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To George Eliot—
a humanist philosopher novelist,

and
to Nağme__
a true friend,
and to our books—
Nihal and Nilay

Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardoner.

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PREFACE

In addition to its many other functions, literature plays an important role in helping us know ourselves: what makes us "us"; who we are; how we feel, think and act; how we communicate with each other; what our relationships are like; where the distance between us and others is; how we change or do not change; how human societies function; and how society, religion and ideology affect us. More than any other literary genre, the genre novel has addressed these concerns with its focus on realistic characters. Some novelists have paid more attention than others to the psychological aspects of their characters. George Eliot (1819-1880) is a prime example of this type of writing throughout the second half of the Victorian Age in English literature.

In today's literary world, Mary Anne Evans is not as famous as her pseudonym George Eliot. Widely known as a historical, multi-plot, and psychological novelist, Eliot is certainly one of the most philosophical, moralist, and academic novelists in English literature. Her interest in scientific, moral, religious, and cultural issues is represented by her erudite omniscient narrators. In her novels, Eliot mostly studies the determining effects of modernism, religion, ideology, conventions, traditions, and emotions on her characters' mental functioning, behaviour, and interpersonal relationships.

Psychological examination of fictional characters is one of the main concerns in Eliot's narratives. In most of her novels, Eliot shows how characters are under the yoke of their own natures. In this case, she writes in the young tradition of the English Novel. The plot structure in her novels share many characteristics with the preceding examples, particularly with both Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and Jane Austen's *Emma* (1814). Eliot's novels, however, continue the established tradition with some variations and modifications. *Pamela* is considered the first English novel of consciousness that found its way into the canon. The novel tells us of the process through which a lower-class servant finally succeeds in upgrading her class and social status through her marriage to one squire B. She does so by relying on her inner values and virtues. Her introduction into Mr B's life and circle is in fact an efficient contribution to them. Thus, the novel shows how her virtue is finally rewarded by her society. Considering the narrative plot in *Pamela* from the perspective of

cognitive narratology, the novel is primarily about the eponymous character's mental functioning: her perceptions and perspectives about herself and others. The novel as a whole represents the process through which an emotional and cognitive unit between the two central characters happens as a result of constructive narrative events and situations. In a similar way, one of Austen's main concerns in *Emma* is to present the manner of Emma's self-centred mental functioning. At the same time, the overall plot structure reverses the process through which Emma and Mr Knightley finally construct a shared emotional and cognitive territory for themselves. The newly established zone belongs to neither of them alone. Rather, it is their joint property that brings together the sympathetic qualities of their characters (Nayebpour, "The Training" 127-149).

In both Pamela's and Emma's cases, the two sides of the newly established units fulfil their enterprise with the help of both their intentional acts and their sympathetic societies. In order to construct a shared territory, both the male and female characters modify or readjust some of their previous perceptions about each other. As a representative of his society, Mr B finally recognizes Pamela's true virtue, and Pamela forgives his previous maltreatments. In this way, they both take some steps towards the creation of a new sphere between themselves, which is highly respected by their society. Likewise, the egoist Emma finally accepts her mistakes and grows into a character who is more prudent and has the power of self-command and control. She does so because of Mr Knightly's sympathetic approach to the chain of her mis-(mind)-readings and miscalculations. Concurrent with Emma's change, Mr Knightly also changes his own rough approach to her. Thus, his criticisms lose their sharpness and bitterness as he begins listening to her. Their implied happy marriage is a natural consequence of their shared efforts. Accordingly, the cognitive and emotional flexibility of the patriarchal mind in both *Pamela* and *Emma* plays a significant role in the construction process of the shared new units within the fictional society.

The central conflict in Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860, *MF*) is similar to the conflict in *Pamela* and *Emma*—the conflict between opposing minds. However, unlike in the previous examples of novels of consciousness, there are two main sources for the tragedy in *MF*. First, the social minds' approach to Maggie is not sympathetic. Represented by her own father, brother, relatives, beloveds, and the public opinion, the patriarchal mind rarely transcends its egoistic perceptions. Second, Maggie herself is unable to achieve a steady self-control until it is too late to stop her tragedy. In other words, while the patriarchal minds are inflexible and antipathetic towards Maggie, her own mind also fails to overcome its

contradictory sides for the majority of the narrative. Although she tries to escape the dominant influence of the patriarchal mentality, she is not capable of managing the situation alone. Her mind fails to establish a balance between her imagination, or feelings, and her behaviour. She is doomed to failure because, in her world, there is no character like Mr B or Mr Knightly, one who will sympathise with her and help her develop. Tom's, Stephen's, the society's, and to some extent Philip's, inflexible, self-centred minds cannot help Maggie overcome her personal weaknesses and mistakes.

