

REALISTIC IMAGES IN VIKRAM SETH'S FICTION

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Paper Received: 12.10.2022 / **Paper Accepted:** 28.11.2022 / **Paper Published:** 07.12.2022

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Abstract

The literary movement known as social realism, which first appeared in the 19th century, aims to portray the social reality and everyday lives of common people. It tries to present a fair and unbiased picture of societal circumstances, frequently emphasising problems with class, inequality, poverty, and social injustice. Even if social realism is not a major component of Vikram Seth's literature, it is noted for its study of a variety of themes and genres. Vikram Seth's writing is more distinguished by its wide range of topics, complex plots, and lyrical prose. Instead of making a direct attack on social systems, his works frequently explore interpersonal connections, cultural dynamics, and philosophical issues. Seth's books, like "A Suitable Boy," do touch on cultural and historical backgrounds, offering glimpses into the social fabric of the eras in which they are set. This is important to note.

Keywords: Vikram Seth, Social, Realism, Fiction.

Introduction

Although social realism may not be Seth's main concern, his literature does contain incisive observations about social dynamics, society norms, and human behaviour. He focuses on the effects of historical events on people and communities as well as the intricacies of interpersonal interactions. Although his writing may not adhere strictly to social realism's rules, readers are still drawn to it because of its examination of human experiences and capacity to illuminate the larger social and cultural situations in which his characters are situated. Common themes and traits of social realism in literature include:

Working-class life is frequently the subject of social realism, which highlights their tribulations, difficulties, and aspirations. It illuminates the day-to-day experiences of manufacturing employees, labourers, and members of underprivileged groups. Societal realism strives to bring to light societal injustices, inequities, and systemic problems. It challenges repressive social systems, investigates the effects of deprivation and prejudice, and promotes social change and reform.

Emphasis on Authenticity and Realism: The portrayal of people, places, and events in social realism literature aims for authenticity. In order to convey a sense of realism, it frequently makes use of in-depth observations, in-depth dialogue, and vivid descriptions. Social realism engages with contemporary social and political concerns that are of utmost importance. It addresses issues including racial discrimination, gender inequality, labour rights, poverty, and the social impacts of war and economic instability.

Focus on the Collective Experience: Social realism frequently highlights the shared experience and interdependence of people in society. It studies how social structures and institutions affect people and communities, emphasising the ways that larger social forces have an impact on people's everyday lives.

Empathy and Social Awareness: The goal of social realism writing is to increase readers' empathy and social awareness. It seeks to provide a deeper comprehension of the hardships endured by those who are marginalized and to motivate action

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and social change.

Vikram Seth's writing may not adhere strictly to social realism's rules, but his pieces do examine societal and cultural surroundings as well as interpersonal relationships. They provide perceptions into how people behave, interact, and the effects of historical events. Characters and their interactions are frequently shown by Seth in ways that reflect larger societal themes, but in a more complex and multifaceted way.

Literature Review

In 2022, Akhand [1]; "Realism when writing is an art form and method of presenting actuality as it is, without any idealism or romanticism," according to Coles' literary vocabulary. Beginning in the 18th century, literary realism reached its height in the 19th. When referring to how individuals are portrayed throughout various media, the phrases "social" and "reality" are appropriate. A social realist is an artist who uses realistic art styles to depict contemporary political and social concerns, racial injustice, economic hardship, and the struggles of everyday life. Writing on history, traditions, and rituals as well as severe social realities was a common postcolonial practise. The ones who gave them realism was Vikram Seth. However, he exhibits both the favourable and unfavourable features of his society Indian author Vikram Seth employs realism with its social concerns in his writing. A number various realism principles have been used to investigate his main literary works and evaluate their realism.

Numerous studies have shown that the main narrative strategy used in each of the significant pieces from realistic Indian fiction that have been translated into English is realism. Seth distinguished himself against other realistic writers in addition to his distinctive storytelling style as social concern, and he rose to become the most well-known author across the Indian subcontinent. After considering numerous arguments, we managed to develop an understanding of realistic that is compatible with Seth's writings. In-depth analysis of this subject reveals that English-language Indian authors have a great affinity for this specific story form, which lends itself well to the fictionalisation of Indian society as a whole and so contributes to the growth of this narrative form.

(2021) Salisha [2]; The term "realism" in literature first appeared during the eighteenth century & reached its height in the nineteenth. The term "social" refers to the members of society, and the term "realism" relates to how these members of society were portrayed in various media. The word "social realism" refers to artistic expressions by writers, photographers, filmmakers, and painters

that portray real-world socio-political conditions, racial injustice, economic suffering, and depictions of life's struggles. Balzac, Flaubert, George Eliot, Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, Laurence Sterne, and Jane Austen are just a few authors whose works portray the reality of life. Both Vikram Seth and Amitav Ghosh included social reality into their narrative works. They depict both the benefits and the drawbacks of the local social scene. The true mirror of society is fiction, which reflects the social norms. Additionally, the novels by Vikram Seth & Amitav Ghosh depict society's problems and daily life. Most people consider a Vikram Seth or Amitav Ghosh novel to be a realistic depiction of life. The author offers us an overview of life as it is through the means of a story. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* depicts the lives of four families in the Ganges River village of Brahampur, which is halfway between Banaras with Patna. This book is set in the post-independent national election of 1952, a time of political unrest. Charles Johnson's translation on Puskin Eugene Onegin served as the idea for the poetry novel *Golden Gate*. Yet another book *A Romance of Two Talented Musicians in London* is told in *An Equal Music*. His book *From Heaven Lake* depicts the image about China, Tibet, and Nepal by telling the vivid tale of his voyage from Sinkiang and Tibet. His *Two Live* is the account of the ups and downs that his aunt, a German Jewish Henrele Gerda Caro, and uncle, Shanti Behari Seth, experienced throughout their lives.

