

**TRANSFORMATION AS A JOURNEY: LIBERATION AND POLITICAL
EMANCIPATION IN THE MYSTIC MASSEUR.**

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Ganesh, the protagonist of **The Mystic Masseur** by V. S. Naipaul is never to lose his bearings in the journey of his life, transforming him from a lower pedestal to a higher one, offering him liberation and political emancipation. Ganesh commits to his actions of picking up professions, often changing from one to another, finally to grow as the big and emerge an M.B.E. He does everything off his own bat, yet he is entangled by his associates and his wife, Leela till the end. We need to count their help and cares as each one attempts to be a good samaritan to Ganesh.

This article is a portrayal of Ganesh rising on to the occasion of an M.B.E., overcoming on his way through the various cross-roads of his life. He pulls through in the society as a quack, a teacher, an author, an entrepreneur in book-selling, a politician and a statesman. He represents as a prototype of the transitional order of life; he shifts his locale from a feudal set up to an urban one, from an old order to a new way of life, characterized as the modern. The traditional world order is replaced by an oncoming nascent one with newly furnished signs of development, culture and society. In matters of domestic set up, he is helped by his father-in-law, Ramlogan who intermittently helps him in money for picking up different opportunities. Ganesh, on his way to gain an upper hand, is intimately assisted by Leela with love. He faces a tug-of-war with Narayan, his adversary in politics.

Ganesh never turns tail from the intricacies of capitalism that prick his sentiments in bitter ways in different walks of his life. He is engaged in healing others when there is a belief that the quacks lack caution. Naipaul reflects “They think nothing of killing two three people before breakfast” (Mystic-1). The surrounding of Ganesh shifts from an oral culture to a print culture, for the written words. The publication of books and journals began to gain ground. The meaning of education changes in its connotation. In the days of capitalism, education is more concerned with discipline, cadre and time-table than the ideal worth laden with teaching. He neglects the job of teaching as he disdains capitalist concerns of learning such as money, work and payment.

Ganesh dances to the tune of new facets of changes. He is lesser a masseur than a writer. Book-writing exposes the dexterity of his creative potential but the days of capitalism forces Ganesh to make money. It is illustrated “No respect for books, only money money” (Mystic-79). Ganesh, meets his rival, Narayan in politics. Ganesh, well-known as “the businessman of God” leaps into election affairs. His magazine, **The Dharma** blesses him the right occasions to make Narayan, his rival in politics a laughing stock. Ganesh wins laurels to traverse from an M.L.C. to an M.B.E. Ganesh cuts the Gordian knot and his history is a legend, a saga of struggle in the

transitional world from a rural to an urban one, representing multiplicity of temperaments. His ways of emancipation towards becoming a statesman are exemplary and worthy to guide others to overcome life's solemn main.

Ganesh, in the beginning, a haggard turns to be the real architect of his life. He often runs short of money, finds it either from Ramlogan or the other associates and is tenacious enough to complete writing books. He is a purposeful being hovering hither and thither with multiplicity of purposes. The social limitations hinder his ambitions for which he seems wayward from moment to moment. He comes round with help and cares from the surrounding. Ganesh does not feel the bitterness as experienced by Biswas, a member of the exodus in a foreign community mutilated and tortured. He is a loving being among the neighbours, in the society, titillated and cared for by all. He is struck by delay in his purposes for his vacillating ambition, unfavourable situations of money, jobs and settlements with people. Ganesh is often fetched with money by Ramlogan, given a share in social relations as his son-in-law and betrothed to Leela, Ramlogan's daughter. Ganesh has experiences as a quack, a teacher, a businessman and finally as a politician. Ganesh unfolds his story as an author, an entrepreneur, a politician and a statesman. In course of the change in Ganesh's career, Trinidad also undergoes a transition from a communal to an individualist commercialist order of society. The same trend of a change towards modernism occurs in both Ganesh and his country town. Ganesh does not enjoy any barmicide's feast but achieves all successes off his own bat.

Ganesh, to eke out his living works as a distrusted doctor. He is one of the unqualified masseurs of those days. They were well known for mistreating people. The novelist reflects, "They think nothing of killing two three people before breakfast." (Mystic-1) However, the act of healing others was considered holy.

Ganesh's associates are among the common folk who carry on works to make money, yet have recognition in the native society. They are gregarious social beings feeling homely with each other. Ganesh is less personal than Biswas; he is complacent enough and vociferates his wishes, desires and intentions to his friends. Ramlogan, Beharry and others could make out his weaknesses and abilities. Ganesh, himself, is not reserved and in addition, he is discussed about outside. His actions are vulnerable to the eyes of the public and especially to friends. His successes in writing are cheered by associates and his failures are tolerated. After a series of struggles he comes out as a public figure or an MBE. Ramlogan also continues his commercial enterprise and "Beharry was licensed to sell spirituous liquors." (Mystic-2) Besides, the author comments, "Beharry's shop was the one sign of a social life." (Mystic-2) Thus it is with in the fabric of sociality the characters dwell, earn and participate in the locality of Fuente Grove. Ganesh is believed to commit to the pious works of healing people and dressing their wounds. Thus he is credible enough to have the mystical power of curing people. Besides, people have their fidelity upon him as he is possessed with books and regarded in social reputation. The mass has no ill-will towards him as he reflects an image of himself as studious, genuine and veracious. The comment goes, "He is the sort of a man, who would be a rishi in India." (Mystic-7) Adding to his image, *The Trinidad Sentinel*, a journal advertises in his name. His autobiography, *The Years of Guilt* was accepted as a "Spiritual thriller". (Mystic-8) His history was the talk of the contemporary days and his account was authentic. He is a product of the society and the alienation is caused in him because of the change in the society from a feudal set-up to a capitalist up growth. Things gradually become mechanical, interests become solely economic and he grows as an MBE, finally enduring continued struggles. He suffers from alienation as he

seems to lose his bearings but often he is never to bite the dust just because he is true to his purpose and often guided, helped and tolerated by Ramlogan.

