CHAPTER – IV

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THEMES AND TECHNIQUES IN THE POETRY OF ARUN KOLATKAR AND NISSIM EZEKIEL

4.1. THE THEMES OF THE POETRY

4.1.1. The Study of Socio–Graphical and Cultural

Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel both are common men. They sketch social situation and cultural standard of India with their poetry. They also criticize social relationship with nature. Arun Kolatkar highlights the themes of socio-graphical and cultural through his collection of the poems. Some poems have been depicting the hollowness of a borrowed cultural standard. In the contemporary society we find people having no sincerity in their beliefs and attitudes. The poet is pointing out the lack of sincerity of people and criticizing, the hypocrisy of those people who deliberately choose unconventional attitude. The poem entitled ‘Makarand’ presents a simple theme about social. The poet raised a question about the relevance of a custom at the place of worshiper. He also showed social attitude through the poems entitled: ‘The Bus’, ‘The Priest’, ‘The Priest’s Son’, ‘Vaghya and Murli’, ‘The Blue Horse’, ‘The Railway Station’, ‘Yeshwant Rao’, ‘An Old Woman’, ‘Chaitanya’ and ‘Boatride’.

Nissim Ezekiel also writes poetry on society, common man and woman. He focuses largely on philosophy of life and psychology of the people. Philosophy and psychology these concepts are different from Arun Kolatkar’s concept of poetry. Ezekiel is the poet of ordinary human situations and common human relationship and human interest comes to the fore in a host of lyrics ‘Night of the Scorpion’ Interfresh the family with community the superstitions with the rational and the scientific. He has written large number of poems on society entitled ‘The Visitor’, ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T. S.’, ‘The Poem of the Separation’ and ‘Marriage’ are comments an society he also uses the social images: beggars, saints, sadhus, healers, Yogi, the society girl, English Boss, the clerk and Guru, they are common men and women.

The poem ‘Makarand’ which is written by Arun Kolatkar presents a simple theme about society the poet is raising a question about the relevance of a custom at a place of worshipper:

Take my shirt off
And go in there to do pooja?

No thanks

But you go right ahead

If that’s what you want to do

Give me the matchbox

Before you go will you?

I will be out in the courtyard (M-43)

The poem ‘Makarnd’ depicts social attitude about worship and worshipper. The question whatever one has to wear a shirt to take off perturbs the poet. He is hot willing to follow this custom. He does not want but others to follow his suit he demands only freedom to present his individual belief he regards for a matchbox so that he could smoke in the courtyard. The poem lays emphasis and the importance of personal freedom the poet is not ready to accept the custom prevalent at the shrine but he does but not demand any change. He allows his friend to go in, if he wants to do. There is a sense of tolerance that attitude to show the importance of the poem is giving to personal freedom. He does not raise any objection against any ritual or custom. He concerns only with his own individual and personal freedom. So poet is representing active of society no one wants to worship god directly but everyone wants to worship indirectly. Totally survey of the poem is societal disbelief of god. The poet is the representative of society. In this poem the protagonist, Manohar, the poet uses nickname for himself frankly refuses to join the worship which the pilgrims have come to offer to the image of god Khandoba. Here the protagonist’s scepticism turns into total disbelief. In fact, he prefers smoking to go into the temple for purpose of worship. In other worshipper in other words, the speaker or the person in the poem objects to the very act of the worship of a stone or bronze image supposed to represent a deity. M. R. Satyanarayana says that “for the first time the pilgrim is faced with the problem of worshipping a god in the poem Makarand”.¹

The pilgrim would rather smoke outside than go inside shirtless for the worship. His objection is not merely to his taking off his shirt but to the worship itself. His imitation is revealed by the tone of “Not me” and “will you?” The title of the poem needs a word of explanation “Makarand” means to all those, who know Sanskrit, “Honey” but here it is used as the name of a certain sweet offering to a god, somewhat like “Modak”.

Again Satyanarayana says that “puzzles the reader who has all along followed the protagonist’s complaint that there is no god worship at Jejuri. Here, where there is worship, the protagonist does not wish to be a party to it on the ground that he is being asked to observe a meaningless from his refusal is not merely because of the required form but because he sees no meaning in the form or worship itself”.  

Another poem ‘The Bus’ shows socio–graphical position surrounding area of Jejuri. In this poem, the poet describes the travelling by bus. It is a state Transport bus. The tarpaulin flaps are buttoned down on the windows, a cold wind moves the tarpaulin. The poet tries to search for sign of day break; he finds the reflection of the countryside on a pair of glasses on an old man’s nose. Arun Kolatkar writes.

You look down the roaring write.
What little light spills out of the bus?
Your own divided face in a pair of glasses
Is all the countryside you get to see?
You seem to move continually forward
Towards a destination [TB-13]

‘The Bus’ is the opening poem and it established theme of exception, social atmosphere and quite alienation, the bus brings the pilgrims to Jejuri at the rainy down. The state transport bus it is flapping tarpaulin and whipping cold wind, are minutely described face in spectacles of an old man. The old man is an authentic pilgrim with the caste mark and to worship Khandoba who is pure deity from people. But it is not real aim of the tourist; he wishes to beyond aim of the tourist, he wishes to beyond the externalities of religion. When he comes down the bus, does not step inside the old man’s head. That is, he is not able to share the world view of the old man.

At the end of a bumpy ride
With your own face on either side
When you get off the bus
You don’t step inside the old man’s head [TB-13]

“You don’t step inside the old man’s head”; this single line indicates that the poet’s attitude is very different from the old man so, it is the different from old generation and young
generation in modern society. The old man is religious devotee, but is not the central image the old man is used for the protagonist, alter go or the other –self. The caste mark on the forehead reveals the old man’s belief the roaring road, is an example of the transferred epithet, its meaning is that the bus is roaring down the dark road. There is also an image of, sunbeam which indicates the rising sun. The phrase, bumpy ride shows the poor condition of road in Jejuri. The bus helps to set the style and the stance adopted by the protagonist while confronting an experience which demands an altogether different kind of sensibility. According to R.S Kimbhune “the entire poem reveals a lack of contemplative spade work that the material strongly demands”.

Another poem, ‘The Priest’, it has social mood. It shows social and religious attitude of priest in very religious place where abode of gods and goddesses in other word priest called Badave or caretaker of deity, the poem depicts the mood of priest who is waiting for the arrival of the bus and tourists or pilgrims. Kolatkar writes;

An offering of heel and hunch
On the cold altar of the culvert wall the priest waits
In the bus a little late
The priest wonders
Will there be a Puran Poli in his plate? [TP-14]

This poem is a sketch of the priest who looks after temple of Lord Khandoba and naturally lives either on the premises or quite close to the temple which he is custodian and the chief Pujari of course, it is the priest who gets all the offering some in cash or in other kind which pilgrims make to the stone image or the bronze image of god Khandoba inside the temple. The poet describes the priest as eagerly and suspenseful waiting for the arrival of pilgrims by the bus which is expected to arrive at Jejuri in the morning. The priest is waiting for offering of “heel and haunch” at the altar of god Khandoba. As the bus carrying, the passengers have not arrived he wonders whether it has been delayed for some reason. He also asks himself inwardly whether offerings and whether he would take a “Puran Poli” in his plate. He comes out of the temple in order to take a look at the long road which has a returning that make the bus in distance invisible to the priest the priest recites “Mantra” again and again in order to attract the pilgrims.
The poet depicts the social mood of the priest who is waiting for the arrival of the bus which as usual would arrive in the morning, bringing a crowd of pilgrims and tourists. The priest is, of course, not bothered about the religious aspects of the visit of pilgrims. He is more concerned with offering which the pilgrims always make when they bow reverently before a stone or bronze image of the god Khandoba. The main intention of the priest is to collect the offerings and to complete his daily life. He is not aware pure faith of pilgrims. He only waits to pilgrims to have his wish fulfilled. Pilgrims also enjoy to look the place and to be a tourist and relief tension and burden from daily life.

There are also other human lives which are around the temple; they are social figures as worshipper, Vaghya, Murli and beggar. There is much difference between the priests and beggars. The beggars disturb our mind because their physical appearance. The priest is representative of priest community the priest is from rich family. He gets lots from offerings, he is healthy, but the condition of beggar is very pathetic. There is no only one beggar around the temple. The numbers of beggars, who are hungry and foolish for food, but priest, is foolish and hungry for money. So, number of priests and beggars who are ready, to eat pilgrims by money and food. Kolatkar writes:

As a catgrin on its face
And a live, ready to eat pilgrims
Held between its teeth [TP-15]

Another poem ‘The Blue Horse’ depicts the performance of an orchestra and culture. The poem is depicting the hollowness of a borrowed standard in the contemporary society, we find people having no faith, no sincerity, in their belief and attitude. The poet is pointing out the lack of sincerity of people, and criticizing the hypocrisy of those people who deliberately, choose conventional attitude. The poet finds the horse as of white colour. The confusion soon is removed by the poet.

Priest gives an explanation about the use of shade. He speaks with authority as if he knows everything about the skills of a painter and he is by operatic the poet deliberately enquires about the colour of the horse in order to reveal the hypocrisy of the priest. The musician and the priest are showing all glances to a certain unconventional mode of living. They are not willingly adopting such unconventional attitude. ‘The Railway Station’ also shows social mood. According to M.R. Satyanarayana, “The Railway station having six sections with separate title is by far the best poem in the sequence. He also says that “Railway
Station is just another meaningless temple and station master is the two headed god who inhabits the place.  

Here, Arun Kolatkar exploits the idea of a time table and a journey in an admirable manner to suggest the timelessness into which the town of journey and the temple, there have sunk and absurdity of a quest, or far the matter, the absurdity of any type of journey in space or in the mind. Arun Kolatkar depicts civil society mood and pilgrim’s mood about the station and Jejuri particular god Khandoba.

