Conceptual Metaphors of Anger
and Embodied Realism
in *Middlemarch*

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George Eliot's *Middlemarch* is replete with conceptual metaphors, many of which are familiar and carry deep emotional resonance. The recurrence of widespread and broadly familiar conceptual metaphors in this influential novel suggest them to be a major characteristic feature of Eliot's technique. This figurative manner of expression is both a signature discursive structure constituting part of the formal properties of the text's realist aesthetics, and also an indication of Eliot's intuitive creativity at work: her capacity to produce a familiar sensation via conventional language structures. Part of this reliance on metaphor arises from the established conventions in which Eliot works. The nineteenth-century realistic novel preserves, and highlights, a subconscious, normalized linguistic regularity, and therefore draws attention to itself as a genre that establishes its essential distinctiveness, to a considerable degree, through the cultivation and foregrounding of its metaphoric conventionality.

Such orthodoxy of expression is not only a matter of habit, but is also experiential, in that metaphors can become conventional because they reflect the embodied experience of being in the world. For example, in *Middlemarch*, the prototypical figurative model of anger, one of the most evidently embodied emotions, which Eliot extends in original ways, usually has its basis in 'the universal embodiment of anger'.[1] Its external

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[1] Kövecses, 'Cross-Cultural Experience of Anger: A Psycholinguistic Analysis,' 157.

manifestation therefore is in recognizable facial,[2] gestural,[3] and vocal expressions.[4] The linguistically-revealed embodiment of the novelistic discourse of anger is contended here to be a re-enactment of a cluster of beliefs about properties of anger. They are characterized, on the one hand, physiologically by 'muscle tension, general restlessness, an increase in heart rate and the face feeling hot';[5] and on the other hand, behaviourally by 'self-assertion, ranging from statements of appropriate self-assertion and defense of one's self to harmful aggressive actions',[6] impaired judgement,[7] and also a tendency to 'lose self-control and to act on impulse and without reflection'.[8] The broad understanding of anger in terms of different, but familiar, kinds of natural response patterns leads to the assumption that the origin of anger metaphors in *Middlemarch* resides in the way people are biologically hard-wired to react to anger-eliciting events. Because novelistic discourse comes to rely on pervasive conventional metaphors, many of which express embodied emotion, such expressions become an identifiable

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[2] Darwin first suggested (*The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*) and modern authority on facial behaviour seems to agree (Ekman, Friesen and Ellsworth [*Emotion in the Human Face*]; Ekman [*Emotions Revealed*]; and Izard [*The Face of Emotion*; *Human Emotions*]) that basic emotions (such as joy, anger, fear, disgust and sadness) have a reliably recognizable facial signature across cultures.

[3] The emblematic gestural expression of anger has been reported to involve 'an impulse to move forward toward the target of anger', and also a tendency to prepare hands with an intention to strike. (Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, 135, 26). These highly recognizable bodily movements, perceived to be oriented towards inflicting harm, 'show that angry feelings are paralleled by aggression-related motor impulses.' Berkowitz, 'Anger,' 425.

[4] One of the most characteristic features of anger recognized across cultures is the high-pitched tone of voice such as that produced during yelling, shouting or screaming. Green, Whitney and Gustafson (in 'Vocal Expressions of Anger'), demonstrate that there is a considerable similarity in the ways people vocally express anger worldwide.

For a convincing argument that the vocal expression of emotions is, like facial, subject to universal recognition, see also Banse and Scherer, 'Acoustic Profiles in Vocal Emotion Expression.'

[5] Berkowitz, 'Anger,' 412.

[6] Schultz, Grodack and Izard, 'State and Trait Anger, Fear, and Social Information Processing,' 312.

[7] See, for example, Kolts, 19–20; and also Seneca's view of anger as inhibiting rational faculties, referenced by Spielberger and Reheiser, 'The Nature and Measurement of Anger,' 404.

[8] Potegal, 'The Temporal Dynamics of Anger: Phenomena, Processes, and Perplexities,' 386.

quality of the novel, an integral part of its textual apparatus, instinctively deployed as a representational strategy[9] and a generic hallmark of that expressive mode.

Eliot uses and develops these embodied expressions of anger in new and motivated ways, which is to say she deftly experiments with conceptual metaphors to drive and bolster a number of salient features of her narrative, most typically the social and psychological realities of her characters, whose affective worlds are carefully crafted for moral use in the story. But, despite this individualistic deployment of conceptual metaphors for anger, Eliot nevertheless relies on easily recognizable and distinctly embodied schemas which take part in the representation of reality precisely as a result of this universal familiarity. It is proposed here that the language of a realistic narrative, such as *Middlemarch*, can be understood in terms of its aptness to project coherent patterns of embodied experience imprinted on the (English-speaking) mind. In turn, such a novel can be seen as a cultural map of embodied emotional experience—a particularly useful resource for the reconstruction of mental representations of enduring anger concepts.

In order to explore this line of inquiry, this article will examine conceptual metaphors used by Eliot to express anger. The consistency of conceptual metaphors of anger in *Middlemarch* suggests a non-coincidental and non-trivial conceptualization of this emotion that arises from the perceived symptoms of embodied anger—the involuntary mounting of bodily heat proportionate to the experienced intensity of the emotion. When mimetic instances of the experience of anger are communicated, the actual physiology of anger seems to influence Eliot's cognition, or to prime it— and probably other writers' too, given the particularly strong biological basis of this emotion—to conceive of anger characteristically as that which, like temperature itself, has the potential to rise and fall. This mentally rehearsed property of anger is in turn intuitively expected to guide the linguistic representation of this emotion, offering an indication of the way the Victorians metaphorically created, and were controlled by, an emotional reality, structured by these biological patterns. In other words, Eliot tends to use figurative language that configures a typically angry person to have features similar to that of a container under pressure, capable of retaining

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[9] Conceptual metaphors, according to the influential theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), are the product of a cognitive processing that functions in ways that we are largely unconscious of. Turner succinctly expresses this idea: 'Constructions have intricate structure and systematic principles that we know intuitively but not consciously.' ('Figure,' 58).

accumulated energy up to the critical release point. The embodied conceptual metaphor here is that a person is a pressurized container, and in turn, anger is imagined as the heated fluid in the container that expands and causes the pressure to rise.