Therefore, Maggie is the victim of her own fluctuating and indeterminate mind as much as she is the victim of the inflexible minds of the people around her. This situation leads to the impossibility of constructing a steady third zone between her mind and the other (patriarchal) mind(s) in her sphere. This element's lack in the narrative plot transforms *MF* into not romance or a happy-ending novel, as its presence does in *Pamela* and *Emma*, but into a tragic narrative. The main source of tragedy in *MF*, accordingly, is in the characters' mental functioning since the represented subjective first minds are primarily antipathetic towards each other. Eliot's main concern in *MF* is a representation of the interplay between characters' self-centred emotions and their interpersonal relationships. There is no innocent character in *MF*. Restricted by their own character qualities, every character has a share in the tragic tone of the narrative. With varying degrees and from different aspects, the main characters contribute to the communal tragedy. The overall narrative plot, however, shows how overcoming egoistic or self-centred emotions requires self-sacrifice, persistence, and courage.

The main goal in this book is to analyse the impact of characters' thoughts and emotions on their relationships. The study explores the ways characters' subjective first (individual, private, or intramental) and intersubjective first (interpersonal, public, shared, or intermental) thoughts and emotions influence their interpersonal relationships. Through examining the character' discourses or their thoughts and actions, I achieve two goals in this book. First, I examine the role of emotions, particularly negative emotions, in the characters' mental activities. Second, I explore the impact of these emotions on the characters' interpersonal relationships. The hypothesis behind the central argument of my study is that the main conflict in *MF* is between the individual and the social or between the personal and interpersonal levels of thoughts and emotions.

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I would like to thank my wife for her friendship, understanding, and encouragement. I also thank all my students, particularly those who sat in my 19th C. English Novel class where we discussed George Eliot's novel *The Mill on the Floss* in detail. Their reactions, responses, and contributions to most of the ideas presented in this book helped me a lot to organize my arguments better about this project.

CHAPTER ONE

ONE-TRACK FICTIONAL MINDS AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

> "My writing is simply a set of experiments in life—an endeavor to see what our thought and emotion may be capable of." (George Eliot, qtd in Paris 1)

Representation of the relationship between workings of fictional minds and their interpersonal relationships lies at the center of *MF*. Both the individual and social fictional minds in Eliot's narrative function on inherited thoughts and emotions. The characters' egoistic, unsympathetic perspectives cause private and collective tragedy by the end of narrative. The novel has frequently been acclaimed by many critics and readers. However, the significant role of one-track minds in this narrative has not received enough critical attention. As the present book argues, the main cause of tragedy in *MF* is derived from at least two factors. The first is fictional minds' primarily function based on the characters' self-centered thoughts and emotions over which they usually have no control. Second is the public opinion's unforgetting, unforgiving, and unsympathetic perspective towards any unconventional behavior.

Emotion plays the most important role in the construction and operation of such minds, and it lies at the base of George Eliot's art of characterization. In Eliot's narratives, emotions manipulate the characters' mental activities and influence their relationships. Emotion has a basic role in the operation of fictional minds: in controlling their behaviour and in building their interpersonal interactions. In other words, emotion builds bridges across the characters' mental or private selves and their external or social lives. In this sense, in Eliot's fiction, emotion acts as an integral part of the characters' cognition and (social) identity. Through affecting their intellects, emotion plays a significant role in the fate of characters in *MF*. Similar to real-life people, most of these characters understand their own

relationships with the external world through the effect of their emotions since "the function of emotion," as Hobbs states, "is to impel us to generally appropriate actions without extensive reflection" (36).

The omniscient narrators in Eliot's fiction have a broad tendency to elaborate on the central characters' different cognitive and emotional sides. This situation, as Jill L. Matus points out, stems from Eliot's perception of the mind:

> Eliot understood emotion as part of an expanded notion of mind, part of 'psychical Life,' which included all sensation. Feelings (emotions, sense impressions, perceptions) inform ideas through their connection to the world outside of the self. Abstract thought and reflection, on the other hand, may prohibit one from being *in touch* with the real rather than imagined other. (463)

Eliot's learned narrators construct the fictional minds' mental functioning by representing the connection between their emotions and cognition[1]. Using a variety of representational tools, from the authorial intervention and commentary[2] to thought report and free indirect discourse, allows Eliot to depict the emotional intelligence of her main characters and to show the interplay between the characters' emotions and their interpersonal relationships.

As Eliot argues at the beginning of Book Second in her first novel *Adam Bede* (159-167), her main concern in narrative art is to show the characters' reality in which unconscious, subconscious, and conscious emotions play fundamental roles. In this way, Eliot hopes to give the narrative readers a full sketch of the represented characters' (psychological) reality. In doing so, she treats characters' emotions as an inseparable part of their cognition. She shows both how their different emotions arise from their belief systems, and therefore configure their mental functioning, and how their emotional experiences provide the setting for their cognitive, perspectival change. The narrative stream in Eliot's novels, accordingly, is

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[1] Highlighting Eliot's interest in the studies related to mind and consciousness, Jill L. Matus states that Eliot "becomes increasingly interested in (self-conscious about) consciousness and the various states of mind to be distinguished from it—unconsciousness, for example—and thus engages in more explicit discussions of it in her later novels" (462).

