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## Post-Colonial Faces: A Comparative Analysis of Point of View in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *A Grain Of Wheat* and V. S. Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*

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### Abstract

Style and content are two concepts or ideas that exist side-by-side in literature. Style or artistic expression in particular really helps to place content (subject matter and themes) of literary works in its proper perspective. This essay is a qualitative work positioned in the context of narrative technique and post-colonial studies. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the importance of narrative point of view in the understanding of post-colonial issues through a comparative analysis of Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Naipaul's

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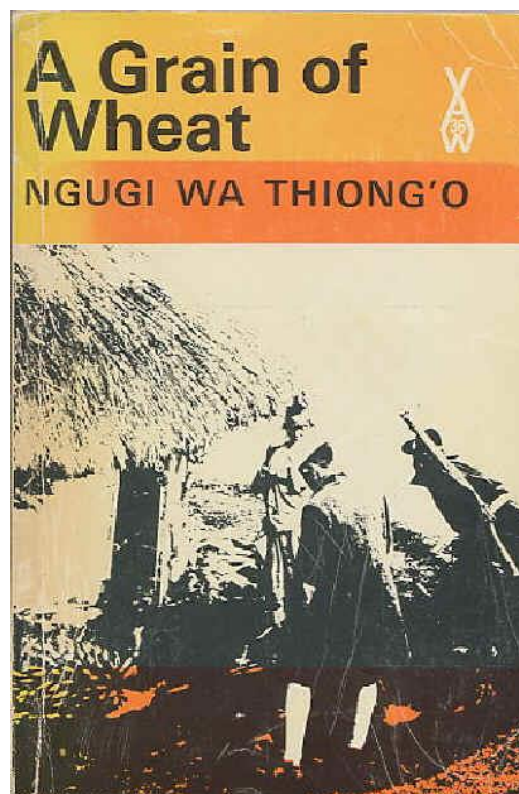
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*The Mystic Masseur*. Qualitative research approach and post-colonial theory are the two vital tools used in the analysis of the texts.

The findings of this essay reveal that both Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and V. S. Naipaul use first and third person points of view, with varying frequencies, in developing their post-colonial issues. In addition, the study shows that narrative point of view primarily contributes to the development and understanding of post-colonial issues in the two texts under study.

**Keywords:** *A Grain of Wheat*, first person, Naipaul, narrative point of view, Ngugi, *The Mystic Masseur*, post-colonial, third person

## Introduction



It is generally agreed that literature provides a lens through which human beings interpret the world in order to cause a social transformation. African and Caribbean writers

like other writers from Europe, Australia and Asia write to present issues of their own

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experiences, imaginations and things they witness in their society. Placing emphasis on this idea, Fanon (1963) in his write-up, *On National Culture*, as contained in *The Wretched of the Earth*, argues thoughtfully that since African history, culture and identity have been displaced, disfigured, or destroyed by colonialism, it is the task of the native historians, intellectuals and artists to illustrate “the truths of the nation” (p.225) in order to affirm the existence of African culture. Post-colonial writers draw upon their own experiences and that of their own culture to fight against neo-colonialism. According to Brennan (1990), the novel is one of the means through which these post-colonial nations can be imagined. Deducing from the above statements by Brennan and Fanon, it can be said that Ngugi’s *A Grain of Wheat* and Naipaul’s *The Mystic Masseur* are novels aimed at revising the “disfigured” and “displaced” history and culture of a colonized people in order to create national consciousness among them.

In exploring the complex nature of the disruptive effects of colonialism on their respective society, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o and V. S. Naipaul have developed unique narrative technique, that is narrative point of view, which blends intimately with their choice of characters. Their narrative points of view and choice of characters emanate from definite personal decision by the authors to represent and influence the reality of the political, social and cultural environment to which they belong. With different narrative points of view, the two writers present their post-colonial themes with immense authority.