‘An Old Woman’ shows social atmosphere around the temple of Khandoba. Arun Kolatkar says that an old woman catches hold of a pilgrim in order to extract such money from him she is very poor woman who earns her loving by begging money from the pilgrims who go to Jejuri. Her demand is very modest because she asks a pilgrim for only a fifty – paise coin, and, when the pilgrim shows his unwillingness to give her the money, she says that, in return for the money, she would take him with her and show him the Horse shoe shrine.

When the pilgrim replies that he has already seen that shrine, she still clings to him and, in fact, tightens her grip on his sleeve. The pilgrim looks at her with an expression of finality, indicating his refusal to give her any money. But the woman still does not leave him and says that a poor old woman has no alternative but to maintain her on the clarity of people. So Kolatkar writes;

You look right at the sky
Clear through the bullet holes
She has for her eyes [AOW -26]

The pilgrim then looks up at the sky and a moment afterwards he once again turns his gaze upon her, indicting his unwillingness to give her anything. The pilgrim undoubtedly feels overwhelmed by his feeling but is still unwilling to give her money. It seems to him that her poverty and his refusal to give her money have combined to cause sudden cracks in the hill and in the temples. He even gets an impression that the sky has fallen down to the earth with a loud sound, shattering everything except the withered old woman who alone stands before him. At this, the pilgrim thinks that he has been reduced to a nonentity. The pilgrim feels as unimportant as the small coins which the old woman has collected from other pilgrim and which she is holding in her hand.
This poem may be called a vignette. Here the poet has drawn the portrait of an old beggar woman, begging money from the pilgrims who go to Jejuri some pilgrims would readily give money to an old beggar woman but there are others like the protagonist who, having gone to Jejuri not as a pilgrim but as a casual visitor wanting to observe what kind of a place Jejuri is and what goes on there, would not like to part with money. But the beggar woman in this poem is very persistent. She first offers to take the protagonist to the Horseshoe Shrine which he may not have seen before when the protagonist tells her that he has already seen that shrine, she yet clings to him like a burr and would not leave him ultimately the protagonist’s refusal to give her money makes him feels that the sky has fallen upon him and that, while she still stands unaffected by this catastrophe, he feels that he has been reduced to a nonentity.

Arun Kolatkar tried to know what the cultural standard of Vaghya and Murli is. Vaghya and Murli have the cultural standard to worship the god, Khandoba. Vaghya and Murli become ritual and worshippers from their birth. They worship the god from their bottom of heart. A study of Jejuri is as an angle of sociology, ‘Priest’s Son’, ‘Monohar’, ‘Chaitanya’, and ‘Booking Clerk’, their mood is more social. ‘An Old Woman’ is too social, the character of old beggar woman portrait as social mood. An old beggar woman has no value in society but as a ritual priest has most valuable for worship the God Khandoba. Yeshwant Rao, he is second class of god, even though he is armless, headless, and organ-less but he is value for cure the disease of people, so people worship him heartening.

‘Yeshwant Rao’ is believable of people, though he is out of main temple; people fulfil their wish by worshipping Yeshwant Rao. Actually Jejuri is the place of faith about gods and goddesses, but Yeshwant Rao is second class god because he is from society. Yeshwant Rao does not do anything spectacular. He does not give a pilgrim a promise to make him the rules of the earth or to send him straight to heaven by means of a rocket. What he can really do is to mend the bones of a man who has suffered and fracture. He can restore to his worshippers which ever part of the body they may have lost. He can only restore the missing parts of a body; leaving the soul of a worshipper to look after itself. He is only a kind of a bone setter. His only deficiency is that he himself has no heads, no hands, and no feet. Being without the limbs he can realize the misery of the human beings who have lost a limb or two, and who therefore go to worship him to win his favour and to get back the limbs which they have lost. In his collection “The Priest’s Son” also shows the attitude of society. The Priest’s Son belongs to priest community. It is traditional work. He is a young boy and who often deputed
by his father to take the tourist to different parts of the temple and its environs and explains to
the significance of the various statues and of some of the hills. Priest’s son is not aware of
real holy situation of the place. His only intension is that to follow his father’s order and to
collect money from tourist.

Arun Koltakar also portraits civil society in his poem, the poem ‘The Boatride’
describes the foreman and sailor. The sails of the boat are unfurled after in the mind of a
sailor. An abrupt flight of a number of pigeons from the spot takes place as soon as the boat
moves. The foreman of the boat sits self-conscious by the side of his spouse who is even
more self-conscious than he. An old man hands over the fare to foreman’s spouse without
letting his touch her shoulder. Gold and sunlight fight for the possession of the woman’s
throat. The foreman speaks boastfully to himself about his exceptional skill at his job. A
timid old man having a large number of grand children with him, warns them again falling
into the sea which he says, is dangerous. The foreman’s wife speaks authoritatively and
categorically like a queen. Two years child on the boat demands balloons from his father,
and cracks one of them. Two sisters, who had got into the boat, last of all, sit silently, just
looking past the boat man at the sea. As the boat approaches the ‘Gateway of India’, it seems
to be shaky but it does not lose its balance. A man is playing on a stringed instrument on one
the several empty boats which stand beside the shore. The passengers start getting down from
the boat at the landing place which is paved with stones but on which shells lie scattered,
seeming to threaten the passenger. ‘The Gateway of India’ seems somewhat unsteady for a
moment, but recovers its equilibrium immediately. In this poem Kolatkar turns towards
Bombay from Jejuri to sketch social atmosphere of city Bombay and boat.

The poem ‘Woman’, Kolatkar raises the issue of a woman and questions a society’s
views about her. He also uses cat, lizard and a sewing machine which are compared with
society women.

A sewing machine may bend her

Moonlight may intercept the bangle

Circling her wrist (ZM-390)

In this poem, Kolatkar tries to depict the domestic picture of marginalized woman in an
Indian society, her struggles and quest for an intellectual freedom ‘in the circulating liberty’.
Kolatkar tries to show the evolution of a woman from an object of sexual desire to a person
with greater intellectual ability and her ultimate victory over a patriarchal society. Kolatkar writes;

    In a weather draught with forceps
    A woman may damn
    Man. (ZM.391)

Arun Kolatkar as a poet is fascinated by myth and religion also. He may also be called a poet of the people because of the use of common themes like religion, society and sex. His poem ‘Suicide of Rama’ is about the death of a hero and this poem can also be seen a critique of a contemporary Indian society which indulges in hero and idol worship. Here he treats the basic theme of death with darkness, he paints the picture of death with the use of dull words like ‘river’, ‘rope’, ‘roof’, ‘top’, arse and salt. This poem does not deal with an ordinary death of an ordinary man, but it rather deals with an ordinary death of an extraordinary man. The poem is about the fall of a hero who was unfortunate enough to find nobody to mourn his death except for some natural elements like the river, moon, shore and the sea. In the contemporary Indian political scenario, this poem can also be seen as an attack on the concept of, Ram Rajya, and the questioning of secularism. Kolatkar poses the question of morality:

    …….his arse turned up toward up toward the moon
    Rama drifts like a gourd
    Far from sap or store (ZM.391)

So, Arun Kolatkar is the poet of society. He comments on society, occasionally. His poems offer us with a multi-dimensional view of the basic aspects of our society and culture like religion, women, sex and faith. On a more literary level, his poems deal with the psychological, spiritual and social dislocations. Kolatkar uses his own experiences and surroundings to paint a picture of our society in his poems. His fascination with the scientific approach towards literature is evident in his poems, especially in his Jejuri. Arun Kolatkar is one of the foundations on which modern Indian English poetry is built.

Nissim Ezekiel is another poet who writes on society and social cultural tradition. Ezekiel occupies an important place in post- independence Indian English literature. He has wielded great influence as a leading poet, editor and an occasional playwright. He is also a well- known critic. Sometimes, he also emerges as a politician in the guise of a fighter from cultural freedom in India. Ezekiel held many important positions. For many years he held the
post of professor of English in Bombay University. He is a noted name in the field of journalism. As a man of letters, Ezekiel is ‘Protean’ Figure. His achievement as a poet and playwright are considerable. K. Balachandra writes “The post–independence Indian poetry saw its new poetry in the fifties”.  

Among rather, Shiv K. Kumar, Kamala Das, Monica Verma, O. P. Bhatnagar, Gauri Deshpande, Adil Jussawilla, but Ezekiel occupies a prominent place, his versatile genius can be found in his poetry, Plays, criticism, journalism and translation. Nissim Ezekiel is the greatest poet in Indian English Poetry, comparison with Arun Kolatkar he is more prominent than Arun Kolatkar. He has written number of poems in English which are criticism of Indian society.

A poem ‘Mornings Walk’ occurs in The Unfinished Man brilliantly evokes the typical city scene. He exposes the social milieu realistically, refraining from artificiality of expression. Ezekiel is primarily a poet of the city, but perhaps the city is after all not as important to him as the gifts of the place are.

As Rahaman Aanisur says that “life in the modern inferno is unbearable but the poet has to compromise…. the whole set-up is disturbing. Yet the poet has struck a frightful equipoise between himself and the world”.

There is also another poem, ‘Hangover’ presents the frenzied pace of city life where there is a general overlapping of sights and sounds resulting in cacophony. The city dweller reels from and overdose of sensational pleasures. The nocturnal activities of the city are highlighted by midnight revellers who frequent these spots at unholy hours. They while away as good as they can their inglorious hours. The poet presents a dispassionate portrayal of these activities and ingeniously refrains from presenting his own comments on them. However, reading between the lines we find that he is of the opinion that the brisk pace of life in a city can often be disconcerting. Temporary releases from pleasures and anxieties are offered in a general atmosphere of anonymity. But, unfortunately, they do not assist in imparting to life of meaning or a purpose for they are escapist activities and do not confront or help to solve existential problems.

