International Journal of Research in Social Sciences
Vol. 9 Issue 6, June 2019,
ISSN: 2249-2496 Impact Factor: 7.081
Journal Homepage: http://www.ijmra.us, Email: editorijmie@gmail.com
Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories Indexed & Listed at: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory ©, U.S.A., Open J-Gate as well as in Cabell's Directories of Publishing Opportunities, U.S.A

A STUDY ON THE SOCIAL ISSUES RAISED IN THE POETRY OF NISSIM EZEKIEL

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ABSTRACT

Ezekiel's poems regularly touch upon language and the writing process. In "A Time to Change," Ezekiel envisions the poet as "a stubborn workman" who should work over language to reach towards "the perfect poem." This "perfect poem" is characterized by "exact communication of a thought" (p 5). In "On Meeting a Pedant," Ezekiel repudiates language, which is "cold as print" and "insidious" for the joys of the world: "Give me touch of men and give me smell of Fornication, pregnancy and spices" (p 9).

One more illustration of the theme of the power and cutoff points of language in Ezekiel's work is "A Word for the Wind," which laments the speaker's failure to find a word for the wind other than the ones which are as of now appointed to the wind. The current paper highlights the social issues raised in the poetry of Nissim Ezekiel.

KEYWORDS:

Social, Poem, Imagination

INTRODUCTION

Ezekiel's poem flows exactly like the wind he is depicting, and becomes itself a "word" for the wind. Ezekiel doesn't avoid enjambment or the manipulation of beat as his words twine over the lines of this poem. For instance, lines 3-5 bring out the flowing idea of the wind as the thought extends over three lines: "sections moving gradually like the wind over grass" (21).

In his later poems, after his language streamlined incredibly, Ezekiel communicates being tired of grand, complicated, and non-direct language: "I'm tired of irony and paradoxes of the bird in the hand and the two in the bush of poetry direct and oblique of statement plain or symbolic of doctrine or dogma" (157). Ezekiel's poetry turns in the later part of his profession towards directness and compactness.

Indian Personality is maybe the most challenging and controversial theme that surfaces in the poetry of Nissim Ezekiel. The possibility of the "Indianness" of a work manifests time and again in his poetry. The substance composed by Nissim Ezekiel is very Indian in its social setting. Poems like "Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S." and "Night of The Scorpion" manage broadly Indian issues, for example, the glory concurred to the English language, and the job of superstitions.

In "Night of the Scorpion," the speaker recalls an episode from his childhood where his mom was stung by a scorpion. The poem utilizes informal however melodic language to transfer the memory, and present inquiries of class contrast, aggregate mythology, religion, and family.

Ezekiel depicts India throughout his fifth collection of poetry, The Exact Name. In the first part of "In India," he gives a composition of pictures that assistance to give a feeling of a place: "Always, in the sun's eye, Here among the beggars, Hawkers, pavement sleepers,

Hutment dwellers, slums Dead souls of men and gods, Burnt-out mothers, frightened Virgins, wasted child And tortured animal, All in noisy silence" (131).

The slight rhyming meter of these lines adds a musicality and dynamic quality to Ezekiel's depictions. Note that Ezekiel's portrayals of India focus on the people rather than the environment, which proposes an aim on Ezekiel's part to characterize a place as indicated by its occupants.

In "Background, Casually" Ezekiel relates his life story and finishes the poem on a note about India. He expounds on the landscape first: "The Indian landscape sears my eyes. I have become a part of it. To be observed by foreigners" (181). In these lines, Ezekiel sees his environment as an outsider despite the fact that he is viewed as an insider and neighborhood. He proceeds with that he has made a pledge to remain in India: "I have made my commitments now.

This is one: to remain where I am As others decide to give themselves or In some remote and backwards place. My backwards place is where I'm" (181). Despite the fact that Ezekiel has complaints about India and looks at it as a "backwards" place, he realizes that he is viewed as an Indian poet, part of the landscape. His choice to remain in India communicates a fortitude with his country that he would just feel from within. Despite the fact that he finds the Indian environment unsatisfactory, he acknowledges it as his own and chooses to work so it might improve.