[2] According to Philip Davis, George Eliot becomes "not only a directing emotional presence within the work but, finally, the most important person in them. Culminating in *Middlemarch*, George Eliot becomes her own greatest character, more important than an Adam Bede or a Maggie Tulliver or a Dorothea Brooke, though only realized through the act of creating them" (2).

mainly triggered by the interaction between characters' emotions and their established beliefs. For example, in *MF*, no single event associated with the fictional characters' reactions, recollections, goals, and decisions is empty or independent from either their private or social and collective emotions. In other words, "emotional experience" is the source of "life" in this novel (Szirotny 79).

Jenefer Robinson writes, '"It is a deeply rooted idea in contemporary Western culture that there is some peculiarly intimate relationship between the arts and the emotions" (101). According to the cognitive narratologist Alan Palmer, "'Novels tend to be stories with a high emotional content" (*Fictional* 117)[3]. Palmer's statement can be "certainly true for realistic novels [those written by George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad] [. . .] cited by F. R. Leavis (1948) as part of the 'Great Tradition' of the English novel" (Robinson 106). In Philip Davis's words, Eliot is "The quintessential Novelist," who arose "out of the culmination of the realist novel in the nineteenth century." Davis considers Eliot "the great representative [. . .] of what it means to be a writer of realist fiction, where 'realist', whatever its complexities, signifies the commitment to do work determinedly between life and art, art and life. 'George Eliot' existed to make that link and to be it" (1). Therefore, as is true about Eliot's novels, "understanding character," as Robinson says, "is essential to understanding the great realist novels" (126).

Fictional minds in Eliot's second novel, *MF*, are subjugated by emotions that often arise from characters' own personal or social beliefs. It is through such self-inflicted emotions that they (mis)communicate with each other and with their society. In this case, narrative events act mainly as triggers for the evocation of the characters' inner dilemmas and emotional aspects. Emotions also are believed to have a constructive role in the "formation and achievement of goals" (Palmer, *Fictional* 117) and in "decision-making processes" (Hogan 238). Eliot establishes the general structure of her narratives mostly by presenting the way emotional events and situations generate the characters' goals and decisions by influencing their established belief systems or habitual thoughts[4]. Therefore, it is the constant interplay between the opposing patterns of emotions and the

[3] However, despite its significant role in narrative, there has been "very little" (Palmer, *Fictional* 115) attention to emotion in narrative theory or, as Patrick Colm Hogan says, "narratological treatments of emotion have on the whole been relatively undeveloped" (1).

[4] As Hogan states, "more often than not, emotions are a response to changes in what is routine, habitual, expected" (30).

established minds, thoughts, or beliefs that drives the plot lines in Eliot's narratives.

Eliot, in other words, adds her own basic element, emotion, to the plot structure of her narratives by focusing on the interaction between emotions and cognition and studying the impact of this interplay on characters' judgements, actions, and relationships. As Hogan maintains, there is a "relation between emotion and recurring story structures and components" (18). The development of the story line in *MF* happens through both positive and negative emotions. Therefore, *MF* can be read as exploration of the main source(s) and effects of the characters' feelings. In other words, representation of the fictional characters' sensibilities lies at the heart of Eliot's fiction[5]. The educating impact of emotions on characters' thoughts, as described by Robinson, happens in the following form:

> A novel does this [develops the characters' emotions] by showing (1) the characters' focus of attention; (2) their thoughts about or point of view on the situation on which they are focused; (3) how this point of view and focus of attention reflect their desires, interests, and values; (4) the affective appraisals that they make; and (5) how their physiological states serve to maintain their focus of attention on whatever it is that they are affectively appraising. Further, by reflecting on their responses, characters can be brought to understand and form beliefs about themselves and their situations. (158)

Many passages in *MF* represent the characters' focus of attention; their point of view on a particular situation; their wills, desires, and values; the way they evaluate the situation affectively; their physiological responses to the situation; and their secondary recollections on the experienced situation. Through this process, characters' emotional responses lead to their reflection. This process, however, fails to lead to a fundamental change in the characters' thoughts and perspectives in *MF*.