The recognition of the very conventional nature of such habitual forms of expression might lead to the conception of a literary creativity that is of relatively limited conceptual potential, where the metaphorical representation of mental states is more or less restricted by a consistently mechanistic, physiologically-based imagination. The principle of conceptual restriction to which the novel adheres is the consequence not only of automatic bodily responses, but also of the ways of thinking that have become customary both within a particular cultural situation, and also in an individual mind. But along with this inherent conceptual limitation of novelistic discourse comes its particularly persuasive power. When readers recognize the basic metaphorical conceptualization of an emotion—its representative 'image schema'—they are automatically involved in the associated meanings that this conceptualization engenders, and hence are more readily inclined to accept, and even be guided, by them.[10] Conventional conceptual metaphors can thereby be rhetorically deployed specifically for didactic purposes. As Victorian writers used novels, amongst other implicit purposes, as a vehicle for reflecting and even encouraging high standards of conduct, a recourse to conceptual metaphor was a key linguistic strategy for the endorsement of the ethic of self-regulation and the concomitant promulgation of the disparagement of excessively fiery behaviour, an aim encoded in Eliot's linguistic choices.

The narrative tendency to reflect the embodiment of emotions through the pervasive use of figurative language does not, however, equate to a denial of Eliot's creative engagement, or detract in any way from the accepted literary brilliance of *Middlemarch*. Scholars of Eliot's oeuvre have invested much of their critical energy in examining her masterful and original use of metaphor (the early experimentation with which appears in her religious letters as the young Mary Anne Evans[11]). It would be hard to dispute Jan Jędrzejewski's evaluation of *Middlemarch* as a text whose unity of design is uniquely dependent for its success on consciously contrived figurative ensembles:

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[10] On 'image schema', see Turner, 'Figure,' esp. his discussion of the concept of 'iconicity,' 49–51.

[11] See Henry, 3.

> The immense diversity of themes and motifs that constitute the
> world of *Middlemarch* is held together by elaborate patterns of
> imagery integrating all elements of the novel and functioning on
> a number of levels, from individual, localized metaphors and
> similes embedded in the texture of George Eliot's prose to
> broader symbolic structures of the plot and characterization.[12]

Eliot's use of metaphors and imagery, across time and space, has been
studied in terms of their complexity, scope,[13] and also with reference to 'how
they function as a compressed form of exposition',[14] thereby establishing
their relevance to the composite of narrative method. The perceived finesse
and calculated unity of her linguistic representation, a discursive technique
of levels of quality attributed to Shakespeare,[15] long ago provoked Barbara
Hardy to form the conclusion that her creative language reflects an artistic
meticulousness which 'we are more willing to give to the medium of poetry
than to the medium of the prose narrative'.[16]

Eliot's metaphors, more often than not, seem to be the result of a
deliberate demand for stylistic perfection, but when Eliot famously labours
to sustain the visual image of Dorothea's marriage in terms of motifs of
confinement,[17] or when she consistently configures Maggie's conflicts of

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[12] Jędrzejewski, 77.

[13] For example, for an excellent discussion of Eliot's intricate metaphorical
weavings in *Middlemarch* and other novels, see Hardy, *George Eliot: A Critic's
Biography*, esp. Chapter 6, 'Objects, Words and Metaphors,' 147–64. Paxman
makes a convincing case for the way the linguistic significance of knowledge
metaphors in *Middlemarch* can be broadened when supplemented by a
consideration of the novel as inseparable from mechanisms of the cognitive system.
('Metaphor and Knowledge in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*').

[14] Gorbunova references B. R. Naptsok's dissertation (1997) to give an example of
an increased focus of Russian literary scholars on Eliot's artistic technique.
Gorbunova, 'George Eliot in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia (1917–
2014),' 282.

[15] Images of the mirror and the labyrinth in *Middlemarch* are the ones most
energetically interpreted.

[16] Hardy, 'Imagery in George Eliot's Last Novels,' 14.

[17] On how metaphors and metonymies of imprisonment figure in literary texts,
amongst them in George Eliot's 'Janet's Repentance,' *Scenes of Clerical Life* and
Felix Holt, see Fludernik, 'The Metaphorics and Metonymics of Carcerality.' The
association of marriage with enclosure is supplied, at least in part, by the female
experience of living within the restricting confines of Victorian patriarchy.
Fludernik argues that, through the traditional metaphor 'MARRIAGE AS PRISON',

emotions and ultimate destiny as running parallel with the flow of the river in *The Mill on the Floss*,[18] the figurative threads indicate more than their thematic significance; articulate more than wider social and psychological issues with which Eliot was engaging; and disclose more than that 'fertility of invention characteristic of the best Victorian fiction'.[19] Rather, they register linguistic instantiations of shared, deep-seated cultural models of concepts and ordinary ways of thinking about them. Eliot's creation of these analogies might have a poetic dimension, but it also has a commonplace source of origin. Dorothea's and Maggie's mental struggles are metaphorically anchored in basic figurative expressions that 'are part of those conceptual resources, part of the way members of a culture make sense of the world'.[20] The characters' psychological condition is imaginatively enacted fundamentally via extremely typical conventional metaphors: respectively, marriage is a prison and life is a river. These conventional metaphors function as a conceptual prime, and as such exert a profound influence on the limits in terms of which concepts such as marriage or life can be understood and from which may emerge an immense diversity of artistic elaborations. Similar to the creative principle of poetic discourse, 'authors may call upon our knowledge of basic conceptual metaphors in order to manipulate them in unusual ways'.[21] So, although Eliot's intricately-spun metaphorical webs are indicative of her contemplated effort to unify the recurring images of life and marriage for emotional impact, the conceptual templates to which these images continually make reference are, in the words of L. David Ritchie, conspicuously flat, unoriginal and already

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Wollstonecraft and George Eliot 'foreground the domination of women by their husbands, exposing the trappings of marital felicity as contemptuous fondling (the spaniel) or disguised subjection.' (241). In support of this idea, I would recommend reading Tadlock's brief essay on boredom as arising in marriage from 'the confinement that comes as a result of conforming to the feminine sphere.' ('Boredom and Marriage in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*,' 82).

[18] On this point, see Rubin, 'River Imagery as a Means of Foreshadowing in *The Mill on the Floss*' and also Makurath Jr., 'The Symbolism of the Flood in Eliot's *Mill on the Floss*.' Sadrin (in 'Time, Tense, Weather in Three 'Flood Novels'') has made a different observation with respect to the metaphoric function of the flood. Unlike in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, where 'A simple allusion to the Flood can be a short-cut to a tragic *dénouement* or a means of solemnizing events that otherwise would appear as mere accidents' (98), water deluge in *The Mill on the Floss* is perceived more as 'a means for the novelist of preventing the future of the heroine from being too disastrous.' (103–4).

