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Idea of Love and Sex in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry and in Osho Rajneesh's Philosophy**Dr. Purushottam P. Deshmukh***PG Department of English, Mahatma Fule Mahavidyalaya, Warud, Dist. Amravati, (M.S.) India***Abstract**

Nissim Ezekiel was one among the greatest of twentieth century Indian English poets. His poems of man-woman relationship are splendidly evocative and sensuous. He was painfully and poignantly aware of the flesh; its insistent urges, its stark ecstasies, and its disturbing filiations with the mind. For thousands of years in India, one has been trained in how to suppress and repress passions of sex. Until this day, we have not been able to bring in vogue an atmosphere conducive to healthy and normal growth of carnal passions. Everyone grows in taboos and inhibitions about it. The urge of love and sex in humans is existential. However, it has been condemned and is being condemned by fanatics and fundamentalists alike. In most concrete but poetic terms, Ezekiel puts his understanding of the carnal passions: "No moral law can fill the void/ Deaf and blind to all is appetite." Osho Rajneesh, a great philosopher, psychologist, spiritual guru and a highly intelligent individual, belonged to the second half of the twentieth century India. The five talks he gave his audiences in Mumbai are compiled in a book "From Sex to Super-consciousness." In a sexually repressed and guilt-ridden society like ours his talks could be a panacea to lead a healthy and normal life, but he became notorious on account of his free and rational treatment of love and sex. He observes: "Unless we bring a deep understanding and a harmony to the act of sex, a better humanity cannot come into being."

Key Words: love, sex, philosophy, Nissim Ezekiel, Osho Rajneesh**Objectives of the Study:**

(a) The first objective of the present study is to explore the ideas of love and sex in Nissim Ezekiel's poems and the same ideas in Osho Rajneesh's philosophy in "From Sex to Superconsciousness."

(b) The second objective of the study is to make the reader aware of the impact of love and sex on human personality.

(c) The third objective of the study is to explore whether man is capable of *seeing* the fears associated with sexual repressions.

Nissim Ezekiel, (December 16, 1924 – January 09, 2004) has in his name seven books of verses: (1) A Time to Change (1952), (2) Sixty Poems (1953), (3) The

Third (1958), (4) The Unfinished Man (1960), (5) The Exact Name (1965), (6) Hymns in Darkness (1976) and (7) Latter-Day Psalms (1982). Like most of his contemporaries (the Indian poets writing in English), Ezekiel treated love and sex without inhibitions. The theme of love and sex had always engaged his mind powerfully and dominated his poetry. K. R. S. Iyengar writes: Ezekiel's poems are as a rule lucid....splendidly evocative and satisfyingly sensuous. He was painfully and poignantly aware of the flesh, its insistent urges, its stark ecstasies, its disturbing filiations with the mind.¹ Except Kamala Das, none of the Indian English writers could use so daring terms to depict "stark

ecstasies” of the flesh. However, in some of his unpublished poems, his depiction of the nudity of the human bodies engaged in making love seems belonging to the pre-historic periods. In one of his unpublished poems, he has been able to create the erotic mood. A woman depicted in this poem “announces every act / of pleasure as she does it”:

“Is this a part of you?” she asks
As she holds it, stares at it.
Then she laughs. “Put your finger
there,” she pleads, as if
I need instructions. It is only
impatience, though, becoming frenzy
as I penetrate. “Now,” she claims,
“You are within me. Aren’t you
Within me?” And she makes me say,
“I am.”²

However, the way Nissim Ezekiel put together the fundamentals of love and love-making has no parallel except Kamala Das. In his poetry of love and sex, one is struck with the inevitable fact that in the life of humans, all that is good, beautiful and true can only be lived and known. Man and woman in love are love. They do not exist apart. It is very difficult to define the actual state man or woman in love making. Poet’s realization is love-making is an organic phenomenon and hence no words put it properly, yet, he knows, if the poetic experience is real and authentic, the right and exact idiom follows:

That I must and train myself
To recognize the real thing,
And in the verse or friends I make
To have no truck with what is fake.³

The words constitute reality but are not reality in themselves. Poet’s idiom takes a realistic and thoroughly human view of man-woman relationship. He strips his view of romantic illusions and sentimentalism. His view of love and sex covers diverse moods and situations in his treatment of man-woman relationship. Love is of vital force to him-as a man and as a poet-almost *raison d’* of his life. If he could ever pray, his demand would be for:

Quietude. The ordered mind
Erasure of the inner lie
And only love in every kiss.⁴

Those who believe the soul exists are replete with inner lies. For Ezekiel, the soul does not exist. In his understanding of love and love-making, no dichotomy between the soul and the flesh does exist. The organized religions all over the world do not take realistic view of the body. They say it is most *unreal*. There can be no accord between the poet and this life-negating idealism. This, the poet finds utter disregard of the inherent qualities and intelligence of the body. He knows that the actuality that fills the heart can never be unreal:

