

Engaging Strategies in *Adam Bede*

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Abstract

One of the narrative strategies employed in different ways by men and women writers is the presentation of narrator. The significance of narrator is so much that it differentiates between the realistic and non-realistic fiction and specifically men's and women's writings in realistic fiction. Robyn R Warhol's theory based on Genette's is applied to *Adam Bede* by George Eliot to focus on woman as writer. Warhol specifies five touchstones for distinguishing engaging and distancing narrators which consist of 1) The degree of irony present in references to the narratee; 2) The frequency of direct address to the narratee; 3) The names by which the narratee is addressed; 4) The narrator's stance toward the characters; 5) The narrator's implicit or explicit attitude towards the act of narration. These five touchstones are examined in *Adam Bede* to come to the conclusion about the nature of the narrator, whether engaging or distancing.

Keywords: 1. Narrator 2. *Adam Bede* 3. Narrative strategies 4. Engaging narrators 5. Distancing narrators

Received: 4/25/2010 Accepted: 9/29/2010

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1. Introduction

One of the narrative techniques employed in different ways by men and women writers is the presentation of *narrator*. The significance of narrator is so much that it *differentiates* between the realistic and non-realistic fiction and specifically men's and women's writings in realistic fiction. Robyn Warhol (1986) lays heavy emphasis on the narrator (*voice*) who makes a fiction seem real to the reader and engages the reader in the world of the narrative so much that the reader identifies with the narratee. Based on Showalter's views (1977) who differentiates between men and women's writing, this paper focuses on *woman as writer*. Warhol's theory conjoined with Genette's narratology is applicable to realistic fictions in which the reader feels the similarity between the actual life and the world depicted in the fiction. The difference between men's and women's writing in realistic fiction is based on the *degree* they involve and engage the actual reader in the reading process. Therefore, such differences between men's and women's narrative techniques should be studied in the realm of the realistic novel. Whenever there is a question of comparison, there is always a fixed condition for the changing elements to be compared with one another. The changing elements are considered as men's and women's writings and the fixed condition is in the realistic fiction in which the strategies that men and women employ to narrate are different.

For the nineteenth-century woman who had something to say, it was not easy to find a safe space to say what she meant. Surprisingly enough, for some women, even to write for publication was to cross-dress as a man. Therefore, "by taking up the strategies that men used in *real-world discourse*--the earnest exhortation, the personalized direct address to an audience, the insistence on speaking about a truth--the women transformed those rhetorical forms into feminine codes in *literary discourse* [emphasis added]" (Warhol, 1989, p. 165). Thus women novelists formed a mode through which they could speak without exposing themselves, while men had so many other public places in which they could say something. The form of preaching was a good

solution to speak in relative safety. But even this form had to be hidden behind the mask of a pseudonym. Kreisel (2003) argues that "Evans feels unable to speak to her admiring public, and is ironically voiceless and without identity, behind the mask of her incognito" (p. 548).

Writing with engaging narrative strategies in the mid-nineteenth century was to write as a woman. Deirdre David (2001) believes that our late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century ideas about gender differences originated in the Victorian novels. Warhol believes, "Even when Dickens or Trollope sometimes *borrowed* [emphasis added] women strategies, it was a kind of cross-dressing" (1989, p. 164). To find feminine, engaging strategies in men's writings is more difficult than to find masculine, distancing strategies in women's novels. But it should not be forgotten that narrative structures are always complex; Warhol (1986) states, "novelists who typically employ distancing narrative *interventions* sometimes use direct address to engage their readers, and even the most consistently engaging narrators sometimes intervene in their texts in distancing ways" (p. 811).

Dolin (2005) argues that women "were not generally invited to give their opinions" (p. 102). A woman could speak, for example, in a church as an evangelist or as a religious revival, but it had some disadvantages including her access to only a small audience and the necessity of woman's physical presence in a public arena. She had to choose between her own ambition to speak and the fear of being humiliated by others. Thus, the best option for her was to write without exposing herself to general view and, on the other hand, to reach large numbers with her voice. Therefore, her art of writing becomes substantial. It should be in a way to substitute men's opportunity to speak in public places. It was a challenge to find a mode of writing that could compensate women's difficult presence in public. It was the realistic fiction that became that mode.

It is true that George Eliot was concerned at the beginning of her career about the status of her work as art; but her crucial duty as a woman writer in the Victorian period was to engage the reader in the narrative.

The narrative stance in her realistic fictions is one sign of feminine strategy for coping with the restrictions on their real-world discourse. By using direct address, she bridges the gap, as Warhol (1989) says, between "strictly literary utterances and serious statements" (p. 169). Therefore, it is her purpose to engage the reader that signifies a gendered gesture.

2. Discussion

Kearns (1996) states that "*Adam Bede* has been called the first major exercise in programmatic literary realism in English Literature" (p. 22). In *Adam Bede*, the engaging strategies dominate the text and it marks its discourse as feminine, though Warhol (1987) and Kreisel (2003) point to some masculine moves in the novel. They point to chapter seventeen that brings the narrator's gender identity into question.