[19] Bennett, 162.

[20] Lakoff and Turner, 26.

[21] Ibid., 54.

absorbed.[22] Considerations of how the traditional metaphors in Eliot's novel have a conceptual core prompt speculation and reflection upon the scope and limitations of narrative imagination, and have profound implications for thinking about the importance of conceptual metaphor in revising the list of generic features of realist aesthetics. But the novel is not thought to distinguish itself from other literary forms fundamentally due to the connection it establishes between conventional metaphoric language and realist representation; the point is rather that any theory of literary realism can be developed and nuanced by acknowledging the fact that this connection exists and that it typifies the genre.

Literary scholars who work on metaphors in literary texts have tended to focus on a combination of metaphor and literary theories, and their analyses have fruitfully functioned to trace in literary discourse—whether poetry or prose—either a particular imaginative use of language, or a tendency of the literary text to display an intrinsic figurative stagnation. What has been achieved, as a result of these cognitive-linguistic ventures, is a fairly flexible methodology capable of accommodating, and often reconciling, competing insights from Conceptual Metaphor Theory variously utilized to comment on the potential of literature to make manifest mental models that fundamentally underlie all creativity. In this context, this article has a double scope. Firstly, it participates in an ongoing cognitivist project of theorizing metaphor as a basis of human understanding, by providing textual evidence for the claim that the structure of literary language reflects an inventory of conceptual schemas that the reader automatically and effortlessly activates to comprehend metaphorically encoded information about the experience of fictional emotions. And secondly, it puts forward an argument that is of particular value in the highly specialized field of narrative realism: that conceptual metaphor has a special prominence in realistic prose as a representational strategy that is both characteristic of the genre and also acts as a structured and highly powerful vehicle for driving narrative meaning.

When talking about the pervasiveness of conceptual metaphor in the novel, it is important not to draw any simple analogies between the actual language that we ordinarily speak and the literary language. Conceptual metaphors of anger like those deployed by Eliot in *Middlemarch* are products of artistic construction in the sense that they are always subject to the author's aesthetic and rhetorical choices, and as such they always

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[22] Ritchie, 1–13.

necessarily belong in the linguistic texture of the narrative. The literary context thus can only be expected to betray 'an authorial presence . . . that attunes the reader's attention to what is written, mirroring the authorial attention to detail and structure. The literary artefact is highly intentional, and this makes a difference for the reading experience'.[23] On the other hand, although the intentionality of the language used entails an increased artistic assiduity and highlights its concomitant interest in its own creative reception,[24] the linguistic impulse of the novel is not towards idiosyncrasy of expression. Eliot did not reach out for her metaphors from the depths of her creative mind to foreground her originality by dotting her novelistic landscape with linguistic quirks; rather, she used metaphoric language subconsciously, retrieved from a pool of already existing conceptualizations of emotions and modes of cognition, grounded 'in patterns of what we take to be habitual and routine experience, both biological and social, that [she knew] unconsciously and in rich interactional detail, because [she lived] these patterns'.[25] This recognition enforces the idea that realist discourse is not entirely the product of a type of imaginative thinking that is distinctly innovative, but is rather motivated, to a large extent, by the physiological and socio-cultural facts of our human existence encoded in everyday metaphors.

The metaphorical language of the novel can be analyzed in a similar way as figurative expressions that occur in real speech, because cognitive interpretive abilities that readers activate to process narrative metaphors (although usually below the horizon of their conscious awareness) emanate from readers' 'real' bodily/biological and socio-cultural experience. Thus the principle of mimetic construction is linked to a simulated consciousness that displays 'no rupture in experience between perceiving, feeling and thinking'.[26] One striking instance of the novel's establishing a link between a physiological reaction and a particular, quite standard, metonymic emotion image is when Dorothea enrages Casaubon by denouncing his work as fruitless during their first quarrel in marriage. After delivering this blow of

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[23] Brandt and Brandt, 'Cognitive Poetics and Imagery,' 125.

[24] Brandt and Brandt offer a comment in this connection to the effect that the more pronounced the shadow of an author and the greater artistic enigma of a literary text, the stronger the demand for an increased interpretive mobility on the part of the reader: 'A text vested with heightened attention calls for a reading vested with heightened attention. The more authorial awareness is present in the text, the more worthwhile the reading of it is.' ('Cognitive Poetics and Imagery,' 125).

[25] Lakoff and Turner, 59.

[26] Johnson and Rohrer, 'We are Live Creatures,' 22.

criticism, she notices that his 'face had a *quick angry flush* upon it'. He opens his reproachful speech with a patronizing tag 'My love', and then continues 'with *irritation reined in* by propriety'.[27] Here, conceptual metonymy[28] calls attention to the assumed structure flushing stands for anger, accorded by the standard rule of metonymy, as articulated fully by Kövecses.[29] An essential biological attribute of anger—heat—constitutes a basis for this metonymic representation of this emotion. The physiological pattern mentally schematizes a human being as resembling a hydraulic pressure system in which the temperature of fluids progressively rises and which, upon reaching a critical point, has to be violently released. This gradual accumulation of energy when in an agitated state allows anger to be linguistically gradated, 'from mild irritation or annoyance to intense fury and rage'.[30] In the subsequent metaphor that features in the passage, irritation is configured as held back, with a possible significance to act as a shortcut to cultural sanctions against socially inappropriate anger displays. Hence for Eliot to metaphorically describe Casaubon's irritation as consciously inhibited (at least insofar as a proper sense of decorum bids him to control his emotion) is to attribute to him a virtue of self-restraint, via the metaphor of irritation is a horse that needs to be controlled. Presumably, the self is doing that controlling in both instances, a conscious suppression that counters the unintentional escape of both anger and irritation. The metonymic and metaphoric depiction respectively of anger and annoyance is realistic, not because it 'mirrors' natural emotional behaviours, but because it comes to establish a level of believability by immediately making sense in a narrative situation, allowing the reader to absorb the conceptual metonymy/metaphor instantaneously. It is precisely because of its intuitive preoccupation with essentially 'naturalized' language (textually reproducing—or imitating—authentic speech acts that feature 'spontaneous metaphorical expressions as they are encountered in concrete uncontrolled language use'[31]), that the novel is proposed here to take on an agency of realism: it physically records the conceptual underpinning of metaphorical language, and betokens the way the reader's mind is naturally hardwired to process that language.

