

Darkness and Justice

— A Study of Imagery in *Romola* by George Eliot —

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(I)

As far as darkness is concerned, a lot of people will remember that it is symbolically opposite to justice and that light is symbolic of justice. Every novelist has his or her own unique image of darkness and justice. George Eliot puts moral emphasis on darkness in connection with justice in the development of the heroine's life in *Romola*. Romola inherits a sense of justice from her father. In a sense her justice drives her into darkness. The words, "total darkness" are used; "Romola's laborious simple life ... imprisoned in total darkness," (1) in a spiritual sense and "the room was in total darkness," (p. 316) in a physical sense. They effectively express Romola's heart. Eliot is quite creative in her specific description of the interrelation or intercommunication between the human spiritual world and the natural physical world in order to reveal the real nature of human beings. Such characteristic descriptions are distinctly

understood in *Romola*. The word, "darkness" is variously used in *Romola*: "prince of darkness" "eternal darkness," "wide darkness"; "chaos," "wickedness," "inferno," "fear," "despair," "helplessness," "sleep," "the tangled web" and so on in a symbolic sense.

Who shall put his finger on the work of justice, and say, 'It is there'? Justice is like the Kingdom of God—it is not without us as a fact, it is within us as a great yearning. (p. 535)

Romola decidedly keeps justice in mind to the end, so that she suffers from the severe realities symbolized as darkness. Romola, Tito, Baldassarre and Savonarola have their own conception of justice accompanied by the image of darkness.

The image of darkness and justice is closely related to their character, life and fate. (2) Only Romola among them can survive in the end.

(II)

Tito has been successful in his wicked deeds so far. Darkness is the place where wickedness is nourished. Tito needs it to succeed in enjoying his life for pleasure. He is forced to live in the dark world. Darkness is essential for Tito's transformation into a wicked person. He is described as quite a common

person who does not give others any impression of being wicked. He plays an important role in making a remarkable contrast with Romola in terms of justice. The darkness is like an axis for his life. Eliot inserts the same great energy on wicked characters as well as on good ones.

But to have told that falsehood would have required perfect self-command in the moment of a convulsive shock: he seemed to have spoken without any preconception: the words had leaped forth like a sudden birth that had been begotten and nourished in the darkness.

Tito was experiencing that inexorable law of human souls, that we prepare ourselves for sudden deeds by the reiterated choice of good or evil which gradually determines character.

(p. 218)

Wicked words are begotten and nourished in the darkness; "The reiterated choice of good or evil that gradually determines character." Tito's dwelling seems to be in darkness. His character is influenced or qualified by his dark dwelling of pleasure, and his choice of words springs from wicked darkness. Darkness is what Tito needs for his wicked deeds. (3)

It was Tito Melema who felt that clutch. He

turned his head, and saw the face of his adoptive father, Baldassarre Calvo, close to his own.

The two men looked at each other, silent as death: Baldassarre, with dark fierceness and a tightening grip of the soiled worn hands on the velvet-clad arm; Tito, with cheeks and lips all bloodless, fascinated by terror. It seemed a long while to them—it was but a moment.

(p. 215)

Darkness is not only a place where the wicked words leap forth but also where Tito feels fearful at Baldassarre. His fear is so endlessly deep that his sense of time is out of order. Tito has to suffer from fear because of his wicked darkness. So darkness has two aspects of good and evil.

'And them,' Monna Lisa went on, in her thick undertone, 'God may love us well enough not to let Messer Naldo find out anything about it. For he never comes here but at dark; and as he was here two days ago, it's likely he'll never come at all till the old man's gone away again.' (p. 290)

Tito secretly has two children whose wife is an ignorant girl

called Tessa like Lucy in Wordsworth's poems. He persuades her not to make a great attempt to go out in the daytime, for he does not want to have their relation revealed in public. So he goes to see her in the dark evening. Tito needs darkness to hide his wickedness.

