boy; her own pledge (was it a pledge not to marry him?)—the new disbelief in the worth of men and things for which that scene of disclosure had become a symbol. That unalterable experience made a vision at which, in the first agitated moment, before tempering reflections could suggest themselves, her native terror shrank.

...yet in the dark seed-growths of consciousness a new wish was forming itself—"I wish I had never known it!" Something, anything she wished for that would have saved her from the dread to let Grandcourt come.

(p. 293)

From the above quotation we can understand her terror to decide the moral conflict in her heart. But we know that what makes her confused to decide and finally what makes her urging to get Grandcourt's visit, from this passage:

"If Mr. Grandcourt has only just returned from Leubronn," said Mrs. Davilow, observing that Gwendolen leaned back in her chair after taking the pen in her hand—"I wonder whether he has heard of our misfortunes."

"That could make no difference to a man in his position," said Gwendolen, rather contemptuously.

"It would, to some men," said Mrs. Davilow. "They would not like to take a wife from a family in a state of beggary almost, as we are. Here we are at Offendene with a great shell over us as usual. But just imagine his finding us at Sawyer's Cottage. Most men are afraid of being bored or taxed by a wife's family. If Mr. Grandcourt did know, I think it a strong proof of

his attachment to you."

...The effect of her words now was stronger than she could imagine: they raised a new set of possibilities in Gwendolen's mind—a vision of what Grandcourt might do for her mother if she, Gwendolen, did what she was not going to do. She was so moved by a new rush of ideas, that like one conscious of being urgently called away, she felt that the immediate task must be hastened: the letter must be written, else it might be endlessly deferred. ...

(p. 295)

Actually she thinks of herself so she feels wrong inwardly, but it seems less if she thinks of her mother's happiness as the motive. This is clearer when we notice her reaction on receiving Grandcourt's cheque:

The check was for five hundred pounds, and Gwendolen turned it toward her mother, with the letter.

"How very kind and delicate!" said Mrs. Davison, with much feeling. "But I really should like better not to be dependent on a son-in-law, and the girls could get along very well."

"Mamma, if you say that again, I will not marry him," said Gwendolen, angrily.

"My dear child, I trust you are not going to marry only for my sake," said Mrs. Davison, deprecatingly.

Gwendolen tossed her head on the pillow away from her mother, and let the ring lie. She was irritated at this attempt to take away a motive. Perhaps the deeper cause of her irritation was the consciousness that she was not going to marry solely for her mamma's sake -

(p. 311)

From her reluctant attitude while opening Grandcourt's packet, we know that she was not resolute in her decision. She treats marriage as a 'business'. Beforehand both Gwendolen and Grandcourt calculate the 'business' whether they will make a lot of profits from it or not. Unluckily each party thinks of his own profit. From Gwendolen's side, it is clear that she considers her coming marriage from the economic point of view. Concerning this, the author gives an impressive description:

...It would be hard to tell on which side Gwendolen's or Grandcourt's—the influence was more fixed. ...

All the while they were looking at each other; and Grandcourt said, slowly and languidly, as if it were of no importance, other things having been settled:

"You will tell me now, I hope, that Mrs. Davilow's loss of fortune will not trouble you further. You will trust me to prevent it from weighing upon her. You will give me the claim to provide against that." ...

"You are very generous," she said, not moving her eyes, and speaking with a gentle intonation.

"You accept what will make such things a matter of course?" said Grandcourt, without any new eagerness. "You consent to become my wife?"

This time Gwendolen remained quite pale. Something made her rise from her seat in spite of herself and walk to a little distance. Then she turned, and with her hands folded before her stood in silence.

Grandcourt immediately rose too, resting his hat on the chair, but still keeping hold of it. The evident hesitation of this destitute girl to take his splendid offer stung him into a keenness of interest such as he had not known for years. None the less because he attributed her hesitation entirely to her knowledge about Mrs. Glasher, in that attitude of preparation, he said:

"Do you command me to go?" No familiar spirit could have suggested to him more effective words.

"No," said Gwendolen ...

"You accept my devotion?" said Grandcourt, ...

"Yes," came as gravely from Gwendolen's lips as if she had been answering to her name in a court of justice.

(p. 303)

It seems that the situation and Grandcourt's threat force her, so she can not help saying just "Yes". In her situation she can not make any other choice. The prospect of marrying Grandcourt gives her material security, so she can get rid of Mrs. Monpert, whom she considers as a horror. Moreover, she was not only saved from financial shortage but also supplied with all the things she liked most. But her state of mind is altogether changed. She is conscious of just having take a decisive step which beforehand she would never have taken. But she can not go back now; she has to go on. It seems new to her that a moral question of right or wrong can arouse her terror. In her youth she was always sure of herself, and ready to command others. She never thought twice or felt regretful of her conducts. But now she feels frightened of her own conduct. At night she is often woke up by nightmares. Mrs. Glasher and her children are always in her mind. They seem to blame her forever.

During her married life she can not get rid of this hallucination. It becomes the poison of her life. Actually her great mistake lies in her false pride and her egoistic impulse. She could have revealed the secret to Grandcourt before her engagement but she is too proud to tell.

However, the author helps her to ease her trouble. The author believes that spiritual trouble can only be cured by self remedy. So she puts Daniel Deronda as Gwendolen's counsellor. He directs her to the reality she always avoids.