The blending of the feelings and thoughts of East and West is reflected in Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*. The culture and the society that emerge out are drive towards the print culture-for the written words. Education is the means to take the protagonists to the outside world of men and materials. Money, earning and economic capacity are related in the modern days with the ability to read and write. Ganesh is amazed and contemplates "All these people with their name in big print on the screen have their bread butter, you hear. Even those in little print. They not like me." (Mystic-16) Ganesh is not yet an able man to fit into the capitalist world of work, money and payment. He despises work despite his pecuniary difficulties. He knows the tenacity required to be engaged in work in the capitalists' days. Thus he abandons the job of a teacher offered by the headmaster of a school in port of Spain and is offered hints at taxi-driving.

The contrast between the feudal tradition and the capitalist newness is remarkably presented. The bitterness of comparison is elicited while discriminating between the cane-field from the remote lands and the urban port of Spain. Though teaching is an art but the author voices the problem of the people who come from the far-off villages and the cane-fields and participate in teaching in the schools of port of Spain. Modernism is shown wide apart from the olden days of feudalism, still present in the villages.

Teaching is based on the seriousness of purpose and planning. Teaching is not an act of morality and codification but with a purpose "to form, not to inform." (Mystic-14) Everything is dictated by efficacy of planning to serve a pre-designed end and education in the capitalist days is a means to an end. Ganesh is a hard nut to crack on all newness of situations. He is harassed by the strictures and designs of the capitalists' ways. The programmes and settings of the institutions such as time table are considered more important than efficacy and worth of teaching. Education is synonymous with discipline and cadre rather than with the worth of studies.

Alienation is caused by the chronology of the events that are painful and purging him of the passions of life. His lovable father, the well known Pandit Ram Sumair passes away at the juncture of his becoming something in life. The elderly persons to care for him are almost none. It is only Ramlogan, the would-be father-in-law who pursues after him. As a young man, he feels himself bewildered and sunken. As a traditional Hindu, he performs what the elders dictate to him. Just before the cremation, he applies "the last caste-marks to the old man's forehead". (Mystic-20) The person in grief is laden with more of burdens. The society demands from him maturity of his being and an adult disposition at the moments of crises in his own family. It is well-expressed by Ramlogan saying to Ganesh, "Well, Ganesh, you is a man now." (Mystic-21) The sad songs of the women heard in lengthened tunes, the preparations for the cremation and the dictations of the Pundit, his aunt and Ramlogan add to a gloomy atmosphere at the death of his own father. Ganesh feels the loss and separation but hides it under the guise of performing rituals. It is the first jerk which Ganesh has to tolerate at the brink of his journey of development. Ganesh at present appears as a drowned rat.

Ganesh, the gregarious being is fond of the affability of the society and the circumstances. The East Indian ways of life along with the feudal communal world of Trinidad and Tobago shape the personality of Ganesh. Ganesh gives up the job of teaching. He seeks a release "from the emptiness of urban life back into the stimulating peace and quiet of the country." (MM-21) He represents the man from the traditional world of Hinduism shared with the feudal ways of the past. The urban ways are despised by him. He seeks solace from the

natural, the rural and the peaceful world of the villages. At the moment of his awakening, activity and development, he loves to rest in the humble, the simple and the beautiful villages. He wants to retire from the contemporary world of Christianity and capitalism that demands work, engagement, business and toughness of urbanization. He is susceptible to the gusto of mysticism in the villages encouraging sharing of lives and empathy from each other. He is disgusted at the clumsy, buried and mechanical ways of the town people. The values regarded are quite opposite to what are necessary. He must have been an aggressive individual dancing to the tune of the town people and a modern upsurge in order to become a big one in the society. In contrast, he is after an affable surrounding amiably inhabited by his own men, Kith and Kin and aspires for a big career in writing. He searches for the means to an end where they are scarce. A village may share his emotions but is devoid of the means to his upkeep. The proof of the pudding is in the eating but Ganesh wants to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear for he prefers a rural dwelling. Naipaul aptly says, "Ganesh remembered the queer feeling he had of being separated from the village people." (MM-25) The rural living mocks at the wariness of life and prefers the soothing playfulness and liveliness of existence. In the meeting with Mr. Stewart, Mr. Stewart advises Ganesh, "You must find your own spiritual rhythm before you start doing anything. You must stop being worried about life. (MM 30)

The social institution of marriage, infested with affiliation and feelings of well-to-do for each other is a mutual and reciprocal relationship for a settled life. Settlement and accommodation are issues joyful in *The Mystic Masseur* where as they are painful and bitter in *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Ganesh is loved and appreciated often by Ramlogan for Leela, his daughter would be betrothed to Ganesh. On the contrary, Biswas is seen by the Tulsis in a condescending attitude. Kinship is smooth and pleasing in *The Mystic Masseur* but in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, it is put to distrust and hatred. The Tulsis distaste Biswas and Biswas undoes the bondage and subjugation of the Tulsis. But humour, good-nature and sincerity of belongingness colour the marital well-being in *The Mystic Masseur*. The love and worthiness of emotions mark the liaison between the son-in-law, Ganesh and the father in law, Ramlogan. The sincerity of Kinship is put forth : "First he looked at Ganesh's face, then at Ganesh's plate and there his gaze rested until Ganesh had eaten the last handful of rice." (Mystic-35)

There is an awareness of gradation – low and high status in the society that each one would attain to by virtue of jobs, professions and works. A discrimination between originality of belongingness and achievement in society pervades the whole social sphere. The discussion goes, "That for a man like you, educated and reading books-night and day, shop keeping is a low thing." (Mystic 36) An educated man despite being unemployed is unable to pick up the jobs considered unworthy and lowly in society. Ganesh, at times seems to have given up the ghost.