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[27] Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 200, hereafter designated as *M*. As in this example, italics will be used to indicate metaphoric/metonymic expressions of anger.

[28] Oster offers a definition: 'In the lexical approach to the study of emotions, we speak of conceptual metonymy when an emotion is represented by its physiological effects or by the behavioural reactions it generates.' ('Using Corpus Methodology for Semantic and Pragmatic Analyses,' 741).

[29] See Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*.

[30] Spielberger and Reheiser, 'The Nature and Measurement of Anger,' 403.

[31] Steen, 'Identifying Metaphor in Language,' 386.

The presumed familiarity of readers with conventional metaphoric expression is reflected by their demonstrated ability to understand it. In the mindset of the literary reader, the novelist takes for granted their internalized metaphorical structures, and is expected to have implicitly invited a construction of an analogy between authentic and fictional discourse when reading. What is notoriously significant is the organic interrelatedness of a fictional (literary) metaphor with the 'real' metaphor (that is, produced by real people in real life contexts)—there are, the argument holds, cogent resemblances between two distinct realms of shared conceptual understanding. Narrative realism functions such to take a whole range of familiar (and normalized over time) conventional metaphors as input, and to construct their mimetic equivalents as output. This cognitive interchange makes it possible for the conceptual output to be perceived as input, allowing imitative metaphors and metonymies 'to take the reader a short cut to very complex scripts, scenarios and cultural frames which can be evoked with the strokes of a brush'.[32] The realist novel can thereby catalogue English modes of cognition by creating mimetic mental models that account for the life-likeness it bestows.

A consideration of the novel's conventional metaphoric language allows us to allocate a crucial, if not representative, characteristic of the genre that contributes to its reality effect. Such a line of inquiry, moreover, permits a consideration, with the assistance of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, of how generic realist narrative conventions are transformed and expanded upon at a linguistic level, a creative zone that interacts with culturally specific image schemas and mental models. One of the recognized cognitive exploits of the novel is its ability to invite an emotional response from the reader. Several theorists focus the explicit goal of realist fiction to engage readers emotionally, each differently addressing the deeper problem, indeed the psychological oddity, of how it happens at all that we feel any emotions towards characters that we know to be imaginary. Broadly, we can discern amongst a variety of approaches two strands. In the first strand, a realist narrative has been perceived as engaged in the process of constructing a 'sense of character as person',[33] recruiting an emotional connection with the fictional character by using the representational technique of presenting the imaginary with the plausibility and credibility of the real. Taken as such, novels do not contrive to depict characters as though they were real people

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[32] Fludernik, 'The Metaphorics and Metonymics of Carcerality,' 242.
[33] Nash, 14.

with real emotional instincts, but rather to project human figures with personalities, frailties and motivations that correlate closely enough with those of the real people to then be taken as such. This evocative capacity of the genre conforms to ideas fundamentally encapsulated within the concept of what Marie-Laure Ryan has suitably termed 'embedded narratives', encompassing 'any story-like representation produced in the mind of a character and reproduced in the mind of the reader',[34] which stresses the centrality of the novel's desire to deliver human simulations: 'intelligent beings who produce a variety of mental representations such as beliefs, wishes, projections, intents, obligations, dreams, and fantasies'.[35] Our affective response to fictional characters thus consists in a novelist's construction of humanlike behaviours and emotional states, and the reader processing this information as that belonging to 'persons, real persons' without ever assuming 'that they are real persons', in Radford and Weston's configuration.[36]

The second strand to reading literary emotions has mainly been developed to add theoretical weight to the first. Amy Coplan, for example, has re-examined and consolidated empirical research on narrative affect to resolve the confusion associated with the customary ascription of 'empathy' towards, or 'identification' with, characters of a novel as an indispensable component in fictional realism, offering a theoretical adjustment in the form of the introduction of a concept known as 'self-other differentiation'.[37] Most influential has been her distinction between 'empathy' and 'sympathy', which Radford and Weston probably had in mind when formulating their pioneering theory about the potential of the novel to involve the reader into its emotional scenarios. For Coplan, 'sympathy' is that which 'involves caring about another individual—feeling *for* another'.[38] It is essentially the non-'get 'inside' the other'[39] affiliation with someone who experiences a difficult emotional moment. In the case of sympathy, people show 'concern for another's well-being' without sharing their emotions. Sympathy is thus separated from 'empathy', the latter which Coplan defines as the affective state that occurs when we 'take up [another's] psychological perspective and imaginatively experience, to some degree or other, what he or she

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[34] Ryan, 'Embedded Narratives and Tellability,' 320.

[35] Ibid., 320.

[36] Radford and Weston, 'How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?' 78.

[37] Coplan, 'Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions,' 144.

[38] Ibid., 145, italics in original.

[39] Davis, 5.

experiences'.[40] Empathizing with fictional characters thus involves the enactment of the characters' primary condition, 'by *pretending* to be in their "mental shoe"',[41] whilst simultaneously preserving a separate version of one's own experience—an essentially simulation-oriented theory that does not depart far from that of Radford and Weston.

To rationalize fictional emotions as reconstituted real affect (because readers recognize fictional characters' emotions to be *like* their own, and verify them against their own evocative stimuli) has been instrumental in strengthening the novel's claim to be realistic. When we understand that connecting fictional language with real-world language of emotion relies on conventional metaphorical language to produce an imitative mental state, then we discover more about the mechanics of narrative realism. Particularly relevant to this project is the emphasis on the role of conceptual metaphor in the creation of literary realism, specifically as a result of the universal embodied experience that underpins such metaphoric expression. Such emphasis can be construed as a response to the appeal of F. Elizabeth Hart working in the field of Cognitive Linguistics, who, aware of how increasingly sophisticated and multi-pronged the study of literary texts is rapidly becoming, insists upon 'the possible relevance of cognitive linguistics to literary studies',[42] recommending an interpretive approach that takes advantage of 'a new, metaphor-centered model of language . . . one that situates the subject within its material world both inside *and outside* the text'.[43] In other words, insights from Cognitive Linguistics, which Hart recognizes particularly valuable in discussions of literary texts, have created a window of opportunity to explain how the novel's recourse to basic, readily comprehensible metaphors participates in framing the mechanisms of realist aesthetics, technically 'by positing the nature of language as a cognitive and not a transcendental phenomenon, and by showing language to be imaginatively *embodied*'.[44]

This article has two aims: to de-emphasize the novel's innovative metaphor usage, and to consider its language more as a product of experiential cognition that confines meaning to a largely subconscious awareness of biological universals—precisely to investigate what makes the

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[40] Coplan, 143.