‘In India’ is an excellent poem of Nissim Ezekiel which reveals his penchant for depicting the contemporary scene as it meets the eye. The object of poverty and squalor are lucidly portrayed and on reading it, one immediately envisages a clear picture of the place. The obvious care and spontaneity with which he does this is indeed remarkable:
Always in the sun’s eye
Here among the beggars
Hawkers, pavement sleepers
Hutment dwellers, slums,
Dead souls of men and gods
Burnt out mother, frightened
Virgins, wasted child
And tortured animal. [CP-15]

‘Poverty Poem’ of Nissim Ezekiel presents the Indian scene through the eyes of a friendly
foreigner. They testify to the grim reality of the country’s impoverished condition quite
poignantly. Poverty is one of our chief ills that call for effective solutions and, when a poet
like Ezekiel deals with the social scene, poverty as a social problem is bound to merit
adequate coverage. The attitude of the white woman from abroad to poverty is aptly
portrayed so he writes:

She paused when the coffee came
Thanked the waiter and said
I passed him by of course poor child
He held my eyes sitting still,
Almost naked small and slightly bent, alone. [IbId-18]

It is one of our country’s characteristic features that while the sea of humanity moves in
various activities, quite nonchalantly, petty entertainments are organized in defiance of civic
rules and regulations. This heightens the general air of pandemonium in the streets of a city.
One such public entertainment is described, and the reader immediately becomes aware of its
odd nature, for it is certainly an incongruous occurrence on a busy street. Yet it has come to
represent an indispensable feature of our noisy, urban streets. Ezekiel’s early poems describe
people, places and situations with a sense of humour.

Nissim Ezekiel’s ‘Very Indian Poem in Indian English’ presents typical Indian
situations. He teases the oddities of Indian English like the use of presents continuous tense in
the place of simple present tense, use of statement for questions, adding ‘no’ with statement,
etc. His poems ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T. S.’, ‘The Patriot’ and ‘The Railway Clerk’ belong to this group. Ezekiel is candid even to the point of business in describing man-woman relationship. The passion, the desire for love and sex on one hand and the social norms, and his own inhibition on the other hand lead to conflict that can be perceived in many of his poems.

The poem ‘Night of the Scorpion’, it presents the traditional Indian society steeped in ignorance and superstition. The poem is remembered particularly for its memorable close.

My Mother only said

Thank God the scorpion picked on me

And spared my children [TS-32]

The use of the restricted adverb ‘only’ distinguishes the mother from the peasants, the father and the holy man. The mother does not blame God she thanks God because the scorpion stung her and spared her children. Her agony would have been greater if any of her children were bitten. Ultimately it assumes universal dimensions. The poet throws light on the selfish lore of the Indian mother. Indian mother takes care to her children instead of herself. The woman of Arun Kolatkar and the woman of Nissim Ezekiel both are different. Thus, C.D. Narsimha compliments him in the following words “But to the extent he has availed himself of the composite culture of India to which he belongs he must be said to be an important poet not merely in the Indian context, but a consideration of those that are writing poetry anywhere in English”.

In the poem entitled ‘The Truth about the Floods’, Ezekiel has ridiculed some students for distributing biscuits among the flood-affected villagers and getting themselves photographed while doing so in order to publicize what they regard as their spirit of social service. Ezekiel has also derived government officials in the same poem and shown them as being totally indifferent to the Indian masses.

Other poems of Nissim Ezekiel preoccupies with the Indian social reality are only a few in this collection. All are surcharged with Irony. In ‘Poverty Poem’ the single line indicates; “Indians are a friendly people anyway” (CP-13), offers a severe comment on the Indian social reality, obviously suggesting contextually that they are most indifferent to the feelings of the poor and are friendly not among themselves but to white foreigners only. The poem views the Indian economic reality from two angles, one native, and the other foreign.
The resultant convergence is caused by the lip-sympathy and crocodile tears shed by the two observers.

The poem ‘Hangover’ depicts in details the sophisticated cosmopolitan urban life a la mode where Macaulay’s bastards huddle together to exult in fake foreignness:

No, Indian whisky sir

All imported this is Taj [CP-15]

The sting is, as usual, in the tail here. The first class railway compartment sheltering the boozer on his return journey home also contains “Two blind beggars, husband and wife”. To say the least in Eliot’s cliché, the blind couple is an objective correlative of the spiritual – inner –beggarliness of the nouveau rich in the Taj. The scene is all the more bizarre in “under trial prisoners” where justice is mocked and law is only a verbal bugbear to oppress the weak and strengthen.

In the comparative study of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel, Arun Kolatkar portrays particular theme of society about Jejuri. Jejuri is the holy place in western Maharashtra incarnation of Shiva. Khandoba is the God who protects lower class people particularly shepherded community. But all community who belong different class they worship God Khandoba. Arun Kolatkar is the poet of town and Nissim Ezekiel is the poet of city, Bombay. Arun Kolatkar has described the hypocrisy of people those who are concerned about Jejuri, some of the poems of Arun Kolatkar describe Bombay citizenship. But Most of the poems of Arun Kolatkar’s describe the Bombay community. Arun Kolatkar has coined some social images as Vaghya, Murli, an old woman, priest, priest’s son, Railway clerk, tourists, pilgrimages, the beggars; also he described some non-human things like dog, bitch, horse, tortoise, hen which are correlated to the society. The comparison with Nissim Ezekiel he portrays some social images like woman, man, beggar, boy, girl, Guru, seller, visitor, the clerk, mother-in-law, father–in–law, servant, the professor, villagers, city dwells, slums, students, different religion, the patriot, family, poet, lover, birdwatcher and beloved which are concerned to the society. Arun Kolakkar is very serious about culture. He has used some cultural activity in his poem. He shows Indian cultural and shepherded class people’s culture to worship God Khandoba on the occasion of fair. It is ritual to vow son and daughter to God Khandoba to entertain him. Vaghya is the son of God, Murli is the daughter of God and horse is the vehicle of God. Nissim Ezekiel is also so aware about culture. The last stanza of
“the Night of the Scorpion” is the very culmination of the sense of sacrifice and vicarious suffering of the mother for her children.

My mother only said

Thank God the scorpion picked on me
And spared my children. (TNS-32)

These lines have rich cultural undertones typical of the orient and remotely typical of Hinduism. So Ezekiel states that “India is simply my environment. A man can do something for and in his environment by being fully what he is, not by withdrawing from it. I have not withdrawn from India”.8 [Adil. J-88-89] (interview).

Having lived in culture and observed it for such a long time, its attitudes, beliefs and the ethos no more remain foreign or unfamiliar. This long and intimate familiarity peeps through even such casual lines as:

Three times the crow has cawed
At the window...
Three times I got the message. [Visitor-33]

Arun Kolatkar’s Jejuri is the quest of society, because there are many people who are unknown about the town, Jejuri, they don’t know motive of the Jejuri. They are expected to know the reality of the place. Society is the central theme of the Jejuri. Because Jejuri, it is the journey of the tourist to know about Jejuri, which is tourist place. According to Shirsh Chindhade, “Jejuri is the journey like John Bunyan’s protagonist in ‘The Pilgrims Progress’, or to an extent, even in Mrs. Moore in Forester’s ‘Passage to in India’ and the protagonist from Jejuri and the protagonist in the “pilgrim’s progress” both are similar.” 9 [Five Indian p-93]

Arun Kolatkar writes the journey poem Jejuri similar with Nissim Ezekiel writes the poem ‘Enterprise’. Both Jejuri and ‘Enterprise’ are journey poems. The protagonist and leader of the journey start the quest to know new world and experience. The poem ‘Enterprise’ shows social attitude of the quest. It is the journey to seek new knowledge of the world. The poem depicts external and internal journey of human life. The travellers haunted to know new places, nature and diversity of the Indian landscape. The different crops are among these intellectuals. Each has his own point of view, but instead of sitting together and discussing their differences of approach and point of view to reach the correct conclusions,
each asserts his own point of view to be the true one. The poem ‘The Bus’ which is written by Arun Kolatkar is also journey poem.

Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezkiel are Indians but used different objects from society. The Three poems from Jejuri, they seem to speak and stand for the Jejuri ethos and culture. They are ‘An Old Woman’, ‘A Song for Vagaya’ and ‘A Song for Murli’. The old woman must be one-time Murli, a Devdasi now old and therefore, without any commercial prospects she asks for money. But Nissim Ezekiel’s beggars are helpless, no social and religious familiar background. ‘The Priest’ from Arun Kolatkar’s collection is protector of God Khandoba who lives closer to Lord Khandoba, is different from Nissim Ezekiel’s ‘Guru’. The Guru in the poem possesses all the vices that a saint or Guru must never be guilty of; he is faithless, obstinate, ungrateful, merciless to servants and the poor, discourteous to disciples, rude to visitors, money-minded, unrestrained in fleshly enjoyment, and what not?–almost walking museum of vices.

Arun Kolatkar is not a poet of city but he also tried to show Indian society from different part of India. The poem ‘Three Cups of Tea’ it has different parts. The first part of the poem shows the conduct of an employee who is of an aggressive type, and who demands his month’s salary a few days earlier than the due date which is the first of the next month. The manager naturally refuses to pay him the salary because, according rules of the firm, the salary is payable only on the first of the next month. But the employee picks up the manager’s wristwatch. The Railway clerk of Nissim Ezekiel is not satisfied with job. He complaints about salary and facilities in office. They are civil society.


Both Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel use common theme about society like woman, man, clerk, the manager, boy, tourist, priest, Guru, God, pilgrimage, protagonist, Beggar, musician, and social religious culture. The main intention of every poet is to portray
and focus on the society. Society from Jejuri and society from Bombay, they are common men and women.