The pride of wealth and possession is a repercussion of the feudal tinge in the then society. The talk goes on between Ramlogan and Ganesh about Ramlogan's property: "Two acres near Chauganas, good land too. Ten acres in Penal A house in Fuente Grove Two three houses in Siparia." (Mystic-37)

A comparison between the practices of the old days and the present days is an image of the decaying of the old order and pervading of the new one into the social arena. The social milieus are in transition. The print culture symbolizes the oncoming of modernism. The rituals receive a change into newness. "he did not send the messenger around to give the saffron-dyed rice to friends and relations and announce the wedding. 'That old-fashion' he said. He wanted printed invitations on scalloped and gift-edged cards. 'And we must have nice wordings, Sahib.'" (Mystic – 38)

Education is a rod of judgment of values and worthiness. But money counts one's position. So in marriage, an educated person is regarded much but is not credible enough to sustain the married life. So Ramlogan is worried about the economic stability of Ganesh though he is educated and soothes him at his restlessness. Besides, the beauty of social life is still traditional and Leela is appreciated as "a chastened and impassive, a good Hindu wife." (Mystic-44) To suffice the earning for the family, Ganesh wants to pick up messaging and writing and he hopes to sell his books as hot cakes. Ganesh develops interest in the beginning of his career both in messaging and book writing. He is reflective enough and mutters "A little bit of messaging and a little bit of writing." (Mystic-47) One brings faith and love to the people for he serves them heartily but the other might offer him, fame and wealth. The context of "money in books" is an expression of the capitalist interest in writing. (Mystic-47).

Ganesh loses his vigour and his works and his attempts grow fragile. The portrayal of Fuente Grove is dissuading to the readers. The author describes in discouraging terms the atmosphere and the site befitting the hazy career of Ganesh in writing. It is well-marked in the interaction between Ganesh and Beharry featured by the author. The description of Fuente Grove is repulsive and numbs the senses of the readers. It foretells about Ganesh crumbling down in his profession. The author says, "Fuente Grove looked unpromising" (Mystic-57) and he describes it "to be practically lost." Besides the author adds "You could not like Fuente Grove. In the dry season the earth baked, cracked and calcined and in the rainy season melted into mud. Always it was hot." (Mystic-57) It purges the place of the liveliness and elation of existence. Activity is deadening and pleasures are few. "They had few thrills. The population was small and there were not many births, marriages and deaths to excite them." (Mystic-57) The culture and life is degraded and Beharry's shop makes enthusiastic the drunkards to thrash their wives.

The conversation between Ganesh and Beharry point to the culture of books, journals and the awareness of the outside world. The oral culture is losing its ground and giving in to the printed and the written. They talk about Napoleon's Book of Fate, edition of Eothen, Almanac, the Gita and the Ramayana. The call for knowledge and writing is boosted enough in Fuente Grove to be frustrated later on. Ganesh grows nervous and stays in trepidation when Beharry is a versatile announcer to all forms of writing.

The comparison between the business of Four ways and Fuente Grove is the hiatus between the rural life and the urban life kept wide apart. The urban capitalism looks gorgeous, grand and full of opulence and ability. The rural feudalism is gradually lost, drooping, dry and dejected. Beharry's shop is "bright with coloured advertisements," but Ramlogan's shop was "greasy and dirty". (Mystic-60).

Ganesh loses the appreciation of the people and is graded a minor quack. A masseur as the career is described as "a hard hard thing." (Mystic-60) They derive their livelihood with too much of labour, that is "Getting two cent to buy a bread and some cheap red butter". (Mystic-61) (P-60 & 61) In similar vein, Suruj Poopa, is unfit for committing to minor treatment and dreams of the dentists' operation "to pull out big people teeth." The number of masseurs is many. So Ganesh can not top the list in Fuente Grove. Thus Ganesh can not gain the upper hand in his profession. Leaving aside stomach dislocation and curing stiff joints, Ganesh falls flat to carry on bigger operations. The author is sarcastic enough in calling the treatment of a masseur as "God's work! (Mystic-62)

The reference to America while Ganesh links his career in writing to Street and Smith, a firm of American Publishers is an expression of Commercialist enterprise replacing its traditional and native counterpart. It is big opportunity for Ganesh when American publishers are begging

him to write. He has excelled in his prose writing with “Victorian Weightiness” and the couple Ganesh and Leela is developing in their dexterity of English speech, i.e. - the big thing of talking good English.” (Mystic-66) America looks bright and Challenging enough to pick up a career in writing. People’s opinion changed. He is found incompetent as a masseur and better capable as a writer. The awfully attractive elements of far-off America make Ganesh crazy enough. It is considered as grand as a revelation. “There were so many kinds of paper, so many colours and so many glorious smells.” (Mystic-70) Printing is accepted as a repeated affair along with the smell of books. Similarly, note-making on papers of several colors is highly cheerful. The achievement of writing a book is worthy enough to be revered. The act of “one day writing a book of his own and having it printed” (Mystic-73) is contemplated to be miles ahead in his days.

Ganesh, a man of letters is a traditional character well-versed with the native ways. He calls his son naming him Jawahar and his daughter, Sarojini. But every writer is denounced to be pregnant with the problems of “poverty and sickness.” (Mystic-77) It is to pooh pooh an idea in each career that Ganesh prefers and rejects.

Ganesh, despite his desires, is unable to turn over a new leaf. Here, the alienation cursed upon Ganesh alludes its cause to his wife, Leela bearing no child. Ganesh is angry on Leela, “She can’t even have a thing like a baby, a small tiny little thing like a baby ! Let she shame ! Lesshe go ! (Mystic-79)

Book-writing involves an aesthetic potential and a creative ability with the consciousness of reflection and reality. But the age of capitalism drags its purpose towards earning of money. The discrepancy is illustrated “No respect for books, only money money.”(Mystic-79) There is disgust and repulsion created between the old artistic styles and the modern materialist ways symbolized from time to time by both Leela and Ganesh alternating between each other and between the two forces. The tug of war persists throughout.

The hesitation to write is caused by family disputes and the others, even his Kith and Kin are growing jealous of him. Ganesh utters being angry on Leela, “Going to show she. Not going to write a single line.” (Mystic -79).