CONCLUSION

A. George Eliot's World

As we are approaching the last chapter, it is necessary to have some general acquaintance with George Eliot's world. Let us therefore probe her world for a reflection on the motivations that have influenced the course of her works. Meanwhile reading her books, some questions are raised in our minds; what basic views of life have inspired her novels? and in how far does George Eliot's world have some influence on the literary quality of her works? Between the two questions, at this point, the first question will be put forward for observation. Some of her biographies are of great help in replying to this matter.

From the records of George Eliot's life, it is obvious that her personal experience of life has a significant influence on her works. Beside that, of course, a great deal of literary works have also influenced her own observations about human life.

Beforehand it is better to examine the country which has had a great impact on her work. As mentioned in the first chapter, Mary Ann Evans grew up in the fertile English Midlands where the basis of life was agriculture. So it is not surprising if in *Adam Bede* she is able to give an actual picture of the farmer's life in 'real' language. J. V. Cross related that her birthplace was very comfortable- 'the warm little nest where her affection were fledged'. But actually the remoteness of the villages and the country houses in England of the time was very different from what is illustrated in the novels. Indeed, the situation is quite difficult for us to conceive now.

There were no telegraphs and no railways and no post offices, 'nothing but a succession of green fields and hedgerows with some fine trees'. But strangely George Eliot can 'transfigure' these scenes into picturesque descriptions which take place in an era 'of activity in scientific and mechanical discovery'.¹

Let us direct our attention to George Eliot's childhood. As a little girl she was used to be among humble and poor people. Because of this reason, George Eliot is more interested in common than in superior thing. This interest is reflected in her novels, for example, ADAM BEDE. Here is one of her reasons:

...I delight in many Dutch paintings, which lofty-minded people despise. I find a source of delicious sympathy in these faithful pictures of a monotonous homely existence, which has been the fate of so many more among my fellow-mortals than a life of pomp or of absolute indigence, of tragic suffering, or of world-stirring actions. I turn without shrinking from cloudborne angels, from prophets, sibyls, and heroic warriors, to an old woman bending over the flowerpot, ...

Then some lines further she continues:

There are few prophets in the world; few sublimely beautiful women; few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities: I want a great deal of those feelings for my everyday fellow men, especially for the few in the foreground of the great multitude, whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesy. ...

(ADAM BEDE, p. 164)

It is true what Henry James says about George Eliot as the novelist of 'reminiscence', describes the 'poignancy and charm' of personal experience. However, most novelists relate their own experiences, in some way, to their novels. So it is not surprising, George Eliot takes

¹Crass, J. W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 8.

her characters from her venerable repertory. George's father was a remarkable man and she was so impressed by his determination of character that she represented him in ADAM BEDE and Caleb Garth of MIDDLEMARCH. Her own mother was a shrewd but very practical person. She had an affectionate, warm-hearted nature. This characterization is found in Mrs. Poyser and Dolly Winthrop in SILAS MARNER. 'The susceptibility of terror' of *Geendolen Barleth* is George Eliot's phobia of darkness which she got during the early school time. Like the author, *Geendolen* also becomes subject to an over-lasting fear.

Among her five novels which are taken in this study, *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* is the best representation of the author's own feelings. It is no wonder that she is able to illustrate Maggie's character very vividly; especially in the first and second parts of the book. The way she analyses the whole effect of persons and circumstances on a child's mind is so natural that it is like a truth, not fiction. J.V. Cross writes that a lot of incidents in the book are based on the real experience of family life, but we must be careful not to put too much stress on each similarity with her life. Fiction is always a mixture of observation and imagination.

Concerning *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*, George Eliot does not want to apply her own experience to the novel, if she has no definite intention to do so. As has been related in chapter II the novel contains a family theme. Through Maggie Tulliver the author displays the negative effects that can result from an unharmonious family. The relationship among the family members becomes the source of her writing.

Through her childhood experience, George Eliot learned that the unharmonious relationship between father

and mother could have a psychological impact on the children. Thus, in the novel she says that in every aspect parents should always be one, so that the children will respect them. She describes that when Mr. Tulliver underwent his ruin, his wife did not give him any spiritual comfort but made the situation worse. She regretted her being married to Mr. Tulliver. Understanding the critical situation, Maggie burst out in anger to her mother:

"Mother, how can you talk so? as if you cared only for things with your name on, and not for that has my father's name too and to care about anything but dear father himself!- when he's lying there, ..."

(p. 208)

and the author writes this statement to show Tom's reaction:

For the first time Tom thought of his father with some reproach.

(ibid)

However, George Eliot gives an example of a good wife too. Furthermore, here she wants to say that an intelligent wife is not always an affectionate wife; on the contrary she may be selfish. George Eliot treats the two different characters by comparing Mrs. Bulstrode and Rosamund Vincy.

The author repeatedly emphasizes the importance of her impression gained during childhood in regard to the future. She describes how parents can make mistakes in the treatment and bringing up of the children. In *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*, Mrs. Tulliver always disapproved of Maggie's appearance and behaviour. Moreover, the mother treated her children differently; to her a boy was superior to a girl. All these faults will have a great impact on a sensitive girl; she may become very diffident or naughty. But in *MIDDLEMARCH* and *DANIEL DERONDA* there

were mothers who did the contrary of what Mrs. Tulliver did. At this point the mothers spoiled their girls so that they became very selfish. Both the strict and the generous mothers ruin their children's conduct and future.