Warhol (1987) specifies five touchstones for distinguishing engaging and distancing narrators. These five touchstones are examined in *Adam Bede* to come to reach a conclusion about the nature of the narrator; to find out whether the narrator is engaging or distancing. In each part there is an example from men writers (the same example that Warhol has employed) to highlight what engaging means in women writings. It can lead to a better understanding of the narrator in *Adam Bede*.

1. *The names by which the narratee is addressed.* Whereas a distancing narrator may specify a name or title for an extradiegetic narratee, an engaging narrator avoids naming the narratee or using names that refer to large classes of actual readers. The narrator in *Adam Bede* frequently addresses the narratee as *reader* or *you*:

This is what I undertake to do for *you, reader* [emphasis added]. With this drop of ink at the end of my pen, I will show *you* the roomy 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. (*Adam Bede*, 3)

Barbara Hardy (1963) suggests that the dominant narrative "tone is personal: it is the tone of voice in which the author tells a story about remembered people. It is also the tone in which she addresses a living reader" (p. 158).

In *Vanity Fair*, the narrator addresses the narratee as "Miss Bullock," "Miss Smith," or "Jones, who reads this book at this club" (Warhol, 1986, p. 813). Thus, the narrator limits the narratee to these special people and rarely the actual reader finds similarity between Miss Smith, for example, and himself or herself.

2. *The frequency of direct address to the narratee.* The engaging narrator in *Adam Bede* is like an evangelical preacher speaking to *you*. The Pronoun *you* is frequently used more than even the word *reader* and it makes an atmosphere as if the actual reader is engaged in the narrative. The *you* is addressed to the narratee with whom the reader identifies. Although, the distancing narrator may use the pronoun *you*, the novelists, mainly male writers, use a strategy to embarrass actual readers; therefore, the reader does not identify with the narratee and it makes the reader to have distance from the *you*.

In *Adam Bede*, Eliot tries to engage the reader by the help of the narrator as well as *Dinah's sermon* that evokes the presence of Jesus. Dinah brings the idea of God vividly to life for her auditors. The narrator asserts her presence and that of her actual readers and in this way brings the fiction to life; the reader takes part in the narrative as if he/she lives in it. Therefore, both the preacher and the narrator depend on direct address to achieve this effect.

Dinah's message relies heavily on repetitions of the word *you* to raise the feelings of the listeners. Here is Dinah's preacher-like speech about Christ to her audience in the *story* (different from the narrative):

All this he bore for *you*! For *you*—and *you* never think of him; for *you*—and *you* turn your backs on him; *you* don't care what he has gone through for *you*. Yet he is not weary of toiling for *you*: he has risen from the dead, he is praying for *you* at the right hand of God—Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

And he is upon this earth too; he is among us; he is there close to *you* now; I see his wounded body and his look of love. [italics added], (*Adam Bede*, p. 25)

Dinah as a preacher wants to touch the audience. George Eliot as a Victorian female novelist shields her body by placing her voice in a text, while the Victorian male preacher touches the audience by using "his voice as an extension of his body" (Warhol, 1989, p. 191). Dinah's direct address operates upon the sensations toward didactic ends.

Warhol (1986) cogently illustrates the *frequency* in *Mary Barton* in which the narratee is addressed as *you* in at least twenty-two passages, *we* in at least five passages and seldom, if ever, in *the third person*, while Fielding often refers to narratee as "the Reader" or "my reader" (p. 813).

3. *The degree of irony present in references to the narratee.* Sometimes, although the distancing narrator directly addresses the narratee ironically, s/he inscribes the addressee as a bad reader or puts the addressee in a dangerous or embarrassing situation, in which the actual reader rarely wants to be in or even imagines to be. Therefore, he/she does not identify with the narratee. In contrast to distancing narrators, the engaging narrators "assume that their narratees are in perfect *sympathy* [italics added] with them" (Warhol, 1986, p. 813).

In the following passage, for example, the narrator engages you in the narrative by arousing your sympathy, just as Dinah does (Dinah's preaching engages the readers by arousing their religious emotions). In this passage the narrator puts you in a situation that you have experienced, at least once; therefore, the narrator can simply stir your emotions and your sympathy with the characters. At the end, the narrator engages you by giving a palpable example:

Before you despise Adam as deficient in penetration, pray ask yourself if you were ever predisposed to believe evil of any pretty woman—if you ever *could* (original italics), without hard head breaking demonstration, believe evil of the one supremely pretty woman who has bewitched you. No: people who love downy peaches are apt not to think of

the stone, and sometimes jar their teeth terribly against it. (*Adam Bede*, p. 131)

These palpable images sometimes play the role of *prolepsis*; when Adam discovers Arthur and Hetty amongst the "enervating" beeches and limes, the image that the narrator depicts, forecasts the imminent tragedy: "if only the corn were not ripe enough to be blown out of the husk and scattered as untimely seed!" (*Adam Bede* p. 251). Therefore, *prolepsis* functions not only to generate *suspense*, which is one of the strategies in realism, but also "to reinforce the authority of the narrator "to create a sympathetic atmosphere and engage the reader in the narrative" (Bridgeman, 2005, p. 132).