This is the scene in which Baldassarre is soon to try revenge against Tito with his dagger:

He was in one of his most wretched moments of conscious helplessness: he had been poring, while it was light, over the book that lay open beside him; then he had been trying to recall the names of his jewels, and the symbols engraved on them; and though at certain other times he had recovered some of those names and symbols, to-night they were all gone into darkness. And this effort at inward seeing had seemed to end in utter paralysis of memory. He was reduced to a sort of mad consciousness that he was a solitary pulse of just rage in a world filled with defiant baseness. He had clutched and unsheathed his dagger, and for a long while had been feeling its edge, his mind narrowed to one image, and the dream of one sensation—the sensation of plunging that dagger into a base heart, which he was unable to

pierce in any other way. (pp. 300—301)

He is too excited to remember “the names of his jewels and the symbols engraved on them.” “Tonight they were all gone into darkness,” may demonstrate the perfect end of his bond with Tito. It may also suggest that his qualified mind of a scholar who is always searching for the truth should be lost. His dagger is not justice Dagger. His conception of justice is prejudiced by his blinkered desire for revenge against Tito. Darkness is the place where Baldassarre’s bright life ceases and his new dark life starts for the perfect revenge.

His long imprisonment had so intensified his timid suspicion and his belief in some diabolic fortune favouring Tito, that he had not dared to pursue him, except under cover of a crowd or of the darkness; he felt, with instinctive horror, that if Tito’s eyes fell upon him, he should again be held up to obloquy, again be dragged away, his weapon would be taken from him, and he should be cast helpless into a prison-cell. (p.415)

Baldassarre also feels instinctive horror in the revenge. His instinctive horror and Tito’s diabolic fortune are thought to lie in the darkness: Baldassarre’s long imprisonment caused by

Tito's diabolic fortune leads him to act in the darkness. A crowd plays the same role as the darkness in terms of providing the ability to hide one's own secret. Baldassarre himself notices the value of darkness as Tito does in hiding his secret married life with Tessa.

His fierce purpose had become as stealthy as a serpent's, which depends for its prey on one dart of the fang. Justice was weak and unfriended; and he could not hear again the voice that pealed the promise of vengeance in the Duomo; he had been there again and again, but that voice, too, had apparently been stifled by cunning strong-armed wickedness. (p. 415)

"Justice is weak and unfriended," — this sentence represents Baldassarre's poor state of mind. He forgets to reflect on himself. In other words he loses himself. First of all he should think much about himself to make his life happy or comfortable. But he is ignorant of such an extremely important conception of life, and his sense of justice and morality is so wretchedly distorted that he can not help living in the darkness. His justice is after all in darkness with a serpent and its fangs in it.

'I was ill. I can't tell how long—it was a blank. I remember nothing, only at last I was sitting in the sun among the stones, and everything else was darkness. And slowly, and by degrees, I felt something besides that: a longing for something—I did not know what—that never came. And when I was in the ship on the waters I began to know what I longed for; it was for the Boy to come back—it was to find all my thoughts again, for I was locked away outside them all. And I am outside now. I feel nothing but a wall and darkness.' (p. 437)

“Nothing but a wall and darkness,” is distinctly indicative of Baldassarre's life. Darkness is stressed by the sun.

Again he kept his watch on the face. And when the eyes were rigid again, he dared not trust them. He would never lose his hold till some one came and found them. Justice would send some witness, and then he, Baldassarre, would declare that he had killed this trator, to whom he had once been a father. They would perhaps believe him now, and then he would be content with the struggle of justice on earth—then he would desire to die with his

hold on this body, and follow the traitor to hell
that he might clutch him there. (p. 534)

Baldassarre would follow Tito to hell because of his conception of justice. His struggle of justice is in the darkness to such an extent that it encompasses thoughts of hell. He must think that Tito should be a person who will fall into hell. His life centers around Tito. In this sense Baldassarre is a monotonous simple character, and the struggle of his justice leads him to regard revenge as his sole living pleasure. He can not afford to have Tito confess his wicked deeds. He is a slave of Tito's wickedness. He can not overlook Tito's crime. It is of course natural.