During the pre-colonial and post-colonial era, a new content-based literary genre known as post-colonial literature emerged around the sixteenth century. Colonialism modified and changed the physical territories, as well as human identity. As Lamming (1960), the renowned Caribbean writer puts it: “the colonial experience is a live experience in the consciousness of these people” (p.12-13). This observation by Lamming is what has

shaped the thought of these writers of the post-colonial period. Since the pre-colonial and

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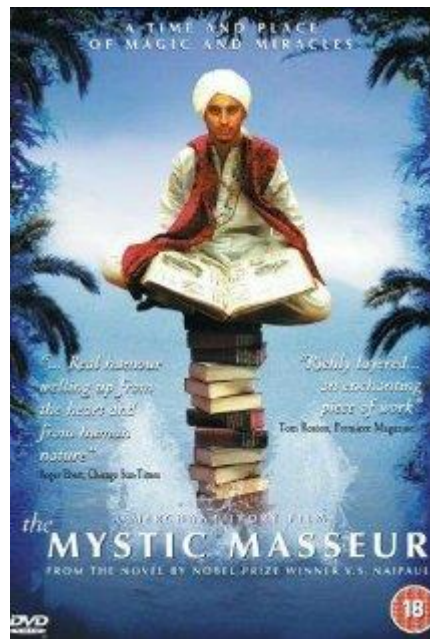
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post-colonial period, literary writers have been using literature as a means of exposing the disruptive effects of colonialism and problems that post-colonial societies face even after independence. It is against this backdrop that a new content-based genre known as “post-colonial literature” emerged. Following this emergence, Tyson (1999) in his work, *Critical Theory Today*, situates post-colonial literature within a number of qualities. One of such qualities is that post-colonial literature, wherever post-colonial critics place themselves, is interpreted based on overlapping themes such as mimicry, disillusionment after independence, double consciousness, alienation, unhomeliness and others.

Apart from the thematic studies in post-colonial works, narrative technique is also a different aspect that makes a novel very understandable. Narratology refers to both the study and the theory of narrative and narrative structures and the ways that these elements affect meaning and our view in general. As Lye (2008) in his *Lecture Note* puts it: “the story must get told, there are various ways to tell it, each way of telling may bring a different emphasis, different knowledge, different ways in which the readers process the story”. This therefore means that narrative point of view influences how thoughts, ideas, emotions and meanings are delivered to readers by the narrator. Some of the major subdivisions in narrative technique include flashback, foreshadow, character consciousness, point of view and others. Point of view, which is the focus of this study, is the position and direction by which literary works are perceived and related. Abrams (1981) clearly explains point of view in literature in his work, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, as “the way a story gets told; the mode or perspective established by the author through which the audience is presented with the narrative ...” (p. 142). Also, Robert and Jacobs (1998) suggest that point of view is “the speaker, voice, narrator, mode... of a work” (p. 210). A point of convergence that is obvious

in these two explanations concerning point of view is that, it is the narrator and perspective of a work.



Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and V.S. Naipaul are prolific post-colonial writers whose contributions to African and Caribbean writings are facts that cannot be doubted. Their artistic style and technique in propagating their post-colonial subjects are very encouraging to learn from. As a means of exploring the artistic nature and post-colonial subjects of these prolific writers through a comparative analysis of Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*, this essay will establish that point of view contributes immensely to the development of post-colonial issues. We shall proceed by taking each point of view and show with instances how it influences the discussion of post-colonial issues in the various novels. Then a comparative study will be done as the conclusion aspect of the work.

## **Analysis of How Narrative Point of View Influences Post-Colonial Themes in the Two Texts:**

### **I. Third Person Narration in *A Grain of Wheat***

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The third person point of view basically has to do with the employment of the third person pronouns “he”, “she”, and “they” or the narrator referring to the characters by their names. In a broader sense, the third person could be an omniscient narrator who knows and sees everything about the characters. According to Losambe (2004), the omniscient narrator is not hindered by time or place. The narrator maintains some distance between himself or herself and the story being presented. In a situation whereby issues are presented from different characters’ point of view, it is classified by scholars as “multiple narration”. Having given the above background, this study will proceed to analyse how the third person point of view (multiple narration) influences the status of post-colonial themes in Ngugi’s *A Grain of Wheat* by carefully studying some selected influential characters of his novel- Kihika, Gikonyo, Karanja, Mumbi and Mugo, General R., Koina, Githua, Mr. Thompson and others.

Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, through the multiple narratives, is able to uncover several post-colonial themes. One of the most influential themes Ngugi reveals in *A Grain of Wheat* is the theme of disillusionment. Ngugi aesthetically treats the theme of disillusionment through the perspective of the following characters - Gikonyo, Koina, Githua, and General R. Reconstructing the history of Kenya from the point of view of this group of characters, Ngugi reminds us of how the new nation-state is manipulated and controlled by the elite. The fruits of Kenyan independence are not eaten by characters such as Gikonyo, General R., Githua and Koina, who form the working-class and the peasants, the two classes which Ngugi considers to form the majority of the freedom fighters. For instance, Gikonyo's disillusionment can be demonstrated in his failed effort to ask for a bank loan from an M.P. in Nairobi. Also, as it is seen in the novel, it turns out that the piece of land which Gikonyo and five others want to buy for their business has been bought by another Kenyan person. Later in the novel, Gikonyo discovers that the new landowner of Richard Burton’s land is his own M.P.



Gikonyo's frustrations are generally expressed by him in a conversation with Mugo, in the following words: "But now, whom do we see riding in cars and changing them daily as if motor cars were clothes? It is those who did not take part in the movement, the same who ran to the shelters of schools and universities and administration" (p.75).

Here, Ngugi suggests that even on the day of independence the people's struggle is being betrayed by a new ruling class who, in the words of Fanon (1963), "are completely ignorant of the economy of their own country" (p.151). Like the other politicians, the M.P. does not really care about development of the masses. This M.P. and other politicians function in postcolonial Kenya as the agents of colonial power, preoccupied with their self-interests and not the welfare of their own people.

Furthermore, the post-colonial subject of disillusionment can be seen in Githua's encounter with Mugo and General R. at the "Uhuru Hotel: subtitled Bar and Restaurant" (p. 137). As Githua, the Mau Mau fighter in the novel, says, "The government has forgotten us. We fought for freedom. And yet now!" (p.139). Representing the marginalized and the voiceless, Githua wants his voice to be heard and his sacrifice as a freedom fighter remembered in postcolonial Kenya. He says to Mugo, "So, Chief. Remember me. Remember the poor. Remember Githua" (p.139). Here, through the pleading voice of Githua, Ngugi focuses on how the woeful plights of the "ignored masses" have been neglected by the new government after Kenya's independence.

Closely linked to the theme of disillusionment is the theme of doubt and uncertainty, which Ngugi reveals from the points of view of General R., Karanja and Koina. After Kenyan's independence, one would have expected that the freedom would bring hope and contentment to the masses. However, the aspirations of the people are replaced with mistrust and uncertainty, which becomes a new obstacle for the Kenyans. As General R. says in his independence celebration speech, "And I know even now this war is not ended. We get

Uhuru today. But what's the meaning of 'Uhuru'?" (p.240). Ironically, the biting effects of neocolonialism are most profound on those who actually fought in the Mau Mau war. In this novel, the narrative of doubt and uncertainty can be succinctly summarized by Koina's questions. Upon seeing Dr. Lynd, an European plant pathologist, whom he used to work for, Koina, who fought in the Mau Mau war, asks in a doubtful manner: "Why was she still in Kenya? Why were all these whites still in Kenya despite the ringing of Uhuru bells? Would Uhuru really change things for the likes of him and General R? Doubts stabbed him" (p.232). All these questions posed by Koina are perhaps well answered by Karanja's prophetic words: "The coming of black rule would not mean, could never mean the end of white power" (p. 42). Ngugi also stresses that this new ruling class has little concern for the people. This instance can be seen in the novel when General R. recalls Lt. Koina's recent misgivings, where Koina talks "of seeing the colonial past still haunting Independent Kenya" (p. 239). From these instances, one can draw the conclusion that the people of Kenya detect little meaning of Kenya's independence as they are plagued with fear and suspicion. Also, the prophetic statement of Karanja echoes on in the novel to reveal the neo-colonial state of Kenya which is manipulated and controlled by the "supposed educated elite" in Kenya.