Emotion has also recently been among the main subjects of cognitive approaches to narrative. In these approaches, it is widely accepted that "cognition causes emotion." In other words, "cognitions nearly always have some sort of emotional component" (Palmer, *Fictional* 116). As the eminent cognitive psychologist Keith Oatley notes, "emotions are managers of mental life, prompting heuristics that relate the flow of daily events to goals and social concerns" (275). While in the study of

[5] It is because of this quality in the realistic novels that Jenefer Robinson, in her book *Deeper than Reason: Emotion and its Role in Literature, Music, and Art* (2005), tries to show how readers' and audiences' emotional responses to and engagement with such situations in literature can train their sensibilities (154-194).

consciousness it is believed that "consciousness and emotion are *not* separable" since "emotion is integral to the processes of reasoning and decision making" (Damasio 2000, 16, 41), the role of emotion in the construction of fictional characters' mental functioning, as Palmer maintains, has been ignored in narrative research. However, Palmer argues that "presentation of emotion plays a vital part in the creation of character" (*Fictional* 113). He refers to the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio's category of emotions. According to Damasio, there are three types of emotions—primary, secondary (or social), and background:

> The primary emotions are happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, and disgust. The secondary or social emotions include embarrassment, jealousy, guilt, and pride. [. . .] background emotions [include] the feelings of well-being, malaise, calm, tension, fatigue, energy, excitement, wellness, sickness, relaxation, surging, dragging, stability and instability, balance and imbalance, harmony and discord, edginess, discouragement, enthusiasm, down-ness, lowness, and cheerfulness. (qtd. in Palmer, *Fictional* 114)

Referring to research on emotion, Palmer also points out that "emotions last for varying periods of time. When they are short-term, they are emotional events; medium-term, they tend to be called moods; as long-term states, they are closer in nature to dispositions" (*Fictional* 114). Oatley explains the significance of this distinction, "whereas an emotion tends to change the course of action, a mood tends to resist disruption" (273).

In addition to representing short-term emotions, Eliot shows why and how emotions act as moods or dispositions and what happens when they do so. Considering the types of emotions, Eliot in *MF* links primary, social, and background emotions. For example, Tom's feeling of anger (a primary emotion) about Maggie's behaviour influences his pride (a social emotion) and his sense of down-ness and lowness (background emotions). Emotions act in this type of interconnected manner because of their goal-oriented nature. As Oatley says, "an emotion is a psychological state or process that functions in the management of goals. It is typically elicited by evaluating an event as relevant to a goal; it is positive when the goal is advanced, negative when the goal is impeded" (273).

Oatley highlights that among the other approaches, "cognitive approaches now dominate the field" (274). According to these approaches, "emotions [. . .] serve important intracognitive and interpersonal functions" (275). That is so because,

> Emotions bias cognitive processing during judgment and inference, giving preferential availability to some heuristics rather than others. For instance, happiness allows unusual associations and improves creative problem solving [. . .]; anxiety constrains attention to features of the environment concerned with safety or danger; sadness prompts recall from memory of incidents from the past that elicited comparable sadness. Such biases provide bases for both normal functions, and for disordered emotional processing. (Oatley 275)

The two functions of emotions—intracognitive and interpersonal—are at work in Eliot's *MF*. On the intracognitive level, *MF* shows how particular emotions arise from the characters' faulty perceptions, beliefs, and goals. On the interpersonal level, the narrative reveals how emotions influence the characters' relationships with their societies. As revealed through their stream of consciousness, using thought report mode, the represented emotions in *MF*, on the one hand, act as an integral part of the characters' cognition. On the other hand, the emotions play a significant role in the construction of the overall narrative structure itself. The plot structure of *MF* represents the alteration and cultivation process of some emotions. The negative emotions, arisen from biased thoughts, often lead to a (collective) tragedy. In a few situations, however, they dissolve into positive emotions, providing an opportunity for the characters to overcome their emotional bondage.

In narratological approaches to fictional minds, exploration of emotions in their construction and workings is a way to understand the functioning of such minds (Palmer, *Fictional* 112). Such a textual analysis, as David Herman argues, "can illuminate how narratives represent the moment-by-moment experiences of fictional minds, as well as the coloration that those experiences acquire from the characters' broader cognitive and emotional stances toward situations and events" (247). The present study's primary concern is the second aspect of Herman's statement as it analyses the interplay between characters' cognitive/emotional stances and the narrative events and situations. In *MF*, Eliot explores the different layers of her fictional characters' minds in order to reveal the underlying impulses behind their thoughts, beliefs, desires, and goals. Her characters mostly encounter the undesirable consequences of their thoughts and actions mainly as a result of their established minds. In addition to being imprisoned by the invisible walls maintained by social minds, the characters are primarily enslaved by their own biased beliefs and thoughts and, above all, by their own barely controllable emotions. The narrative plot in *MF* shows how some

emotional events transform the (rational) manner of mental functioning in central characters.