Baldassarre should have had his revenge kept in mind without putting it into practice. He is not flexible in thinking but one-sided because of his ignorance. He does not understand how complicated this world is. Romola is the character who sometimes considers her life without being impressed too much by the others. Though Romola falls into despair, her conception of justice is so severe that it moves her greatly as if it were her preserver. Baldassarre's idea about it is quite different from Romola's. It seems to him a destroyer.

The following passage is about Savonarola:

Fra Girolamo moved towards the door, and
called in a lay Brother who was waiting out-

side. Then he went up to Romola and said in a tone of gentle command, 'Rise, my daughter, and be comforted. Our brother is with the blessed. He has left you the crucifix, in remembrance of the heavenly warning—that it may be a beacon to you in the darkness.'

(p. 158)

Romola's brother dies peacefully devoting himself to Savonarola's faith in a sense. Romola is moved by Savonarola's persuasive excellent words, "a beacon to you in darkness," which penetrate her so much that she believes him. Savonarola hands the crucifix to her as his disciple's will. Savonarola's will is thought to lie in it. The crucifix is a very good subject for Savonarola, for he persuades her to regard it as "a heavenly warning."

'Rather sum up the three sorts of hatred in one.' said Francesco Cei, impetuously, 'and say he has won the hatred of all men who have sense and honesty, by inventing hypocritical lies. His proper place is among the false prophets in the Inferno. who walk with their heads turned hindforemost.' (p. 385)

Francesco Cei severely criticises Savonarola's christianity.

He is a poet and his words may be a little too fierce but Savonarola's future is clearly predicted here. Savonarola is good at "inventing hypocritical lies." It may be said that this Inferno is closely connected with the concept of darkness. He is too narrow-minded to have a close grip on the public. Francesco Cei talks with the famous Italian politician, Machiavelli, who praises Cei's being good at expressions by the use of words. Cei also notices Tito's trick of smiling.

'You remember, my children, three days ago I besought you, when I should hold this Sacrament in my hand in the face of you all, to pray fervently to the Most High that if this work of mine does not come from Him, He will send a fire and consume me, that I may vanish into the eternal darkness away from His light which I have hidden with my falsity. Again I beseech you to make that prayer, and to make it *now*.' (pp. 494—495)

In spite of himself Savonarola is to predict his own future fate in his words; his work does not come from Him; he falls into the eternal darkness. Are his words pardonable? They are to lead Romola's godfather into death. Savonarola can not understand Romola's sorrow. Then he seems to us a monster. He also deprives her of her living hope. There is a scene in the

end in which under arrest Savonarola has his strong faith flattered. Then one notices that Savonarola is also a human being with weak mind.

But the Loggia was well guarded by the band under the brave Salviati; the soldiers of the Signoria assisted in the repulse; and the trampling and rushing were all backward again towards the Tetto de' Pisani,⁸ when the blackness of the heavens seemed to intensify in this moment of utter confusion; and the rain, which had already been felt in scattered drops, began to fall with rapidly growing violence, wetting the fuel, and running in streams off the platform, wetting the weary hungry people to the skin, and driving every man's disgust and rage inwards to ferment there in the damp darkness. (p. 523)

“Driving every man's disgust and rage inwards to ferment there in the damp darkness,” — this sentence demonstrates the presentation of Savonarola's phony aspects; it is justice to reveal and rectify them. Darkness is thought the place where disgust and rage are nourished. It is truly the most powerful

thing to change Savonarola's fate. Eventually Savonarola's ambition drives himself perfectly into the fire. His wretched end is very penetrating when one thinks of his repulsive attitude toward Romola's entreaty for her godfather's life. He forgets to consider the endlessly important existence of human beings. He should not have kept his dream without him "as a fact but within" him "as a great yearning." As a result his words are too fanciful. His fanciful dreamy words and thoughts may be nourished with the end of his life in the darkness.

