

International Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

*Indian Streams
Research Journal*

Executive Editor
Ashok Yakkaldevi

Editor-in-Chief
H.N.Jagtap

Indian Streams Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

Regional Editor

Dr. T. Manichander

Mr. Dikonda Govardhan Krushanahari
Professor and Researcher ,
Rayat shikshan sanstha's, Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu College, Kolhapur.

International Advisory Board

Kamani Perera
Regional Center For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka

Mohammad Hailat
Dept. of Mathematical Sciences,
University of South Carolina Aiken

Hasan Baktir
English Language and Literature
Department, Kayseri

Janaki Sinnasamy
Librarian, University of Malaya

Abdullah Sabbagh
Engineering Studies, Sydney

Ghayoor Abbas Chotana
Dept of Chemistry, Lahore University of
Management Sciences[PK]

Romona Mihaila
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Ecaterina Patrascu
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest

Anna Maria Constantinovici
AL. I. Cuza University, Romania

Delia Serbescu
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest,
Romania

Loredana Bosca
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Ilie Pinteau,
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Anurag Misra
DBS College, Kanpur

Fabricio Moraes de Almeida
Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil

Xiaohua Yang
PhD, USA

Titus PopPhD, Partium Christian
University, Oradea, Romania

George - Calin SERITAN
Faculty of Philosophy and Socio-Political
Sciences Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi

.....More

Editorial Board

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade
ASP College Devrukh, Ratnagiri, MS India

Iresh Swami
Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur

Rajendra Shendge
Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University,
Solapur

R. R. Patil
Head Geology Department Solapur
University, Solapur

N.S. Dhaygude
Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur

R. R. Yallickar
Director Management Institute, Solapur

Rama Bhosale
Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education,
Panvel

Narendra Kadu
Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune

Umesh Rajderkar
Head Humanities & Social Science
YCMOU, Nashik

Salve R. N.
Department of Sociology, Shivaji
University, Kolhapur

K. M. Bhandarkar
Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia

S. R. Pandya
Head Education Dept. Mumbai University,
Mumbai

Govind P. Shinde
Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance
Education Center, Navi Mumbai

G. P. Patankar
S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka

Alka Darshan Shrivastava
Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar

Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar
Arts, Science & Commerce College,
Indapur, Pune

Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary
Director, Hyderabad AP India.

Rahul Shriram Sudke
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore

Awadhesh Kumar Shirotiya
Secretary, Play India Play, Meerut (U.P.)

S. Parvathi Devi
Ph.D.-University of Allahabad

S. KANNAN
Annamalai University, TN

Sonal Singh,
Vikram University, Ujjain

Satish Kumar Kalhotra
Maulana Azad National Urdu University



LOVE AND LIFE IN SANFRANCISCO

Manisha Sharma¹ and Dr. R. Sucharan Reddy²

¹Research Scholar NIMS University, Jaipur.

²Associate professor and Head Dept. of English , School of Humanities and social sciences , Nims University Jaipur.

ABSTRACT

Vikram Seth's first novel *The Golden Gate* is novel, in the sense that this is a fiction in verse. Novel in verse is a thing of novelty. In the recent literary history, novels in verse have not appeared though Vikram Seth says he has drawn inspiration from Alexander Puskin who has composed *Eugene Onegin*, a novel in verse. Seth's *The Golden Gate* has all the ingredients to be described as an 'American novel'. It deals with the lifestyle, culture and love of present America.

KEYWORDS- Vikram Seth's, Love, Life, Golden Gate.



INTRODUCTION :

The Golden Gate occupies the watershed position in Vikram Seth's life. The inspiration for the novel was Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. After reading *Onegin*, Seth realized that he had found a medium for the story he had wanted to tell about California. In reading *Onegin*, three things came together: the idea of the novel, the actual structure and the classical structure of the stanzas, and the idea of writing about California and life in California, because Seth was studying there at the time. The basic theme of the novel was provided by a lunch meeting with a friend, a Japanese-American woman. Their discussion of their then rather unsuccessful love life became the opening scene of *The Golden Gate*.