Haggie's affection for Tom is similar to Mary Ann's lasting love for her brother, Isaac. When she was going to live with George Lewes, Isaac fiercely opposed the union. Since that affair he did not speak with her any more until her remarriage to J. W. Cross. On the day of her second marriage, she wrote to her brother:

Our long silence has never broken the affection for you that began when we were little ones.

(Cross, J. W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. I, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 25.)

This above statement then becomes the theme of **THE MILL ON THE FLOSS**.

It is to be admitted that one of crises in George Eliot's life is her marriage to George Lewes. It is so surprising indeed, for men who don't know her inner life, that such a moralist can 'commit adultery'. B. Hardy in her evaluation on **THE MILL ON THE FLOSS** writes,

...Finally, she is forced to discard all the illusions, after a crisis of moral choice and thoroughly miserable and motivated renunciation which seems to reverse George Eliot's own moral choice, in going to live with Lewes, while bringing out plainly the nature of her personal ethic. Maggie refuses to break an unofficial engagement, George Eliot committed adultery; Maggie renounces Stephen on the grounds of feeling and duty, to people, not laws, George Eliot committed herself to Lewes for similar reasons. In the most subtle way the novel disguises, socializes, but also defends George Eliot's own social deviation.

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot" The Victorians, London: Sphere Books LTD., 1970, p. 190)

In some ways, through the novel the author really has meant to make a protest against the unjust laws of the

time. But she had no idea to use them to defend her own conduct. Both George Lewes and she could have been legally married in Europe or in the United States, if they wanted.

Much has been written on this subject, but those who understand her feelings and love her books, agree that her heart was right, if her conduct was conventionally wrong. George Eliot never regretted her marriage to Lewes or hated people who opposed and condemned the union. This attitude is clearly shown in her letter to a friend:

...Light and easily broken ties are what I neither desire theoretically nor could live for practically. Women who satisfied with such ties do not act as I have done. That any unworldly, unsuperstitious person who is sufficiently acquainted with the realities of life can pronounce my relation to Mr. Lewes immoral, I can only understand by remembering how subtle and complex are the influences that mould opinion. But I do remember this: and I indulge in no arrogant and uncharitable thoughts about those who condemn us, even though we might have expected a somewhat different verdict. From the majority of persons, of course, we never looked for anything but condemnation. We are leading no life of self-indulgence, except, indeed, that, being happy in each other, we find everything easy. We are working hard to provide for others better than we provide for ourselves, and to fulfil every responsibility that lies upon us.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. xviii.)

Though George Eliot was a moralist, she viewed human problems from the point of view of human feelings. To her 'the truth of feeling' was the only universal law.

Finally, before we proceed to the next point, it is necessary to look over her 'incognito' name. It was George Eliot's nature to be shy, sensitive and easily discouraged. Although she was aware of her ability and intelligence, she was very susceptible to any adverse remarks. In one of her letters she explained the reason for using the pseudonym:

...Whatever may be the success of my stories, I shall be resolute in preserving my incognito, having observed that a nom de plume secures all the advantages without the disagreeables of reputation. Perhaps, therefore, it will be well to give you my prospective name, as a tub to throw to the whale in case of curious inquiries; and accordingly I subscribe myself, best and most sympathizing of editors, yours very truly, George Eliot.

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. xxvii.)

The second point is the influence of George Eliot's belief on her works. As a matter of fact, whoever has read her works will recognize the religious aspect in them. But in order to be able to analyse the matter, we have to see her own belief first; what kind of religion does she believe in and how deep is her belief? These questions will be the guide for further analysis.

To answer these questions it is better to look into the history of her faith. When George Eliot was still little Mary Ann, she was sent to a school at Nuneaton. Here she met Miss Lewis, a fanatic of the Evangelical Movement.¹ In her relations with this mistress, Mary Ann was drawn to her belief. She did not forsake the church of England, but she became thoroughly Evangelical in her tendencies and thought. When she then moved to Coventry, she made friends with the Brays. Under the influence of these people, she not only lost her Evangelism but gave up her faith in all 'supernaturalism'. Apparently she had been very religious throughout her girlhood and this faith was increased because she was always eager to do

¹ This movement in its later stages broke away from the Established Church of England into Nonconformity, but in its early steps was a movement within the Established Church, and did much to reanimate a moral personal and vital faith.

(Cooper, Lettice., George Eliot, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954, p. 9.)

good. But in her mind she continuously inclined to search for the reasons of her belief. She desired to find what could be said on the subject of religion.

However, what makes George Eliot withdraw completely and suddenly from the church and her past belief? The main reason is that she was dissatisfied with some religious men. In her days she saw that there was a discrepancy of religious theory with religious practice. She noted it in the life of the untruthful but very religious people with whom she was brought into contact in the course of charity work. She also noticed it in the lives of the good men of whom she read. It affected her very much and as a result she did not want to go to church, and especially hated to listen to sermons.