This is the scene in which Romola's great hope to fulfil her father's will begins to collapse because of Tito's one-sided wicked deeds:

But the sense of something like guilt towards her father in a hope that grew out of his death, gave all the more force to the anxiety with which she dwelt on the means of fulfilling his supreme wish. That piety towards his memory was all the atonement she could make now for a thought that seemed akin to joy at his loss. The laborious simple life, pure from vulgar corrupting ambitions, embittered by the frustration of the dearest hopes, imprisoned at last in total darkness a long seed-time without a harvest—was at an end now, and all that remained of it besides the tablet in Santa

Croce and the unfinished commentary on Tito's text, was the collection of manuscripts and antiquities, the fruit of half a century's toil and frugality. The fulfilment of her father's lifelong ambition about this library was a sacramental obligation for Romola. (p. 239)

Romola's state of mind is clearly expressed by the words, "imprisoned at last in total darkness." Total darkness also expresses her coming perfect loss of love for Tito. Romola's long-time accomplishment devoted to her father suddenly comes to an end. Tito does not understand Romola's sorrow or darkness caused by the end of "a long seed-time without a harvest." "The laborious simple life pure from vulgar corrupting ambitions," represents Romola's isolated life from the vulgar world, so her sorrow has become deeper, but it is total darkness that leads Romola to learn painful lessons of the world outside. In short she will be wiser through it.

The great need of her heart compelled her to strangle, with desperate resolution, every rising impulse of suspicion, pride, and resentment; she felt equal to any self-infliction that would save her from ceasing to love. That would have been like the hideous nightmare in which the world had seemed to break away all

round her, and leave her feet overhanging the darkness. Romola had never distinctly imagined a future for herself; she was only beginning to feel the presence of effort in that clinging trust which had once been mere repose.

(pp. 241—242)

Romola's fierce agony is caused by her own wretched effort to keep the lost love for Tito in spite of her free will. "Desperate resolution, every rising impulse of suspicion, pride and resentment," refers to Romola's tangled feelings brought about as the conventional law symbolized as a ring. "Any self-infliction" is symbolized as darkness. "The hideous nightmare in which the world had seemed to break away all round her, and leave her feet overhanging the darkness," expresses the great change in Romola's heart and mind. The future of her totally broken love is suggested here by the nightmare. It demonstrates the darkness where she is perfectly lost. The repeated image of darkness is quite effective for the exact expression of Romola's heart and mind.

To her great surprise, she had not been at work long before Tito entered. Her first thought was, how cheerless he would feel in the wide darkness of this great room, with one little oil-lamp burning at the further end, and

the fire nearly out. She almost ran towards him. (pp. 274—275)

The dying fire and the wicked presence in Romola's room can be thought symbolic of the end of her relationship with Tito. The interrelation between physical darkness and spiritual darkness should naturally be seen; it is a fundamental element for human life. The room and Romola's mind are dark. Romola expects Tito's cheerless mind. Tito is also dark being influenced by his own anxiety. There can be seen something like intercommunication of darkness in the reader's mind.

There were other things yet to be done. There was a small key in a casket on the table' but now Romola perceived that her taper was dying out, and she had forgotten to provide herself with any other light. In a few moments the room was in total darkness. Feeling her way to the nearest chair, she sat down to wait for the morning. (p. 316)

It is quite rare that the same words, "total darkness" are repeated in George Eliot's novels. Physical darkness is stressed here and it is quite responsive to Romola's spiritual darkness. "She sat down to wait for the morning," — this sentence suggests that she will find her new life later. "The morning" is

quite symbolic in *Romola* when one thinks of the scene of Romola's decisive recovery. As for Romola, total darkness means the next step toward her advanced, cultivated state of mind.

This was the tangled web that Romola had in her mind as she sat weary in the darkness. No radiant angel came across the gloom with a clear message for her. In those times, as now, there were human beings who never saw angels or heard perfectly clear messages. Such truth as came to them was brought confusedly in the voices and deeds of men not at all like the seraphs of unfailing wing and piercing vision--men who believed falsities as well as truths, and did the wrong as well as the right. The helping hands stretched out to them were the hands of men who stumbled and often saw dimly, so that these beings unvisited by angels had no other choice than to grasp that stumbling guidance along the path of reliance and action which is the path of life, or else to pause in loneliness and disbelief, which is no path, but the arrest of inaction and death. (p. 318)

“The tangled web” is what Romola can not solve. It is in the darkness. Romola tries hard to make it clear but in vain. It is

beyond her wisdom. She wants a radiant angel to come and help her. She believes in Savorarola so firmly that she expects some light in his christianity, but the light does not come. The world is always too big for Romola but she does her best to live a happy life. It is the place where she suffers from the tangled web. Darkness is followed by sleep in *Romola*. The web drives her into darkness and sleep.