Representation of the operation of characters' consciousnesses is considered one of the basic elements of narrative in cognitive narratology (Herman 2009, Palmer 2004). According to Palmer, "narratology is concerned, in part, with the study of the mental functioning of the characters who inhabit the storyworlds created by fictional narratives" ("Intermental" 428). For this reason, Palmer, in his ground-breaking study *Fictional Minds* (2004), develops two concepts from psychology to explain the operation or activity of fictional minds. He states that historically there have been two approaches to real minds: the internalist or the subjective first and the externalist or the intersubjective first. The two conventional perspectives to the operation of fictional minds, according to Palmer, are based on the two prevalent perspectives on mind itself. However, the dominant approach to the analyses of the operation of fictional minds has always been the internalist perspective or the intramental thought or individual thinking.

Palmer focuses on the role of the externalist approach or intermental thought, which is shared, group, or joint thinking in the operation of fictional minds because, as he states, "It could be plausibly argued that a large amount of the subject matter of novels is the formation and breakdown of intermental systems" (*Fictional* 163). Unlike intramental thinking, which is based on individual emotions, intermental thinking, as Palmer argues, refers to "socially distributed emotion" or "socially distributed thought" (*Fictional* 118, 157). "Intermental thinking by groups," or a shared thought used by the two parties for problem solving, "is often more powerful than individual intramental thought" (Palmer, *Fictional* 163). Therefore, intermental minds, in Palmer's definition, are social minds that '"are central to our understanding of fictional storyworlds" ("Social" 197).

Intermental activity is an extension of intramental activity. In other words, the constituent element of intermental thinking is intramental thought or, as Palmer maintains, "intermental thinking is simply the aggregate of the individual, intramental consciousnesses that make up the group" (*Fictional* 224). The constructed interpersonal unit, however, belongs to none of the group members alone. Rather, it is shared territory and property: "The power of intermental thought is clearly related to the concept of synergy, which specifies that a combined effect is greater than the sum of the parts and that increased effectiveness and achievements are produced by combined action and cooperation" (Palmer, *Fictional* 224-225). In Palmer's words, '"The notion of intermental thinking is obviously

essential to analyses of fictional presentations of close relationships such as friendship, family ties, and, especially, marriage." Palmer thinks of these relationships as "intermental systems" because "the reader may have the expectation that the thinking of the characters who make up the relationship will be shared on a regular basis, although it is often the role of the narrator to frustrate that expectation" (*Fictional* 163).[6]

Eliot's critics have pointed out the significance of emotions such as empathy and sympathy in Eliot's personal life, philosophy, and narrative art. In her study, Isobel Armstrong "concentrate[s] on older traditions[7] governing the affects and the expression of emotion available to Eliot" (296). She argues that, compared to the previous discussion of the concept, "Eliot widened and deepened the idea of sympathy" (296). In other words, Eliot believed that "the extension of sympathy is the particular role of the artist as opposed to the theorist" (Irwin 279). In Eliot's works, '"The projection of feeling brings understanding in its train" (Armstrong 297) since it triggers the characters' rational sides. Armstrong draws our attention to Dorothy Atkin's *George Eliot and Spinoza*. According to Atkins "the overcoming of bondage to the passions through rational understanding was of prime importance to Eliot, as to Spinoza" (qtd. in Armstrong 298). In *MF*, characters either break through their emotional bondages or give in to them. In either case, in Eliot's works, "the appropriate emotions," says T. H. Irwin, "are the only route to the correct judgments and responses" (282). Therefore, as is true about *MF*, "emotions are essential to moral virtues because they express our reactions to particular situations" (Irwin 282). The way central characters in *MF* react to emotional events and situations conveys their individual or shared moral virtues.

The imbalanced nature of sense and sensibility can be considered the main source of the embedded tragedy in *MF*. The entire narrative shows how one of these human aspects without the other can be disruptive to the self as well as to others. The overall plot structure reveals the negative consequence(s), which can be caused by the dominance of either of these two human aspects. The narrative shows how Mr Tulliver's negative and devastating emotions or his revenge-seeking desire arise from his faulty

[6] For more detail on Palmer's discussion about the workings of Fictional Minds see *Mind Presentation in Ian McEwan's Fiction* (57-63) by Karam Nayebpour.

[7] Before studying the similarities between Eliot's and Spinoza's theories of emotions, Armstrong refers to a) Adam Smith's theory of sympathy in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and b) to Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). Armstrong illustrates how Eliot widens the earlier theories on emotions such as sympathy.

and inflexible beliefs. For example, he judges the lawyer Mr Wakem with hate without thinking about the real reason(s) for his own failure and bankruptcy. Similarly, the Dodson sisters' feelings about themselves and about the others are based on the thoughts established by their (family) biases and social conventions. More than aggravating his anger and hate, Mrs Glegg's criticism of Mr Tulliver proves to have no impact on him because she rationalizes her humiliating interpretation of Mr Tulliver's way of life without attempting to sympathize with him.