4.1.2. Study of Tradition and Superstition

Arun Kolatkar writes poem about the place of pilgrimage, giving to his poem the title Jejuri. But the most important aspect of his writing this poem is faith which the people of Maharashtra have in the miraculous power of god Khandoba-incarnation of Lord Shiva. They go there to pay their obeisance to the god to worship the image of the god, and to make their offerings in an effort to placate him and win their favour. But Kolatkar has not written the poem Jejuri to celebrate this god or to pay his personal tribute and homage to him. In fact he does not even fully or wholeheartedly believe in idol worship the worship of Gods. He believes his worship to be kind of superstition, though he does not openly say so that anywhere in the whole poem. But some of the pilgrimage, worshipper and proper people have some kinds of superstitions and traditional beliefs although the attitude of Kolatkar’s unbelief, or at least of scepticism predominate worship has a positive aspect of it. Actually the poem depicts a direct and unflinching attitude of denial and disbelief. Kolatkar seems to be debunking and denigrating not only people’s faith in this kind of worship but also in all kinds of worship having its origin in a belief in the existence of gods and goddesses. Kolakar’s general attitude is that a rationalist but without a spiritual element in human life.

‘An Old Woman’, ‘A Song for Vaghya’, ‘A Song For a Murli’, ‘The Priest’, ‘The Priest’s Son’, ‘Chaitanya’, ‘Manohar’ and ‘Makarand’ these indicate Aurn Kolatkar’s traditions and superstitions. People have blind faith about Lord Khandoba and other goddesses, so they visit Jejuri to fulfil their faith and beliefs.

Here is the poem ‘The Blue Horse’ indicates traditional and superstitious attitude of singers about horse. Horse is the vehicle of Khandoba who comes from Karanataka on blue horse Kolatkar writes;

God’s own children

Making music.

The singer’s song of a blue horse (BH.52)

How is it then that the picture on your wall

Shows white one?
Look blue tome’ (BH-52)

This poem is traditional and superstitious, the company of chorus singers on Lord Khandoba and Blue horse. A drummer is playing on a small drum to keep company with the singers. The drummer’s face seems to have fallen down on itself; and his skin, which is black, has become even backer on account of the sun’s heat to which it has remained exposed for long periods of time. He is playing his instrument will all the force which he can command; and he reinforces the singer’s hymn with great vigour though he cannot play the tune correctly. He has a step-brother who is also a member of the group singing the hymn to the tune of drum and another musical instrument. This step-brother has had on attack of smallpox which has left its makes on his face. He is playing musical instrument which has just one string, and he is too playing on his instrument in a somewhat clumsy manner. The members of this group consists a singers and couple of instruments and players may be regarded as ‘God’s’ own children performing a religious ceremony.

Superstition creates by the priest; protagonist asks the priest, why does the picture of horse look white on your walls? The picture of horse with Khandoba was ridden after killing his wife in a fit of anger and killing to demon. The priest ironically says that the picture on his all seems blue to his eyes. And then the priest artificially import a bluish huge to the picture on the wall in order to make it looks blue. In other words, he contrives to make the white horse on the wall look blue. In the meantime the drum continues to be beaten with great force.

In this respect to follow tradition to sing a song about god and goddess is from Maharashtrian manner. There are many choruses of singers in Maharashtra; they sing a song about god and goddess everywhere at the religious places. There are many commercial singers who sing a song and please gods and goddess. There are two poems from ‘Jejuri’ need closer analysis, as they seem to speak understand for the Jejuri ethos and traditions as well as superstitions. They are ‘A Song for Vaghya’ and ‘A Song for Murli’. Vaghya is the entertainer of god Khandoba. Lord Khandoba keeps Vaghya near him because Khandoba likes. Actually, Vaghya means dog, ‘Khandya’. In this poem Kolatkar shows tradition as the people who are childless, they worship god to get child. When they get child they vow first child if he is boy, becomes ‘Vaghya’ in his manhood. Traditionally ‘Vaghya’ always sings a song in front of god Khandoba. According to B.V. Nemade that, “Kolatkar’s stance of unfaith is totally an Indian? He even notices an attitude characteristic of philistinism”.

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Another tradition is at Jejuri to take turmeric and coconut kernel to offer to Lord Khandoba and other gods and goddesses. It is said that gods and goddesses should be worshipped with full shaped coconut kernel but the little children collect coconut kernel and return to shopkeeper in order to get money. There are also many donating boxes around the temple and in the temple to collect money because priests are fond of to collect money. They are commercial priests. They are survived only for money. Another tradition at Jejuri is “Otibharane” it is five rupees. “Otibharane” or to adopt with coconut kernel and green piece of cloth is good omen for married woman. Also there is another traditional thing, located at the first step of the stairs, “Nangar” of Khandoba”. Shepherded community believes that to touch “Nangar” and breaks it because it gives personal satisfaction in life. Newly married couple performs that event to be happy in married life. “Doli” is also traditional method at Jejuri. Pilgrims reach to Khandoba temple and Kadepathar by “Doli” or “Palanquin”. It is also holy at Jejuri.

According to Siddarth Syangden “in Jejuri, Kolatkar also asks questions about the existence of faith and devotion towards god. He takes about the selfish nature of man and his selfish motives of worshipping the respective deities. He compares this kind of faith and selfish nature to a mongrel bitch in A Low Temple”. 11[Critical essay -397]

In the Jejuri series, the stone plays a very important role. Stone, traditionally associated with cold and hardness, was used in ancient India for making idols. Rural India is known for its stone worship and superstition regarding stones. Kolatkar satirizes the image of stone.

In the section ‘Chaitanya’, Kolatkar writes:

Come off it

Said Chaitanya to a stone

In stone language …. 

Sweet as grapes

Are the stone of Jejuri

Said Chaitanya
He popped a stone

In his mouth

And spat out gods. (C- 20)

We can see the production of ‘gods’ in the above lines made out of stone which are ‘sweet as grapes’. It can be argued that the sweetness of the stones can be the faith and the belief system which the society is conditioned to believe.

Kolatkar competently uses the image of the stone to deconstruct the concept of god. The poem again ‘The Priest’ and ‘The Priest’s Son’, the traditional temple attendant and the hangers on them are all drawn in accordance with the general mood of poem. The priest’s son, a School going boy, acts as a guide seems his school has vocation, and when asked whether he believes in the legends of the place:

“He does not reply

But merely looks uncomfortable

Shrugs and looks away.” (TPS- 30)

Arun Kolatkar describes Indian religious people. In traditional Hinduism metaphysical ignorance is said to pose as a curtain between the devotee and deity, the same way as the tarpaulin flap prevents glimpses of the landscape outside the bus. The poet makes journey to go to Jejuri by bus and return by train, but most of the traditional Hindu chooses to take a “Dindi”, “god’s banner” and walk miles together from everywhere to Jejuri. Thus the protagonist’s physical comfort seems to engender an idle occupation of indulgence in minor material superficialities. The caste mark on the forehead is also another tradition of Hindu community to have shown Hindu community.

The brief looks in the foregoing chapter at the tradition of Indian poetry in English shows that the roots have gone deep and the tree has sprouted in all directions. Nissim Ezekiel is also another poet who writes poems on tradition and superstition. The modern Indian poet in English is showing a growing awareness of his environment. Jayant Mahapatra, Keki. N. Daruwalla and Gieve Patel along with many others, have added to the flowering. Their response to the times and climes in which they live is sensitive and sharp.
They have not withdrawn from India in order to whore the English gods as R. Parthasarathy puts it in an essay “the desire to fit in the native tradition and to belong to the native scene is explicit. It remains now to see how explicitly or otherwise it is expressed in Ezekiel’s poetry, critical consensus has generally favoured Ezekiel’s poetry from its very first stage up to today. It is now accepted that Ezekiel is one of the most outstanding and most rewarding poets”.12 Linda Hess, for instance, has summarized all the reasons behind Ezekiel’s success as a poet”.13

This is no more so in the poetry collected in the successive anthologies; The Unfinished Man (1960), The Exact Name (1964), Hymns in Darkness (1976), Latter-Day Psalms (1982), and Collected Poems (1989). The sense of self-absorption has given way, among many other things to a sense of place. The urban theme emerges in his song. From The Unfinished Man onwards unmistakable traces of the development of an intimate relationship with his own city are found in great frequency. It is the city of the poet’s “birth and rebirth” that has moved to a prominent place in the poet’s consciousness.

‘Night of the Scorpion’ is obliquely about redemption of children achieved vicariously through the suffering of a scorpion-stung mother. This justly oft anthologised piece is ostensibly a simple narrative poem in which the force of superstition and age-old beliefs is pitted against the modern sceptical temperament.

R. Parthasarthy points out that “the poem evokes superstitious practices we haven’t still outgrown. It enacts an impressive ritual in which the mother’s reaction, towards the end, to her own suffering ironically conceals our earlier responses, both primitive and sophisticated he also points out that Foregrounding is used as an interpretative device in Night of the Scorpion”.14

According to Paul Verghese “throughout the poem, Ezekiel deliberately withholds his own emotional colouring, so that, while reading the poem, we may become aware of a traditional world of superstitions as against another of scepticism and rationalism”.15

The poem has, as its setting, a tender family situation. The theme of the poet’s mother stung by a scorpion, is given multiple treatment bringing, in its sweep the world of magic and superstition, science and rationality, and maternal affection. The poem shows the characteristic qualities of Ezekiel. He works consciously within the range of his experience
and thereby attains the poetic personality peculiar to him. This authentic and genuine streak in his work gives it its own peculiar strength.

The poem ‘The Visitor’ thus gives a subtle example of how tradition and imagery get completely merged into each other and finally becomes a poet’s naturally earned knowledge and experience of tradition. The poem is based upon a common Indian superstition that, if we hear a crow cawing on the roof or a wall of our house in the morning we should expect a guest to arrive in the course of the day, and we should experience of having heard a crow cawing and expecting a guest, and then finding that his expectation has proved true. However the arrival of the guest or the visitor brings only disappointment with it because the pout discovers to his dismay and chagrin that the visitor has nothing worthwhile to say to him and that their conversation has turned out to be trivial and insubstantial. He then comes to the conclusion that most events in human life are of the ordinary kind with nothing momentous or weighty about them.