Sympathy has an important role both in *voice* and in *mood*. The engaging narrator employs sympathy to engage the reader's feelings and emotions in the process of reading. In *mood*, by the help of details given about characters, scenes and events, the novelist makes a real world in which the reader engages and consequently his/her emotions are engaged and he/she sympathizes with different characters in the *story*. Greiner (2009) in her essay entitled, "Sympathy Time: Adam Smith, George Eliot, and the Realist Novel" states:

Talk about novel-reading and sympathy and you are likely to spend some of that time talking about omniscience. If your subject is the nineteenth-century realist novel, you will probably have something to say about the relationship between ethical feeling and free indirect discourse which suggests that peering into the secret hearts and minds of characters enables our sympathy for them, and thus that "sympathy" names that special ability to cultivate our identification with others through feeling what they feel and knowing what they know, or what they are thinking about. (p. 291)

The importance of sympathy, its definition in George Eliot's view, its influence in realistic fiction, and consequently its role in decreasing the *distance* (related to *Mood*) between story and narration and, thus, between reader and story as an engaging strategy are studied in *Mood*

with the help of Genette's (1980) *Mood* in this discourse to suggest the interaction and interdependency of *Mood* and *Voice* in depicting George Eliot's engaging strategy in *Adam Bede*.

Thackeray ironically refers to "some carping reader" who is incapable of enjoying the sentimental passages in *Vanity Fair* (qtd in Warhol, 1986, p. 813). Fielding's (1973) directive on how to read *Tom Jones* shows his awareness of the distance that the narrator encourages between the narratee and the actual reader:

Reader, it is impossible we should know what Sort of Person thou wilt be: For perhaps, thou may'st be as learned in Human Nature as *Shakespeare* himself was, and, perhaps, thou may'st be no wiser than some of his Editors. Now lest this letter should be the Case, we think proper, before we go any farther together, to give thee a few wholesome Admonitions. . . . We warn thee not too hastily to condemn any of the Incidents in this our History, as impertinent and foreign to our main Design. (p. 398)

Here, the intrusive narrator intervenes in the narrative and directly addresses the reader but the strategy is distancing; therefore, the narrator by putting the reader in the embarrassing situation repels the reader by addressing him/her as "no wiser than some of Shakespeare's editors."

4. *The narrator's stance toward the characters.* The insistence of the engaging narrator is on the reality of the characters rather than reminding the readers that the characters are fictional. To do so the engaging narrator in *Adam Bede* uses what Genette has called *metalepsis* (crossing diegetic levels to imply that figures inside and outside the fiction exist on the same plane). Here, the engaging narrator tries to "suggest that the characters are as real as the narrator and the narratee." Therefore the characters in *Adam Bede* can "be identified with the actual author and actual reader" (Warhol, 1986, p. 814).

What Barbara Hardy (1963) argues, in *The Novels of George Eliot*, is an example of *metalepsis*. She believes that in *Adam Bede* "when characters are presented for the first time the reader may be treated as an

actual though invisible presence" (p. 157). In the chapter called "The Rector," the narrator puts the reader on the same plane with the characters:

Let me take you into that dining-room. . . . We will enter very softly . . . the walls, you see, are new. . . . He will perhaps turn round by-and-by, and in the mean time we can look at that stately old lady. . . . (*Adam Bede*, p. 45)

When the narrator and the narratee are in the *extradiegetic* level it is easier for the reader to identify with the narratee and it is easier also for the narrator to engage the reader. It is clear that the characters are *intradiegetic*, but it is the art of the women writers to suggest, *implicitly* (as the following example shows), or *explicitly* that the characters are as real as the author and the actual reader. The engaging narrators occasionally claim "personal acquaintance with their characters, even though the narrators never figure as *intradiegetic* characters themselves" (Warhol, 1986: p. 814). In *Adam Bede*, George Eliot arranges a conversation between the heterodiegetic narrator and the hero through *metalepsis*: "But I gathered from Adam Bede, to whom I talked of these matters in his old age, that few clergymen could be less successful in winning the hearts of their parishioners than Mr. Ryde" (p. 155).

It is clear that the heterodiegetic *I* is never present in the fictional world and is never in a position to see the character in the context of the fiction. Therefore, it is implied that the character must exist in the context of the narrator's own world. Therefore, characters are as real as the reader, the narrator, and the author. The function of *metalepsis*, here, is not to cause "the humorous discomfort" that Genette has identified as the usual result of the device. It reinforces "the reader's serious sense of the characters as real" (Warhol, 1986, p. 815).