Likewise, the most noticeable common point between the siblings Tom and Maggie is their imbalanced minds. While Maggie mostly thinks and acts based on her altruistic feelings, Tom, repressing his feelings, tries to appear a more speculative and reasonable character. They both fail at the end possibly because through most of the novel Maggie fails to act morally and reasonably according to her social context and Tom ignores his emotional responsibilities to both himself and others, including his sister. His solid rationality, practical-mindedness, conceit, and solipsism are as dangerous as Maggie's imaginative and emotional personality. Tom is a reproduction of Mr Tulliver's mentality. He thinks with his inherited emotions, which are mostly his subjective attributes. Nowhere in the narrative is he represented as exploring the nature of his own emotions. As a result, he experiences little cognitive and emotional change throughout the story.

Although, under the effect of Maggie's character, some characters change their perspective through the narrative, Philip Wakem is the only character who finally becomes aware of the necessity of a balance between his thoughts and emotions. His free mindedness, or intellectualism, enables him to keep himself away from negative emotions although he is exposed to the problems caused by others.

Since the determining conflicts of the plot structure in *MF* are based on the persistent opposing operations of both intramental and intermental aspects of fictional minds, the present book analyses the two modes of the fictional characters' mental activities. *MF* opens with the representation of Mr Tulliver's intramental thinking activities. At the same time, it shows how the public opinion represents intermental thinking against his obstinacy. Mr Tulliver becomes the victim of his own negative emotions, like a persistent feeling of anger and a desire for revenge, which finally cause his bankruptcy, humiliation, and early death. Moreover, the narrative studies the troubled relationship between a pair of rival siblings. Tom's and Maggie's different natures and vexed relationship make it difficult for them to create an intermental unit between themselves. The main cause of this situation, however, is mostly Tom whose mind

functions similarly to the other biased, patriarchal minds within the fictional society. Maggie's life-long desire to build an intermental bond between herself and Tom is postponed until the end of the narrative.

In addition to representing the impossibility of Maggie and Tom constructing an intermental system, the narrative focuses on the late adolescent Maggie's severe hardships regarding intermental relationship(s). No one, neither her family members nor her society, understands her feelings and the intentions behind her behaviour. On the one hand, her clandestine romantic relationship with the son of her family enemy, Philip, creates an escalating conflict between her and her brother. On the other hand, this experience creates a long inner conflict within Maggie's mind as she increasingly finds herself conflicted between her intramental and intermental feelings and thoughts. While Tom expects her to feel as he does, Philip encourages her to break away from any familial and social expectations.

Similar to Tom, Stephen Guest tries to persuade her to his own egoistic desires. Maggie enters into a new inward, as well as outward, conflict when her cousin Lucy introduces her to Stephen, Lucy's fiancée. Stephen's interest in Maggie changes into a challenging temptation against all her recently formed ties and values. Their elopement reconstructs the nature of her relationships with Lucy, Philip, and Tom. When she returns home unmarried, the public opinion turns against her. The people of the town St Ogg's unanimously blame Maggie for what they interpret as her disgrace. Accordingly, they build their unsympathetic and incomplete approach to Maggie's behaviour based on a highly limited vision, which does not let them construct a mental unit with her, which might help her overcome the dreadfulness of her new situation. The negative emotions are so prevalent in this case that even the priest Dr Kenn's benign efforts cannot transform the limited vision of the negative public opinion.

The source of tragedy in *MF* is that it is populated with prejudiced minds and inappropriate goals. Both private and social minds are replete with negative emotions throughout the narrative. These minds rarely build any unit between Maggie and themselves since their country minds are basically unable to take other perspective(s) through imagining different situations. The overall plot structure in this narrative illustrates how the entire town, represented by Tom and Maggie, bears the consequences of their own emotions in the end. The characters' minds within the society of St. Oggs' rarely change. Their biased and limited visions make co-understanding and sympathising impossible for them. This situation is the result of a community based on negative emotions, such as vengeance, anger, sorrow, hatred, solipsism, egoism, and prejudice. The outcome of

these unfavourable emotions is the construction of minds with limited capacity for sympathy and forgiveness.

Maggie's mind throughout her adolescent years mainly functions through its imaginative structure. Later, this disposition changes into the main source of her conflict as she fails to build a sound interaction between her emotions and the (moral) reality. In other words, as Caroline Levine sates, "*The Mill on the Floss* wakes Maggie repeatedly, excruciatingly, into the recognition that her forgetful distractedness has hurt those whose love she most desperately craves" (71). Although she is finally able to sort her emotions into a sympathetic moral structure, the social minds do not have the capacity to forgive her. Her tragic death is, therefore, the only rationally possible path the narrative structure offers to her. The inflexible minds of her society, which function based on their narrow and biased sense of emotions, also fail to readjust their thoughts to the real nature of Maggie's character.

