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# Pastiche Playground: A Study of Postmodernistic Approach in Vikram Seth's *"The Golden Gate"*

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**Abstract**

*The Novel Golden Gate was published in the year 1986. Vikram Seth is an Indian novelist and Poet. Vikram Seth was an international writer, the kind who breaks the boundaries national to refusing the fan keep characters settled in one place. Post Modern Theory has been applied in this research. Post modernity is understood as a historical period from the mid 1960s to the present, which is different from the theoretical postmodernism. The works with postmodern narrative frequently deal with the largely trivial and the narratives uses intertextuality, parody and pastiches freely. The author remodels, refashions, reinterprets or re/presents the character with variation. The story revolves around the Protagonist John, meanwhile the author gave equal distribution of importance to the other characters as well. He writes the novel within the Omniscient. it's like the reader is exploring through windows into the family relationships and therefore the mental and emotional attitudes of the individual characters. Seth's characters are outlined not most through an outline of their consciousness, self-expressive or reads of themselves.*

**Keywords:** Love, Intertextuality, Parody, Relationship, Emotions Expressive, Self-Realization.

**Introduction**

English Literature, which refers to the study of texts from around the world written in English. The English language has developed over the course of more than 1,400 years. English Literature opens up a world of inspiration and creativity. It helps to explore and analyze some of life's greatest question and assists young people in gaining the skills required for the muse and deeper thought process to life.

Indian Writing is an honest enterprise to demonstrate the ever-rare gems of Indian writers in English. It has attained an independent and special status in the realm world of Literature. India has produced several great writers who have influenced the whole generation and continue to inspire the generation by their writings.

Vikram Seth is an Indian novelist and Poet. He was born in Kolkata. His first book is a collection of poems, *"Mappings"*. The Novel *Golden Gate* was published in the year 1986. It was published in unique since the entire verse and dealt with hives people in Silicon Valley. It was successful novel in his life and brought him plenty of

accolades from Literary Press. In 1985, he won Sahitya Akademi Award, an Indian Literary honor from his book “The Golden Gate”. In 2007, he was bestowed with Padma Shri, India’s Fourth highest Civilian honor.

### **“The Golden Gate”**

*The Golden Gate* is a story of love and self-discovery, set in the 1980s in San Francisco. The protagonist, John Brown, is a successful computer engineer who is looking for love. His ex-girlfriend, Janet, a sculptress and drummer, places an advertisement for him in the newspaper. Liz Dorati, an intelligent and witty lawyer, is the perfect match for him. Their relationship quickly blossoms, but as John and Liz get ready to get married, cracks appear in their relationship. Liz’s family life is complicated by her mother’s illness. Phil, a lawyer, is struggling with career dissatisfaction and is looking for a simpler life. Paul, the son, is going through adolescence and is feeling the pressure of society. All of this adds to the complexity of the story.

The characters ponder different philosophies. John is perplexed by Phil’s anti-nuclear stance, while Liz ponders the meaning of a comfortable existence. Liz struggles with her career aspirations and the possibility of having a family. Feminism, social justice and personal fulfillment are major themes throughout the novel. Through John’s introspective poetry, we see their triumphs, sorrows, and personal development. The novel delves into the intricacies of love, meaning-seeking, and the dynamic of friendship. San Francisco’s iconic bridge and its bohemian atmosphere become characters in the story. *The Golden Gate* is more than just a love story. It explores themes of personal growth, purpose, and relationships in a world that is constantly evolving. The characters, although privileged, confront real questions about their place in the world. There are some unresolved issues in the novel. Is John and Liz going to stay together? Is Phil finding solace in his work as an activist? These unresolved issues prompt readers to reflect on the characters’ journeys and ask themselves, “What are my own journeys?” *The Golden Gate* is a novel that uses language to explore the human condition through the eyes of a generation struggling with love, ambitions, and the constant search for meaning.

### **Postmodernism**

*The Golden Gate* might combine elements of different genres, like romance, coming-of-age, and social commentary. This reflects a postmodern rejection of rigid genre classifications. The novel is aware of itself as a work of fiction. Seth might employ techniques like directly addressing the reader, blurring the lines between narrator and character, or even including fictional reviews of the book itself within the narrative. The story unfolds through the viewpoints of various characters, challenging the idea of a single, objective truth. This fragmented narrative reflects a postmodern distrust of grand narratives and universal meaning. The novel might reference other literary works, historical events, or cultural touchstones. This creates a sense of playfulness and encourages the reader to make connections between the text and the broader world. The novel might employ irony and parody to question traditional values and societal norms. This could involve humor, satire, or even a sense of absurdity.

### **Symbolism**

The bridge, which bears the novel’s name, is a potent representation of opportunity and connection. It stands for the protagonists’ quest for purpose and their hopes for a happy existence. However, since characters still struggle to find happiness in spite of their success, the bridge can also represent the gap between hopes and reality. John offers a glimpse into his inner world through

his reflective poetry. They stand for his quest for self-awareness and his efforts to express his nuanced feelings. Writing itself takes on symbolic meaning as a means of introspection and self-discovery.

One could see Liz's sculptures as an expression of her artistic soul and her wish to make a difference in the world. They might also represent the brittleness and transience of interpersonal bonds. Nourishment and drink all through the novel can symbolize distinctive things. Extravagant suppers may speak to a materialistic way of life, whereas shared dinners can mean association and closeness. Liquor, frequently displayed at parties, can symbolize elude or a misfortune of control.

The dynamic California scene, with its redwood woodlands and rolling slopes, stands in differentiate to the characters' often-sterile lofts. It can symbolize opportunity, plausibility, and an association to nature, a counterpoint to their manufactured urban lives.

By utilizing these images, Seth includes layers of meaning to the characters' encounters and the novel's topics. The peruser is welcomed to decipher these images and consider their centrality inside the setting of the story.

## Conclusion

This is in contrast to Modernism, which tended to emphasize fragmentation, but within the context of a search for a greater purpose. Postmodernism can be seen as playful and sceptical of the notion of a single, fixed meaning. Postmodern thought rejects the idea of monolithic categories (e.g., good/bad, upper/lower culture). Instead, it suggests that identity and meaning are fluid and multifaceted. There is a recognition of the multiplicity of points of view and the importance of marginalised voices. The use of verse allows for a certain sharpness and wit in Seth's social commentary on themes like relationships, career struggles, and life in 1980s San Francisco. A key aspect is his use of verse. Novels like "*The Golden Gate*" and "*An Equal Music*" are written entirely or largely in poetry, creating a unique and musical reading experience.

Seth's novels, particularly "*A Suitable Boy*," are known for their vast size and sprawling narratives. They encompass a multitude of characters, storylines, and social themes, offering a rich tapestry of Indian life. He doesn't shy away from experimentation. "*A Suitable Boy*" harks back to 19th-century realist novels like those of Jane Austen, while also incorporating elements of social commentary and romance. His characters come alive not just through their personalities but also through their social interactions and the depiction of Indian culture, customs, and traditions. John embarks on a journey filled with romantic complications and setbacks. His relationship with Liz falls apart due to conflicting perspectives and his own uncertainties. Despite rekindling with Janet, tragedy strikes when she passes away in an accident.

Throughout the novel, John battles with uncertainty, dissatisfaction in his career, and feelings of jealousy. He struggles to fully commit to relationships and faces a sense of emptiness with each failed connection.

Although the novel doesn't conclude with a clear happy ending, John displays signs of potential personal growth. Finding comfort and contentment in his role as a godfather to Liz's child, he hints at a possible evolution towards maturity and a deeper sense of belonging.

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