Warhol (1989) argues that: "If, on the one hand, the narrator is supposed to be an individual capable of conversing with Adam, then the narrator's assertions about characters' thoughts and emotions must be subjective." She continues saying: "If, on the other hand, the narrator is

not supposed to be a person in the story—if her status is heterodiegetic, not homodiegetic—then . . . her claim to have met Adam makes no sense at all" (p. 132). But it must be noted that this happens only once and *out of the story*, in the narrative; the narrator cannot be considered as homodiegetic. The narrator does not take part in the story but once *she* confronts one of the characters and talks to him; this happens in extradiegetic level. Therefore, not only does it not weaken the reality of the narrative but also adds to it, as much that it puts the character of the story in the same plane with the narrator.

In contrast to this engaging technique, Warhol (1986) believes that the most extreme examples of distancing narrator can be found in *Vanity Fair* in which the narrator refers to the characters "as puppets that come out of a box" (p. 814).

5. *The narrator's implicit or explicit attitude towards the act of narration.* The distancing narrator intervenes in the narrative to remind the reader that it is only a fiction, while the engaging narrator intervenes to remind the reader that the fiction reflects "real-world conditions for which the readers should take active responsibility after putting aside the book" (Warhol, 1986, p. 815).

In *Adam Bede*, the narrator intervenes to explain *explicitly* the purpose of narration; it is the subject of an entire chapter entitled "In Which the Story pauses a Little." Warhol emphasizes this technique as masculine; to answer Warhol, Kreisel and other critics insist on Eliot's masculine technique in this chapter. It should be considered carefully that though it is male writers' tradition to intervene in the narrative and women learn this technique from men, the difference between men and women writers is in the way they employ this technique. George Eliot employs this masculine technique in her fiction, but what distinguishes her from men's distancing technique is her purpose of intervention that she explicitly refers to in chapter seventeen.

The seventeenth chapter of *Adam Bede* is an example of what Prince (1985) calls *overjustification*:

Surjustifications...situated at the level of metalanguage, meta-commentary, or meta-narration... Over-justifications always provide us with interesting details about the narratee's personality, even though they often do so in an indirect way; in overcoming the narratee's defense, in prevailing over his prejudices, in allaying his apprehension, they reveal them. (qtd. in "Toward a Theory", p. 814)

This chapter of *Adam Bede* tries to defend the narrator's refusal to idealize the characters of the *story*. It is to defend the realistic portrait of the characters. George Eliot's purpose is to engage the reader rather than make distance between the reader and the narrative. It is the difference between men and women writers in the Victorian period that, by using the same technique they follow different purposes which are explicitly or implicitly referred to. The narrator tries to engage the reader in the extradiegetic world:

So I am content to tell my simple story, without trying to make things seem better than they were; dealing nothing, indeed, but falsity, which, in spite of one's best efforts, there is reason to dread. Falsehood is so easy, truth so difficult. The pencil is conscious of a delightful facility in drawing a griffin—the longer the claws, and the larger the wings, the better; but that marvelous facility which we mistook for genius is apt to forsake us when we want to draw a real unexaggerated lion. Examine your words well, and you will find that even when you have no motive to be false, it is a very hard thing to say the exact truth, even about your own immediate feelings—much harder than to say something fine about them which is *not* the exact truth. (*Adam Bede*, p. 152)

George Eliot's emphasis is on the truthfulness of her fiction; she insists that the fiction should be true to life; therefore, this explicit claim engages the reader in the narrative and brings the narrative to life. Adding empathy to reality, the author tries to strengthen the reality of

characters and consequently the reality of fiction, because it increases the reader's capacity for sympathy with characters who seem real to him/her and it is also an exercise for strengthening this capacity in the reader's own life.

Chapter seventeen, in contrast to what Warhol claims or what Kreisel (2003) calls masculine tradition, is engaging rather than distancing. Not only the reader does not take it as fiction but also it has some effects on her/his real world to learn how to sympathize with actual humans in the real world. George Eliot in chapter seventeen of *Adam Bede* refers to the purpose of the realistic novel: "Then we shall see with a glance whom we are to condemn, and whom we are to proven" (p. 152). She does not only theorize but gives palpable examples to engage the reader as if this chapter is a story not about Hayslope but about the real world, common people and universal feelings:

I turn, without shrinking, from cloud-borne angels, from prophets, sibyls and heroic warriors, to an old woman bending over her flower-pot, or eating her solitary dinner, while the noonday light, softened perhaps by a screen of leaves, falls on her mob-cap, and just touches the rim of her spinning-wheel, and her song jug, and all those cheap common things which are the precious necessaries of life to her—or I turn to that village wedding, kept between four brown walls, where an awkward bridegroom opens the dance with a high-shouldered, . . . while elderly and middle aged friends look on, with very irregular noses and lips, . . . but with an expression of unmistakable *contentment* and *goodwill*. (emphasis added, *Adam Bede*, p. 153)

In this chapter, she tries to affirm the importance of sympathy in realistic fiction, and assure us of the morality of her artistic choices:

And I would not, even if I had the choice, be the clever novelist who could create a world so much better than this, in which we get up in the morning to do our daily work, that you would be likely to turn a harder, colder eye on the dusty streets and the common green

fields—on the real breathing men and women, who can be cheered and helped onward by *your fellow-feeling* (my italics), your forbearance, your out spoken, brave justice. (*Adam Bede*, p. 152)