In the world of modern days, the women seem to compete and not meekly obedient to the men. Leela is also engaged in reading and writing Marriage is no more an eternal celebration. It is a mechanical affair of coming together. It is, thus, comically commented by the author, “These young girls today think that getting married is some sort of game. Something like rounders. Running away and running back.”(Mystic-80 & 81) Suruj Mooma reminds her past and regrets herself being taken out of school after Third Standard though she used to stand first. Education was considered insignificant for girls in her young days. In contrast, the present days ‘Leela neglects caring her husband, she being engaged in studies. Education was a far-fetched access for girls in the past but the table is turned these days. The creeping in of the machine-made world and encroaching onto the aesthetic world of leisure in order to increase in efficiency of work and activity is observed on the scene. Beharry makes a time-table to which Ganesh must stick to so as to be able to write the book. As per the time table the author reports the daily routine activities : “He rose at five, milked the cow in the semi-darkness and cleaned out the cow-pen; bathed, did his puja, cooked and ate; took the cow and calf out to a rusty little field; then at nine, he was ready to work on the book.” (Mystic-83) The dexterity, engagement and arrangement of time table are believed to add more hues to the occasions than the spirit and talent indispensable to the work. Success is believed to lie in organization and machination of planning and not in possession of originality. However, machine is treated inferior to arts.

Ganesh's writing amazes the printer who operates the machine. The words on the pages composed by Ganesh create thrill in the printers. The grandeur of arts grades a higher rank than the efficacy and performance of the machines. Ganesh is versatile and superseding to others and competes against the worth of machines.

The commercialist enterprise proliferates its cause. Ganesh prints the thousand copies of his book at San Fernando and in his conversation with Basdeo, Ganesh cheers up at the fast-selling of the copies. Suruj Mooma, Beharry and Ganesh applaud at the praise-worthy work of Ganesh. Gradually, Ganesh undoes the doubt of Ramlogan whether he (Ganesh) is a B.A. and explains the values laden with education in the then days. Money, at the same time, is regarded as the root cause of success, even at the cost of studies in the hue and cry of capitalism. For instance, Ramlogan claims the books that Ganesh writes for his help in house and money. Money and materials seek priority to books and study. Ramlogan says to Ganesh, "I gave you my daughter, I give you my money and you don't even want to give me your book." (Mystic-92) Suraj Mooma and Leela wait at the success of Ganesh. They express their envy at Ganesh and back-bite him. Ganesh, along with Beharry, fixes an attractive price for the book as its demand reaches as high as forty-eight cents. Besides, Bisson is appointed for his versatility in setting. Bisson is an active being of the capitalist world. The author aptly delineates, "Oh, yes. American books. Preety books. Nice books Salesmanship. Fastest- selling books. I ever handled." (Mystic-96) Besides, he expresses his handy ability in book-selling as follows : "Now I could just look at a book and tell you how hard or how easy it is to sell." (Mystic-98) The coins count his competency in selling and he charges nine cents commission for his selling. After Bisson's departure, the book-selling reaches a low pace. Ganesh is appreciated for his authorship and Bisson is praised for being a protean seller. Arts receive a secondary place to business. Bisson is paid more importance and better concerned than Ganesh in the enterprise.

Ganesh develops as a prototype of the individuals who grow up in a developing country. He pulls through in a fast pace. He knows to make ties with the forces of capitalism involving money, market, price and profit. He, with an aesthetic tinge does not forego the indispensable element of an economic enterprise. He wins the favour of the people who make him reach the Zenith. He is rewarded for his artistic dexterity in composition but faces a tug of war with market competencies. The author worried about the sale of his books is visited by Bisson as a Daniel come upon the scene.

Ganesh's persistent engagement in work makes him remarkable as a successful one in the Caribbean society in an interval of transition. The society grows more economic, material and well in the gusto of business. Ganesh is prudent and hard-working. He is, in the opinion of William Walsh, "dutiful, devious, unscrupulous – each where it is necessary to give this greatness a chance to shine out." (Walsh-67) Ganesh's name is associated with the lord of learning and prosperity. Similarly, Ganesh here, is on the way to fame, success and opulence in life. He endeavours to rise high and his ceaseless strive is conspicuous enough among the neighbours and in the society. He develops a new identity. He, in the past, belonged to the group of displaced individuals who managed with substandard works. They are in the struggle to identify themselves and their community is being creolized to the urban standards of multiple ethnic habits and adaptations to lives. The new society inhabits the economic individuals, the Philistines who value success in terms of money and achievement in work.

The issues of the day are about the war in the sway of modernism. Beharry and Ganesh are talking to make a history book for the future on the hot issues of the then days. That Hitler, the leader of the Germans might blow off Trinidad being in thirst for oil is the subject of

discussion between the two. As both are of East-Indian origins, they relate war with the battle of Mahabharata, the dialogue between Arjuna and Srikrishna and the sacred quotations from the Gita. The cross-cultural exchange is not marked as they talk between themselves and do not share their conversation with any member of a different community in Trinidad. The community of the East Indians remains confined and segregated, caused to feel bigotry, distance and boredom of existence. They feel isolated from the others and remain a limited section in Trinidad. It propels them in reaction to rise high in Trinidad to gain affability, touch and loyalty of the people. Ganesh, the great Indologist, is hanging after books on Hindu philosophy and issues Indian in books. Ganesh's dreams of writing hundred and one sorts of books concerning Hinduism and Indian philosophy are yet to be completed. But he having further ambitions in life is looking for money that would be fetched to him by his books. Ganesh, a scholar in appearance and work is also a money-maker who turns to an MLC because of his highly esteemed ambitions to become big in his society. At the same time, the coaxing of her wife regularly questioning him whether the books would offer him money makes Ganesh dumb, founded and puzzled. Arts and creativity are evaluated by their ability to offer money and capital.