In relation to the novels themselves, it is obvious that she uses them as an outlet of her protest against some indecent religious people. Practically she cannot make any indirect improvements. This attitude appears distinctly in her treatment of the contrasted types of church rectors in ADAM BEDE and in MIDDLEMARCH. In the first novel, George Eliot expresses it through Mrs. Poyser:

Mrs. Poyser used to say--'Mr. Irwine was like a good meal o' victual, you were the better for him without thinking on it, and Mr. Ryde was like a dose o' physic, he gripped you and worried you, and after all he left you much the same.'

(ADAM BEDE, p. 163)

The contrast reappears in MIDDLEMARCH, between Mr. Farebrother and Mr. Lyke:

Mr. Farebrother, the man of the world who plays for money, yet who has pity and fairness, fine human tact, and ripe wisdom, and knows the secret of renunciation; Mr. Lyke, protégé of Bulstrode, who is doctrinal and evangelical but non human.

(Willey, Basil., Nineteenth-Century Studies, Penguin Books, 1964, p. 251.)

The treatment of Bulstrode of MIDDLEMARCH is the best example of a Evangelical hypocrite. Moreover, George Eliot's analysis of Bulstrode really shows her creative imagination. The way in which she analyses him as a hypocrite is vivid and real:

His private minor loans were numerous, but he would inquire strictly into the circumstances both before and after. In this way a man gathers a domain in his neighbours' hope and fear as well as gratitude; and power, when once it has got into subtle region, propagates itself, spreading out of all proportion to its external means. It was a principle with Mr. Bulstrode to gain as much as power as possible, that he might use it for the glory of God. He went through a great deal of spiritual conflict and inward argument in order to adjust his motives, and make clear to himself what God's glory required.

(MIDDLEMARCH, p. 544)

George Eliot repeatedly underlines her poignant criticism on the people involved by relating a complete process of Bulstrode's inner conflict as he has to respond to his moral conscience. Here, he is struggling with hope and temptation before he determines to hasten Raffles' death:

Bulstrode's native imperiousness and strength of determination served him well. This delicate - looking man, himself nervously perturbed, found the needed stimulus in his strenuous circumstances, and through that difficult night and morning, while he had the air of an animated corpse returned to movement without warmth, holding the mastery by its chill impassibility, his mind was intensely at work thinking of what he had to guard against and what would win him security. Whatever prayers he might lift up, whatever statements he might inwardly make of this man's wretched spiritual condition, and the duty he himself was under to submit to the punishment divinely appointed for him rather than to wish for evil to another - through all this effort to condense words into a solid metal state, there pierced and spread with irresistible vividness the images of the events he desired. And in the train of those images came their apology. He could not but to see the death of Raffles, and see in it his own deliverance. What was the removal of this wretched creature? He was impenitent - but were not public criminals impenitent? - yet the law decided on their fate. Should Providence in this case award death, there was no sin in contemplating death

as the desirable issue - if he kept his hands from hastening it - if he scrupulously did what was prescribed. Even here there might be a mistake: human prescriptions were fallible things: Lydgate had said that treatment had hastened death - why not his own method of treatment? But, of course, intention was everything in the question of right and wrong.

All Bulstrode himself to keep his intention separate from his desire. He inwardly declared that he intended to obey orders. Why should he have got into any argument about the validity of these orders? It was only the common trick of desire - which avails itself of any irrelevant scepticism, finding larger room for itself in all uncertainty about effects, in every obscurity that looks like absence of law. Still he did obey the orders.

(MIDDLEMARCH, p.622-623)

At last Bulstrode did realize his intention indirectly by giving a bottle of brandy to his housekeeper who looked after Raffles. But let us see how wonderfully the author displays Bulstrode's action after he had murdered Raffles. A man like Bulstrode not only feels calm after committing the murder but says his morning prayers as usual as if nothing has happened.

Early in the morning - about six - Mr. Bulstrode rose and spent some time in prayer. Does any one suppose that private prayer is necessarily candid - necessarily goes to the root of action? Private prayer is in audible speech, and speech is representative; who can represent himself just as he is, even in his own reflections? Bulstrode had not yet unveiled in his thought the confused promptings of the last four- and twenty hours.

(p. 628)

In the prayer he does not realize that he is concealing his sin. He still believes that he is innocent and without sin. Here is his concept of sin:

His belief in these moments of dread was, that if he spontaneously did something right, God would save him from the consequences of wrong doing. For religion can only change when the emotions which fill it are changed; ...

(p. 550)

Really concealment has been the habit of his life so

that he is unconscious of any wrong. He lies before God but he does not feel guilty. He is hypocritical not only to his fellowmen but also to God.

George Eliot's constant objection to Evangelism is shown in her hatred towards long sermons and church doctrines. For example, in ADAM BEDDE, she emphasizes that the important part of religion is the practice of its doctrines in everyday life but not the high sounding words in long sermons. George Eliot displays it through Mrs. Poyser and Adam Bede:

"Well," I said, "... if your old friend Mr. Irwine were to come to life again, and get into the pulpit next Sunday, you would be rather ashamed that he didn't preach better after all your praise of him."

"Nay, nay," said Adam, "... But I've seen pretty clear ever since I was a young one, as religion's something else besides doctrines and notions. It isn't notions sets people doing the right thing - it's feelings..."

