

INTRODUCTION

Nissim Ezekiel (b. 1924) is among the very best of contemporary Indian-English poets. He handles the language with utmost care and sensitivity. In the present study I have tried to present an objective and detailed stylistic analysis of some of his poems. First, I have presented the views of linguists, literary critics and stylisticians on style in literature and the function of stylistics. Besides, I have given critical assessment of Nissim Ezekiel as a poet and his views on poetry in general. Finally, I have analysed some of his poems paying special attention to the linguistic devices used in them. Considering the limited scope of this dissertation I have selected only six poems for my analysis.

Nissim Ezekiel acquires a place of considerable importance in post-independent Indian-English literature. His poems fascinated me from my college days both from the thematic and the language point of view. The poems chosen here display variety in terms of form, theme, technique and the use of language. These poems are considered as his masterpieces and have drawn considerable critical attention.

In my analysis of these poems I have used an eclectic model, giving all the linguistic details by exploring the poems a great deal and made comments on the stylistic features and their relevance to the total meaning. My attempt is to show the usefulness of stylistic

approach in the study of poetry.

The design of the present dissertation is as follows:

In Chapter I I have presented a number of definitions of style and the views of linguists on style and stylistics and shown that no single definition covers the domain of style. I have also taken a brief survey of the work done in the field of literary stylistics so far mentioning stylisticians, literary critics and linguists who have shown their keen interest in the study of language of literature although such studies are mainly limited to single poems. I have stated the methodology of stylistic analysis in the context of Ezekiel's poetry.

Chapter II deals with the critical estimation of Nissim Ezekiel's poetry. In the beginning I have given a brief biographical sketch of Ezekiel highlighting his poetic career. In the second part of this chapter I have presented Ezekiel's poetic works in brief and the opinions of critics about his poetry. An attempt has been made to trace Ezekiel's views on poetry and the language of poetry scattered in his critical essays, creative writings and the personal interviews given. Lastly, I have given the justification for my selection of the poet and his specific poems.

Chapter III comprises a detailed stylistic analysis of Ezekiel's six poems: 'Morning Prayer', 'Marriage', 'Night of the

Scorpion', 'Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher', 'The Railway Clerk' and 'Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.'. In my stylistic analyses of these poems, I have presented each poem in orthography with its syllabic structure followed by matrical and phonetic structures. This is followed by detailed analysis of the respective poems.

In 'Conclusions, I have stated my findings derived from Chapters I, II and III.

I have appended the discussion I had with Nissim Ezekiel in an interview held on 25th November, 1988 at Kolhapur to the dissertation.

This dissertation, I hope, is an attempt to study some of Ezekiel's poems from the point of view of stylistic devices and their importance in the interpretation of the poems. I am aware that this dissertation has its own limitations in the absence of a set model of analysis. Consequently, the statements made in the analysis are sometimes tentative and open-ended. I have concluded my dissertation emphasizing the need of stylistic approach in the study of poetry.