The theme of the novel is one of the classic materials of all comedy-man's search for love--and the various mishaps that befall him in the course of that search, although the rest of the novel leads less to the traditional comic ending (nuptials all around), than to surprising sadness. The novel begins from this relatively simple inception and steadily enlarges in scope as it becomes a bittersweet love story, a wickedly funny novel of manners, and an unsentimental meditation on morality and the nuclear abyss.

John Brown, the hero, is a Silicon Valley computer professional who's highly successful career stands in abysmal contrast to his personal life, which leaves much to be desired. When he gets hit hard by a frisbee while taking a walk, he thinks:

... If I died, who'd be sad?
Who'd weep? Who would be glad?
Would anybody?

This dismal rumination is not in the nature of paranoid self-pity; it is a cold-blooded evaluation of the state of affairs in John's world. John is an emotional non-entity. Nobody needs him beyond his work, and this irks

him no end. Beneath all his frivolous capers and his outward aggressiveness, he has the basic human need to be loved by somebody. He uncomfortably senses that he exists in a vacuum, while around him life is passing him by. He knows that he is “a link less node, no spouse or sibling/No children ...” Nothing offers solace anymore—not books, or music, or any of the things he enjoyed doing earlier. His only female friend is Janet Hayakawa, erstwhile lover, now, through mutual agreement (prompted by a neurotic compulsion to avoid a permanent relationship), the two share a friendship that is shielded “from all passion”. This condition of John Brown makes us seriously think about the cruelty of human life and also the need to have a humane and harmonious world instead of a dry and sterile life that John lives.

The story now shifts to focus on Phil Weiss, a college friend of John and fellow computer professional. Phil has given up a promising career in nuclear science to become an environmentalist. He has a son, Paul whom he is raising all alone, because he has become estranged from his wife, Claire. Phil runs into John and Liz at a music concert, in which Liz’s sister, Sue, is performing. Having renewed their acquaintance, Phil gets invited to John and Liz’s house-warming party, where he meets Ed, Liz’s brother. The two indulge in a homosexual relationship, but as Ed feels guilty about homosexuality on ethical grounds, their liaison is plagued by uncertainty and denial. Seth, therefore, shows the unhappiness and indifference prevalent in the American society where it is very difficult to find a comforting friend. Thus, these characters of Seth always search for a humane and harmonious world to extract at least some comfort and peace of mind in an otherwise dismal society.

Meanwhile, John, alone again, rediscovers his friendship with Janet, and reawakens to the love he had always felt for her. John, thus, searches for a humane and harmonious relationship based on real commitment towards Janet. But as fate would have it, just when they are on the verge of committing to each other, Janet dies in an accident, and John is left heartbroken and bereft. The story closes with Janet’s words ringing in John’s ears:
... I’m with you John. You’re not alone.

Trust me my friend; there is the phone.
It isn’t me you are obeying.
Pay what are your own hearts arrears.
Now clear your throat; and dry these tears.

There is thus the tacit understanding that John will pick up the pieces of his life and will renew human contact by breaking down his wall of isolation, thereby returning to sanity and normalcy.

A natural corollary to the disintegrated persona of the American woman is a dysfunctional family life. As the traditional home maker, it is the woman who keeps the family together, even in today’s overlapping and confused roles. But the average American woman is too emancipated to be tied down by any rules, and if her quest for freedom and self satisfaction entails leaving in her wake a trail of broken marriages, broken homes, maladjusted children, then it is a small price to pay. It is through Phil’s son Paul that Seth expresses how hard children get hit by estrangement between their parents:

“... No Paul, she’s gone away.” “Forever?”
“I just can’t tell you, son, but never
Think you’re alone. You’ve got me.” “When
Will you leave me?” Phil, shocked, stares

Being separated from a parent is thus not a bad dream but a fact of life that Paul is just learning to accept.

Another issue is that of morality. Seth does not subscribe to the concept of conventional Indian morality. As an artist, he recognizes the complexities of human nature, unpalatable though they may be. The moral code presented in the novel is the moral code that America lives by: casual sex is a way of life, as are homosexual relationships, pick-up bars and so on. Social morality, or what one owes to the world at large, has been brought to the forefront by the episode of the peaceful demonstration against Lungless Labs. Seth unambiguously says that one must look beyond one’s personal world to do what one can for society as a whole, emphatically stating, “I am my brother’s keeper”

The title Seth has chosen is of special import, because the name The Golden Gate Bridge captures the quintessence of modern California. It stands as a defining feature of America's west coast, just as the Statue of Liberty is the defining feature of the eastern one. In the novel, Seth uses the bridge to indicate the setting of his tale, and the identifying landmark of San Francisco becomes the novel's majestic backdrop of the human drama that unfolds.