[41] Gallese, Ferrari and Umiltà, 'The Mirror Matching System,' 36, italics in original.

[42] Hart, 'Cognitive Linguistics,' 3.

[43] Ibid., 2, italics in original.

[44] Ibid., 2, italics in original.

realist novel realistic. Thus what I will call 'embodied realism', as a mark of differentiation from all other existing theories of literary realism, is one that acknowledges a discourse that activates reading that switches between two levels of awareness: the first—'bio-(pre)perceptual'—which involves an acknowledgement (tacitly but nevertheless) of our own bodily responsiveness to an emotional stimuli; and the second—'narrative-reflective'—requiring establishing the point of maximal convergence of realistic/imagined and probable/real emotional scenarios, and thereby reducing the distance between the two ontologically separate worlds. Engaged reading derives from an embodied realism that is encoded within linguistic form via metaphorical means. Cultural models of emotions embedded in conceptual metaphors compel the reader to keep track of the embodied nature of their own emotional states, thereby orchestrating an empathetic response to fictional characters. Readers are textually cued to select from a range of possible emotions the ones that are most appropriate to the fictional situation being communicated. This logic precludes interpretive misfits and is most appropriate to the fictional situation being expressed. Such frameworks are thereby as much signals of particular emotions that fictional characters undergo, as organizing procedures for rendering them intelligible in a narrative context.

A consideration of the figurative language in *Middlemarch* aims to illuminate how Eliot subconsciously engages with conventional anger conceptualizations, in order to communicate to her readers the ethical messages of her own social/cultural milieu. In particular, it will be shown how Eliot in her aesthetic effort to propagate a concept of anger as a breach of etiquette educates her audiences to regulate their angry emotions through the metaphorical representation of that regulation as a laudable characteristic of English civilized society. Eliot's standard metaphoric language for analyzing demonstrations of anger serves as a visual reminder of the shared responsibility of individuals to effectively control this emotion when it strikes. What these common anger images seem to suggest is Eliot's interest in the linguistic enactment of the cultural scripts that describe appropriate anger behaviours (a culture's own '*display rules*'[45] in the form of 'role performances'[46]) to be learned, and ideally, acted out under trying circumstances. The ideal behaviour, in her ethical schema, involves cultivating emotional states that reflect and are driven by rational thoughts

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[45] Display rules, Ekman explains, 'are socially learned, often culturally different, rules about the management of expression, about who can show which emotion to whom and when they can do so.' (*Emotions Revealed*, 4, italics in original).
[46] Matsumoto and Wilson, 'Culture, Emotion, and Motivation,' 541.

and moderation. Of course, Eliot, as an English writer, and as a promulgator of realist aesthetics in particular, was not completely at liberty to invent radically new ways of conceptually representing socially-prescribed norms about the expression of anger. Her formation of ideas of self-control in *Middlemarch* will be shown to be principally based on instantly familiar configurations of anger—most prominently, but not exclusively, in terms of boiling or burning—that are mainly inspired by a reliance on analogies with the physical body, and produced reflexively rather than consciously or highly creatively.

The figurative representations of anger are both conceptually recognisable and discursively creative. The result is a paradox of familiar innovation, which achieves embodied recognition as well as distinctive literary potency. For example, Eliot clearly depicts anger of a resentful kind in *Middlemarch* in her presentation of the emotional behaviour of Dorothea. Eliot's use of this specific anger variant for both characterization and mood development is enhanced by a range of metaphoric elaborations, grounded in the longstanding belief that anger is prone to explode, to manifest itself as a sudden rush that is difficult to stop. Already during her honeymoon, Dorothea is disappointed with Casaubon's emotional placidity, and is depressed by the prosaic servitude to which he has reduced her by commanding an intellectual debasement. Her marital expectations thwarted, Dorothea realizes that her initial perception of 'some spiritual communion' (*M* 22) with Casaubon was false, and this pang of awakening leads her to 'becoming more and more aware, with a certain terror, that her mind was continually sliding into inward *fits of anger* or repulsion, or else into forlorn weariness' (*M* 196). Further, in using the expression 'fits of anger' here, which could be construed as an instance of the conceptual formulae anger is an illness, the narrator hints that Dorothea's quick temper is a symptom of psychological deficiency, or lack of individual control. It is thereby implied that Dorothea is conditioned by social conventions to contain her 'inward fire' (*M* 14), to constantly monitor her emotional thermometer, the compulsory task the narrator repeatedly emphasizes to be contradictory to her nature, and the resulting impulses her flaw, at least in comparison with her more congenial sister Celia. Collectively, these expressions suggest that Dorothea and Casaubon's marriage is a combustible one, and this evaluation can be made by way of extracting from a conventionally intricate metaphorical/metonymic pattern elements that make up the atmosphere of conflict. Dorothea, often against herself, shifts to making peace, motivated, it is implied, by an awareness of how an outburst of anger can generate destructive energy in a marriage. Her intentionally calculated anger

discipline may be conceptualized metaphorically as a monitored release: 'anger can be let out under control',[47] a figurative category that can be modified, by conceptual analogy, to encompass deliberate restraint. The proposed extension of this principal metaphor—anger can be controllably suppressed—signifies Dorothea's conscious suppression of this emotion in pursuit of domestic harmony:

> There had been no clashing of temper between Dorothea and her husband since that little explosion in Rome, which had left such strong traces in her mind that it had been easier ever since to *quell emotion* than to incur the consequence of *venting it*. (*M* 282)