That evening, when it was dark and threatening rain, Romola, returning with Maso and the lantern by her side, from the hospital of San Matteo, which she had visited after vespers, encountered her husband just issuing from the monastery of San Marco. Tito, who had gone out again shortly after his arrival in the Via de' Bardi, and had seen little of Romola during the day, immediately proposed to accompany her home, dismissing Maso, whose short steps annoyed him. It was only usual for him to pay her such an official attention when it was obviously demanded from him. Tito and Romola never jarred, never remonstrated with each other. They were too hopelessly alienated in their inner life ever to have that contest which is an effort towards agreement. (p. 388)

As far as the image of Romola's darkness is concerned, it appears distinctly since her love for Tito begins to be declining. The more often she feels pain, the deeper her pain becomes. The word, "darkness" is quite powerful to drive her into the tangled web, that is, the chaotic world. Tito tries to spin the web of lies toward Romola but in vain. Romola does not accept him because of his wickedness according to her severe morality. It is Tito that is to lead her into chaos. It is true that he is a bane for Romola but ironically his existence is necessary for Romola to become wiser. Romola is destined to suffer greatly from vulgar realities because of her lack of ability to succeed in life. There is no conversation about children between Romola and Tito. Romola seems to have no dream of a happy home with children and Tito. Instead there appears the gloomy dark relationship between Romola and Tito. The image is that her chaotic and gloomy life with him is darkness.

The torches passed, with the Vicario dell' Arcivescovo, and due reverence was done by Tito, but Romola saw nothing outward. If for the defeat of this treachery, in which she believed with all the force of long presentiment, it had been necessary at that moment for her to spring on her husband and hurl herself with him down a precipice, she felt as if she could have done it. Union with this man! At that mo-

ment the self-quelling discipline of two years seemed to be nullified: she felt nothing but that they were divided.

They were nearly in darkness again, and could only see each other's faces dimly.

(p. 393)

Tito and Romola's inward darkness is repeated here: "They were nearly in darkness again, and could only see each other's faces dimly." Romola's mind sometimes moves like a pendulum in darkness, going away from and coming to Tito but the darkness is stressed at the end. This is one of the conspicuous forms about the heroine's fate. When Romola is in darkness, Tito knows her dark heart and shares the gloomy dark feeling with her. In this sense Romola directly seems to influence him though he himself tries to go on his own way quite different from hers. Romola's darkness drives him into an unhappy married life with her. In this sense Tito is indirectly manipulated by Romola's darkness because of his love for her. Romola is a typical Victorian type of woman with strict morality. Of course the absence of any inner human ties with Tito is intolerable for her.

And Romola's mind was again assailed, not only by the utmost doubt of her husband, but by doubt as to her own conduct. What lie

might he not have told her? What project might he not have, of which she was still ignorant? Every one who trusted Tito was in danger; it was useless to try and persuade herself of the contrary. And was not she selfishly listening to the promptings of her own pride, when she shrank from warning men against him? If her husband was a malefactor, her place was in the prison by his side, that might be; she was contented to fulfil that claim. But was she, a wife, to allow a husband to inflict the injuries that would make him a malefactor, when it might be in her power to prevent them? Prayer seemed impossible to her. The activity of her thought excluded a mental state of which the essence is expectant passivity.