People are indulged in both work and money in the days of capitalism. The coming of the Americans leads them towards increasing activities and bigger payments. The author mentions, "Everywhere people making money." (Mystic-107) Ganesh, the protagonist, by his persistent endeavour makes money by selling his books composed by him. He, a devotee of literature and arts turns a materialist by the influence of his own wife, his friends and the surrounding. Basdeo, the printer and Bisson, the seller are intimate associates to help him in his writing career. The smaller locality of Trinidad still enchants Ganesh to propagate his career in writing and people are amazed at Ganesh being busy in such a narrow vicinity, "a small small place like Trinidad." (Mystic-109) His perseverance is observed more in writing books. Still then, he is called a Pundit and a masseur. The practices of an enterprise such as printing, selling and advertisement are quite conspicuous. To advertise himself, he paints on the signboard. "GANESH, Mystic." (Mystic-110) He is put to different careers in his life as people believe that one swallow does not make a summer. Ganesh is not to turn tail from any hurdle in life. Even under adversity, he endures to reach the moon someday. Thus his life is a thespian art. The author says, "He built a small shed in his front yard, thatched it with carat palm which he had to get all the way from Debe and put up some stands in it. On these stands, he displayed about three hundred of his books, including the *Questions and Answers*. Leela put out the books in the mornings and brought them in at night." (Mystic-111) May he be a triton among the minnows toiling hard.

The workers are worried about to lose their gain and pleasure of valuable professions at the announcement of American companies leaving Trinidad. Colonisation and investment by the foreign companies are beneficial to them and they express grief at the departure of the company after a nine days' wonder.

Ganesh is yet on his march to cross the Rubicon. He, now, plans to place his picture and the picture of his wife on the advertisements in the papers. He realizes for not composing the companion volume – He thinks to change his attire from trousers and a shirt to proper dhoti and Koortah. He is advised so by his friends for he would appear as the real mystic. Beharry makes him always to be promptly acting to the situations and the surrounding. Ganesh, in whites, looks like "a real Maharaj." (Mystic-113) Business demands the briskness of the current days. One ought to be apt and prompt with all and win their favour. Ganesh, in a few days wins the recognition of the mass as a "mystic" (Mystic-115) from the sign-board on the mango-tree and

the book display in the shed. Besides, Leela takes each concern in book-selling as “a matter of life and death.” (Mystic-115)

Ganesh scribbling in his notebook “black boy under a black cloud” with the pictures of the clouds (Mystic-115) is to illustrate the helplessness that stays in them as its permanent abode. “His eyes were dead, lack luster.” (Mystic-117) It is an expression of empathy, share and identification with the poor, neglected and downtrodden. This is a scene of distress and poverty involving the taxi-driver, the poor boy and Ganesh.

Ganesh reveals the waywardness of the society that declares him a hero. He does not feel himself the winner in the face of poverty, hunger and backwardness. He fights tooth and nail to hold the reins of power so as to work for the society.

Ganesh has earned most of his money by tackling spiritual problems. He is liked by all for his intellectual and spiritual strength. The author says, “Race-horses and racing-pigeons were named after him.” (Mystic-127) When every “obeah-man” tried to become a mystic “Ganesh was the only true mystic in the island.” (Mystic-128)

Ganesh “was no bigot” (Mystic-128) says the author. All the religions – Christianity, Hinduism and Islam were revered by him equally. The deities of all religions are treated as one. He worships Mary and Jesus, Krishna and the crescent star equally. As he considers ‘All the same God’, (Mystic-128) so he is loved by the people of all religions.

He as a mystic has no fixed fees. He does not charge high fees but treats the patients with very meagre payment. People recommend his highness, “He not like others. They only hot after your money. But Ganesh, he is a good man.” (Mystic-128)

He talks in the common dialect to the simple folk in his gregarious style being affable to them. With pompous ones, his delivery of language is deliberate and put weight on it.

Ganesh, by virtue of his generosity and hospitality can win people’s favour and he strengthens to become a big one in the society. Ganesh’s association with people is a kind of transformation of the bitterness of the feelings into gaiety and happiness. The transcendence brings peace and compassion for each other in a public gathering, on a whole, meeting Ganesh. The author says, “so clients come to Fuente Grove from every corner of Trinidad. Soon he had to pull down the book-shed and put up a canvas roofed bamboo tent to shelter them. They brought their sadnesses to Fuente Grove, but they made the place look gay. Despite the sorrow in their faces and attitudes they wore clothes as bright as any wedding crowd : veils, bodies, skirts all strident pink, yellow blue or green.” (Mystic-129)

Ganesh can venture to buy twenty dollars, worth of books from San Fernando and goes through them. Basdeo, is still keeping alive the zeal of Ganesh and praising him for his good books. Basdeo is applauded and speaks in high words about Ganesh, “Remember, I did tell you I did feel something special about you. Is a good good book and is my opinion that more people should have a chance to read it.” (Mystic-131) Basdeo is an affirmative sign and agent of modernism embraced with the values and ethics of capitalism. Basdeo, even prints Ganesh’s books at his own expense. The book is worthy and attractive enough. It does no more require the mysterious selling hand of Bisson. Ganesh’s *101 Questions and Answers on the Hindu Religion* is sold at the fastest pace in the history of book selling in the Caribbean city of Trinidad. Thus, Ganesh, by virtue of his struggle, quite tenacious and his purposeful attempt comes out with flying colours in book-writing. He maintains his dexterity, ability and boldness till the end.

The search for money tosses Ganesh hither and tither. He looks for any port in a storm. He picks up the work of taxi-driving. He buys the taxi from his father-in-law, Ramlogan. Ganesh, gradually grows practical and material in nature. A man who intended to serve the

people by offering them free transport charges four shillings for the trip from Princes Town and San Fernando to Fuente Grove only after the initiation of his wife, Leela. The paper illustrates, “A little bird tells us that the so-called mystic in South Trinidad has taken up driving taxes.” (Mystic – 140) Besides, he becomes well-known as “The businessman of God.” (Mystic-140) The good-nature of Ganesh and his liaison with business makes him a figure of such wide reputation. Narayan comes into the scene and he locates in Ganesh, a rival that is getting on. The accusation against Ganesh resonates everywhere and it is parroted by the people all around. A mystic in affiliation with business is despised and looked with suspicion. However, the business is the idea of Leela, his wife. It is no greater than taxi-driving. To be amusing enough, Leela has built a great bamboo tent to feed the clients coming to see Ganesh. The clients bring offerings, of food to Ganesh from Beharry’s shop and Leela uses the food to serve the customers in the restaurant also. The couple is able not only to sustain and exist but gain the popularity and favour of the people. Ganesh, the affable one is able to overcome the hurdles with his cunning and devoted wife, Leela. Ganesh, the philosopher inside can feel the depth of passion for the people though he engages himself in book-writing and taxi-driving from time to time. The brightened being chooses a disguise of material engagements and prefers such mask to overcome his worldly hurdles. Ganesh can build a mansion replacing his old thatched home and is donated with a temple built in proper Hindu style.