Clearly the passage uses conventional language, which is a metaphoric seesaw of anger suppression and release: through Dorothea's psychological resolve, a very specific—and rather predictable—chain of highly uniform anger conceptualizations is established (denoted by the persistence of this binary configuration). This chain places the reader under a condition of expectation. Once she returns home from her wedding journey, Dorothea is no longer capable of basing her attitude toward her husband on her respect for his superior knowledge and to continue the relationship in blind reverence. In the concomitant absence of emotional intimacy, her marriage becomes a sacrificial quest for devotion and understanding, a moral endeavour to respond in sympathy to her husband's emotional and, it is hinted, sexual limitations. Intellectual and spiritual needs not being met, she commits herself to a life of emotional celibacy, adopting the role of a dutiful wife-martyr. So, the more then she is frustrated by Casaubon's distrust in her pure intentions when he imposes on her his jealous prohibitions of her seeing Will Ladislaw, her confidant, but also, after all, his family relative. Frustration is bound to trigger Dorothea's righteous anger, and as she comes to see her husband as 'stupidly undiscerning and odiously unjust' (*M* 282), the metaphor anger is bad weather inside a person gives us a clue that she has reached the most dangerous level of this emotion, beyond which it is impossible for her to '*stride the blast*' of the '*storm within her*' (*M* 282). Casaubon's sanction of Ladislaw's visits is a provocative stimulus for Dorothea's automatic physiological and behavioural reactions that are visible signs of fury. Three of the commonly recognized symptoms of intense anger seem to be involved in Eliot's metonymic representation of

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[47] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 18.

Dorothea's pent-up emotion: a change in voice; a flash of light in the eyes; and a verbal outburst directed at the offender:

> With her first words, *uttered in a tone that shook him*, she startled Mr Casaubon into looking at her, and meeting *the flash of her eyes*.
>
> 'Why do you attribute to me a wish for anything that would annoy you? You speak to me as if I were something you had to contend against. Wait at least till I appear to consult my own pleasure apart from yours.' (*M* 282)

Dorothea believes herself to be in the right, and receiving no apologies, she persists in anger, where the lack of appeasement is captured via the great generic anger is fire conceptual metaphor: 'the *fire was not dissipated* yet' (*M* 282). As it psychologically appears to her, in self-defence she 'has at least attempted to assert herself and show the other to be wrong, and in thus relieving her feelings has at least declared her own position and so has taken a step towards re-establishing herself'.[48] But the quarrel is not ultimately resolved in her favour; in fact, it appears to scale towards Casaubon's side when he is shown to subdue his own wrath by trying to turn to his writing. We need only our human experience of bodily changes frequently attending this emotion to appreciate, and to make sense of, the metonymic designation of one distinguishing mark of anger, namely agitation: 'his hand *trembled* so much that the words seemed to be written in an unknown character' (*M* 282-3). Casaubon is generally never shown to be given to excessive emotional expressions, and on this occasion he invests a great deal of mental effort to arrange his conduct around considerations of self-restraint, an effort that should not go undervalued, especially as his early suspicions towards Ladislaw prove to be not entirely unfounded at the novel's climax.

Eliot depicts Dorothea's emotionally complex position via these figurative expressions of familiar embodied sensations and identifiable states of mind. Dorothea's short-sighted conviction (short-sighted, because it is, like all her thoughts, 'largely spun out of illusory suppositions',[49] rather than grounded in objective reality) that it is not her who is to blame for the tension in marriage, Casaubon's 'unresponsive hardness' (*M* 425) being proof of her helpless entrapment, gives way to the display of an emotional behaviour that corresponds exactly with what Peter van Sommers metaphorically terms the

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[48] Taylor, 86.
[49] Bonaparte, 126.

''incubation' of hostility'.[50] She spends much time ruminating over what she stubbornly considers to be illegitimate reasons for Casaubon's displeasure with her, exaggerating his insensitivity and expanding her own self-pity out of proportion. Since the narrative emphasis has been on Dorothea's cultivation of 'inward misery' (*M* 426), it comes as no surprise that, when her dying husband rejects her gestures of genuine sympathy, Dorothea rages characteristically in the privacy of her room:

> She was in the reaction of a rebellious anger stronger than any she had felt since her marriage. Instead of tears there came words:—
>
> 'What have I done—what am I—that he should treat me so? He never knows what is in my mind—he never cares. What is the use of anything I do? He wishes he had never married me.' (*M* 426)

Dorothea takes Casaubon's refusal to be comforted as a calculated insult that is beyond her endurance, and she remonstrates, in a fit of petulance, against her unrequited self-sacrifice as a wifely paragon who has laboured to perfect the act of giving in to please her husband. The eruption of Dorothea's repressed anger takes place under the sudden impulse of rebellion, for up till now 'she had never deliberately allowed her resentment *to govern her* in this way before' (*M* 426). Access to her retaliatory anger that results from the perceived absence of due recognition from Casaubon is granted through both or either of two major image-schemas activated in the reader's mind: that induced by a standard conceptualizing of anger as a loss of control over outside force and/or that invoked by a well-entrenched metaphor 'anger is a social superior'.[51] Perhaps by way of association with the idea that anger is an enemy, the 'anger is an opponent (in a struggle)'[52] metaphor supplies an additional conceptual input for the metaphorical portrayal of how Will Ladislaw internally wrestles toward the novel's end with having to renounce Dorothea due to his financial poverty, and hence his unsuitability as a future husband:

> He went and leaned on the back of the chair again, and seemed *to be battling with his own anger*, while she looked towards him sadly. (*M* 811)

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[50] Van Sommers, 42.
[51] Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*, 21.
[52] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 22.

It seems that the unconscious conjuring up of these schematic images is a prerequisite for understanding the emotion of anger being narrated which is always already steeped in our fixed and widely shared preconceptions about it. Metaphoric realism here is the novel's inherent entanglement with the conceptual material that yields the standard folk practices of deriving meaning from set knowledge.

Another example of Dorothea's propensity for solitary anger outbursts behind locked doors is when she erroneously sees herself betrayed by Will Ladislaw and develops, in response to her 'jealous offended pride' (*M* 787), an unfair prejudice against him. Her anger, digested internally, is reinforced by the deployment of the conceptual metaphor 'anger is fire',[53] which, beside 'anger is the heat of a fluid in a container',[54] (made distinctly perceptible by Aristotle[55]), is one of the two main subgroups of the mega-metaphor anger is heat:

> *The fire of Dorothea's anger was not easily spent*, and it *flamed out* in *fitful returns* of spurning reproach. Why had he come obtruding his life into hers, hers that might have been whole enough without him? Why had he brought his cheap regard and his lip-born words to her who had nothing paltry to give in exchange? (*M* 787)

This metaphor of anger as fire is probably 'the central one'[56] in our conventional view of anger, and probably as a result of this centrality the least creative one. But, at the same time, the lack of originality makes it somewhat easier for the reader to process, and subsequently to share more directly in Dorothea's mental crisis. The ease of conceptual understanding here is partly attained by Eliot's use of everyday language, and in the implicit knowledge of anger that we have already accumulated. If we were not already tacitly sensitized to the alliance of these cognates, Lakoff and Johnson conclude, we would not be able to think and talk about concepts as

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[53] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 13.