(ADAM BEDDE, p. 168)

In fact, to George Eliot, religion is simply a means of voicing the inward life. Because of this she does not believe in the 'speculative' part of religion, but she is only interested in the 'humanitarian' and the emotional side of it.¹

Next, her belief in the side of emotion leads her to be addicted to idealisation. In her youth she could not be satisfied with a mere profession of faith. She was trying to shape her own life and in the lives around her. One of the critics who says that George Eliot really stumbles on 'the concept of renunciation' is Basil Willey. He emphasizes that

The tension in George Eliot's mind between ideal and

¹ Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York : P. P. Collier & Son, p. 122viii.

actual, action and reaction, ambition and renunciation, appears in her preoccupation with the theme of the 'egotistical sublime', her recurrent treatment of efforts after sanctity, great and signal service, or self-realization - efforts which are thwarted by circumstance, 'the gradual action of ordinary causes', the blight of the commonplace. We have noted the spiritual ambitiousness of her own evangelical youth - her emulation of Hannah More and St. Paul, her anxiety 'to be doing some little (i.e. a very great deal) toward the regeneration of this groaning, travelling creation'.

(Wiley, Basil., Nineteenth-Century Studies, Australia: Penguin Books, 1964, p. 256.)

Through the novels George Eliot transfers the 'sublime' concept to her heroines, Maggie and Dorothea. Here, the author dramatizes herself, sees herself heroic in her very renunciation, in the character of Maggie: ¹

... her own life was still a drama for her, in which she demanded of herself that her part should be played with intensity. And so it came to pass that she often lost the spirit of humility by being excessive in the outward act; she often strove after too high a flight, and came down with her poor little half-fledged wings dabbled in the mud. ... That is the path we all like when we set out on our abandonment of egoism - the path of martyrdom and endurance, where the palm-branches grow, rather than the steep highway of tolerance, just allowance, and self-blame, where there are no leafy honors to be gathered and worn.

(THE MILL ON THE FLOSS, p. 265)

The same pattern appears in Dorothea Brooke,

... The later born Theresa who would find her opes in the reform of a religious order -- a certain spiritual grandeur.

(The Prelude of MIDDLEMARCH)

In her youth George Eliot came across Walter Scott's books, and her orthodox belief springs from them. Scott's descriptions of good and noble lives had produced this effect on her mind.² The heroines are also supplied

¹ Croce, J.N., George Eliot's Life, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 24.

² Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. P. Collier & Son, p. vii.

with such books. Maggie stumbles on 'Thomas à Kempis' and Derrothea knows many passages of 'Pascal's Pensées' and of 'Jeremy Taylor' by heart.

The religion of the Dodsons in *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* reminds the author of her religion during her childhood. The Dodsons are prototypes of Mrs. Evans' family. From *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* which in some part can be considered as her biography, we know that George Eliot feels humiliated because of their attitudes towards human relations as well as towards religion. She feels disappointed with their treatment of religion which they used merely as a formality. Here, the author shows it in long vivid description:

The religion of the Dodsons consisted in revering whatever was customary and respectable: it was necessary to be baptized, else one could not be buried in the churchyard, and to take the sacrament before death as a security against more dinaly understood perils; but it was of equal necessity to have the proper pall-bearers and well-cured hams at one's funeral, and to leave an unimpeachable will. A Dodson would not be taxed with the omission of anything that was becoming, or that belonged to that eternal fitness of things which was plainly indicated in the practice of the most substantial parishioners, and in the family traditions - such as, obedience to parents, faithfulness to kindred, industry, rigid honesty, thrift, the thorough scouring of wooden and copper utensils, the hoarding of coins likely to disappear from the currency, the production of first-rate commodities for the market, and the general preference for whatever was home-made. The Dodsons were a very proud race, and their pride lay in the utter frustration of all desire to tax them with a breach of traditional duty or propriety. A wholesome pride in many respects, since it identified honour with perfect integrity, thoroughness of work, and faithfulness to admitted rules: and society owes some worthy qualities in many of her members to mothers of the Dodson class, who made their butter and their freemanty well, and would have felt disgraced to make it otherwise. To be honest and poor was never a Dodson motto, still less to seem rich though being poor; rather the family badge was to be honest and rich, and not only rich, but richer than was supposed.

(*THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*, p.273-274)

What the author tells about the Dodsons of nineteenth

century still reflected on the believers of this century. Many of whom use religion as a device, not as faith.

George Eliot's religious exaltation does not stop with MIDDLEMARCH but it colours all her novels. However, among the five novels which are taken in this study, DANIEL DERONDA's religious quality is the most striking. In the previous novels George Eliot analyses religion from the point of view of Christianity. But in DANIEL DERONDA she tries to make a variation by applying the Jewish religion as a background. Dr. Leavis writes:

...her religious bent, and her piety, as well as her intellectual energies and interests, found a congenial field in the Jewish culture, history and tradition.

(Leavis, F.R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1965, p. 95.)

The author is very clever indeed at uniting the two different religions by taking Daniel Deronda as the hero. He is used by the author to be the intermediate between the two religions. Mordecai, the Jewish prophet, imagines that Deronda has all the personal characteristics to be a Jewish hero:

He must be a Jew, intellectually cultured, morally fervid - in all this a nature ready to be ploughed 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 life must flow with a full and easy current, his circumstances must be free from sordid need: he must glorify the possibilities of the Jew, ...