Your body was the same, though,
Surviving all the loss,
This most unreal flesh
Obstinately fills the soul.
I see, touch, hear, hold
You....breathing.⁵

Man has been talking of love for thousands of years. *Something* that man ought to have been living is merely being talked about. Osho observes: Love is being discussed, songs of love are being sung, devotional hymns of love are being composed and

sung, but neither love nor sex has any sacred place in the lives of the Indians. If we begin a rigorous search of our own selves, we find no other word is more false than the word 'love.'⁶ It is deeply paradoxical when those who condemn love and sex are the direct produce of love and sex. Ezekiel takes into confidence "reluctant creatures of solitude" who, under the influence of their respective organized religions, ruin lives by suppressing the phenomenon of love and sex: "Forgive yourself the springing of the blood/The sad illusion of perpetual light."⁷ How repression, remorse and guilt proliferated in human is worth listening from the American humorist Mark Twain: Civilization came into being when man stopped pelting stones at his enemy and began throwing insulting and humiliating words. The poet being a civilized man cannot hide his frustrations, for the modern civilization has thrust in him the taboos and the inhibitions of sex. Not easy for anyone to talk independently on love and sex, he has to allude to mythical references to appease his readers:

How freely they mention
breasts and buttocks.
They are my poetic ancestors
Why am I so inhibited?⁸

Cultures and religions talk of love. But love in which the co-called civilized man finds him makes him neither tranquil nor creative. The spiritual masters, gurus and the priests blame man as if he himself is responsible to have brought for him his present condition. They say man is intrinsically evil. He is given precedents from the ages-old scriptures so that he returns to his normalcy. Those who condemn individual liberty have

killed all the possibilities of love to grow. The priests, gurus, masters, etc., do blame man for his predicament, but it never comes to their mind the culture and its byproduct the religion could be at fault. It is basically wrong to ask man to cultivate love. It is not a thing to be cultivated, but a reality to grow in. But organized religions all over the world have separated love from sex. Man has no courage to go against huge authority of organized faiths. His vulnerability on account of his weak defense against organized faiths has bred in him antagonism towards sex and a deep of sin and the resultant feelings of guilt. However, man's mind revolves round sex round the clock. One cannot be free from something that is very root of life. Poet suffers sense of guilt in dreaming sensual passions:

Debtors to the whore of love,
Corrupted by the things imagined
Through the winter nights, alone
The flesh defiled by the dreams of
flesh,
Rehearsed desire dead in spring
How shall we return?⁹

Sex is the greatest mysterious force of all, yet a deep rooted guilt exists along this passion. The nature of the guilt is it brings one down to animal level. Man develops the traits of his character through the culture in which he is born and brought up. The culture inculcates in him its values and they nourish him. The cultural pressures produce a *center*, the *self*, the entity called "I"- the *ego*. This *superstructure* as produced by cultural forces fears degradation of lowering itself to animal level. Hence, when the actual act of lovemaking is over, many a man is filled with regret and remorse. He or

she resolves not enter or repeat it again. Osho Rajneesh gives us deep insight: An oath, a resolution, is on the surface and is always on the periphery. An oath implies conscious part of the mind exercising its will over the sub-conscious. The conscious mind may take an oath of celibacy while the vast subconscious ...is asking for that very thing that has been implanted in humans by existence.¹⁰ Desires "labyrinthine" give the poet "the sour taste of sin", yet he is not able to overcome them:

Desire
labyrinthine?
And all to win
The sour taste of sin? ¹¹

Osho observes: From an early age boys and girls are taught sex is sin. When they attain adolescence, they marry and their journey into the world of sex begins. However, although avid for sex, they carry with them the strong conviction that sex is sin. A girl in India before marriage is convincingly told that her husband is her god. Under circumstances as these, it is not possible for her to hold the view that her husband is god because he carries her into sin. Then sex is done as a ritual. The act does not bring her bliss and joy. The feelings of sin and guilt have destroyed married life on the earth. If we make even a causal search of the Hindu Scriptures, we find they are replete with

women's utter humiliations and degradations. A woman is supposed to be a door to hell. When married life is destroyed this way, the dream of love can never be realized. In absence of love, we are sadly mistaken to think that the a couple will love children.¹²

His marriage was the worst mistake of all.
Although he loved his children when they came,
He spoilt them too with that extra doll,
Or discipline which drove them to the wall.
His wife and changing servants did the same –

A man is damned in that domestic game.¹³

However, it is in love-making a couple has glimpses of eternity. The dimension of time ceases. The mind becomes unburdened with all its content and grows perceptive. It is this perception that makes the poet says:

Your body had an inner light
For me to contemplate. I knew
each part but now I saw
the sacramental pattern, soul
inviolable within all that
pure being flowing from its source.¹⁴

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