(p. 397)

She knows much about Tito's wickedness. Her spirit of justice is abnormally strong so that her agony becomes all the harder. To her great pity she can not look at and scrutinize the realities so well, so that she can not give good advice to Tito to make him reflect himself on his wickedness. Her action in this sense seems to be emotional. She wants to escape from her chaotic life but in vain. She is not wise enough to find a new life positively by herself. On the contrary a heroine Margaret

in *North and South* by Elizabeth Gaskell is so positive that she can live without such a chaotic melancholy heart for a long time. But Romola's dark aspects are as important a factor in *Romola* as light through the darkness. Romola's happiness will be fulfilled through pain, sorrow or agony.

'We need not refer to these matters again, Romola' he said, precisely in the same tone as that in which he had spoken at first. 'It is enough if you will remember that the next time your generous ardour leads you to interfere in political affairs, you are likely, not to save any one from danger, but to be raising scaffolds and setting houses on fire. You are not yet a sufficiently ardent Piagnone to believe that Messer Bernardo del Nero is the prince of darkness, and Messer Francesco Valori the archangel Michael. I think I need demand no promise from you?'

'I have understood you too well, Tito.'

(p. 405)

Tito tells Romola that her godfather, Messer Bernardo del Nero is "the prince of darkness." Tito's ability of expression by the use of metaphor is so excellent that many people are deceived by him. But Romola can no longer find light in him.

Romola adheres purely to light of Good but Tito is to darkness of Evil. In this sense *Romola* seems to be based upon Medieval Morality Plays. Romola keeps her attention to Tito's dark sight in order to find the truth underlying the reality. Romola relies on perfectionism in terms of morality. (4) Perfect light is what Romola is looking for. On the contrary Tito is a perfect epicurean asking for perfect darkness toward Romola.

She drew the cowl over her head again and covered her face, choosing darkness rather than the light of the stars, which seemed to her like the hard light of eyes that looked at her without seeing her. Presently she felt that she was in the grave, but not resting there: she was touching the hands of the beloved dead beside her, and trying to wake them. (p. 491)

Love, God, society ... everything seems to Romola perfectly dark. She is in despair because she can not find any clue to peaceful life. In a sense her way of living is quite scientific. The development of the plot in *Romola* is from mystery to science like *Hamlet*. Romola comes to learn the real nature of Tito, Savonarola and Baldassarre in the development of the story. Romola herself finally abandons her hopes for coherent clues as to the direction of justice and peaceful existence: the internal and external qualities underlying human life. Instead she casts

her fate to the heart of nature. "The hard light of eyes that looked at her without seeing her," is to tell us how terribly severe is the world where Tito and Savonarola lie. This scene reminds us of Silas Marner's:

'The last time I remember using my knife, was when I took it out to cut a strap for you. I don't remember putting it in my pocket again. *You* stole the money, and you have woven a plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper, for all that: there is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent.'

There was a general shudder at this blasphemy.

William said meekly, 'I leave our brethren to judge whether this is the voice of Satan or not. I can do nothing but pray for you, Silas.'

Poor Marner went out with that despair in his soul — that shaken trust in God and man, which is little short of madness to a loving nature. (5)

As for Silas in deep despair, he moves to a small village of Raveloe and continues to live by leaving out his past. But Romola can not escape from her past. Star light is often an ob-

ject of supreme beauty in poems. The light of stars does not appease Romola's mind at all. She can not afford to appreciate its beauty. On the contrary it causes her pain. It is Romola's ugly human relationship that makes the beautiful scene disgusting.

The gloomy intercommunication of mind and nature can be seen in George Eliot's letter:

The fog and rain have been the more oppressive because I have seen them through Mr. Lewes's almost constant discomfort. I think he has had at least five days of sick headache since you saw him. But then he is better tempered and more cheerful *with* headache than most people are without it; and in that way he lightens his burthen. (6)

Romola is in a boat floating in the sea. The dark sea has a harmonious effect upon the dark world inside and outside Romola. Romola herself does not try to scrutinize her own feelings. She would rather be oppressed by the vulgar world. Darkness is the place where Romola lies without any interference from others. The sea is the place where her fate will be decided. The next morning she recovers from the despair by the help of the bright warm sunshine. After all she has not found a true instructor to tell her how to live justly. It is the

nature of darkness, sleep and the warm morning that drives her out of despair. Darkness should be thought to be various painful experiences through which one comes out into the light. (7) So it is a kind of nourishment with which Romola should do her best to live a happy life in justice.