The turn of events transforms the mystic staying in the holy abode of the temple to an able politician. Narayan, comes closer and closer to him through the adverse ways and attacks in mass-media. Ganesh is accused from time to time being an “Anti-Hindu”, a “Racialist” and an “Atheist”. (Mystic-145). The Hindu reveals Ganesh with loopholes, in support of Narayan to win the trust of the people against Ganesh. The critics, Prof. Harihar Ratha and K.C. Mishra illustrate in their article, “The Mystic Masseur : A Study in Third-World Politics” appropriately “Ganesh as a politician and conman combines in himself. Eastern spirituality with Western materialism and secularism, Indian orthodoxy with modern revolutionary ideas.” The battle that Ganesh faces against Narayan is retaliation against Narayan denouncing Ganesh as a “religious visionary.”(Mystic-150) Ganesh exhibits his potency in politics by applying the practical and workable ideas in politics for a win against Narayan. He is not a vague spiritualist but a politician of the days defeating Narayan in the political battle. The Indian and the western combine in him and the togetherness of spirituality and materialism exemplifies his humanity in the world of battle and debates. Ganesh is politically conscious but appears a holy-figure for his long-term engagement in mysticism. Ganesh, now, has the opportunity to rise high and to take silk.

Ganesh remains a regarded individual esteemed among the council of elders pronouncing judgements on theft or assault. He, besides, is invited to prayer meetings. He is, no more, an alienated being hovering as a haggard. He is about to reach the pedestal of power. The sign of “Authority and piety” (Mystic-149) marks his face. His audience is wide. The businessmen, shopkeepers, workers, bedecked children and “spidery limbed children sprawling on sugar sacks,” (Mystic-149) all are crazy to listen to him. He delivers speeches on Buddhism and Indian religions. He writes in English and speaks in Hindi. He elucidates on suppression of desires, avoidance of war, and possession of pleasure for the world. Thus, he is condemned by the little bird to be “a religious visionary.” (Mystic-150) Narayan is imitating Ganesh in delivering lectures and showing the people books as Ganesh did. Narayan is not envious of Ganesh’s ability in mysticism but he is struggling for the elections. Leela is now being convinced to pick-

up social welfare work. She is making arrangements to feed poor children in her restaurant. The Great Belcher fully shares Leela with her social work.

Ganesh's writings flourish in Trinidad and it is an efficacy to defeat Narayan. He brings out the lovely books sold regularly. Namely, *The Road to Happiness*, *Re-Incarnation*, *The Souls and See it* and *The Necessity for Faith* are of sufficient attraction. Still the popular ones are *What Gold Told Me* containing spirituality and metaphysical discourses and his *Profitable Evacuation* is the mega success after all. It explains the "means of strengthening abdominal muscles" and it looks awfully attractive (Mystic-113) its cover being bright yellow with a lotus on it. Ganesh has earned such fame that the future of Beharry depends upon the fate of Ganesh. Beharry is asked often to speak on Ganesh as a man and a mystic and his elaborations on Hindu philosophy. He disparages the sarcasm of Narayan against Ganesh. The author brings home, "His fate was bound up with Ganesh's and he, more than anyone, resented Narayan's attacks." (Mystic-153)

Ganesh is given apprehensions of being attacked by Narayan through mass-media. Ganesh has denied interest in elections when Narayan is putting on a hard toil in 1946 elections in Trinidad. Ganesh says, "I ain't burning to be one of those damn crooks – who does go up for elections." (Mystic-154)

The hiatus for political rivalries grows wide. The scene of politics is approaching to be on tenterhooks. Narayan has already formed his own party, i.e. the Hindu Association. He turns tail from the urban Port of Spain and chooses the country area for his political tussle. At the first general election, Narayan is able enough to gain or win the day as the President. Narayan looks more grand when the appendage is seen after his name. The affairs of Ganesh are rode a roughshod over by that of Narayan. Narayan's messages in cable to Indian leaders are reported in the *Trinidad Sentinel* making him popular. The appendage behind Ganesh looks humble and common. The author expresses, "What a chance would a cable signed GANESH PUNDIT MYSTIC have against one signed NARAYAN PRESIDENT HINDU ASSOCIATION TRINIDAD". (Mystic-154)

Ganesh is tempted by his associates to form his own association and a party. They tantalize him to face sternly against Narayan who attacks Ganesh time to time with sharp retorts. Narayan accesses Partap and his father with vague allegiance to bribery and corruption in the Local Road Board. Partap is looked down by Narayan as a post-office man. Besides, he is motivated by his group of friends to bring out a newspaper and assured of being assisted by Swami and others. Narayan is being discussed about in derogative terms about his Home for Destitutes. He is talked about to have become rich from the fund for destitutes. In contrast to it, Ganesh is encouraged to publish his periodical and "to start small" (Mystic-161) as in the manner of Uncle Swami i.e. to bring the journal first with only four pages. Partap, to be a good Samaritan, advises Ganesh, firstly to dedicate the paper to Mahatma Gandhi with Gandhi picture on it. Swami helps Ganesh in minute details, for instance i.e. "to mark out "the space for homage." (Mystic-162) Both Ganesh and Leela are busy, Ganesh writing bitterly against the Destitutes Fund and Leela writing a report on her social welfare work. They always call a spade a spade and never spare their rival. They allocate a special page for advertisement and page two as the culture page. The couple is ready to put Narayan below the salt, having their paper as a means to it. Ganesh previously was associated with *The Dharma* and was partly frustrated from the Indian film Industry because the magazine was not believed to bring good fortune to the Indian cinema. The report of social welfare work by Leela Ramsumair was a big blow to Narayan. She had helped the destitute in cash and refreshments, as expenses for the treatment of

213 poor children and in feeding 425 children. The couple now puts up shoulder to the wheel. Destiny, sooner or later ordains on the couple their good days.