‘The Visitor’ shows Ezekiel’s fine gift as a verbal portraitist the poem starts with the folk belief that if a crow caw three tones the superstition proofs itself true in the form of the arrival of a visitor to keep up with the mysterious atmosphere of the poem the language is equally wholly and vague:

Three times I got the message
Sleep walking on the air of thought. (CP-44)

The second line here is not in keeping with the usual concreteness of Ezekiel’s writing but in this way the causal talk goes on and on and life is fully accepted on its mundane level we expect so much but what turns out is the most causal and the ordinary what a difference between the expectation and the actually this is how the temptation and promise ruin us few Indian English poets out of the ordinariness of most events as Ezekiel has done in the poem this volume.

‘The Visitor’ has its theme the ordinariness of most events and this theme has been illustrated by the poet through a personal experience of his the experience which is described in the poem may be actual or imaginary but it is a perfectly convincing experience at the basic of this experience is the common Indian superstition that if we hear a crow caving on the roof or on a wall of our house we may expect a visitor or a quest in the course of the day.
In ‘Rural Suite’ an equally harrowing version of exploitation is represented this time it is not the proverbial government officials that plunder the poor and the ignorant but their prototypes the Bhikshuks whose summer vacation means begging for profit among the ignorant superstition and gullible villagers the raid is repeated annually and Bhikshuks. Ezekiel writes:

Carry away huge quantities of rice,

Chillies, fruit and nuts.(CP-197)

Nissim Ezekiel describes Indian religions with his poems. Birje-Patil considers this as special feature of Ezekiel’s poetry. According to him “Ezekiel’s originality lies in his projection of Bombay as a metaphor which defines the alienation of the modern which defines the alienation of the modern Indian intellectual brought up in the Judeo-Christian and Greco–Roman traditions and being forced to come to terms with a culture whose response to life is controlled by “a totally different metaphysics”. Hence the clash or the conflict is inherent to him. As a part of a “racial memory”, a legacy of the past.” Shyamala Narayan also “sees the identity clash in the poetry of Ezekiel”.  

Ezekiel’s best poems show “his struggle to come to terms with himself and Indian”. In ‘The Poster Poem’ Ezekiel makes use of both Judaic-Christian and Hindu traditions to examine his relationship with god.

Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry is an arch dome made from Indian culture but a title damaged by westernization. Corruption, superstition and hypocrisy in modern India are his themes. His poem is sharp distinction between an individual poem and poetry as a whole underlines his critical facilities. The Individual poem is a fragment, a unit of one or more consequential moments of living, while poetry is a complex web, a flux. A poem reflects a particular state of mind. As Ezekiel himself records, any particular state of mind always seems to him a very minor expression of immediate potential. The poet has acquired a large vision of art which encompasses every mood, matter and phenomenon, and places him firmly in the modern tradition.

The theme of tradition and superstition of Arun Kolatkar shows the superiority of Indian English literature. The tradition of Arun Kolatkar and tradition of Nissim Ezekiel both are quite different. Jejuri, this poem is major work of Arun Kolatkar. In this poem he shows
The opening poem ‘The Bus’ shows protagonist’s attitude about travelling and travellers who go to Jujuri. There is an old man who travels by bus to go Jejuri with caste mark on his forehead. He is truly religious and traditional believer of god. He is known as traditional Hindu community who keeps caste mark on his own forehead. He is deep devotional Hindu who believes on god and god’s holy place. He has expectation from god to get salvation after death in heaven. Actually Jejuri is the heaven for pilgrims in this life. But Ezekiel is unaware about characters in his poetry. He simultaneously describes Hindu community, Muslim community, Christian community and Jewish community in his poetry. He portrays Christian community who is also sceptic about Jewish community.

Arun Kolatkar’s God is Lord Khandoba who is incarnation of Lord Shiva. But Nissim Ezekiel has not used particular God. He says God is universe. He uses in his poem Christian god Jesus. Some of the poems which are written by Arun Kolatkar like ‘Makarand’, ‘Chaitanya’, ‘A song for Vaghya’ and ‘A song for Murli’ these are the examples of superstitions. The tension between the modern and the orthodox outlook is very pithily revealed in ‘Chaitanya’. Gaurang Prabhu Chaitanya, a fifteenth century Bengali saint, was said to be an incarnation of Krishana and is said to have walked into the ocean, in the deep blue colour of which he saw the vision of Krishana himself. This transformation of the blue ocean into blue Krishna was obviously due to Chaitanya’s deep Bhakti, whereas ironically enough the modern Chaitanya sees stones, a mere mass of basalt in the gods at Jejuri. Both the old priest and his school going son cherish this conviction that the stones of Jejuri, are gods and the hills are demons that Khandoba killed. In the contrary Nissim Ezekiel also uses the character ‘Guru’ in his poem. The Guru in the poem possesses all the vices that a saint or guru must never be guilt of: he is faithless, obstinate, ungrateful, merciless to servants and the poor discourteous to disciples, rude to visitors, money-minded unrestrained in fleshly enjoyments, and what not? He is almost a walking museum of vices. After this exhaustive cataloguing of the guru’s vices the poem butts into a very direct rhetorical conclusion;

If saints are like this,

What hope is there then for us? (TG-191)
The priest of Arun Kolatkar is money-minded with the guru of Nissim Ezekiel. But guru is fond of physical fulfilment; priest is fond of only money to keep his life healthy and wealthy.

Arun Kolatkat has given holy superstitious experience of society about god and goddess through ‘A song for a Vaghya’, ‘A song of Murli’ and ‘The Blue Horse’ but Nissim Ezekiel has given his own homely experience about superstition through the poem ‘Night of the scorpion’. ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is obliquely about redemption of children achieved vicariously through the suffering of a scorpion-stung mother. This justly oft anthologised piece is ostensibly a simple narrative poem in which the force of superstition and age-old beliefs is pitted against the modern sceptical temperament. In this respect, Arun Kolatkar uses traditions in his poem like a singing a song for god, to have Vaghya and Murli, Murli is a mother of an old beggar woman, Vaghya is a father of an old man. Otibharane, to touch Nangar, to have Doli to go to Kadepathar, ritual of newly married couple to visit Jejuri, ritual of railway station and manager and clerk, traditional water supply, work of Yeshwant Rao and Chaintanya they are the common images about tradition in Jejuri. Nissim Ezekiel also used common tradition of men and men woman. Woman in ‘Night of the Scorpion’, Guru, Muslim girl to have Morning Prayer, superstition of crow in visitor, ritual of government officers, tradition of pilgrims and citizens are common.

4.1.3. The Study of Religion and Mythology

Arun Kolatkar’s most of the poems are written religion and mythical view. Most of the poems are also written in an ironical and satirical vein. Together these poems constitute of satire on the people’s religious belief which actually are superstitions. There are some poems which are related to religion as: ‘The Priest’, ‘The Priest’s Son’, ‘A Song for a Vaghya’, ‘A Song for a Murli’, ‘The Heart of Ruin’, ‘Chaitanya’, ‘The Horseshoes Shrine’, ‘A Scratch’ and ‘The Blue Horse’.

The poem ‘The Priest’ depicts the mood of the priest who is waiting for the arrival of the bus most of the priests belong from the particular “Ramoshi community”. They forcefully take charge or empower to worship the god Khandoba who is incarnation of Lord Shiva. Actually he is not bothered about the religious aspect of the visit of pilgrims. The priest expects a “Puran Poli” on his plate. He moves in the sun light and looks eagerly for the bus which carries pilgrims to Jejuri. He very likely said that, Khandoba who is incarnation of Lord Shiva very fond of Puran Poli. The poem imagines that the sun takes up the priest’s
heads and parts his cheek like the village barber. As a religious god, is very fond of “Prasad” in the form of “Puran Poli”.

The priest wonders.

Will there be a Puran Poli in his plate. (TP-14)

Most of the people who are religious, they think that to take some taste with sweet in daily meal. Another poem, ‘The Priest’s Son’ also shows religious aspect, because to empower to be priest got from heritage from their forefather performed as worshipper of God Khandoba, so they get their right to become priests, but the priests do not know certainty of religion and tradition. The priest’s son knows the legendary story about hill. He always asks to hear a story of hill:

These five hills
Are the five demons
That Khandoba killed [TPS-30]

There are so many legendary stories associated with Jejuri and Khanddoba. Once upon a time the demons were indomitable they tormented even gods and goddesses so to save gods, goddesses and society, Khandoba killed them and they turned in to the hills.

The poem ‘A Song of ‘Murli’ is quite symbolic, said that Murli’s song is concerned with religion; the song is religious because Murli got right from heaven. The Murli has legend. She was the flute of Shri Karishna in Mahabharata period. Shri Krishna played Murli whenever he was happy. It gave him happiness and it was part of entertainment of Shri Krishana. Now the flute turned in to Murli in medival period,still she belongs from shepherded community. She lives close to the god Khandoba. ‘A song for a Vaghya’ is not only related to religion but also tradition. Shepherds elicit their first son to God Khandoba, it is said that mythical and religion view behind their blind religious altitude. Arun Kolatkar has written some of these poems which are quite religious not fully aware about religious.

Arun Kolatkar fully aware about mythical or mythological story related to Jejuri. He exposes the legends about god Khandoba and other gods for what they really are. The poem ‘Heart of Ruin’ perhaps it is related with collapsed temple of the god “Maruti” who belongs from ancient time. Maruti is worshipper of “Rama” in the great epic of Ramayana. Maruti is also incarnation of “Lord Shiva” but at ancient time and now Lord Khandoba too incarnation of “Lord Shiva”. All the priest and pilgrimage aware and interested about Khandoba but God
Maruti ends his dwelling place is neglected by priests and pilgrims those who are tourists and devotee of Khandoba. The condition of Maruti temple is like ‘The Heart of Ruin’:

The roof comes down on Maruti head
Least of all Maruti himself
Maybe he likes a temple better its way.
A mongrel bitch has found a place.