(III)

Romola is betrayed by Tito and Savonarola in terms of love and God. As a sub plot Baldassarre is also betrayed by Tito in terms of love. Romola's highly tangled life is mainly connected with those three characters. Though the other three are all philosophers, their conception of justice is not to the point or out of order, but Romola's is as rooted as George Eliot's though she is not a philosopher. Eliot describes Tito as a wicked person who is aware of his own evil, whose consciousness makes Tito fearful of Baldassarre and Romola. He is truly lacking in a sense of justice. Justice is less important for him than pleasure but for Romola the opposite is true. Tito sells his heart to evil for pleasure so that his dwelling place is in darkness. In secret he enjoys his life with Tessa. His phony life is closely connected with his pleasure, and his character gradually becomes wicked as his words come out of wicked darkness. Tito's words to Romola's godfather, "the prince of darkness" may be symbolic of himself. Eliot writes Tito as a wicked character with fearful feelings toward justice instead of being a perfectly atrocious

one. In this sense he is a normal-minded character. The same is true of Savonarola when his consistent assertion becomes out of order. Tito, Baldassarre and Savonarola have to continue to spin their own prejudiced webs to the end, and finally put an end to their lives like a self-destructive spider suffocated by his own spun web. In this sense their image of darkness is represented by their words, character and life; that is their way of thinking and living.

As for Baldassarre he misses the true human way of thinking and living, but there are many solutions about his problems with Tito. He chooses the worst one. Baldassarre needs darkness in the attack on Tito because of his wrong conception of justice. The wrong conception of justice is the same for Savonarola. He appears first as a master priest for Romola's brother when he is dying. However excellent his words may be for Romola, because of her justice she can not endure Savonarola's attitude toward her godfather at all. Savonarola and Baldassarre must have recognized much about the endlessly valuable existence of human beings whether they may be utterly intolerable persons. Without changing their conception of justice, Baldassarre, Savonarola and Tito can not escape from the darkness. Eliot's severe way of writing *Romola* can be appreciated here, for writing is a part of religion for Eliot. She can not tell a lie through Romola. Romola's life is quite pure. Romola's fundamental way of living in justice is George Eliot's. There is no scene in which Romola suffers from sin like Margaret in *North*

and South. Romola is always a sufferer. Baldassarre is also a sufferer but becomes an assailant. There is the scene in which he can not read Greek words. This prepresents the fact that he can be no longer a philosopher in truth. His scholastic career is in darkness. The same is true of Tito and Savonarola. Their conception of justice is out of order, so darkness is always closely connected with justice in *Romola*. It is true that Savonarola is a great priest but unlike Romola he dreams too much to keep common sense. He is burnt dead in front of her because of inspiring "every man's disgust and rage ... in damp darkness." The fire shows that he is nothing but a human being. It is the fire of justice. But as for Baldassarre's dagger, it is not justice Dagger in truth. Eventually they are both blinkered like Tito in their way of living. It may be said that they take darkness for light; they fall into a perfect illusion about justice. There is no one to make them to rectify it. They die without recognizing their own improper concept of justice, and only Romola keeps alive because of her justice. This is George Eliot's strict way of writing about justice in *Romola*.

Romola should not be so wise as the author. As for *North and South*, Margaret seems as wise as the author. Both heroines do their best to live with the strict concept of justice. Margaret suffers from her sin of having told a lie to save her brother but Romola never suffers from such a sin. In this sense Margaret is more vulgar than Romola. Romola's life seems to be more severe in terms of morality or justice though she is not so wise

as Margaret in a practical way of living. Eliot hopes to express the whole character of Romola with perceptive eyes. If Romola were as wise as George Eliot, Eliot might not look at, scrutinize and write about Romola from various points of view with quite calm eyes in *Romola*. Perhaps she can transmit her whole messages effectively through Romola as long as Romola suffers severely from the reality like young George Eliot. In other words darkness is an essential element of enlightenment, as Eliot continually demonstrates through her repeated use of the darkness symbol. Darkness is symbolic of the complicated world which may be seen in the previous quotation: "This was the tangled web that Romola had in her mind as she sat weary in the darkness." Romola suffers severely from the realities with the images of darkness, but after all justice is "like a kingdom of God" for her. Owing to it her pure life remains unchanged to the end in the vulgar world. When in total despair she selects darkness rather than star light and recognizes the natural peaceful world through darkness, justice of human beings is finally done for her. (8)