However, the bridge is more than just an identifying feature of Seth's tale. In ancient alchemy, the element corresponding to the emotion of love was gold; gold, the metal that stands for all that is pure and worthwhile in human life. The Golden Gate Bridge, with all its connotations of the material of which it is a namesake, is thus the concrete image of human love reaching out and connecting people. The bridge becomes a symbol of love, representative of the soul test of worthiness, which all the characters must traverse before being let into the sanctum sanctorum of the kind of love they have only ever dreamed about, never known. Janet, with her broad human sympathy, has already crossed it, as have Phil and Liz, in their own compassionate way. John learns the lesson last of all, as Janet's voice calls to him from beyond the grave. The bridge is thus an apt symbol of the effort each one must make to reach out and connect with the rest of one's fellow beings. Thus, the underlying theme is the need for a humane and harmonious world based on mutual understanding and love. Seth says in the novel:

... In life's brief game to be a winner
A man must have ... O yes, above
All else, of course, someone to love

Love is elusive, because it means different things to different people. For John and Janet, it is all or nothing at all, for Phil and Liz, sadder but wiser, it is a comfortable sharing of trust, mutual respect, loyalty and friendship. For Ed love is an abstraction linking him to God and to his own soul. Seth's basic premise is that love is a vital, life giving force; that it is possible to exist without love but only in an inhuman, vegetable kind of way. Seth believes in the power of love to build a

In *The Golden Gate* Seth has mastered the creative art process, his mastery of style and diction cannot go unnoticed. The verse seems to flow effortlessly. Whether it is description or conversation or even mental reflection Seth harnesses the sonnet to fashion a tale that never lapses into boredom. Seth's diction is interspersed with Latin and French influences and displays his inarguable but non-overbearing scholarship. The sparse restrained style is combined with a character driven narrative, spiced with urbane satire, and all is wrapped in humour tempered with compassion that bathes the entire working gentle light.

Seth maintains the pace of the novel throughout, only varying the tone in some places in order to avoid monotony. His tone is lightly ironic and 'witty, and he has that ability of the true artist to see the world around him very perceptively. As the drama unfolds, with its native joys, blind rage, then sudden tragedy, it reflects on the wider issues afflicting mankind, the place of love in human life, and the sacrifices required before one is entitled to the happiness that love brings. Seth makes us realize in the end that we need a world full of mutual love, affection, understanding and sympathy towards others. We must, therefore, leave aside our self interests and egos and search for a humane and harmonious world to restore the lost feeling and dignity to human life. This will make our earth a better place to live.

REFERENCES

1. Ashok k. Jha. (1994), "Vikram Seth: The Golden Gate and other Writings," Recent Indian Fiction, (ed) R.S. Pathak, New Delhi: Prestige Books. Print.
2. Prasad, G.J.V. (2004), Vikram Seth: An Anthology of Recent Criticism. Delhi: Pencraft International, Print.
3. Mohanty, Seemita. (2002), A Critical Analysis of Vikram Seth's Poetry and Fiction. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors,. Print.
4. Ramaswamy, S. (1998) "A Sonata in C Major: Vikram Seth's The Golden Gate. "Essays in Criticism on Indian Literature in English. Ed. M.S. Nagarajan et al. New Delhi S. Chand and Company, 158. Print.

Publish Research Article

International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished Research Paper, Summary of Research Project, Theses, Books and Book Review for publication, you will be pleased to know that our journals are

Associated and Indexed, India

- * International Scientific Journal Consortium
- * OPEN J-GATE

Associated and Indexed, USA

- Google Scholar
- EBSCO
- DOAJ
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Database
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database
- Directory Of Research Journal Indexing

Indian Streams Research Journal
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005, Maharashtra
Contact-9595359435
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com
Website : www.isrj.org