Structurally, Ngugi's multiple character perspectives (focused on characters such as Mugo and Karanja, who represent the Kenyan society, and Dr. John Thompson, who represents the colonial government) relate to his post-colonial subject of betrayal. A typical evidence in the novel to support this claim is when Karanja betrays his own community's safety and integrity by collaborating openly with John Thompson and the colonial administration. As an appointed chief of the colonial administration, Karanja selfishly searches for his personal gratifications or individual freedom at the expense of his own collective community. Even though Karanja decides to be on the side of the colonial government, he is cautiously warned by his mother, Wairimu; yet he chooses to ignore her:

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“During the Emergency, Wairimu disapproved of her son becoming a home guard and a chief and said so. Don’t go against the people. A man who ignores the voice of his own people comes to no good end” (p. 245). From this statement, one can conclude that Ngugi, through his post-colonial writings, is trying to caution Kenyan leaders, in particular, and African political leaders, in general, not to betray their country’s safety and integrity for their selfish satisfaction and progress.

Also, when Mugo betrays Kihika, a true patriot and nationalist of Kenya, it causes more harm to the freedom fighters. The omniscient narrator’s revelation of Mugo’s tortured thoughts showcases the result of his betrayal- the death of Kihika. In his work, *Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary*, Ngugi (1981) explains the importance of Mugo’s suffering and fate: “In the novel, *A Grain of Wheat*, I tried, through Mugo who carried the burden of mistaken revolutionary heroism, to hint at the possibilities of the new Kenya” (p. 90). Here, through the creation of the character, Mugo, Ngugi tries to predict what may happen to Kenya if the country is governed by unpatriotic people like Mugo in the novel, who may betray the safety and integrity of “the new Kenya” for their personal satisfaction.

Moreover, Ngugi develops the character, Kihika, beyond an original “Mau Mau” revolutionary deliberately to develop his post-colonial themes of nationalism, resistance and unity. Through the use of disguise and daring, Kihika is actually developed into the epic “Mau Mau” character reminiscent of Stanley Mathenge or Didan Kimathi, two of the key leaders of Land and Freedom Army of the 1950’s in Kenya. Using the omniscient narrator, Ngugi gives Kihika historical depth as a nationalist figure, by tracing his early life:

Kihika's interest in politics began when he was a small boy and sat under the feet of Warui listening to stories of how the land was taken from people. . . Warui needed only a listener: he recounted the deeds of Waiyaki and other

warriors, who, by 1900 had been killed in the struggle to drive out the white man from the land; of Young Harry and the fate that befell the 1923 Procession; of Muthirigu and the mission schools that forbade circumcision in order to eat, like insects, both the roots and the stem of the Gikuyu society. . . Kihika's heart hardened towards 'these people', long before he had even encountered a white face (p. 91).

When Kihika talks about Kenyan independence, he says that what is needed is the unity of the people. Unity is the strong force of the people against the military strength of the British. The novel explores the idea of unity in the community as well as in political lives. The strong forces that oppose unity are isolation and division, and the focus on self to the detriment of the larger society. Unlike Kihika, Mugo is the quintessence of isolation and he ultimately destroys himself through his own isolation. He has no family or sense of leading a political life in the community of Thabai and Kenya. Mugo only wants to live in isolation. In contrast with Kihika, Mugo does not see the reason why he should fight for the freedom of his own community. Mugo does not realize that he is in the same position as the other African people of Kenya. However, no man can exist only for himself; he must live in a society. Kihika preaches the importance of collective action rather than individual endeavor in his advocacy of anti-colonial resistance. Throughout the novel, there remains tension between individual and collective action that is never fully resolved. Mugo's unconcerned attitude towards the collective freedom of his community is revealed by the omniscient narrator through Mugo's own thought:

Why should Kihika drag me into a struggle and problems I have not created? Why? He is satisfied with butchering men and women and children. He must call on me to bathe in the blood. I am not his brother. I am not his sister. I have not done harm to anybody. I only looked after my little shamba and crops. And now I must spend my life in prison because of the folly of one man! (p. 210).

Even though Mugo's betrayal is considered as unfortunate, it also results in a new life for other characters in the novel. Ironically, the main purpose of Mugo's public confession during the time of Kenya's independence is to heal the wounds of betrayal, which indirectly is a cause of distrust and disunity in the novel. In support of this action, JanMohamed (1983) makes an interesting point that even though Mugo wants to isolate himself from other people, he is integrated as a member of the society and he makes the community more open to each other: "Mugo's self-sacrifice, through his confession, is ultimately soothing; it becomes symbolic of the regeneration of open communication and has notable effects on Gikonyo and Mumbi" (p.218). Mugo eventually brings reconciliation to his community by inviting other people to redeem themselves in the post-independence era, and they start a new life in a new "imagined" community.