(DANIEL DERONDA, p. 479)

On the other side Deronda has to be a confessor to Gwendolen Hartleth. Here, George Eliot's own religious conviction has turned Deronda into a priest.¹ Let us

¹Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 97.

examine his examine to Gwendolen,

"...Turn your fear into a safeguard. Keep your dread fixed on the idea of increasing that remorse which is so better to you. Fixed meditation may do a great deal towards defining our longing or dread. We are not always in a state of a strong emotion, and when we are calm we can use our memories and gradually change the bias of our fear, as we do our tastes. Take your fear as a safeguard. It is like quickness of hearing. It may make consequences passionately present to you. Try to take hold of your sensibility, and use it as it were a faculty, like vision!"

(DANIEL DERONDA, p. 676)

And here is George Eliot's own principle of life:

"The 'highest calling and election' is to do without opium, and live through all our pain with conscious, clear-eyed endurance."

(Cross, J.W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. II, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 283, (letter to Mrs Bodichon, 26 Dec. 1860)

From this comparison it is very obvious that she really transfers her own feelings to Deronda. About the 'opium' itself, it is not caused by the hardness of her heart that makes her decline the 'opium', but she desires to reach what is in itself good and enduring. So far, she also wants her heroes to act as she does.

Concerning the Jewish matter in DANIEL DERONDA many critics find that the matter is in the wrong place; it should not have been brought into the novel. George Eliot has a strong reason, however, for bringing the Jewish element into DANIEL DERONDA. In her journal and her letters she records public attention to the novel:

... the approval accorded to the book by the Jews, and the condemnation with which it was read on the part of many Christians.

Her own feelings on the subject are best expressed in a letter to Mrs. E. B. Stever:

"As to the Jewish element in DERONDA, I expected

from first to last, in writing it, that it would create much stronger resistance, and even repulsion, than it has actually met with. But precisely because I felt that the usual attitude of Christian towards Jews is, - I hardly know whether to say more impious or more stupid when viewed in the light of their professed principles, - I therefore felt urged to treat Jews with such sympathy and understanding as my nature and knowledge could attain to. Moreover, not only towards the Jews, but towards all Oriental peoples with whom we English come in contact, a spirit of arrogance and contemptuous dictatorialness is observable which has become a national disgrace to us. There is nothing I should care more to do, if it were possible, than to arouse the imagination of men and women to a vision of human claims in those races of their fellow-men who most differ from them in customs and beliefs. But towards the Hebrews we western people, who have been reared in Christianity, have a peculiar debt, and, whether we acknowledge it or not, a peculiar thoroughness of fellowship in religious and moral sentiment. Can anything be more disgusting than to hear people called 'educated' making small jokes about eating ham, and showing themselves empty of any real knowledge as to the relation of their own social and religious life to the history of the people they think themselves witty and insulting? They hardly know that Christ was a Jew. And I find men, educated, supposing that Christ spoke Greek. To my feeling, this deadness to the history which has prepared half our world for us, this inability to find interest in any form of life that is not clad in the same countenances and flourishes as our own, lies very close to the worst kind of irreligion. The best that can be said of it is, that it is a sign of the intellectual narrowness - in plain English, the stupidity - which is still the average mark of our culture."

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, p. lxvi - lxvii.)

Let us come back to George Eliot's belief. Emotionally George Eliot is quite in sympathy with all that is noble and pure in her belief. So when she converts to a new faith that can be called the 'faith in humanity', this noble ambition never left her. She was convinced that she had to render her service through fiction, for she had a great sense of responsibility to all mankind. On a trip to Italy in 1864 she writes:

We must be for ever ashamed of ourselves if we don't work the better for it.

And soon after she adds:

I will never write again to which my whole heart, mind and conscience don't consent, so that I may feel that it was something - however small - which wanted to be done in this world, and that I am just the organ for that small bit of work.

(Cross, J. W., George Eliot's Life, Vol. II, New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, p. 303.)

What she has written to her publisher shows how powerfully her sense of duty governs her conscience: she must not waste time, the best fruits have to be produced.

On the whole, George Eliot has brought us to analyse various kinds of human faith. It is really interesting to observe how she illustrates the beliefs through her characters. We know the moral attitudes of the characters when they get entangled into their trials. Indirectly, the author wants to show that her faith in humanity is the most practical belief. The most important matter in this faith is human relations in so far as one has to love and know one's fellowmen much better.

B. Evaluation of George Eliot's achievements

Finally, we come to the last chapter. The four previous chapters represent an analysis of George Eliot's works. It is in this chapter that her achievements will be evaluated as objectively as possible.

So far, we have taken five of her novels into account. While studying them, a question comes up in our mind: what is George Eliot trying to accomplish through her novels? In fact, its answer has already been given in the themes of her works, and it has been analysed in chapter III of this thesis. However, does she succeed in achieving what she aims at? About her purpose it can really be said that she lived to make the lives of those who

come after her easier and better. But here she gives her answer:

"If art does not enlarge man's sympathy, it does nothing nobly. ... The only effect I ardently long to produce by my writings is that those who read them should be better to imagine and to feel the pains and the joys of those who differ from themselves in every thing but the broad fact of being struggling, erring human creatures."

(Anonymous., A Life of George Eliot, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, P. Knoxville.)

