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A Study Of Indian Society Described In The Works Of Nissim Ezekiel

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Abstract

Nissim Ezekiel is regarded as one of the most influential voices in modern Indian English poetry, whose works reflect the complexities, contradictions, and changing realities of Indian society. His poetry presents a sensitive and often ironic observation of urban life, social relationships, cultural traditions, modernity, and the psychological experiences of the Indian middle class. This study examines the representation of Indian society in selected works of Nissim Ezekiel, with particular emphasis on his portrayal of social customs, family relationships, religious practices, urbanization, cultural conflict, and the tension between tradition and modernity. Ezekiel's poetry frequently depicts ordinary people and everyday situations, transforming seemingly simple experiences into reflections on broader social realities. His use of irony, satire, colloquial language, and understated humour enables him to expose social pretensions, hypocrisy, narrow-mindedness, and cultural inconsistencies. At the same time, his poems demonstrate an awareness of India's diverse cultural environment and the challenges experienced by individuals negotiating between inherited traditions and modern values. The study also explores Ezekiel's portrayal of Bombay as an important urban and cultural space and considers how his personal experiences contribute to his understanding of Indian identity. His representation of society is neither entirely critical nor idealistic; rather, it combines detachment, affection, humour, and self-reflection. The study argues that Ezekiel's poetry provides valuable insights into post-independence Indian society and its evolving cultural consciousness. His works remain significant for understanding the relationship between individual identity, social change, and the complexities of Indian modernity.

Keywords: Nissim Ezekiel, Indian English Poetry, Indian Society, Modernity, Tradition, Urban Life, Social Criticism, Cultural Identity, Satire, Post-Independence India.

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