## **II. First Person Narration in *A Grain Of Wheat***

Despite Ngugi's effective use of the omniscient third person narrator, he also makes use of the first person point of view in some instances. Unlike Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*, which makes dominant use of first person point of view, Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* makes minimal use of the first person narration. Specifically, the narrator's reference to the first person plural "we" makes him part of the Kenyan community affected by British colonialism. For instance in the novel, to indicate that he is a victim of Kenya's colonization by Britain, he says that: "Learned men will, no doubt, dig into the troubled times which **we** in Kenya underwent, and maybe sum up the lesson of history in a phrase" (p. 143).

Upon careful observation of the above excerpt, we can identify that the narrative voice resembles authorial matter-of-fact account anchoring events within a definite historical context. Viewing it from the historical context, the above excerpt recounts the kind of inhuman treatment and oppression that the Kenyan freedom fighters went through during

colonization. The narrator who appears to be part of this historical incident summarizes the inhuman treatment meted out to the innocent Kenyans: “As soon as they got out of the train, they were made to squat in large queues with their hands on their heads. The soldiers beat them with truncheons, cynically encouraging one another: strike harder ...” (p. 143). The image of brutality and the sense of helplessness echo in this last quotation, showing the painful torture and suffering of fellow Kenyans.

To sum up, it is worth noting that through several characters’ point of view and the first person point of view (the least point of view), *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) discusses both colonial and post-colonial themes in Kenya, in a village in which the people’s intertwined lives are transformed by the 1952-1960 Emergency in Kenya.

### **III. Third Person Narration in *The Mystic Masseur***

In the demonstration of the theme of mimicry, Naipaul minimally employs the third person narration in addition to the first person point of view. With his third person point of view, instead of the participant narrator recounting the actions in the story, the story is narrated from the multiple character point of view. Thus, the external narrator switches to other characters from time to time. This can be seen in the use of the third person pronouns “he”, “she”, and “they”. Unlike Ngugi’s *A Grain of Wheat*, which reveals the thoughts and feelings of each of the characters, Naipaul’s *The Mystic Masseur* only reveals the actions and experiences of each of the characters and not what goes on in their minds.

From the viewpoint of characters such as Ganesh Ramsumair, Leela, Narayan, Partraps, and Street and Smith, Naipaul is able to develop his post-colonial subject of mimicry and its effect, being ambivalence. Here, the external narrator is used as a device which creates an ironical distance in the story in order to highlight the inherent ambivalence of mimicry oscillating between its complicity in colonial domination and its potential

subversion of the latter. For Bhabha (1994), “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable ‘Other’, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (p. 122). Based on the evidence from the text under study, we can point out that Ganesh, the hero of Naipaul’s *The Mystic Masseur*, expresses his proclivity for colonial mimicry when he advocates the use of correct English instead of Trinidadian dialect to his wife, Leela:

One day he said, ‘Leela is high time we realize that we living in a British country and I think we shouldn’t be shame to talk the people language good’. ... All right, man. ‘We starting now self, girl’. ‘As you say, Man’. ‘Good. Let me see now. Ah, yes. Leela, have you lighted the fire? No, just gimme a chance. Is “lighted” or “lit”, girl?’ ‘Look, ease me up, man. The smoke going in my eye.’ ‘You aint paying attention, girl. You mean the smoke *is* going in your eye’ (pp. 65-66).

Still on the issue of mimicry and ambivalence, it must be noted that the introduction of English education in the Caribbean produced an ambivalent relationship with language and contributed to distorting the cultural identity of the West Indians, in general and Trinidadians, in particular. For instance, in Trinidad, speaking a different language other than the English language marks people as being countrified and even uneducated; while speaking English makes them feel that they are imitating British mannerisms. Therefore, while speaking Creole serves, in a way, to unite the diverse ethnic elements in the Caribbean, English language has always been the divisive factor in West Indian culture. Evidence in the novel to illustrate this point can be seen when the third person limited narrator in the text under study only reveals the action of Street, Smith and Ganesh by saying that:

Street and Smith had made him think about the art of writing. Like many Trinidadians Ganesh could write correct English but it embarrassed him to talk anything but dialect except on very formal occasions. So while, with the encouragement of Street and Smith, he perfected his prose to a Victorian weightiness he continued to talk Trinidadian, much against his will (p. 65).