Warhol (1986) insists on the distancing strategy men use directly or indirectly to remind the narratee that the fiction "is a game and the characters pawns." She refers to the direct reminders in *Vanity Fair* referring to the narrator "as a stage manger or puppet master," and the indirect ones as "the mock heroic epic language in the 'battle scenes' of *Tom Jones* or *Joseph Andrews* (p. 815)

Colby points to a difference between men and women writers' application of morality. He believes that the woman novelist "ministers to the soul" and guides readers "in matters of faith and morality"; the man novelists "exposes hidden shame and tries to shock" or dispenses advice on social relations and practical matters. The women's purpose is more personal, more individualized, more spiritual than the men's (qtd. in Warhol, 1989, p. 171).

2.1. Mood and engaging technique in *Adam Bede*:

In the discourse of *mood*, the concentration is on the atmosphere of the narrative and on the factors reducing the distance between the narrative and the story or, as Plato for the first time pointed to, between pure narrative and mimesis. There are factors in *Adam Bede* which reduce the distance that pure narrative may create between the reader and the world of the fiction. Sympathy is one of them. Sympathy in *Adam Bede* is so powerful that different realistic elements, which will be discussed later, are in the service of it. One chapter of *Adam Bede* is specified to depict sympathy. Even the pictorial realism and generally the *details* (mood) are all taken into the service of sympathy. Sympathy as an engaging strategy was used or, as George Eliot believes, is always used by women writers, while the mood in men's writings was dominantly authoritarian.

Life is not separate from sympathizing with fellow-feelings. Sympathizing is the sign of being alive; when this factor enters the narrative, it brings the narrative to life. No matter where in the narrative it happens, whether it is a device in the hand of the narrator or the characters of the story, it gives the narrative the realistic *atmosphere (Mood)*. Kreisel (2003) argues that sympathetic identification with the individual characters which "Eliot hopes to inculcate in her readers" is one part of realism (p. 556). Sympathy, moral teaching, didactic realism and other sketches drawn from life such as details given about characters, events, and scenes are all bring the narrative to life and makes it function as a realistic narrative and consequently fill the gap between the story and narration (Genette's Mood).

These elements help the extradiegetic level get close to intradiegetic level, and when the narrator is engaging, the actual reader identifies with the narratee and gets close to extradiegetic level and, consequently, to both levels of narratology. Therefore, *Mood* helps *Voice* improve the reality of the fiction and also engage the reader in the world of fiction. It is crucial for George Eliot, specifically, and Victorian women writers, generally, to reach large numbers with their voice.

Mood is the atmosphere of the narrative created by distance and perspective (point of view). Although the *narrator* sometimes speaks, the point of view may be that of one of the characters, and the feelings of a point-of-view character may be different from those of the narrator telling that character's story. Because the concentration of this chapter is on the narrator, the focus of attention is on distance.

The least distance or the greatest imitation of life is produced by maximum information and minimum presence of the narrator. This problem was raised for the first time by Plato who differentiates between *pure narrative* and *mimesis*. In the discourse of distance, Genette (1980) believes that "narratized, or narrated, speech is obviously the most distant" form and in contrast to this form there is the mimetic form "where the narrator pretends literally to give the floor to his character" (pp. 171- 172).

By the help of engaging narrator in *Adam Bede*, the reader identifies with the narratee and gets close to extradiegetic level (voice). It is again by the help of engaging narrator that pure narrative, like mimesis, functions in such a way as to create an atmosphere in which the reader feels that the narrative is part of life and the narrator the protagonist. This phenomenon has happened more in realistic novels in which the details (about characters, events, and scenes) produce maximum information and consequently minimum distance. It is actually what is called the interaction and interdependency of *voice* and *Mood*.

Suzanne Keen (2006) in her article "A Theory of Narrative Empathy," discusses the relation between the narrator and feelings evoked. She states that the "first person fiction more readily evokes feelings responsiveness than the whole variety of third person narrative situations" (p. 215). The narrator in the first person fiction narrates his or her own experiences and perceptions and tries to invite close relationship with the reader. Keen counts some elements effective in evoking the reader's empathy, "genre expectations, vivid use of setting, *metanarrative commentary*" [emphasis added] (p. 216).