According to Adela Pinch, '"There has been vigorous debate about whether the tragic ending of *The Mill on the Floss* is justified or sufficiently prepared for" (121). My study agrees with the readers "who have either seen the tragic ending as completely woven into the fabric of the novel as a whole or viewed the particularly shocking nature of the ending as entirely necessary" (Pinch 122). From this perspective, the following issues are mainly analysed in the following five chapters—the operation of the central individual minds, the motivation and impulses behind their functioning, the impact of their sympathetic and unsympathetic orientations on their relationships, and the conflict between their intramental and intermental thoughts.

CHAPTER TWO

FICTIONAL MINDS' TENDENCY TOWARDS INTRAMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS IN *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

The tragic tone in *MF* is mostly the result of inflexible thoughts and biased perceptions. Eliot portrays the impact of different negative emotions on the characters' thoughts, actions, and interpersonal relationships, illustrating how the characters are under the yoke of their own negative emotions or are the victims of other individual and social minds. The narrative mainly focuses on the role of individual fictional minds' thoughts and emotions in interpersonal relationships. In its own omniscient narrator's words, *MF* is the "history of very simple people who had never had any illuminating doubts as to personal integrity and honour" (259).

At the beginning of Book Four, the extradiegetic narrator elaborates on the biased and inflexible nature of the Dodsons' and Tullivers' minds. The operation of such minds living on the banks of the Floss river is based on the principles of an "old-fashioned family life [. . .] which even sorrow hardly suffices to lift above the level of the tragi-comic" (*MF* 252). Their life, accordingly, is in want of anything "beautiful, great or noble" (*MF* 255). These minds, "Irradiated by no sublime principles," function based on "conventional worldly notions and habits without instruction and without polish—surely the most prosaic form of human life" (*MF* 252). They are straightforward and in want of creative imagination and sympathy in a way that even "vigorous superstation [. . . is] more congruous with the mystery of the human lot than the mental condition of these emmet-like Dodsons and Tullivers" (*MF* 252). They pursue an automatic life, an "emmet-like" life. Even religion, Christianity, has no impact on their conventional beliefs: "one sees little trace of religion, still less of a distinctively Christian creed. [. . .] their moral notions, though held with strong tenacity, seem to have no standard beyond hereditary custom" (*MF* 252). Their religion is a "simple, semi-pagan kind [. . .] they didn't know there was any other religion" (*MF* 253). For example, the Dodsons'

religion "consisted in revering whatever was customary and respectable" (*MF* 253).

Thus, *MF* is an account of uncultivated country minds and is constructed on a basic duality: the conflict between two opposing mentalities represented by Maggie and Tom. The story presents both the similarities and the differences among the fictional minds. For example, the narrative shows how despite their antipathetic feelings for each other, the Tullivers and Dodsons share the traditional mind: "The same sort of traditional beliefs ran in the Tulliver veins, but it was carried in richer blood, having elements of generous imprudence, warm affection, and hot tempered rashness" (*MF* 254). Although they consider themselves "good church people," their actions represent "many pagan ideas." For example, "Mr Tulliver, though a regular church-goer, recorded his vindictiveness on the fly-leaf of his Bible." Mr Tulliver considers religion "common-sense" and expects "nobody to tell him what common-sense" is. However, since nature has not equipped him with the necessary "hooks," he does not know how to "get a hold on very unreceptive surfaces" in the "unfavourable circumstances" (*MF* 255). His egoism brings about the tragi-comic nature of his life.

The narrative begins by representing the way Edward Tulliver's self-centred mind operates. His negative emotions, such as anger and revenge, eventually lead him to bankruptcy and to his demise in both his personal and social life. Following the activities of his revenge-seeking mind teaches us the unfavourable consequences of being unforgiving of others. By following Mr Tulliver's tragic fate in the narrative plot, and seeing the destructive impact of his thoughts and actions on his son and family, we resist his world views, his concept of enemy, and his belief pursuing revenge is necessary. He becomes an unsympathetic character because he is a threat to the principles of our society in which toleration is highly valued. Mr Tulliver thinks not based on reality but based on what his limited imagination creates for him. His counterfactual imaginings lead both himself and his family into destruction.

Mr Tulliver mostly thinks with his negative emotions. When Tom tells him, "'You won't like me to go to school with Wakem's son, shall you?"' he tries to ensure him that Mr Stelling is a valuable educator through his highly personal inference: "'It's a sign Wakem thinks high o' Mr Stelling, as he sends his son to him, and Wakem knows meal from bran"' (*MF* 150). He even becomes proud of his own decision about his son: "Mr Tulliver in his heart was rather proud of the fact that his son was to have the same advantages as Wakem's" (*MF* 150). Through recounting his perceptions about his own abilities, his unrealistic plans for his son Tom,

and his counterfactual expectations of the lawsuit against the lawyer Mr Wakem's clients, the narrative presents Mr Tulliver's narrow mindedness and how his intramentality negatively affects his judgements and emotions.