Notes

(1) George Eliot, *Romola* (Everyman's Library, 1968), p.239.

Further references to this novel will be parenthetically cited in my text.

(2) cf. Arnold Kettle, *An Introduction to The English Novel* (Hutchinson & Co. LTD, 1961), vol. I. p. 190.

Just as *War and Peace* — despite Tolstoy's enormous, penetrating sense of the dialectics of life, of birth, growth and development — is weakened by his mechanistic, determinist view of history, so in *Middlemarch* does George Eliot's undialectical philosophy weaken the total impact at which she aimed. And yet no novelist before her had so consciously and conscientiously tried to convey the inter-relatedness of social life or the changing nature of individuals and their relationships. She is a great, sincere and humane writer and it may well be that — despite the ultimate weaknesses within her work — the novelists of the future will turn to *Middlemarch* more often than to any other English novel.

(3) cf. George Eliot, *Silas Marner* (Collins Classics, 1970), p. 47.

The rain and darkness had got thicker, and he was glad of it; though it was awkward walking with both hands filled, so that it was as much as he could do to grasp his whip along with one of the bags. But when he had gone a yard or two, he might take his time. So he stepped forward into the darkness.

(4) cf. J.W. Cross, *George Eliot's Life* (Dane Estes & Company, 1968), vol.

II. p. 26.

I think the highest and best thing is rather to suffer with real suffering than to be happy in the imagination of an unreal good. I would rather know that beings I love are in some trouble, and suffer because of it, even though I can't help them, than be fancying them happy when they are not so, and making myself comfortable on the strength of that false belief. And so I am impatient of all ignorance and concealment. I don't say "that is wise," but simply "that is my nature."

(5) *Silas Marner*, op. cit., p. 25.

(6) *George Eliot's Life*, op. cit., p. 264.

(7) cf. Virginia Woolf, "George Eliot," *Discussion of George Eliot*, ed. Richard Stang (D.C. Heath and Company, 1960) p. 27.

Still, basking in the light and sunshine of *Scenes of Clerical Life*, feeling the large mature mind spreading itself with a luxurious sense of freedom in the world of her "remotest past," to speak of loss seems inappropriate. Everything to such a mind was gain. All experience filtered down through layer after layer of perception and reflection, enriching and nourishing. The utmost we can say, in qual-

ifying her attitude towards fiction by what little we know of her life, is that she had taken to heart certain lessons not usually learnt early, if learnt at all, among which, perhaps, the most branded upon her was the melancholy virtue of tolerance; her sympathies are with the everyday lot, and play most happily in dwelling upon the homespun of ordinary joys and sorrows. She has none of that romantic intensity which is connected with a sense of one's own individuality, unsated and unsubdued, cutting its shape sharply upon the background of the world.

(8) cf. Bernard J. Paris, *Experiments in Life* (Wayne State University Press, 1965), p. 226.

When Romola returned to Florence and undertook the care of Tessa and Tito's children, her religious life depended no longer solely upon her identification with the social and political life of Florence. She had found the sanctity of life and a sense of religious orientation in the cosmos through the direct experience of living for others, not as members of the family or of her community, but as fellow human beings. By the end of the novel, then, she had come to participate in the life of

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the species; she had arrived at the Religion of Humanity. But she could not have arrived at what George Eliot considered to be the religion of the future without the moral discipline which was provided by Savonarola's Christianity and by her labors in the common cause of her fellow citizens. Her worship of the family, of the hero, and of the state were stages through which Romola had to go on her way to religion of man.