Ganesh is between the devil and the deep sea to decide whether to leap into the election affairs. For him, the table turns. The hesitant turns an activist in politics. *The Dharma* at the moment comes out as the blossoms of the morning to bless him the right occasions and cause to flourish in popularity. He is tantalized by the then circumstances to act the way really wished and begin a campaign in the most accessible way to the public. He is now able to realize his affairs important and feels the weight behind the mark of a leader. He is put to compete in politics against Narayan.

Politics is limited by the capitalist forces. The reach through money counts the days in politics. It is thirty thousand dollars offered by a Hindu Industrialist that both the parties of Narayan and Ganesh stay in tug of war to access to. That's why Ganesh and friends very soon form a representative assembly of Trinidad Hindus to win the favour from the Industrialist. Ganesh's party comes to be called as Hindu League. The actions of the league are close and secret to the members. The Inaugural meeting of the Hindu league, as if hermetically sealed is held at Ganesh's own residence in Fuente Groove.

It is an expression by political identity that each party strives for. Narayan is seeking new members so as to topple the opponents. The scene of politics particularizes the specific identities, celebrated ideologies and their distinctive mottoes. All join the race of election. It is a democratic awareness growing popular in Trinidad where people can express their free and fair consent. The mass-media remain their chief weapons. Freedom of speech and expression gains ground in efficacy of political promulgation and to condemn one's rival. Ganesh Ram Sumair, the editor-in-chief of *The Dharma* wants to degrade his rival, Narayan of Hindu Association, so as to make him crumble down in power, money and position. The author rightly points out "That paper make Narayan a laughing stock." (Mystic-176) Each side perseveres to enlarge itself and proliferate its branches. Ganesh's supporters are fetching the people *The Dharma* i.e. the free copies of the journal so as to win their favour. The delegates are fed to their heart's content. They eat, gargle and hop. The benches are fewer in number than the number of delegates and they rest on lattice-work. The hullabaloo in politics makes itself look big and the tasks before them are chanted high than done sooner or later. Narayan is put to humiliation and defeat. He is alleged of the corruption charges in grabbing money for the Destitutes' fund.

Politics is condemned more as a corruption, a bribery and a fair of elections. The contestants have gargantuan appetites, fund or source being the fuel for their active initiative. The bullies rule the roost. However, a win by Ganesh shows refinement in politics and maturity of the public towards a democratic consensus. Narayan is decried, "A man like you, rubbing money that people scratch and scrape and save. Waiting to consult constitution!" (Mystic-182) The contestants and supporters vociferate their opinions and prejudices. Narayan turns a drowned rat by the humiliation caused to him for his misappropriation of fund. As he asks for forgiveness, the temper of the situation cools down. Instead he is cheered with reverberations in praise of him just preceding his defeat.

However, fortune par took with Ganesh. The author says, "Ganesh was the only candidate for the presidency and was elected without any fuss at all." (Mystic-184) His retinue, Swami and Partap are Assistant Presidents, the boy along with them is made the secretary, and Indersingh is offered as the fourth assistant to the Chief Secretary.

Democracy is ordained with justice, piety and the voice of the majority. There is no need to twist the lion's tail but humanity is enthroned. Ganesh and party are to win laurels.

Ganesh, struggling hard all these years, is now given fresh opportunities to rise high and mark the occasion. He is condemned as a religious visionary for which he gives back a sharp retort by being elected before his opponent, Narayan, formerly an able politician.

Ganesh, is again boosted to compete for the island election. He is believed to fight election in the cleanest way. His posters read, “GANESH WILL DO WHAT HE CAN. A VOTE FOR GANESH IS A VOTE FOR GOD. GANESH WILLWIN. GANESH IS A MAN OF GOOD AND GOD.” (Mystic-187) Ganesh undergoes a metamorphosis; the mystic masseur turns an MLC. Ganesh, is now, on the platform to cure the people strangled in intellectual poverty. Ganesh offers his people a hope, enlightenment, a joy and a serenity of belongingness and fidelity. He proves to be their man; they have their say on him.

Ganesh, the mystic relates to philosophies when he should deal in politics. He refers to Hindu ethics God and conscience when he moves on a campaign in election. Ganesh turns down the signs denying monetary assistance. Rather he puts up the signs expressing gratitude and financial assistance. Instead he offers the people to seek comforts and help. His sign says, “Spiritual solace may be had here at any time.”

Ganesh and party face contestants Beharry, a sincere compatriot is eagerly working and patching posters writing elegantly about Ganesh :

“GANESH IS

Able

Nice

Energetic

Sincere

Holy.” (Mystic – 188)

Indersingh, the opponent, is posed by Naipaul as a dedicated and well-informed individual who projects himself with carefully thought out speeches planned beforehand about the colonial perspectives of oppression and freedom. He is called a “walking dictionary.” (Mystic-189)

Leela, as Ganesh’s wife does not have fascination for Ganesh’s opponent. But Ganesh in his self-style praises the opponent “He is a good boy. He fighting a clean clean election.” (Mystic-189) Leela makes Ganesh aware that “goodness and big mind” (Mystic-189) won’t do in Trinidad. That Indersingh must be understood from politics’ point of view and not ordinarily as the common people. Beharry nods his head in support of Leela and speaks more with such tinge against the opponent.