George Eliot, in her most famous manifesto of realism, the chapter called "In Which the Story Pauses a Little," reminds us (the metadiegetic level) that the particular task of the novelist is to present to her readers true-to-life characters whose "imperfections train us to understand and forgive those of our actual neighbors" (Kreisel, 2003, p. 547):

These fellow-mortals, every one, must be accepted as they are: *you* can neither strengthen their noses, nor brighten their wit, nor rectify their dispositions; and it is these people—amongst whom *your* life is passed—that it is needful *you* should *tolerate, pity, and love*: it is these more or less ugly, stupid, inconsistent people, whose movements of goodness *you* should be able to admire—for whom *you* should cherish all possible *hopes, all possible patience* [emphasis added]. (*Adam Bede*, p. 152)

It is through *realism* that this training in understanding is to be effected. Courtemanche says that "In *Adam Bede* the insistence is on moral importance of perceiving ordinary life" (p. 397). It is worth mentioning that George Eliot's definition of sympathy in her earlier novel, *Scenes of Clerical Life*: "Sympathy is but a living again through our own past in a new form" (qtd. in Warhol, 1986, p. 816). In the seventeenth chapter of *Adam Bede* in which sympathetic realism is the subject, George Eliot continues saying:

It is for this rare, precious quality of truthfulness that I delight in many Dutch paintings, which lofty-minded people despise. I find a source of delicious sympathy in these faithful pictures of 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. (p. 153)

Kreisel (2003) believes that "for Eliot information and analysis are coded masculine while sympathy is consistently associated with femininity" (p. 548). Kreisel (2003) argues that "it is the especial province of the female author to engage in sympathetic understanding" of the human nature of her characters (p. 547). She continues that "it is the womanliness of the author that ensures her interpretive powers; her explicitly female body, and its life-giving ability to bear children, is the source from which springs the ability to understand and write with sympathy" (pp. 545-546). George Eliot herself explicitly relates sympathy to femininity in her letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe:

. . . you have had longer experience than I as a writer, and fuller experience as a woman, since you have born children and known the mother's history from the beginning. I trust your quick and long-taught mind as an interpreter little liable to mistake me. (qtd. in Kreisel, 2003, p. 545)

Cognard-Black (2004) in *Narrative in the Professional Age* depicts George Eliot's "strong femininity" and believes that Eliot represents the widespread belief that "women had special sympathetic qualities in 'heart and nature' as virtuous, pious, and child-rearing citizens" (p. 43).

Dinah's sermon and the narrator's direct address to the reader together with their sympathetic attitudes inspire a sense of presence in an audience. Dinah begins with a prayer for inspiration from God: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor" (*Adam Bede*, p. 19). Then she declares: "Jesus Christ spoke those words," and that the poor are of particular importance to Jesus. The narrator suggests that Dinah "was not preaching as she heard others preach, but speaking directly from her own emotions, and under the inspiration of her own simple faith" (p. 23). Dinah addresses the audience by pointing to them and using the pronoun *you*; therefore the audience actively take part in her preaching; they go deep into reflecting upon themselves and their deeds. She stirs up the audience sympathy when she declares that Christ is among them and then continues: "*See* the print of the nails on his dear hands and feet. It is *your* sins that made them! Ah! . . ." (p. 24).

Warhol (1989) argues that "the individuals in the crowd hardly comprehend Dinah's characterization as of themselves as sinners" (p. 120). But Dinah uses the rhetoric of sensation to enter into the hearts of the listeners rather than their minds. Dinah's message relies heavily on repetitions of the word *you*. Bess, one of the characters present in the crowd, dissolves into sobs; it is not because she has absorbed the logic of Dinah's argument but because "under the barrage of *you's*, she has supposed herself less well than she had" (Warhol, 1989, p.121). This hammering *you* drives an impression into her listeners that Jesus is physically present among them. Warhol believes that Dinah's sermon has the enormous capacity for sympathy which is different from men's authoritarian sermons (Warhol, 1989, p. 121).

The narrator also relies on the actual reader's own emotional memories to make them sentimental. In the scene in which Adam courts Dinah, the narrator says:

That is a simple scene, reader. But it is almost certain that you, too, have been in love—perhaps, even, more than once, though you may not choose to say so to all your lady friends. If so, you will no more think the slight words, the timid looks, the tremulous touches, by which two human souls approach each other gradually . . . you will no more think these things trivial, than you will think the first-detected signs of coming spring trivial. . . . I am of opinion that love is a great and beautiful thing too; and if you are agree with me, the smallest signs of it will . . . be like those little words, "light" and "music," stirring the long-winding fibers of your memory, and enriching your present with your most precious past. (*Adam Bede*, p. 537)

Therefore, the narrator stirs the actual reader's memory by referring to the "small signs" of their love. This technique parallels Dinah's strategy in her sermon when she exhorts Bess to imagine her future, and consequently to sob because of the sufferings she should tolerate. Sympathy is everywhere in *Adam Bede*, even Hetty's portrait is "sharply critical but far from being unsympathetic" (Hardy, 1963, p. 204). The readers make a sympathetic relation with the characters and it is an *exercise* to sympathize with people in their own real lives.

Sympathy, though a device in the hand of the narrator, like the narrator, functions as a mutual factor. Sympathy increases the reality of the novel and thus reduces the distance (related to *Mood*) on one hand, and on the other hand, engages the reader to identify with the narratee or reduce the distance between the actual world and the extradiegetic world of the novel. Thus, both sympathy and narrator play important roles to connect these two distances, the distance between the story and narration, and the distance between the actual world and the world of the novel. Therefore, Eliot's inclination

towards *feminine* sympathy is coupled with the engaging function of sympathy to reinforce the idea of women writers' engaging technique.