[54] Ibid., 13. A variation of this metaphor, ANGER IS A MOLTEN FLUID, is utilized in the novel in reference to the great anger of Caleb Garth, whereby the narrator states that 'Caleb's *wrath was stirred*' (*M* 696), though this usage could also suggest the broader metaphor: ANGER IS AN ACTIVATED SUBSTANCE OR ENTITY.

[55] This conceptual metaphor has a long history. In terms of physical effects, anger, at least from Aristotle onwards, has been explained in terms of 'a boiling of the blood and hot stuff about the heart.' Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, 129 (I.1).

[56] Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*, 22.

we do, and 'act according to the way we conceive of things'.[57] Thus, the emotional connection with Dorothea is achieved through a metaphorical shortcut. In allowing herself to burn in 'a private and self-absorbing despair',[58] that finds its articulation in 'loud-whispered cries' (*M* 787), Dorothea psychologically matches the profile of those suffering from jealous anger. Metaphorical clues aside, anger recognition in this narrative context also lies in the narrative context itself, essentially a reiteration of Mikhail Bakhtin and V. N. Vološinov's idea that we can ascribe meaning to any speech act (and impute new connotations) by virtue of its antecedent history of use, and derive its ideological purport based on whatever normative sense of a lexical item has been customarily made in a given community and at given point in time.[59] In other words, the reader's ability to identify anger in Dorothea is as much a matter of seeing her within the embodied framework of anger, as it is seeing her in a situation that elicits from us a homogeneous notion of what constitutes the thoughts, feelings and behaviours typically associated with this emotion.

The embodied realism of these anger episodes arises from the fact that anger metaphors are born out of the fully absorbed embodiment of this emotion (it builds up in increments and explodes when in excess) and the culturally encoded convention that it takes control like a social superior does. Lexically, Eliot induces in readers certain affective familiarity via conventional expressions, and by default she draws attention to the relatively stable conceptual core from which literary metaphors can be variously elaborated for particular effect. In such experientially-based mimetics, the conceptual content is very much an inception: it is a departure point, but not a destination; where it starts is in 'known constructions [of concepts] and modes of expression';[60] where it ends is in their inventive range, original largely to the extent that the conservative realist discourse will allow aesthetic concessions, and variable according to the circumstantial specificity of a fictional action. There emerges, in other words, a possible rule of realistic expression, where a semantic variability (in the generation of metaphor) does not in principle occur outside a habitual nuclei: of biology and culture.

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[57] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5.
[58] Hardy, *The Novels of George Eliot*, 100.
[59] See Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, and also Vološinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*.
[60] Brandt and Brandt, 124–5.

It is possible that Eliot's predilection in *Middlemarch* for the use of conventional primary metaphors (whether based on embodied experience or other routine cognitions) would be dismissed as accidental on the grounds that they have been used quite randomly, rather than remarkably consistently, and therefore do not constitute sufficiently representative examples, and less so exemplify the sort of narrative realism they have been proposed to enact. But there is evidence in the text to discount this possibility. For instance, an even more extreme case of anger than Dorothea's, the mighty wrath of Will Ladislaw which metonymically engulfs his whole body in predictable ways is transmitted metaphorically via some staple source domains in nevertheless imaginative collocations. When Dorothea accidentally catches Will in an intimate, though completely innocent conversation with Rosamond, his blood is up once he realizes he has become a victim of intrigue. A series of stock metonymic expressions are collectively highly suggestive of Will's extreme, impulsive anger. In order of appearance they are: 'aggressive verbal behavior stands for anger',[61] the change of colour in the face stands for anger and 'aggressive visual behavior stands for anger',[62] with the concomitant embodied metonymic sensation of tingling:

> *'Don't touch me!'* he said, *with an utterance like the cut of a lash*, darting from her, and *changing from pink to white and back again*, as if his whole frame were tingling with the pain of the sting. He wheeled round to the other side of the room and stood opposite to her, with the tips of his fingers in his pockets and his head thrown back, *looking fiercely* not at Rosamond but at a point a few inches away from her. (*M* 777)

A desire for confrontation is intrinsic to anger, as this emotion is evolutionarily designed psychologically 'to help us deal with setbacks, with things that thwart us from pursuing what we want, and with a range of threats to our survival. Anger prepares us to engage—to force a change—and it does this by getting our bodies ready for *action*'.[63] Will's anger comes as a response to his recognition that his already limited prospect of an imagined future life with Dorothea has now practically diminished to an impossibility. His frustrated disappointment, like Dorothea's in regard to Casaubon, helps explain why Will is on the threshold of attacking Rosamond verbally, thereby attenuating his proper behavioural control. Two conceptual

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[61] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 25.

[62] Ibid., 25.

[63] Kolts, 13, italics in original.

metaphors deployed—anger is a heavy object and anger is an accumulated force that needs releasing—function jointly (and in conjunction with the following simile of the panther) to signal the forthcoming abuse, heaped as punishment and released for the purpose of relief:

It would have been safer for Will in the first instance to have taken up his hat and gone away; but he had felt no impulse to do this; on the contrary, he had a horrible inclination to stay and *shatter Rosamond with his anger*. It seemed as impossible to bear the fatality she had drawn down on him without *venting his fury* as it would be to a panther to bear the javelin-wound without springing and biting (*M* 778).

Will's anger is at its highest point, and the significance attached to his failed impulse control is that of contemporary concerns with social etiquette and standards of conduct. The protocol of Victorian polite society ensured that irascible gentlemen were viewed with disdain and severely judged their unguarded anger. This is suggested in the herculean effort that Will is represented as making to restrain his violent outburst.[64] Through the 'intense anger produces steam'[65] and 'anger is a dangerous animal'[66] conceptual metaphors, Eliot creates a complex figurative moment of anger inhibition:

He was *fuming* under a repressive law which he was forced to acknowledge: *he was dangerously poised*, and Rosamond's voice now brought the decisive vibration. (*M* 778)

If it had not been for the sound of Rosamond's voice, Will, more than likely, would have limited himself to meaningful words of counsel and a cordial termination of their friendship. But Rosamond bites back with an icy retort, and her speech only provides further fuel that reignites Will's anger. Provoked by Rosamond's deliberate sarcasm, Will lashes out despite himself and against prevailing norms of self-restraint. To mark this angry explosion, that is, to make it mentally accessible through the provision of its 'image-schematic structure'[67]—an implicit aim which becomes an ultimate

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[64] Relatedly, on the need and rationale behind the conscious regulation of anger at home to offset pressure at work in a contemporary cultural context, the so-called 'Victorian' American society, see Stearns and Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History*.