To give a proof it is necessary to trace the features of her novels. The first point is to look over the choice of her subjects. She sets out from the social and psychological aspects of life, but examines them from the point of view of the human soul. She analyses the human soul as the centre of human struggles against trials, attempts to respond to his moral conscience; or how a man, filled with self-idealization, falls into human temptation, but still has to answer to the promptings of his moral-conscience. In other words, George Eliot shows that man has a moral-conscience that always guards him from wrong doing.

It is to be admitted that George Eliot's work is complicated and as a result difficult. Of course, the source of the difficulty comes from the moral and psychological as well as philosophical subject matter. How difficult it is to tackle the problems arising from the human soul, which is eventually related to the existence of 'Providence'.

Let us see how far George Eliot works out her subject. Henry James' account of George Eliot is deep. He says:

We feel in her, always, that she proceeds from the abstract to the concrete; that her figures and situations are evolved, as the phrase is, from her own

real consciousness, ... and they are deeply studied and massively supported, ...

(Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 45.)

In James' "Conversation" on DANIEL DERONDA, through Constantine¹ he contrasts George Eliot with Turgenev,

...Be the 'poet', she the 'philosopher' -- says: 'One cares for the aspect of things and the other cares for the reason of things'.

(Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, Appendix, DANIEL DERONDA: A Conversation by Henry James, p. 284.)

Dr. Leavis gives the following comment upon James' opinion,

...Nowhere is this characterization more patently wide of the mark than in those places where her supreme intelligence is most apparent. It is precisely because she cares for the 'reason' of things that she can render the aspect so vividly; her intelligence informs her perception and her visual imagination, the vividness of the rendering is significance.

(Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 130.)

There is a fine example to show this 'skill' of George Eliot. When Mr. Grandcourt visited Mrs. Glasher in order to tell her about his coming marriage to Gwendolen, but he also wanted to take back his diamonds. Their relationship was like that of old enemies who suddenly met each other, yet one asks for the diamonds which remind them of the venerable past. George Eliot presents the event so distinctly that we are able to imagine it as a real drama. At the end she closes the scene with 'Amidst such caressing signs of mutual fear they parted'.

(DANIEL DERONDA, p. 348-352)

Besides the difficulty and the complexity of George Eliot's subject matter, there is still a good

¹ Constantine is one the characters in the "Conversation on DANIEL DERONDA" by Henry James.



point in her work. It is her skill in creating characters. Almost in all her novels she makes the characters clear cut like portraits. George Eliot pays detailed attention not only to the central characters but also to the minor characters. She knows well that an impressive description of minor characters will make the story truly alive and witty. For example, Mrs. Poyser is one of the outstanding minor characters with her shrewd tongue and kind heart. It is very striking how the author describes Mrs. Poyser driving away her landlord. Through her the author says much about her own feelings as a woman who is under a man's power. She dares to speak out her mind and let her anger out, if the man treats her unjustly.

In chapter II it has already been described that George Eliot renders a special description for each central character. It makes them really alive as living figures. However, she is sometimes somewhat idealistic in defining the central characters, as far as Adam Bede and Daniel Deronda are concerned. But these are still alive, for they are supported by the appearance of the pretty and childish Hetty and Gwendolen Harleth. Because of them the novels run naturally. It is natural for the characters to have some flaws that make them more human. The readers often have a deep sympathy for a character because they can identify their own weaknesses with the character. But if the characters are perfect, they are on a great distance from the reader. Yet in well-defined and heroic description, they are still human. So it is true what E. Hardy says in her criticism:

... For although George Eliot puts in the centre of action, characters who are powerful, energetic, creative and intelligent, she keeps in the highroad of human powers, and even her exceptional characters are representative.

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books, Ltd, 1970, p. 187)

After all, what is typical in her characterization is the application of the study of the human soul to her characters. Thus, it is not surprising if she is particularly interested in sinners and self-deceivers such as Betty Sorrel and Silas Marner. They are vividly portrayed with strong and insistent personalities of their own.

The tone of her novels is one of moral earnestness. Among her contemporaries, it is distinctive that she is peculiarly addicted to moral preoccupations. She relates a complete study of human nature as viewed from the moral aspect:

... She handles, too the moral questions of individual conduct: problems of earning a living, of marrying, of staying single, of finding marriage or job good, bad, indifferent, bearable. She handles a very great range of relationships, all typical and sharply individualized: relationships between brother and sister, brother and brother, sister and sister, parents and children, husband and wife, passionate lovers, romantically serious lovers, friends, master and servant in a very role-limited relation, rivals, old people and young people, and so on, in a very long list indeed.

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1970, p. 190.)

George Eliot dramatizes all these relationships so as to display 'the social and personal colours' of each character, like *Gwendolen* and her mother, or *Fred* and *Rosamund Vinoy*. But all are supported by social and psychological conditions, 'to make their contribution to the total moral argument'.¹ Because of this moral argument a certain graveness is created in the tone itself. But in a masterly way George Eliot can alternate the serious atmosphere with rich and genial humour so as to keep the sober tone.