The element of sympathy is so powerful in *Adam Bede* that it reinforces realism in the narrative. Ian Adam (1975) distinguishes three kinds of realism in *Adam Bede*: a pictorial realism, the analytic realism, and the dramatic realism (p. 130-131). The describing details of the novel reduce the distance between the world of the story (participant characters) and the world of narration (the world in which the narrator lives). The reality of these two worlds is better revealed when details are depicted in the novel. In this case, the worlds of the narrator, the author, the narratee and the reader, on one hand, and the worlds of the characters on the other hand get very close to one another.

These three kinds of realism will be exemplified and explained respectively. The novel is full of pictorial descriptions about characters, scenes and landscapes, and they are described from the point of view of the narrator and the characters. There is a passage in which the dairy is very carefully looked at:

It was a scene to sicken for with a sort of calenture in hot and dusty streets—such coolness, such purity, such fresh fragrance of new-pressed cheese, of firm butter, of wooden vessels perpetually bathed in pure water; such soft colouring of red earthenware and creamy surfaces, brown wood and polished tin, grey limestone and rich orange-red rust on the iron weights and hooks and hinges. (*Adam Bede*, p. 70)

In such passages, the action stops and the activity is the activity of the viewer's eyes, focusing on a detail or series of details; therefore the structure is microcosmic of the larger structure of which it is part. These details whether famous details of the conversations at the Hall Farm or details of minor narratives such as Seth's and Adam's courtship of Dinah, Dinah's preaching on the Green, or the death of Thias Bede, they all "involve the main characters and have certain links with the main actions,

but even more emphatically they function *to suggest the normal life of Hayslope* [emphasis added] " (Adam, 1975, p. 134).

By showing a very concrete image, the narrator stirs readers' emotions and suggests the truthfulness of fiction. Motte (2007) believes that this engaging technique is the "invocation of a commonality of experience, the suggestion that author, character, and reader are somehow linked and have something to share" (p. 193). The reader who is engaged in the narrative and identifies with the narratee (voice) is, now, on the same plane with the narrator. Therefore the world of the characters is indirectly linked to the world of the narrator and the intradiegetic and extradiegetic worlds get close to each other. Thus the worlds of pure narrative and mimesis, narrative and story are on the same plane. The narrator's dialogue with Adam attests this saying.

The following examples illustrate the analytic and dramatic realisms respectively:

The picture we are apt to make of Methodism in our imagination is not an amphitheater of green hills, or the deep shade of broad-leaved sycamores, where a crowd of rough men and weary-hearted women drank in a faith which was a rudimentary culture, which linked their thoughts with the past, lifted their imagination above the sordid details of their own narrow lives, and suffused their souls with the sense of a pitying, loving, infinite Presence, sweet as summer to the houseless needy. It is too possible that to some of my readers Methodism may mean nothing more than low-pitched gables up dingy streets, sleek grocers, sponging preachers, and hypocritical jargon—elements which are regarded as an exhaustive analysis of Methodism in many fashionable quarters. (*Adam Bede*, p. 35)

And

It was then she thought of her locket and earrings, and seeing her pocket lie near, she reached it and spread the contents on the bed before her. . . . She had

no longing to put them in her ears now: her head with its dark rings of hair lay back languidly on the pillow, and the sadness that rested about her brow and eyes was something too hard for regretful *memory*. . . . Yes, she could surely get some money for her ornaments: those Arthur had given her must have cost a great deal of money. (*Adam Bede*, p. 387)

Adam (1975) argues that "The analytic realism is more tough-minded than the pictorial." The aim of analytic realism is to perceive realities overlooked by "lazy or conventional habits of thought" (p. 135). The dramatic realism reminds the reader of the past events and their *consequences*. These two kinds of realism are seen in different shapes, sometimes in the form of social and historical realism, sometimes in the form of morality (George Eliot's world of cause and effect). Kreisel (2003) suggests that the tracing of actions and then their consequences is "an awareness of the far-reaching repercussions on our fellow human beings" (p. 556).

George Eliot's view of man's life and of nature follows the doctrine of *consequences*, the scientific view of nature as the impersonal working of *cause and effect*. Coovadia (2002) remarks that "Eliot emphasizes the mutually entangling consequences of activity" (825). Therefore, every action has its own consequences and those characters deviating Eliot's morality are harmed. George Levine (2001) believes that "the contrast between individual desire and moral responsibility is a recurring theme of all her work and an almost inevitable corollary of the realist's program" (p. 11). For instance, despite Irwin's stress on *individual responsibility*, on the fact that the choice is *within* man, Arthur refers to his problem as external. He says that he is mastered by love, and he is betrayed into doing things. Arthur sees himself as a victim of natural process rather than as a man with free will. Therefore, he is disgraced and exiled. Adam's harshness is chastened, Hetty who "has less of God in her," (Van Ghent, 1965, p. 284) suffers and learns. Both Hetty's and Arthur's great mistake is their failure to imagine that the consequences of

their actions could affect anyone other than themselves. Dolin (2005) suggests that for Eliot "individual freedom tempered by responsibility," is the source of a good society (p. 111).