[65] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 15.

[66] Ibid., 25.

[67] This expression is used by Barcelona in his empirically-tested hypothesis of metaphor as essentially motivated by metonymy, where the metonymic basis is

condition of figurative mimetics—the narrator marshals a range of clichéd metonymic and metaphoric expressions with the effect of indexing Will's state of mind as currently beneath that of individuals graced by so-called excellent character. In an image of a split self, he is 'ready to curse her' (*M* 778), thereby acting beyond his conscious control, and against his better judgment. On hearing Rosamond's sardonic suggestion that he pursue Dorothea and declare his preference, Will furiously exclaims: ''Go after her!' *he burst out, with a sharp edge in his voice*' (*M* 778). Will's vocal expression of anger is accompanied by a display of animal-like intent at physical injury: '*He began to move about with the restlessness of a wild animal that sees prey but cannot reach it*' (*M* 778). Rosamond's condescending tone gives new impetus to Will's otherwise subsiding anger: 'He found another *vent for his rage* by snatching up Rosamond's words again, as if they were reptiles to be throttled and flung off' (*M* 778). As might be expected of a man socially trained to display the kind of behaviour associated with good manners and cultivated taste, Will calms down and even attempts a gesture of reconciliation. Before he takes leave of Rosamond, we are told, 'he felt checked and stultified in his anger' (*M* 779), though as the narrator adds by use of the 'anger is fire'[68] metaphor, '*the vindictive fire was still burning in him*, and he could utter no word of retraction' (*M* 779). The narrator, just a moment earlier, had insisted that it be

> forgiven to Will that he had no such movement of pity. He had felt no bond beforehand to this woman [Rosamond] who had spoiled the ideal treasure of his life, and he held himself blameless. He knew that he was cruel, but he had no relenting in him yet (*M* 779).

From this remark, Eliot reflects that it was considered in Victorian culture to be pardonable (if justified), even acceptable (if instructive), to engage in a certain cruelty involved in righteous anger, but one had to overcome venomous feelings, as Will eventually does, if one's proper emotional decorum were to be maintained.

These examples suggest that there is nothing discernibly unconventional in the way Eliot narrates the experience of anger serially in *Middlemarch*, but collectively, they are narratively distinctive, and can be

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interpreted in terms of 'being a conceptual prerequisite for (metaphor).' ('On the Plausibility of Claiming a Metonymic Motivation for Conceptual Metaphor,' 31).
[68] Kövecses, *Metaphors of Anger, Pride, and Love*, 13.

seen to be substantial contributors to the effect of the text's conceptual and emotional realism. The remarkable consistency of metaphoric constructions in terms of heat that exerts pressure on a container, causing it to eventually explode, provides linguistic proof that the subconscious organization and categorization of anger does not occur in a novelistic context in an ad hoc manner, but rather is based on what is universally known and individually experienced about the physiology of anger. What is known, and felt (and sometimes observed in others) comprises a necessary restriction—'the constraining effect of universal embodiment',[69] as Kövecses calls it—that provides the cognitive motivation for metaphorically projecting anger in exactly this way. Undeniably, the scope of conceptual thinking about anger in *Middlemarch* extends beyond the instances of the great generic metaphor 'the angry person is a pressurized container'.[70] We have seen how Eliot effectively makes use of other main (archetypal) metaphors for anger that are widespread in everyday English language, by resorting to familiar idiomatic expressions that have been long recognized and neatly assembled together by cognitive linguists into the unitary metaphors anger is a social superior, anger is an opponent (in a struggle) or anger is a dangerous animal. Notwithstanding the rich variety in Eliot's selection of metaphorical source domains to depict anger, her default choices seem to be those that are demonstrably sub-metaphors, or satellite instantiations, of the anger is heat master-metaphor, and which are intelligible primarily in the light of that metaphor. The implication is that there is no single identifiable origin or source from which spring Eliot's ways of conceptualizing anger, but rather there are many such motivations, not distinctly cultural—the experiential sensation of embodied anger being the most dominant. Any hypothesis that Eliot's imaginative creativity may typically proceed outside these 'presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared . . . by the members of a society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behaviour in it',[71] would be discounted by the sheer volume of the novel's metaphors of anger whose strikingly consistent design suggests something much more than chance. On the contrary, their regularity and interpretive resonance points to a conceptual understanding of narrated mental states that governs the representation (and endorsement) of a commitment to emotional sophistication through the practice of self-restraint.

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[69] Kövecses, 'Cross-Cultural Experience of Anger,' 162.
[70] Ibid., 157.
[71] Quinn and Holland, 'Culture and Cognition,' 3–40; qtd. Radden, 'How Metonymic are Metaphors?' 102.

This regime of conceptual understanding is the building block upon which embodied realism is based, one unit, amongst possible others, of mimetic construction. The particular pre-comprehensibility of the experience-motivated metaphors of anger testifies to what Margaret H. Freeman has already pursued in her cognitive/linguistically-informed theory of literature, expressly that 'literary texts are the products of cognizing minds and their interpretations the products of other cognizing minds in the context of the physical and socio-cultural worlds in which they have been created and are read'.[72] To the extent that the figurative language of emotion in *Middlemarch* solicits the information from the physiological attributes and behaviour that have come to characterize the Victorian conception of anger, the novel is calculated to orient its recipients toward established conceptual frameworks in an act of enforcing emotional vigilance. This is why narrative realism is said here to be discursively embodied. But embodied realism is discursively realist not because the reader is believed to automatically make sense of modalized anger metaphors, but because it involves us in a text that includes instantaneously decodifiable metaphoric language necessary for sense making. The characters and situations of *Middlemarch* are realistic precisely because Eliot artfully deploys metaphors that are individually both familiar and emotionally resonant, and collectively managed into complex discursive clusters that drive narrative recognition and reader engagement.

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[72] Freeman, 'Poetry and the Scope of Metaphor,' 253.