Moreover, the narrative builds a dichotomy between Mr Tulliver's unrealistic perceptions about his own potential and the way he appears to social minds, represented by the Dodson sisters led by Mrs Glegg. Mr Tulliver's inflexible mind, however, shares some basic principles with those of the Dodsons as they all mainly function based on their (family) biases and egoistic goals, interests, and values. Their shared patriarchal mind, for example, places Tom higher than his cleverer sister Maggie. Although Tom does not have the needed interest and intelligence, Mr Tulliver sends him to a new school and spends unnecessary money on his impractical education. When his father goes bankrupt and becomes ill, Tom quits his school and gradually enters into business to support his fallen family. Unlike Tom, Maggie is disliked by her aunts, the Dodson sisters. Her father, though he continuously supports her by taking her side in her quarrels with Tom and with her mother, still shares his wife's limited vision that Maggie's intellect should not be taken seriously. In other words, when it comes to taking action, he does nothing since, as Tom says, Maggie is "only a girl" (*MF* 34).

Tom has the most inflexible mind within the storyworld. In his childhood, his patriarchal mind classifies Maggie as the weaker sex. For example, when his anger overwhelms him, he does not beat her not because he does not want to do so, but mainly because Maggie is a woman and a man should never hit a woman: "he would have struck her, only he knew it was cowardly to strike a girl, and Tom Tulliver was quite determined he would never do anything cowardly" (*MF* 82). Tom's mind is mechanical, lacking sympathetic emotions. He increasingly understands monetary issues better than anything else, but his limited vision restricts his interpretation of Maggie's character and behaviour. He rarely agrees with other characters. His mind in many cases functions in a patriarchal context represented by his own father. Tom hates what his father hates, sometimes to a greater degree and with less reason. When he learns of Maggie's secrets, he does not show any sympathy despite her urgings.

Maggie is represented as the victim of both her own nature and the intramental nature of her society. After Mr Tulliver's death and their family catastrophe, the narrative mostly follows Maggie's life and fate. She is represented as desperate to build a sound relationship or dialogue between her emotional and her cognitive orientations. The weakness in her character becomes more apparent when she commences a clandestine

relationship with the son of her late father's enemy, Philip Wakem. Her friendship with Philip begins at King's Lorton where their younger selves exchanged promises. In Maggie's vicinity, Philip is the only person who presents a well-constructed interaction between his emotions and his intellect. Although he gradually teaches impartial morality to Maggie, the prejudicial minds find their unity abhorrent when they discover it. Then, Maggie enters into a strict self-denial process before meeting Stephen.

Maggie's ever-growing morality concerns are once more tested when she finds herself in her cousin Lucy's company. Lucy's socially expected fiancé, Stephen, becomes gradually infatuated by Maggie's attractive character. Torn between her opposing feelings regarding Philip and Stephen, Maggie finally cannot resist her emotions and, in response to Stephen's expression of love, she pronounces her love to him as well. One day, she accidently finds herself alone on a boat with Stephen and away from St. Ogg's. Stephen immediately proposes to her while leading Maggie away on the river Floss. Her intense inner conflicts about her act finally enable her to reject Stephen's proposal, by accepting she could have a quite different life in St. Ogg's. However, the inflexible minds of the St. Ogg's society entirely blame Maggie. As a fallen woman, she is repudiated by her brother, her aunts, and the social minds. The clerk Dr Kenn fails to alter the dominant negative social perspective toward her. When the flood of the Floss washes over St. Ogg's, Maggie leaves the Jakins on a boat to search for Tom. She saves Tom, and on their way back to Lucy's home, they both drown.

Maggie's death is the natural consequence of a sequence of events triggered both by her individual lapses and by the biases of the conservative social minds in St. Ogg's society. The unsuitable nature of her emotions act as a barrier not only between her and her society but also between her own passion (emotional side) and duty (cognitive aspect). Although she finally learns to control her emotions, most of which her society considers inappropriate, it is the unforgiving mind of her society that makes her atonement impossible. In other words, although she finally attains a mental state that operates with a sound synthesis of emotion and reason, her society's imagination cannot exceed its own borders. The final tragedy in *MF* is caused by the lack of a dialogue between Maggie, considered an emblem of unacceptable desires, and her society's norms, values, and conventions, on which the cognition of its inhabitants operates.

The represented society in *MF* is saturated with negative emotions, such as prejudice, revenge, conceit, hatred, indignation, self-love or solipsism, and paroxysm of rage. The impact of such feelings on the