Analysis

Seth depicts San Francisco in all its beautiful grandeur, highlighting the minute details that constitute the city's beating heart: The city is depicted as a living, breathing place where sexual liberation and intellectual progress coexist. Pumpkin spaghetti, bubblegum, highways, police chasing automobiles, funny bumsticks, bills, protests, the Bay Area, and gay bars are some of the things that come to mind. This is done especially to highlight how fleetingly man's existence in a metropolis where life regenerates through pointless striving is. Even the spoken language is replicated; it is replete with American English colour & vocabulary. In terms of how the mind functions, its physical traits, the chances, its moral requirements, work ethics, single parenthood, love, leisure, and friendship, the San Francisco Seth picture is three-dimensional.

Title of the book in Viz A key characteristic that defines the *Golden Gate* is realism. The *Golden Gate Bridge* in California is an engineering wonder. The suspension bridge has no apparent supports. They serve as a link between two bay area sites, establishing relationships between the main characters and their surrounding environment.

After his journey across the bridge, Ed will succeed in his attempt to seduce Phil. An "opportunity" steals his heart. a good thing. Next, he selects "Phil". After their bitter disagreements, Phil and Liz continued to the Bay and passed the bridge, which they described as "perhaps the most majestic among man's," with its steel threads strewn above mist and showers, wind spraying, and memorable rushes. Storms over the ocean link the beach. On the bridge, Phil and Liz discuss their tense relationship with Ed and John.

The shallowness with populism of *The Golden Gate* contrast with Seth's more sophisticated grasp of Indian society and her excellent fictionalisation in *The Appropriate Boy*. He achieves this by combining realism with a contemporary viewpoint that is nearly Tolstoyan. With a broad historical sensibility, he fictionalises India's dismal 1950s. Seth responded, "I simply stagnated in the beginning stages that really... far more prosperous than I might have imagined," when asked what specifically intrigued him in the years 1950–1952. The plot revolves primarily around the fictional village of Brahmpur, Calcutta. He focuses on issues including the leather business, general elections, Hindu-Muslim studies, and the abolishment of Zamindari. In the book *Maan Kapoor*, Seth, like his character, learned Urdu about the instructor "as a means for us to gain a greater grasp of the nuances during Muslim culture", examine all the land reform cases, visited families about the shoemakers within Agra, gathered firsthand information about the Muslim people for eastern UP, about the rivers as well as gullies in Old Delhi, and took part in the Kumbh Mela within Allahabad. Seth's insistence on honesty negates the necessity for any further stronger supporting proof.

The major purpose of our country's constitution is to promote national unity by treating all religions and beliefs equally and with respect. Additionally, it is accountable for safeguarding state affairs and ensuring that religion does not stand in the way of relations both the authorities and its citizens. However, the pious desire for secularism in our country is not driven by animosity towards any faith as well religion. It is true that the state is perfectly permitted to get involved in the operations of religious groups as well as institutions along with to make special accommodations for the benefit of the most economically disadvantaged of the population. The only choice that is thought to be capable of ensuring the coexistence of India's various castes and religions in harmony and peace is secularism. Therefore, in order to preserve the long-cherished tradition of religious tolerance in India, secular concepts must be ingrained in the young, impressionable brains of our generation. We should

be required to redesign the school and college curricula to accommodate this. Focus needs to be placed on the struggles and sacrifices by all religious communities as well as their contributions to the nation's freedom and progress in school and college history textbooks. Each and every Indian has a duty to support and uphold secularism, the great ideal of living in peace and equality.

Conclusion

A Suitable Boy by Seth, written during the Nehruvian era about Indian civilization, "is a successful thought concerning life as a whole, not a collection of tricks, but life in its totality". Pre-independence Indian writers were ardent nationalists who encouraged nationalism in the reading public and aided our independence fight. Their secret weapon in the political and cultural arenas of repressive foreign power is greater Indian mysticism and spiritualism. Following India's independence, writers like Ghosh Amitav, Chatterjee Upamannu, Shashi Tharoor, Nina Sibal, Pratap Sharma, Sahgal Nayantara, and Seth began to portray India in its everyday reality using clichéd fictional perceptions. In other words, realism within Indian fiction has been revived as a result of their works. Similar to how England's Industrial Revolution stimulated the imaginations of Austen and Dickens, India's creative thinking was impacted by shady politics and a waning sense of civic and political virtue. The industrial revolution and Nehruvian socialist philosophy sparked this train of thought. Indian civilization progressively becoming avaricious, and the sacredness of the family and interpersonal ties was lost. In the book *The Continent of Circle*, Nirad C. Choudhari makes a pointed observation on this fact. "This love of money is the true driver of India's industrialization." As a consequence of this new greed, the Indian middle class has finally emerged. Seth's affinity for Austenism is where this particular fact begins. Ms. Roopa Mehra is similar to Mrs. Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice* in that she expresses standard middle-class attitudes. The general pace of Indian society is accelerating while the past ailments are being maintained at the cost of the poor & the impotent. Unfortunately, post-independent writers' fiction keeps this in mind.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in the conduct of this research.

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