

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed Ernest J. Gaines' novel A Gathering of Old Men the present writer would like to conclude her analysis by pointing out the use of the four elements of narrative technique in the novel, namely point of view, style, time and tempo, and distance to supports the main idea that is self-improvement.

Narrative technique concerns the application of several ways in describing a story. The novel has a significant and unique narrative technique in presenting the story into a very interesting one. The narrative technique can be used to give a variation on the way of presenting the plot of the story. Consequently, it could create a greater effect that may lead to the understanding of the primary idea within the story in a significant way. As a result, the novelist can produce such an effect that the readers can feel what the novelist wants. It can be seen in the use of multiple narrators. Each character brings his/her personal feelings or concerns, and interests to the story.

Point of view plays an important part in this novel since there are fifteen narrators in the story. The story is told through the first-person point of view and more specifically in first-person observer. The effect of using multiple narrators is to give the readers full details to the story. In this story, the fifteen narrators

seldom tell about his/her own story, but more to narrate what they observe and hear from other characters. This effect is to make the story trustable to the readers, as the subjectivity to the story is reduced. The distance between the readers and the story is undoubtedly close. The use of the first-person point of view allows the readers to be more emotionally involved with the narrators, and the use of multiple narrators allows the story to be told in a communal rather than in an individual way.

Time and tempo concerning the novel is chronological. Some flashbacks are added within several events. These flashbacks have significant roles in enlightening each narrator's relationship and experiences in the past. This effect will make a close distance between the readers and the novel, as the readers will feel sympathy to the past experiences of the characters being told in the flashbacks. The tempo is slow as the whole incidents happen only in a day, but are told thoroughly throughout the novel, as to give a more detailed picture of the story to the readers.

In using style, Gaines uses the informal language that is easy to understand by the readers. The use of slang by the black narrators as well as flawed English are to make the readers familiar with the way the black talks and live in Louisiana. In style, Gaines also uses repetition to emphasize more the meaning of the words that have been repeated. Humor is another part of style used in the novel. This humor is usually found inside the black character's speech and action. This is to give an impression to the readers about the actual lifestyle of the black.

The present writer thinks that Gaines has skillfully employed a significant narrative technique in creating certain effects that have been mentioned above to

the readers. The novel has values concerning life and it offers rich materials relating to the narrative technique. By being involved in the story, the readers are brought to remember the importance of self-improvement in this life. One seldom makes mistakes and is often scared to do something, but there will be time for people to make a better life in this world, as it is never too late to make changes.