Thusly, Ezekiel can deal with both the way of life he comes from—that of the Bene-Israel community in India—just as the informing that everyone gets from the Jewish Book of scriptures. To effectively finish this scrutinizing, Ezekiel should separate himself from the text and restate things as he sees them. Thusly, religion isn't introduced as an everlasting

reality and is rather introduced as something that can be discussed or reckoned with through your own scholarly interests.

Along these lines, Ezekiel pushes the limits of religion in "Two Nights of Love," which analyzes religion to sexuality: "After a night of love I turned to love, The threshing thighs, the singing breasts, Exhausted by the act, desiring it again, Within a freedom old as earth and fresh as God's name, through all or The centuries of darkened loveliness" (47).

Ezekiel likewise obscures the line among sexuality and religion in "Delighted by Love" from Sixty Poems. In this poem, the lovers' bodies become religious temples in which a feeling of all out profound satisfaction is reached: "By rituals holy in the temple where life creates and is created. All kinships here are consummated by thrust of list when all that burns in breasts or lips is sated" (82).

The theme of the distinction between the city and nature first emerges in "Morning Prayer" in the first part of the Collected Works, "A Time to Change." In Morning Prayer" the speaker calls upon a power that comes from nature—that of "the white wings of morning," which represent the progression of time and recurrent newness. These "white wings of morning" are intrinsically attached to the movement of the Earth.

The speaker calls upon them and requests that they "shelter" the individuals who live in the city: "men Sleepless or drugged with dreams whose working hours or Drained of power flow towards futility" (20). In this manner, the speaker calls upon nature to assist with an issue that influences a specific group and bring importance to their life. The speaker additionally asks the "white wings of morning" to "Bring . . . city masks a taste of spring and clarity" (20).

SOCIAL ISSUES RAISED IN THE POETRY OF NISSIM EZEKIEL

One thing that Ezekiel is remembered for today is the consistently present suspicious and ironical perspective that arises in his poetry. This wariness becomes a lot more grounded as his vocation as a poet advances, as can be seen by the sheer number of mocking poems from his later books that are remembered for the collection, including ¬¬¬¬"Ganga" and "Occasion."

Notwithstanding, we can see proof of this renowned incredulity right off the bat in his profession: in Sixty Poems, Ezekiel's second collection of poetry, Ezekiel expounds on the pressure between common delights and religion in a poem called "Scriptures." In this poem, the speaker notes that it is difficult to feel both at "home" among religious texts and additionally be attracted to earthly joys, for example, "habits … or women, money or praise by princes, indolence or dreams" (50).

By all accounts, then, at that point, this poem may propose that one has no choice except for to pull out from their own "home" in the scriptures as a result of the world. Nonetheless, the speaker shows incredulity towards the power of these scriptures themselves. Instead of being a definitive decent, they are simply "homespun parables" loaded with base and common themes, for example, "husbandmen and servants, scattered seeds, foolish virgins, erring sons" (49).

Thusly, there is no way out from the "homespun" blunders of mankind—regardless of whether they begin in sacred text or in reality. This outcomes in a deficiency of the "parable," an absence of significance behind all this debasement, and humanity feeling lost and "accused" when at home, regardless of whether this is interpreted as meaning this present reality or the scriptures.

Ezekiel's later poems are characterized by an expanded suspicion towards religion and what the speaker calls "superstition." In "After Reading a Prediction," the speaker uncovers: "I'm not superstitious. The Zodiac predicts a new imaginative period of seven years for Sagittarians" (155). Essentially, the speaker tends to God in "Theological" with complaints: "Your truth is excessively momentous for man and not always useful. I've stripped off a hundred veils and still there are more that cover your Creation" (156).

Ezekiel gets back to the theme of memory again and again throughout the Collected Poems. In "Remember and Forget," from Sixty Poems, the speaker tends to himself with recollections from his childhood: "Remember now the time of golden bears and golliwogs, the first wide-eyed inquiries. In the dark, the mutinies at dawn and giant hopes in classrooms, jungle gyms, parks" (61). Nonetheless, the speaker's thoughts on his childhood rapidly turn solemn, as he remembers loneliness and sadness from an earlier time: "Remember, as the light develops upon you, How you developed, with just silence as a companion, with unexpected snares in books and running streams and dread in everything" (61).