The above quotation and the earlier one before this one clearly demonstrate that language is one of the major tools with which the colonizer seeks to discredit and belittle the culture and identity of the colonized.

Also, the effect of mimicry is posited as central in post-colonial studies by post-colonial theorists. According to them, the colonial subject after imitating the colonizer, for instance, in language, develops a double consciousness (Tyson, 1999). This means that colonial subjects like Ganesh and Leela perceive their world as divided between two opposing cultures: culture of the colonized and culture of the colonizer.

#### **IV. First Person Narration in *The Mystic Masseur***

As we have noted in this paper, the first person narration is in use when the narrator is a character in the story using the pronouns “I-me-my-mine-us-we-our-ours” in his or her speech. Unlike Ngugi’s *A Grain of Wheat* which makes dominant use of the third person omniscient point of view, in developing his postcolonial themes such as disillusionment, doubt and uncertainty, colonialism and neocolonial issues, Naipaul’s novel, *The Mystic Masseur*, employs the first person narrative point of view as the controlling narrative to develop his postcolonial themes of mimicry and new identity. Even though Naipaul uses Ganesh Ramsumair as his focal character, he is able to develop his numerous themes by using a direct observer who tends to reveal various information and moments of deep insight which may also be his own.

Structurally, with the focus of the participant narrator on the central character, Ganesh Ramsumair, Naipaul discusses the postcolonial subject of mimicry, a feature of his own experience as an Indian in the West Indies, a West Indian in England, and as a nomadic intellectual in a postcolonial world, which is also a major problem in Third World Countries,

in general and Trinidad, in particular. In general connotation, “mimicry” refers to the imitation of one culture by another culture. Tyson (1999) explains mimicry as the imitation of the “colonizer, as much as possible, in dress, speech, behavior, and lifestyle” (p. 368). This imitation may therefore be complete, reflecting in every aspect of the life of “colonial subjects” who believed in the superiority of the colonizers.

Even though Tyson does not mention “change of name” as a distinctive marker of mimicry, it must be noted that it forms part of the “mimic act”. Bhabha (1994) in his essay *Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse* demonstrates that colonial mimicry produces not only resemblance, but also difference; thus being ambivalent and therefore potentially subversive. Mann (1984) argues that *The Mystic Masseur* depicts Naipaul’s early critical stance on mimicry as a theme. Certainly, mimicry emerges as the central theme of the novel and Ganesh, the failed teacher-turned-mystic-turned-politician, emerges as the total mimic man. Thus, in the novel, the theme of mimicry is expressed through Ganesh, who is sent to study at the Queen’s Royal College:

Ganesh never lost his awkwardness. He was so ashamed of his Indian name that for a while he spread a story that he was really called Gareth. This did him little good. He continued to dress badly, he didn’t play games, and his accent remained too clearly that of the Indian from the country” (p. 10-11).

The above quotation obviously presents Ganesh as a struggling individual who is prepared to give up his Indian heritage for what he perceives as superior to his own culture.

When the colonial governor appoints Ganesh as an official Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1953, Ganesh becomes ashamed of his Indian name, which he changes from “Ganesh Ramsumair”, turbaned faith-healer, to “G. Ramsay Muir”, sack-suited



diplomat, in London. This instance can be seen at the concluding part of the novel where the participant narrator reports that:

The day of the visit came and I was at the railway station to meet the 12.57 from London. As the passengers got off I looked among them for response with a nigrescent face. It was easy to spot him, impeccably dressed, coming out of a first-class carriage. I gave a shout of joy. 'Pundit Ganesh!' I cried, running towards him. 'Pundit Ganesh Ramsumair!' G Ramsay Muir,' he said coldly. (Epilogue).

In analyzing the above excerpt from the stylistic and thematic point of view, we can establish the fact that the use of the participant character, playing the role as an observer on Ganesh Ramsumair, the central character, contributes immensely to our knowledge of the postcolonial subject of mimicry on the colonial subject, Ganesh Ramsumair. Also, as the main character in the novel, the I-character positions Ganesh as the quintessential postcolonial subject in the novel. Furthermore, the participant narrator presents the accounts of Ganesh and expects us to believe that "the history of Ganesh is, in a way, the history of our times", despite the fact that, "there may be people who will welcome this imperfect account of the man Ganesh Ramsumair, masseur, mystic, and, since 1953, M.B.E" (p. 8).