In the heart of ruin [HR-16]

It is the religious and mythical parody written by Arun Kolatkar. Those who are religious, by their and mind both are like ruined temple. They have blind religious faith and belief about religion and god Khandoba-some great ad little aroused in their mind like bitch and puppies. God Maruti is also devotee of Rama; he cannot think himself, so pilgrims are not aware about him. Another poem ‘Horseshoes Shrine’, if belongs from mythical story. The poem is associated is with footprint of Khandoba’s horse:

That nice in the rock
Is really a kick in beside of the hill.
Like thunder bolt
When Khandoba
With bride side-saddle behind him on the
Blue horse
jumped across the valley
And the three
Went on from there like one spark
Fleeing from flint to a home that waited
On the other side of the hill like a hay

Stack [THS-23]

Kadepathar is the main dwelling place of Khandoba at the Kadepathar there is a horseshoes shrine. According to some religious people, Khandoba brought art Jejuragar by the request of old “Khairyia” who was old devotee of Khandoba. It is said that Khandoba came from the
state of Karnataka, rode of the blue horse with his bride “Mhalsa”. Mhalsa is a wife of Lord Khanboba. Kadepathar is a main dwelling place of Khandoba, its 3 km from Jejurigar on the top of the hill. But old person could not reach at the top of the hill, so, Khairya requested to Lord Khandoba to live on the Jejurigar. Khandoba’s blue horse jumped across the valley which is behind the main temple at Kadepathar, horseshoes shrine is an eye witness of arrival of Lord Khandoba at Kadepathar. It is the footprint of blue horse on the rock.

There is also another mythical story in the poem ‘A Scratch’ related to Khandoba, dedicated at Jejurgar.

That giant hunk of rock
The size of a bedroom.
Is Khandoba’s wife turned to stone?
Is the scar from his broad word?
He struck her down with
Once in fit of rage. [AS-32]

Once, Khandoba in a fit of anger struck his wife with his broad sword. It is said that his wife was turned to stone. The huge, hard rock is a big as a bedroom. The crack on the rock is scar left by smashing stroke of the sword. The poet seems to be convinced but thinks about gods and stones at Jejuri. He thinks that there are no other crops than god. God is harvested there around the year. That’s why he says that dividing line between stone at god is very thin at Jejuri. Every stone at Jejuri is the god and his cousins.

There is no huge portion of a rock, of size of bedroom. This portion of the rock is Khandoba’s wife who had been turned into a stone figure by Khandoba who he struck her down with his sword in his fit of fury. The cracks which run across that portion of the rock, is the scar of the wound which the wife had received from her husband’s sword which had a broad blade. Thus, a very important event in life of Khandoba and in the like of his wife has been imprinted on this portion of the rock. The rock bears witness to Khandoba murders his wife in a fit of anger. The fact is that every rock and even stone at Jejuri, has some holy and instructive legend connected with it so. The Maharashtra, and other who go to Jejuri as pilgrims, strongly and firmly believe that Khandoba did exist and that he was an incarnation of God Shiva. They also believe that by worshipping the images of gods and by making
offerings of money ornaments and eatables to him, they can win his favour and achieve the fulfilment desires.

Brijaraj Singh points out that “the protagonist’s attitude to the whole experience undergoes a clear change in the end where he begins to interpret secular experiences in mythical and religious terms, going so far as to express a willingness, in his desperation, to perform all kinds of religious sacrifices to the railway gods if someone will give him an answer to the mystery of when the next train is due”. 18

This is almost like mutual exchange of places and faiths between the poet and the protagonist. This helps to underline the need of faith in order to understand properly and experience of the Jejuri sort.

As Dr. M. Sivaramakrishna in his paper Arun Kolatkar,s Jejuri: An appreciation writes, “while it is a tribute to the individual talent evident in the poem, it is also an unmistakable pointer to the fact that Indian poetry in English has attained a distinct identity of its own. It is no longer a hybrid of Victorian sentiment or modern metrics. Jejuri has been very influential to the growth of modern Indian English poetry and to may young aspiring poets”. 19

*Jejuri*, the poem, in thirty one sections, is about the poet’s experience and the objects that surround him during his visit to Jejuri, a temple town near Pune whose presiding deity Khandoba is worshipped by the shepherd community of Maharashtra. The poem is considered by many critics to be an attack on the Indian religious fanaticism. Arun Kolatkar as a poet is fascinated by myth and religion he may also called a poet of the people because of the use of common theme like religion, society and sex. Kolatkar beauty fully bends the theme of morality and god. Asked by an interviewer whether he believed in god, Kolatkart replied “I leave the question alone. I don’t think I have to take a position about God one way or the other”. 20

Jejuri is the religious place in western Maharashtra, but question comes to our mind why does Arun Kolatkar go to Jejuri? Is religious quest the chief motive behind the narrator’s visit to Jejuri? Jejuri is conventionally regarded as a quest poem. It is, undoubtedly, a presentation of modern urban scepticism impinging upon the ancient religious tradition. According to M. K. Naik the thematic complex is much larger and the poem is a conscious attempt to present in sharp contrast three major value systems. “Those of ancient religious
tradition, modern industrial civilization and— a value system older than both these—the life principle of Nature and its ways”.21

Kolatkar seems to have apathy towards the traditional myth. Strikingly, he exhibits a rare capacity to create myths out of the mundane. A ticket-clerk, the station master, a dish-washer, they all are seen performing their rituals mechanically. The train indicator is a “wooden saint”, the station dog is in doing a Buddha-like penance “under/ the tree of arrival and departures”: the railway timetable is “eight armed”; the young waiter at the tea stall is a “novice”

Who has taken a vow of silence
When you ask him a question
He exorcizes you
By his ablutions in the sink (TRT-54-62)

And certain ceremonies connected with the washing of cups saucers.

In this way, in his ‘Jejuri’, Arun Kolatkar disclosed surrealistic similarities between an ossified Hindu religious tradition and an equally rigid scientific civilization represented by the railway station. However, the poet celebrates the life force represented by cocks and hens and the butterfly.

Nissim Ezekiel also used the theme of religion and myth in his poetry. The strikingly and prominently new ‘thing’ or sensibility in Ezekiel’s recent poetry seems to be centring on the religious experience, Hymns, Prayers and Psalms become the important modes of expression. Since the experience demands the change. V.A. Shahane points out that “the word ‘prayer’ is used often by Ezekiel in a diverse set of poems”, Though Ezekiel is born in the Bene-Isrel-Jew community in India. Shahane thinks that he is very much under the impact of the Hindu thought. Shahane quotes, “I also veered towards the Hindu view of life, which I consider mythically, religiously and metaphysically right, though I don’t accept its ethics and social codes......”22

However it may be in his recent verse- ‘Hymns in Darkness’ and ‘Poems’ and in a large number of poems not yet brought together in any anthology—the poet’s meditative region-philosophic concerns come to the forefront, indicating a shift in attitude. Such concerns were there from the very beginning, but they acquire a new stress and significance in has later verse, Ezekiel was not committed to any particular system of thought or religion
but was always content to be a man of God. His religion is of love and charity, ideals which every religion cherishes and preaches.

Adil Jussawala rightly says “it is surprising how often the word prayer occurs in the work of a poet whose approach to life far from being religious is one of philosophical humanism. His natural recourse is not prayer”.23

We find a synthesis of the secular and the religious. His address to god is not a direct one; nor does he crave for mercy in the manner of George Herbert. He does not also soar higher like Vaughan but remains ever on the earth with eyes fired on the larger horizon of God. Neither the world nor flesh repels Ezekiel; he is rather committed to both of these, and affirms his faith in them again and again. These poems show not only an awareness of sinful self but also his constant pre-occupation with the supreme deity.

Ezekiel’s recent verse is in the nature of “meditative self-explorations”. It has a marked orientation toward spiritual themes. As a study of ‘The Poster Poems’ and other poems of the ‘Hymns in Darkness’ reveals, the poet, does not consider himself to be an alien or an outside but exercises his will to claim God’s love even though he knows that it will not come to him. The poet’s mood is one of reverence and submission, but even is here there is no desire to escape, no negation of life, but affirmation and commitment. The tone may be mocking and flippant, but the sense is clear. The poet looks to God for the resolution of all his doubts and problems.

God is related to religion and myth he depicts God in his own view. Ezekiel’s best poems show his struggle to come to terms with himself and India. In ‘The Poster Poems’, Ezekiel makes use of both Judaic-Christian and Hindu traditions to examine his relationship with God. He says:

No Lord,
Not the fruit of action
Is my motive
But do you really mind
Half a bite of it?
It tastes so sweet
And I’m so hungry (CP- 212)
The tongue-in-cheek tone apart, this struggle to connect; this conflict to be one with the scene around and thus solve the identity crisis has been an old concern in Ezekiel’s poetry. There are the longing for certainty in kinship surfaces, for stance, as early as ‘The Unfinished Man’. In ‘Morning Prayer’ he says-

God grant me certainty
In kinship with the sky,
Air, earth, Fire, Sea
And the fresh inward eye.
Grant me the metaphor
To make it human good. (CP-122)

Ezekiel’s unwillingness so be isolated has already been underlined. It in fact, has been his constant, positive struggle of develop a meaningful, intimate kinship with the weird word of India. And he who loves has a right to criticize and even ridicule. It is his love for India that makes him criticizes and ridicules her. Therefore, a mild dig at the “Bhagwatgita” spells an important truth about the poet’s attitude; about his growing and honest involvement with India. This is, again a paradoxical relationship with a difference that Lawrence depicts among his characters. Ezekiel’s confidence at being one with India seems reinforced in, for instance, ‘Poster Poems’.