Based on the solid subject matter and strong char

¹Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1970, p. 191.

acterisation, there is no doubt that George Eliot's works deserve a closer study. Her novels are not the kind of reading for pleasure. They need to be pondered. Furthermore, one needs to be acquainted with George Eliot's world before he is able to understand her works fully. Without any knowledge of this, the reader may enjoy the story but miss the point of the novel. Actually her style of writing is clear and easy to follow but only in the beginning, for as the story goes on it is often overweighed with abstractions. But her dialogue is excellent for the revelation of characters. Here is an example of the dialogue which occurred when Grandcourt was in the process of asking the diamonds. The dialogue is so vivid that it is like a real drama:

"Infernal idiots that women are!"

"Why will you not tell us where you are going after the marriage? I could be at the wedding if I liked, and learn in that way," said Lydia, not shrinking from the one suicidal form of threat within her power.

"Of course, if you like, you can play the mad woman", said Grandcourt, with setto voce scorn. "It is not to be supposed that you will wait to think what good will come of it-or what you owe to me." ...

(DANIEL DERONDA, p. 349)

Henry James says through Constantius in his "Conversation" on DANIEL DERONDA:

I delighted in its deep, rich English tone, in which so many notes seemed melted together.

(Leavis, P. E., The Great Tradition, Australia: Penguin Books, 1966, Appendix, p. 280.)

Really, George Eliot's language is smooth and vivid. In describing Gwendolen Harleth in her fear, George Eliot writes as follows:

She was frightened at her own agitation, and began to unbutton her gloves that she might button them again, and bite her lips over the pretended difficulty.

(DANIEL DERONDA, p. 598)

Moreover, George Eliot is good at applying figures of speech: similes, to economize but give an impressive description;

Yes! thank God; human feeling is like the mighty rivers that bless the earth: it doesn't wait for beauty—it flows with resistless force and brings beauty with it.

(ADAM BEDE, p. 165)

... boys of nine and seven ...; looking as much like their father as a very small elephant is like a very large one.

(ibid., p. 171)

In addition, she frequently gives a contrary introduction to the events beforehand, so what happens afterwards makes the readers surprised. For example, on the way home Arthur imagined what he would do when he would become a landlord but as he arrived at home he found the very opposite situation. Betty was in prison, waiting for her punishment of murdering her new-born baby.

(ADAM BEDE, p. 388)

It is now more than a hundred years since the publication of ADAM BEDE (1859). During that time a change has taken place in the attitude of both novelists and their readers to the characters in a novel. It will be an exaggeration to say that moral judgment in the novelist and the reader has disappeared, for then no one would be civilised enough to read a book. George Eliot belongs to the Victorian era. It is a characteristic of her time that literary work was filled with some moral standards. Moreover, this standard, in western culture, was impregnated with the Christian tradition. But moral judgment was always there, although it was in the background. Often the readers were not aware of its existence. Yet, as time runs on, moral judgment depends much more on individual taste in life, but the standard remains.

On the whole, what is quite obvious in George Eliot's fiction is her serious concern with the problems of the human personality and its relationship with the Eternal force. But she pays more attention to the moral concern of her characters. "Is she, or he, going to manage to be noble or not?" is the real plot of her novels. Sometimes her ideas of nobility are unacceptable to the readers, who have learnt that selfishness can be the source of amusement, who are more afraid of self-sacrifice than of deceit or corruption. Though there are some readers who take little interest in her works, still the novels deserve a lasting fame. As said by Lettice Copper:

...But the choice between living by one's own best or second best values is still universal. It is the urgency of that choice that creates the tension in George Eliot's work, and without tension there is no great novel.

(Cooper, Lettice., George Eliot, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1951, p. 38.)

Her great care for the social improvement inspires all her novels. E. Hardy says that George Eliot has studied the social aspects of three eras, and this makes her novels remain current up to the present.

... She asks about the environment: contemporary society, ideal society and society localized somewhere in history-usually in the early nineteenth century,... and the fully contemporary BARCELONA. So she handles three periods at once, combining the carefully researched past history (of say, a County town in the 1830s), the present time which is implied or symbolized through historical reference (as the Second Reform Bill is in the First Reform Bill), and the future, in implications for the progress of societies shown through criticism and ideals.

(Hardy, Barbara., "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot", The Victorians, London: Sphere Books LTD., 1970, p. 191.)

Furthermore, George Eliot's interest in detailed psychological analysis relevant to the inner consciousness has a strong influence on the future course of the

English Novel. The twentieth century has seen the rapid development of this interest. Comparing her with her contemporaries, Dr. Leavis writes as follows:

With her advantage in specificity, she is certainly not inferior in vividness and immediate power; and when we reflect critically and relate the scene to what goes before and what comes after we discover more and more reason for admiring her moral and psychological insight, and the completeness with which she has grasped and realized her theme.

(Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 127 - 128.)

It seems that Henry James was so impressed by DANIEL DERONDA that he wrote his "Conversation" concerning DANIEL DERONDA in 1876 and began to write his masterpiece THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY in 1879. Henry James wouldn't have written it, if he hadn't read about Gwendolen Harloth, says Leavis.¹

During her happy life, George Eliot has managed to write about thirteen books. As far as the quantity is concerned it is already a significant achievement. But the most important thing is the work's quality which is undoubtedly known for her penetrating analysis of motive and her understanding of the undercurrent of mind and heart. This penetration springs from a harmony between mind and feeling, and is accompanied by compassion and love for humanity. In her best work there is always reality and truth.

¹Leavis, F. R., The Great Tradition, Australia : Penguin Books, 1966, p. 130.

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