When the speaker arrives at the passionate base of his recollections, the true truth of how he felt when he was troubled, he encourages himself to release everything: "Remember all and then, at that point, forget. Release it. Just those alive can be reawakened" (61). Thusly, the process of memory can become a practice through which an individual can reclassify himself or herself and return to life.

Additionally, memory acts as a purging power that allows the speaker to achieve self-information and at last rise. This poem, since it pushes towards self-information, self-forgiveness, and giving up, is on the more hopeful side of the range with regards to Ezekiel's poetry. Usually in his poems, self-information is considerably less feasible and the quest for

genuine self-information just prompts nothingness. In this manner, memory becomes a powerful device through which the speakers in Ezekiel's poems can get to themselves and continue on to the following stage in their excursions.

The speaker's relationship with his own recollections in "Mid-rainstorm Frenzy," from The Third, augments the tone of smothering pressure that leaks from the lines of this poem. The speaker, who feels overwhelmingly trapped in his life, stresses that he did not settle on the ideal choices and that everything he once dreaded in the past has happened. He is discontent with his life all things considered, yet can't remember his life as it used to be: "It will always rain like this ceaselessly upon the past and I shall not see anything unmistakably aside from the future stuff of dreams rehashing what has always been" (104).

In these lines, recollections from the past liquefy into insights on the future, and each is overwhelmed by the thoughtless redundancy of the everyday. The speaker's absence of admittance to his own past, just as his vulnerability about his present situation in life, assembles a feeling of stuckness as he endures his moment of frenzy. Along these lines, recollections from the past are nearly compared to one's own admittance to their own character, remembering information on their needs and security for their present.

Poetry itself is a significant theme throughout Ezekiel's works. In "Something to Pursue," the speaker wants for self-information that will make him be "positive as morning" (14). As far as he might be concerned, this self-information will be inherently attached to poetry: "There is a way rising up out of the core of things; a man might finish it works or poetry, from works to poetry or from poetry to something else" (lines 15-8, p 14). Thusly, poetry holds the power to aid advancement or climb. It's anything but a ultimate objective, yet rather a process: "The end doesn't make any difference, the way is everything and direction comes" (14)

Along these lines, nature can positively affect the mind of the people who live in the city and wear their "city masks." Finally, the power of nature uncovers the truth. The speaker hopes the "white wings of morning" will "Reveal, uncover, [and] elucidate" upon the existences of the individuals who live in the city and allow them to "know lucidity" through their relationship with nature.

Sometimes, the power of nature can reign in the city with positive outcomes. In "Townlore," from Sixty Poems, the speaker portrays the impact of the downpour on the city: "This enormous rambling town can cool itself, alleviated by the downpour" (81).

The speaker notes that the downpour has hampered the perilous parts of the city and brought it back towards the positive characteristics that are related with nature in Ezekiel's poetry: "Presently don't date the metal streets, Menace the wayward drifter. The wayside trees expectantly have swirled all around with green and any expectation of love" (81).

The speaker relishes the agreement between the city and nature, as his environment molds itself around his own quest for happiness: "The snare of tramlines and the routes of hurrying transports dissolve into one unbarricaded street that prompts you" (81).

Considerably more curiously, the title of the poem, "Townlore," recommends that when the city and nature become amicable the necessities of the aggregate get together with or become the requirements of the person, until a perfect equilibrium is accomplished.

DISCUSSION

Ezekiel additionally calls upon the work of different poems and praises it throughout his own work. For instance, in "For William Carlos Williams," the speaker (who is the poet) extolls Carlos Williams' work. He composes that despite the fact that he loves it, he doesn't wish to write in the same style as Carlos Williams: "I would rather not compose poetry like yours yet

at the same time I love the way you do it" (45). This poem shows Ezekiel's love and appreciation for poetry itself, despite the fact that a giving joy can't be held to until the end of time: "It comes to me Beloved poem, I love it and then, at that point, I let it go" (46).