I have never been a refugee
Except of the spirit,
A loved and troubled country
Which is my home and enemy. (CP-45)

He has made his commitments, chosen his Island, found his people and identified the five elements of sky, earth, air water and fire. It is quite gratifying that God has granted him the human metaphor also to make his song good. This is not a mood of submission, or of resignation, or of alienation. It is rather the epiphany moment of reconciliation, identification, discovery and achievement.

‘Declaration’, this poem is essentially religious in its definition of a good life and the right attitude towards the world in which we live in our whole life. True freedom, peace, and power reside in obedience to a law which is understandable and acceptable to us. Creation
itself obeys certain laws. People, who do not yield to the laws of Nature, receive their punishment by being in some way or the other afflicted by misfortune or disaster. True freedom, comes from a sense of being one with God and from a bold acceptance of God’s laws. A surrender to the laws of the universe leads to some final good. A man should wait instead of seek; he should seek noting and want nothing. He should wait patiently, like a crab or kingfisher by the water in the sun.

Another poem ‘Encounter’, a spiritual experience of the poet, the subject at this poem, written in free verse. This poem also appeared in Nissim Ezekiel’s very first volume of poems, A ‘Time to Change’ and other poems, published in 1952. It is too written in what looks like prose but what may be regarded as free verse because there is a certain rhythm in the manner in which the words have been arranged, & more particularly because of the religious & holy spirit pervading the poem. The theme here is the speaker’s encounter with God. In other words, the poet here describes a spiritual experience of his. He heard an authoritative voice asking him to simplify his life; and when he was about to ask how should simplify his life, he realized that certain question should not be asked. Then he felt oppressed by the city crowds who were in such a great hurry to get back home that they hardly stopped to speak to him and then he heard God’s voice more, this time urging him to move about among the living forms & shape. God’s voice informed him that the rhythm, the shapes, the colours, and the forms in this world were at his disposal and that through them, he could hear the language which could convey the laws of the universe to him and which could also brighten his life if he submitted to them. Finally, the voice of God called upon him to write musical poems showing his reverence for his creator who would be waiting to receive him when the time came.

‘A Didactic Poem’ shows the writer’s introspective nature in this respect. ‘Thus Encounter’ is a didactic poem which urges us to simplify our lives, and to surrender ourselves to the laws of the universe and to the will of God. Although the poem describes a personal experience of the writer himself, yet the poet’s purpose in communicating this experience to us through a poem also implies that we should learn something from it. At the same time, the poem shows the introspective nature of Nissan Ezekiel as a poet. The inner moods and the state of the mind are important to this poet as outward event and happening, perhaps more important than outward life of man.

In the comparative study of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel, both used the theme of religious and mythical to write poetry. Arun Kolatkar writes poetry on Jejuri which is
religious place. Most of the poems are written in an ironical method. Together these poems constitute a satire on the people’s religious beliefs which actually are superstition. Kolatkar exposes the legends about God Khandoba for what they really are. As pointed out, they are superstitions and myths. Every legend and every myth tends to acquire a stronger still stronger hold upon the minds of the people with the passing of time. Years only strengthen the legends and the myths; and this is what seems to have happened not only in Jejuri but all the many places of pilgrimage in the various Far flung states of India, and also in other countries every stone image is gods and goddesses in Jejuri. There is also second class god like Yeshwant Rao which made from basalt. But Nissim Ezekiel has used different kind of God. One cannot be a stranger to God if one is a reader of Ezekiel, but not even Ezekiel’s most thorough reader can confidently say what his god is exactly like. At moment as in ‘A Time to Change’ he appears to be a Judo-Christian “Lord” more often, he is just “God”. He does not seem to be omnipotent, but his existence never seems to be in serious doubt. Ezekiel’s God, as Give Patel points out “he can very well be spoken to with the familiarity used in ‘Egoist's Prayers’:\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{verbatim}
No, Lord,

No the fruit of action

Is my motive.

But do you really mind

Half a bite of it ?

It tastes so sweet,

And I’m so hungry. (CP-212)
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
Let me be, O Lord,

The camel of the higher income group

Who passes smoothly through

The eye of that needle.

The price of wisdom
\end{verbatim}
Is too high
But folly is expensive too.
Strike a bargain with me, Lord
I’m not a man or ample means. (CP-213)

Arun Kolatkar uses god which is different from Nissim Ezekiel. He says about gods:

Sweet as grapes
Are the stones of Jejuri
Said Chaitanya
He popped a stone
In his mouth
And spat out gods. (C – 27)

At the same time, Nissin Ezekiel also can be addressed, as in ‘Morning Prayer’, with all seriousness:

God grant me privacy,
Secretive as the mole,
I inaccessibility,
But only of they should (CP – 122)

His ways baffle the post but is plain to him that he often interferes in human affairs. For example he very unnecessarily puts an end to the romantic encounter in ‘Episode’:

We sought romantic restfulness.
God sent three beggars.
We went back to our separate bonds” (CP-99)

On the whole, Ezekiel’s God possesses a nature which is a partial reflection of the complex evolution of Ezekiel’s personal beliefs in the matter. More importantly, he had visions of Christ, Krishna and various prophets and these remarkable visions swept aside his rationalism once and for all. He became convinced that the world was mystical, metaphysical and cosmic
reality, that God existed and that every human being had destiny. However, as the final position is slightly removed from the initial one, the evolution is not perfectly cyclic: The initial position was of a believer who is also an orthodox Jew; the present position is that of a believer who believes in a general sort of way.

The poem ‘A Low Temple’ which is written Arun Kolatkar he believes in God in the someway, but does not define religion anywhere. Several questions are in head at Jejuri. ‘A Low Temple’ shows as a believer and non-believer in religion and God. From a stone-god in ruined temple, the tourist pilgrim goes to a low temple. The bronze Gods live in the dark temple. The priest borrows a matchbox form him and lights up, the god’s one by one. Here, the gods are seen for moment the length of a matchstick. The pilgrim asks the Purohit about goddess. The priest replies that it is eight armed goddess. The pilgrim sees 18 arms. Whether the goddess has eight or eighteen arms, is open to question. It is indicated by the “septic match cough”. The ignorant priest sees no difference between 8 and 18 arms. He insists that she has just 8 arms. Nissim Ezekiel also does not confine his attention to God to proper alone but allows it to spread out into his traditional paraphernalia like sacred literature, rituals, holy men and organized religion, none of which escape unsathed from his hands. Sacred literature fails to hold us though we turn to it when beaten by the world.

Arun Kolatkar describes many gods about whom he has some knowledge. There are gods having more attractive faces and better decorated than other gods. There are gods who lure the pilgrims to make an offering of gold to them. There are gods who promise a spiritual upliftman or spiritual elevation to the pilgrims offering worship to them. There are gods who claim to have the power to enable a pilgrim to walk on a bed of burning coals. There are gods who promise to give a child to a childless man if he offers worship to them. Thus, there are gods and goddesses, each having some special power. There are gods who can bring about the death of the enemy of pilgrims who makes a sufficient offering of money to them. However, Nissim Ezekiel uses salvation in his poetry:

Salvation belonged unto the
Lord. It is not through
One or other church.
Thy blessing is upon
All the people or the earth (CP-254)
The claim of every religion, every sect and every group within it, that it is the sole owner or the path to salvation strikes him.

So, Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel both are unaware about religion and God. But they used images of Gods in their poetry. Arun Kolatkar uses stone image gods which are visible everywhere in Jejuri but Nissim Ezekiel’s god is invisible and spiritual. Nissim Ezekiel uses only one God which is Universal. Both reject the God’s task for human being.

Poetry of Ezekiel appears to be a religious as evidenced in the fourth section. Grand views of poetry are implicit in Ezekiel’s poetic vision. The final section ends on a deeply retrospective and political note. However, the book ‘A Time to Change’ is a very important work of poetry. Michael Garman says that, “the poet’s religion sympathetically assumes a double aspect-the introspective-concept active and the outward active”.

4.1.4. Indianness

The term Indianness means those traits in characters of a man which shows him to be an Indian and certainly not those traits which show him as a foreigner or which show that though an Indian by birth he behaves like a westerner and has picked up not only western taste in food and dress but also is mode of speech.

Now, Arun Kolatkar is, by his parentage and quite religious, a foreigner whose ancestor had visited all India particularly Maharashtra and had settled in town, the metropolitan city Bombay. Arun Kolatkar was born in Kolhapur (Maharashtra) brought up in Bombay, and took primary education in Kolhapur, and completed degree and diploma in art and fine art in Bombay leaving some years beside for visiting to speech and recite poems in English, America, Yugoslahokia, Germany, France, etc. Occasionally he started trips to various foreign countries; he lived, worked and earned his livelihood in Bombay. Thus, he steeped and soaked in India particularly Maharashrian life, and as a poet, he observed and experienced much more of Indian life than native Indian themselves. Arun Kolatkar took experience by observing many cities, towns, religious places and pilgrims place.

The question which arises is whether Arun Kolatkar has merged his being with most of typical features of Indian life, and, if so, to what extent. The degree of his Indianness would be determined by the extent and which Indian life has extended his blood and wounded his temperament, his personality, and his way of life. He had felt more annoyed
than attracted by Indian life and by the Indian people. His poems show more of anti-Indianness than of Indianness. He has written a large number of poems depicting the Indian conditions of life, and more particularly the conditions of life in the city Bombay and town Jejuri but in these poems he appears more of the critic and a censor than an admirer of a champion of those conditions of life. Thus, those readers, who regard Arun Kolatkar’s recourse to the theme of the Indian conditions of life in his poems as a sign of his love for Maharashtra and India or his attachment to India or his admiration for India, are merely mistaken in their views. Actually, Arun Kolatkar’s Indianness lays only in his commitment to this country and in his earnest and since endeavour to bring about some improvement in the conditions of life in this country through his poetry. and we should appreciate this “Hindu” author’s identification with this country to the extent of writing to bring certain improvement in the depressing, degrading, and disgusting conditions of life in this country as represented by the metropolitan city of Bombay and town Jejuri the desire to see better conditions of life in this country cannot certain degree of patriotism and in Kolatkar’s case it certainly shown his love for the country of his adoption.