Moreover, the participant narrator's revelation of the success of Ganesh Ramsumair at the beginning of the novel shows that Ganesh's rise from a struggling masseur in Fuente Grove to the position of British Representative at Lake Success in Port-of-Spain (which is the centre of politics and corruption) not only result in the betrayal of his people, but arguably, also of himself. Before Ganesh's position as a Hindu Indian Member of the Legislative Council (M. L. C) of Trinidad, "he was always ready to do a favour for any member of the public, rich or poor" (p. 201). However, when the colonial governor appoints Ganesh as an official Member of the Order of the British Empire (O. B. E), he betrays the local people and

“in 1950 he was sent by the British Government to Lake Success and his defence of British rule is memorable” (p. 207). This whole incident is foreshadowed by the participant narrator when he summarizes the life history of Ganesh in the following words:

LATER HE WAS TO BE famous and honoured throughout the South Caribbean; he was to be a hero of the people and, after that, a British Representative at Lake Success. But when I first met him he was still struggling masseur, at a time when masseurs were ten a penny in Trinidad. This was just at the beginning of the war, when I was still at school. I had been bullied into playing football and in my first game I had been kicked hard on the shin and laid up for weeks afterwards (p.1).

It is clear that Ganesh becomes successful and even famous throughout the South Caribbean, but not after losing a greater part of his belief in his own Indian heritage for the ideal lifestyle he found in the life offered by the British colonial government.

#### **Conclusion: A Comparative Analysis of the Influence of Narrative Point of View on Post-Colonial Themes in the Two Texts.**

Through a comparative analysis of Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*, this paper establishes that point of view contributes immensely to the development of post-colonial issues. It is evident from the paper that the first person and third person points of view are the two main perspectives adopted by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and V. S. Naipaul in their works: *A Grain of Wheat* and *The Mystic Masseur* respectively, though they occur with varying frequencies. These points of view account for the development of post-colonial themes in the two texts. Significantly, Ngugi's use of the third person narration with an omniscient narrator is very effective, with frequent insertions of internal monologue, which gives us direct access to the characters' thoughts and perceptions-a mode almost completely absent in Naipaul's work, *The Mystic Masseur*.

Structurally, *A Grain of Wheat* is much more involved. Through flashbacks, Ngugi constantly shifts his point of view through multiple characters. From the above analysis, we can see that major post-colonial themes such as disillusionment, doubt and uncertainty, betrayal, nationalism and unity are developed from the following characters' point of view- Gikonyo, Githua, Koina, General R., Mugo, Karanja, Mumbi, John Thompson, and Kihika. We can also see that truly the multiple characters' point of view in *A Grain of Wheat* relates to the content of the text. Though Ngugi uses an omniscient narrator, there are several places where the use of "we" points to a narrator who is one with the natives' cause. From the first person point of view, the narrator identifies himself with the post-colonial theme of oppression as brought by the process of colonization in Kenya.

However, in *The Mystic Masseur*, and based on the evidence shown in the above analysis, the paper shows that the central post-colonial subject of mimicry is emphasized from the first person point of view. Here, the participant narrator positions the central character, Ganesh, as the extreme mimic man. To further add to the knowledge of post-colonial themes in the novel, Naipaul employs few instances from the point of view of other characters such as Leela, Street and Smith, and Ganesh, whose thoughts are not necessarily revealed as in the case of characters in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*.

From the analysis, one other conclusion that can be drawn in relation to the themes and narrative points of view studied above is that first person point of view and third person point of view are extremely influential in the development of different post-colonial subjects in the two texts under study. As we have already noted, this is because each narrative point of view devised by the two authors brings a different emphasis and a different knowledge, which affect the reader's understanding of post-colonial issues in the two texts. Indeed, the two postcolonial writers, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and V. S. Naipaul, with varying frequencies of

point of view, have expressed the disruptive tendencies of colonialism in *A Grain of Wheat* and *The Mystic Masseur*, respectively.

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