Ganesh’s supporters are busy with the election agenda – a sense of the downtrodden, traversing the path towards success and greatness in society. They fill up posters and Ramlogan also engages himself in filing in letters. They also exchange drinks such as coca-cola. They decide to organize a “Bhagwat”. Leela explains them that the people come not to pay heed to the recitations but to avail of the free food. It is an occasion of enthusiasm where the Great Belcher, Suruj Mooma and Ramlogan engage all throughout the week in cooking, burning tags where simmered the rice, dal, potatoes, pumpkins, spinach and Karkhee etc. in “great black iron pots.” (Mystic-191) People are elated and over-hoyed to ambulate miles to celebrate Bhagwat organized by Ganesh, Indersingh, the opponent is invited to Bhagwat and introduced by Swami to the audience. Indersingh starts talking on politics, even on the pedestal of Bhagawat. The author says about Indersingh’s vociferation, “Indersingh gave a little hop, fingered his tie and stupidly talked about politics.” (Mystic-192)

Ganesh is represented as a tenacious, persevering individual unyielding to the social hurdles. He can overcome his alienation by his persistent toil and endeavour. Thanks to his common sense in dealing with each situation. The legend is his rising metamorphosis from one to the other profession “from teacher to masseur, from masseur to mystic and from mystic to MLC,” etc. (Mystic-192) His study career, his aspirations to be a pundit and the interlude of becoming a taxi-driver are hinted and mentioned. Without Narayan’s attacks, he would have forgone politics and such a bright career.

Ganesh meets the bigs, as an MLC. He is the first one to break the ice onto power. He dines with the MLCs and their spouses. Ganesh is taught the table manners and is further advised not to hesitate to touch the fish knife, soup spoon, fruit spoon and tea spoon on the dining tables. He is gaining fluency to chat with the Governor’s lady, the Christian Indians and the others. Ganesh is learning increasing sociability with the governmental heads. The mystic is gradually losing his philosophic ways and picking up responsibilities, committing himself to the fashions of the powerful and he looks grand along with them. A humble being turns a majestic one. Ganesh seems dexterous, smart and intelligent. He is on his high horse. N. Rama Devi comments “He proves to be “smarter” than others and his “Smartness” is not condemned by the people of his society in which “Smartness” and “intelligence” has come to be viewed as synonymous and with awe.” Ramadevi speaks about his quality which Ganesh adapts for acquiring social intimacy indispensable in politics. He wins the favour of his men and enchants words to appease his party and the people with a patience that Rama Devi calls “Tolerance” which projects his easy affiliation into activities and assimilation of the discerning manner of his days. His aspirations onto higher pedestal of power succeed with awful veracity. He is esteemed as “The onble Ganesh Ramsuair, Member of the Legislative Council.” (Mystic-192)

Ganesh rises finally from an MLC to an MBE; he can avail of the big hands. He is not to thrust down, but is graded higher in the hierarchy of power. He is fetched with cultural scholarship to travel all round. He gives up wearing dhoti and turban. He abandons his house in Fuente Grove, sells it to a jeweller from Bombay and buys a beautiful house of his choice in the “fashionable port of Spain district of St. Clair.” (Mystic-199) He is a transformed being dropping religion and philosophy and is crazy for political theory. His whole history is a change of scenes and time to time readiness for life. He changes and bears a personality that shifts differently with alteration of contexts. The critic, Gourevitch refers “to shifting about reality” and the “mixing of things” while delineating the history of Ganesh. He further comments, on the rise of Ganesh : “a constant remaking and renaming of the world and of individual lives through simultaneous processes of displacement and accumulation.” (Gourevitch 24)

Ganesh, a member from the exploited and the down trodden does not part with his companies. He leads and shares relationship with the taxi-drivers, scavengers and fish-vendors. Avtar Singh justifies the plight of Ganesh “is a comedy essentially of the individual person in his damaged society.” (Singh 58) The exploited hero is yet able to feel the trauma of the socially oppressed. Though he talks from the door-steps of the Red-house, yet he is said to address the crowd of beggars and idlers from the band-stand in Woodford Square.” (Mystic-201) He receives them with open arms. At the same time he assumes airs in matters of parliamentary affairs such as passing of a bill. The newspaper headline comments.

“LAND RESETTLEMENT BILL PASSED.” Ganesh Walks out.” (Mystic-201)

Ganesh, a leader, avoids pomp and show and expresses charity. He neglects attending cock-tail party and never dines at Government House. He is a fidus Achates to charge fewer fees for favours done to the members of the public irrespective of being a destitute or an opulent one.

Those who pay more fees attend cocktail party and wear dinner jackets. People like primrose can avail of most of such opportunities. Though he has nothing to offer the workers of the sugar estates on strike, yet he can appease “a crowd of impatient strikers as a man of good and god.” (Mystic-204) He eludes the cause of the workers’ strike to the domination by the communists. He said, “I pledge my life to the fight against communism in Trinidad and the rest of the free world.” (Mystic-206)

Politics descends down from the west. It is the borrowed model from the western world which imprints itself in the Caribbean society. It is replicated in the Third-world which has its origin in the west. Colonization pours in the features of civilization, making politics – a stereotyped model imparted into the colony in the socio-political discourse of imperialism. Eric William observes, “Political forms and social institutions were imitated rather than relevant, reflecting the forms existing in the particular metropolitan country from which they were derived”. (William-501)

The colonized society resists the introduction of the ideologies that tussle and contradict with the native ethos. The hybrid society comes to feature in *The Mystic Masseur* as in the poly-ethnic society of *A House for Mr. Biswas* with the approach of a cosmopolitan scene observed in Port of Spain. The combat of the political ideologies is well indicated by Ruthfork, “As a novelist, Naipaul wants to say that no one should accept any political ideology that comes from outside if one does not understand the thought, science, philosophy and law that determine such an ideology.” (Ruthfork-184)

The characters of Naipaul have similarities and contradictions as in Ganesh Vs Narayan – a meeting of the opposites on the political stage. He represents a panoramic society – a comprehensive one inhabiting characters with multiplicity of temperaments. They are placed face to face against one another. It is an image of society in its totality.

Apart from the critical perspective, the narrative perspective of Naipaul is no less than a legend. Ganesh Ramsumair, a devotee of freedom, liberation and political emancipation, can, by leaps and bounds, hold the reins of power and make his mark as an MBE.

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