George Eliot's reference to didactic realism is explicit in analytic realism and implicit in dramatic realism. In the course of the conversation between Arthur and Mr. Irwine, though the latter fails to intrude into the former's secrets, he echoes the earlier words of the narrator in declaring that "consequences are hardly ever confined to ourselves . . . and it is best to fix our minds on that certainty" (*Adam Bede*, p. 172). Maitzen (2005) believes that "often, a writer's ability to generate morality without resorting to didacticism becomes the measure of true literary greatness" (p. 168). In dramatic realism based on the characters' actions and their consequences, the reader implicitly gets the moral message as it is the case in the story of Arthur and Hetty. Maitzen (2005) comes to this point that the "development of sympathy through realistic representation is the truly ethical influence because it leaves the final power of judgment with the reader" (p. 168).

Maitzen (2005) argues that moral lessons were the inseparable principle in the novels of the Victorian time; he believes that art was "not simply for art's sake but ought to have some higher purpose than distraction and entertainment" (p. 164). In his view, the Victorian art, generally, is the combination of purpose with pleasure. These elements in different forms *maximize the realism* of the novel and therefore, reduce the distance between the world of the characters and the world of the narrator. Their worlds are as real as the world in which every action has its own consequence (the real world). Man has free will and so do the characters, and as the reader is engaged in the world of the narratee and in the extradiegetic world, the reader also feels close to the world of characters.

George Eliot claims that "women can produce novels not only fine, but among the very finest; - novels, too, that have a precious specialty, lying quite apart from masculine aptitudes and experience" (qtd. in Walder, p. 25). She, like other women writers of the Victorian age, hopes

to extend the referentiality of her fiction, to make it accurately mirror and concretely affect the real world. She explains what it means to her to be a novelist: "My function is that of aesthetic not doctrinal teacher—the rousing of the nobler emotions, which make mankind desire the social right, not the prescribing of social measures" (qtd. in Warhol, 1987, p. 173).

3. Conclusion

The combination of Genette and Warhol's theories helps improve the theory of difference between men's and women's writings in the Victorian context. Warhol's emphasis is on Genette's voice or narrator and she tries to show that the direct, earnest address came to function in Victorian novels as a sign of feminine presence. We have added to what she says by drawing upon Genette's *mood* consisting of narrator and details. Discussing mood in *Adam Bede*, a realistic novel, reinforces Warhol's theory and puts emphasis on the female strategy employed in the novel. Thus voice functions as one of the distinguishing elements between men's and women's texts and mood functions as the reinforcing element highlighting the difference. So the contribution of this paper is the use of Warhol's discourse by drawing upon Genette's mood and relating it to the engaging strategies used by women writers of the Victorian period.

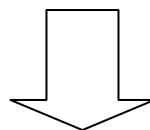
In the discourse of Genette's *mood*, which is our contribution to the discourse of the engaging narrator, a narrator who intervenes to distance the story from the narration. But it has been explained that not every narrator who intervenes to address a narratee makes distance. This problem has been solved by reference to the realistic elements in *Adam Bede* which brings the story near to the narrative and consequently the reader to the story. Genette distinguishes between story and narrative. Therefore, the discourse of mood adds to Warhol's theory by applying other elements effective in engaging the reader with the characters of the story and consequently reinforcing the engaging techniques. Besides narrator, detail creates Genette's mood and it has an important role in

making a realistic atmosphere through the story and engages the reader in both narrative and story. The role of sympathy in *Adam Bede* is so much that sheds light on details as well as the intrusive narrator (main features of mood) and aligns them to reinforce the engaging strategies used mainly by Victorian women writers.

George Eliot demands the reader's sympathy, the one that spills over from the realm of the fiction and "transform the world through the same kind of feminine 'influence' that domestic ideology promoted" (Warhol, 1987, p. 180). Dan Shen believes that feminist narratology "has played a pioneering and significant role in preserving and enriching formal narrative poetics" (p. 146). Therefore, by analyzing *Adam Bede* as a sample in the light of feminist narratology, it is shown that the earnest, direct address came to function in Victorian novels as a sign of feminine presence and as a gesture of connection between the worlds inside and outside the text. To summarize what was said before, the relation between Genette's *distance* (mood) and *voice* in *Adam Bede* is drawn here:

Mood: (Genette's theory) Details ↑ ↔ Realistic elements ↑ ⇒
Distance (between story and narrative) ↓

Voice → Narrator (Warhol's theory) Engaging narrator → Realistic elements ⇒ Distance (between reader and narratee) ↓



By joining these two theories we get a more comprehensive one. Thus, the reader actively takes part in both the *narrative* and *story* (Genette distinguishes between narrative and story.). The women writers of the Victorian period, including George Eliot, could achieve their goals by engaging the reader in the narrative to hear women's voice. Therefore, writing fiction was a *platform* from which woman could speak and express themselves.

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