In "Morning Prayer," from The Unfinished Man, the speaker appeals to God for harmony just as the power through language to change anything that might occur into powerful poetry: "Whatever the conundrum, The passion of the blood, Award me the similitude, To make it human great" (122). Subsequently, vulnerability and passion can be moved into a "human great" through allegory and language, or the process of writing poetry.

Poetry is a significant theme in "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher," in which the speaker looks at writing poetry to watching birds or women: "The best poets hang tight for words. The chase isn't an activity of will Yet quiet love unwinding on a hill" (135). By this point in his profession, Ezekiel's poetry had advanced to where a statement of poetics was quickly generally welcomed.

Critics conjectured that the birds in the poem represent the mission for self-information while the women address muse-like motivation. Ezekiel brings the normal world—a tricky, pursued, and regularly laden landscape in his prior works—into his writing process, which recommends agreement, simplicity, and autonomy away from the urban sphere. The speaker accentuates, "To watch the more extraordinary birds, you need to come abandoned lands and where the waterways flow" (135).

"Poetry Reading," on the accompanying page, is Ezekiel's own contemplation on himself as though he were on the outside examining. The crowd at this poetry reading is stunned by the power of the poet's words: "Against those evil spirits who can win? He drank, he drugged

himself, he went with spouses and prostitutes aplenty. In transgression/and song he spelt out what they signified" (136).

Ezekiel's undertaking, of depicting himself at a reading as though he were in the crowd, addresses an endeavor to catch everything about his poems, remembering the feeling for the stage when they are performed. Additionally, they stress that for Ezekiel, the poetry is intensely situated in the individual and defenseless, as the poet on the stage is sharing his own evil spirits for the crowd to appreciate.

Religion is a common theme throughout Ezekiel's Collected Works. Ezekiel brushes upon many various religions rather than zeroing in on one. For instance, his initial poem "History" doesn't worry about any religion in particular yet is rather about one's own entitlement to pick: "Everything returns to individual man and what he picks; always, some way or another a disappointment, realizing all he can, acknowledges the crowd or reveres snake and cow" (p 12).

In these lines, "tolerating the horde" may allude to the predominant religion of pilgrim India, Christianity. The people who decide not to acknowledge the horde may go rather to Hinduism, which Ezekiel alludes to as "worship[ing] the snake and cow.

Ezekiel doesn't underestimate religious truths and rather allows for vulnerability. In "Something to Pursue," the speaker undermines the conviction of Christianity: "Gethsemane, where Christ was miserable, Even unto passing, isn't the final station, Void of confidence in the comeliness of God, Void of confidence in the shapeliness of Man" (p 17). In this section, the speaker depicts a state of being "vacant of confidence" as a result of both the inadequacy of God's excellence and the overabundance of man's magnificence.

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Throughout the Collected Works, religious texts are additionally utilized as source-texts that are pulled from, repurposed, and reconsidered. For instance, in "Cain," the speaker alludes to Cain as "a killer" and notes the parts of his story that have been left out of Beginning: "No mention is made of delayed regret. He did not, clearly, harp on his transgression" (78).

CONCLUSION

The fact that the city and nature can exist as contrary energies and still magically concur within Ezekiel's poetry shows the elasticity and movement that Ezekiel allows for in his work. He doesn't consider the world to be static and rather understands it as moving between numerous states, as the singular herself shifts through various states of psyche.

"Urban," from The Unfinished Man, fosters this theme with a speaker who ends up lost within a city and longing for nature: "The hills are always far away. He knows the wrecked streets, and moves around and around followed within his head" (117).

The speaker feels stuck among the "broken streets," destined to move "around and around," as he longs for a characteristic break. A couple of lines close to the end summarize his affliction: "The city like a passion burns, he dreams of morning strolls, alone and drifting on a flood of sand" (117).

Throughout Ezekiel's work, there is little harmony to be found in the city, and yet, the speaker is ill-fated to remain as a result of his social ties: "Yet at the same time his brain its traffic gets some distance from ocean side and tree and stone to fellow commotion not far off" (117).

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