Arun Kolatkar’s place is not forward place but is backward place in this country, the country of his adoption where he decided quite early in his life to continue to live; and, of course, he had never regretted his decision in spite of his strong sense of belonging to India, particularly Jejuri and Bombay, become evident in his entire work is re-read within the total perspective of the trend of modern poetry during the last three decades. Although it is easy to talk of Arun Kolatkar as an outsider, his work, on the whole, does not show him to be outsider because he never reminded negative but always turned his situation to the exposition of the positive.

Yet we cannot shut our eyes to what we have called his anti-Indianness. In poem, after poem, he has decided the living condition in India, and more particularly in “an old woman”, with an obvious resentment against, and disgust for, those conditions, though in each of these poems he has adopted an ironical and satirical manner of disapproval and condemnation, and not a tone of indignation and denunciation.

There are, first of all, the poem in which he had ridiculed the manner in which a large number of Indian use the English language, making mistake language of grammar, syntax, idiom and tense. Actually like, every major indo-Anglian poet, he had a thorough understanding of the meaning of English words and unerring instinct for choosing the right words for his purpose. Arun Kolatkar’s picture of Indian life is shown a strong emphasis on
the negative aspect, though he does not ignore the positive aspects completely. In a poem entitled ‘Jejuri’ he has enumerated the following sights which are common in this country like: the beggars, man, slum, nature, religion, animal like dog, horse, tortoise, mouse, cat, social, historical, political, cultural, mythical, sexual, physical relationship, health, artists, homage, modern city of life, town, city its tall buildings, its factory, chimney and, its human souls choked by the building, drum, string, priest, the door, the door step, hills, water supply, tap, butterfly, tiger, cross, stones, indicator, the sun, statue which are Indian images, comet. Arun Kolatkar describes to pray to god to grant him privacy and to grant him a kingship with the sky and with the air, earth, fire, and sea. In other words, Arun Kolatkar seeks an escape from the suffocating and unwholesome atmosphere of an Indian metropolis and towns.

Arun Kolatkar was a native and Marathi speaker. He accepted work as advertiser; he was built his career in art and fine art. Arun Kolatkar has written poem: Jejuri, ‘Irani’, ‘The Boatride, Dnyaneshwar Samadhi Description’, ‘Kala Ghoda’, ‘Sarp-Satra’, ‘The Hag’ and ‘Mumbai Made Me Beggar’. Arun Kolatkar was a scholar and student of Indian Myth and Mythology, so he had written poem on myth. Jejuri is a mythical not only poem but also epic.

So N.P. Acharya thinks that ‘Jejuri’ is the most Indian book of poems in English I have ever read, Indian in its images, in its themes and in sights, and even in its rhythm”. The textual evidence is quite contrary and can be piled up to demolish Acharya’s claim the sawed of sunbeam (‘the bus’), the conduct pipe and the brass mouse (‘water supply’), a flayed man of muscle out of an anatomy book (the door), vertebrate rock cut steps (‘hills’), forks and knives (‘Ajamil and the tigers’). Indeed the entire story is dramatized in terms of a modern round table, warfare, blood, firebrigating dawn (‘a kind of cross’), the stock exchange quotations, the slashed editorials (‘the cupboard’), bright as any post-box, the shape of protoplasm, seat on the next rocket to heaven (‘Yashwant Rao’) and to cap it all the ‘electrical’ image of short circuit in the first stanza of ‘The Blue Horse’:

Flies off her half burnt tongue.
The toothless singer
Opens her mouth,
Shorts the circuits
In her hay wire throat
A shower of sparks (TBH-51)
All these—and perhaps many more, if one is bent on excavating them exhaustively—are starkly modern and international/cosmopolitans images with nothing whatsoever “Indian” about them.

Actually, Arun Kolatkar is a faultless painter, perfect in techniques of imagery, narratives kill and delineations and superb in detail but far from being truly Indian in sensibility. There are many reasons why this impression finally solidifies itself in the reader’s mind, the language with its gratuitously cranky irony, humour and banter does not match the experience; the attitude does not match the atmosphere, the sensibility does not match, the cultural ethos and the intentions of narrations does not match up to the notability of the object under observation. The human figures Kolatkar’s caricatures are Indian only superficially and often at their worst and hardly representative of the true religious metaphysical essence of India in so far as their selfishness and commercial attitudes are underscored. Commercialisation and corruption at religious play is not typical of India. Kolatkar is not, a deeply devoted priest of god; out to study and fight, Luther like, the corruption at Jejuri, he is an extraordinary traveller an artist, visiting a place which ordinary people have traditionally accepted as seat of faith and source of divine grace. Instead of opposing and protesting vehemently he observes minutely and delineates ironically and selectively without trying to get emotionally involved in the spirit of the place. And, after all, Khandoba is basically a deity of the “Bahujan Samaj” and also of the Deshastha Brahmins; Kolatkar is a “Kokanastha”. In the opening poem *The Bus* through a juxtaposition of the protagonist with an old man who is a fellow traveller in the bus was going to Jejuri. His destination appears to be well defined by the caste mark. The journey is made by the S.T Bus and return by the train, both being comparatively very comfortable. However, the road to Jejuri is in poor condition. So, in this poem, Arun Kolatkar portrays old man who is pilgrim, the bus which is Indian means of conveyance, caste mark which is identity of Indian Hindu, the holy place Jejuri which is Indian religious place from Maharashtra. The second poem ‘The Priest’ describes a priest who is waiting for the arrival of the bus, bringing a crowd of pilgrims and tourists. He is not bothered about the religious aspect of the visit of pilgrims. He is concerned with offerings before the stone or bronze image of God Khandoba. With the arrival of the bus a cat-smile runs on his cheek, he expects “Puran Poli” in his plate. Priest chews the betel nut as if he is reciting mantra. The ironic and better remark about the priest’s greediness indicates that he is not interested in holy worship. He thinks selfishly of how much money he will get from the pilgrims. So, in this poem shows Indian sensibility of Arun Kolatkar. Arun Kolatkar
used selfish Indian character in his poem. The place, Jejuri is religious, example of any place from Indian religious place. The poem ‘The Low Temple’ is a poem pointing out that the pilgrim is a modern intellectual sceptic. The poem is conversation between the priest and the pilgrim. The tone is ironic. While lighting the gods and answering the pilgrim’s question the priest says that goddess has 8 arms but pilgrim says that there are 18 arms the goddess. Ignorance of the priest is also quotable. Indian priests’ are not aware about significance of god and goddess. They do not know much about pilgrim place. They only ready to collect money from pilgrims.

In the poem ‘An Old Woman’, the poet describes an old beggar woman in simple and plain words. She catches hold of poet’s shirt and asks him to give her a 50 paise coin and promise to show him the horseshoe shrine. The cracks near the eyes of her make him think of cosmic destruction. It is the supreme surrealistic image. In this poem Kolatkar simply describes helpless beggar woman who finds everywhere at religious places in whole India. He describes her attitude looks behaviour, her demand and her tendency of life and Indian beggar woman. The poem ‘Chaitanya’, ‘Chaitanya’ ‘Mahaprabhu’ the noted Bengali Vaishnav saint is said to have visited Jejuri around 1550-51. The attitude of Chaitanya about Jejuri is stone image. Chaitanya says Jejuri is the land of stone image which has religious significance. It shows Indian blind faith about stone. Indian people believe on stone images instead of living things.

‘A Scratch’, the poem shows the impact of commercialization at Jejuri. People goes to Jejuri as a means of income, throughout the year it is continued. The poet is unable to make difference between god and stone at Jejuri. ‘Heart of Ruin’ is witnesses throughout journey to Jejuri. The heart of ruin in some ways points to a lacuna on the part of the camera eye. Lord Khandoba is protector of dogs that often been called in “Vaghya” or “Khandya” reminding us of the close association between the god and dog.

The poems ‘A Song for Vaghya’, ‘A Song for Murli’ and ‘An Old Woman’ are most remarkable. The old woman must be a one time-Murli, Devdasi now old and therefore without any commercial prospects. It is the Indian character used by Arun Kolatkar in his prem. The poem, ‘The Blue Horse’ also indicates Indian sensibility in making music and playing drum for Khandoba who is the deity of “Bhahujan Samaj”. The poet is pointing out the Indian lack of sincerity of Indian people, and criticising the hypocrisy of those people who deliberately choose unconventional attitudes. Toothless singer, drummer and musicians are all Indian people.
The poem ‘Makarand’ presents a simple theme of Indianess. Makarand is not ready to shirt off and to follow custom in the temple of Khandsba. He wants freedom to preserve his individual belief. He requests for a match box so that he can smoke in the courtyard. The poem lays emphasis on the importance of personal freedom. The poet is not prepared to accept the custom prevalent at the shrine. But he does not demand any change. He allows his friend to go in if that was what he wanted to do. There is a sense of tolerances that attitude to show the importance of the poet is giving to personal freedom. He is not raising any objection against any ritual or custom. He is concerned only with his own individuality and personal freedom. We witness throughout that that Jejuri is a journey through ‘The Heart of Ruin’. Since the life of protagonist is too indulgently attracted by externalities he seems to be faded to certain touching realities, even the heart of ruin can provide shelter to someone as derelict and as agonised as a mongrel bitch who “has found a place for herself and her puppies”. In this poem Arun Klolatkar depicts Indian religious places which are ruined conditional. They are safety for even animals.

The poem ‘The Reservoir’, M.R. Satyanrayana says that “the reservoir prepares the reader for a possible symbol of permanent drought”.

There is no water in the reservoir built by the Peshwas. Whatever spiritual source Jejuri might have boasted of in the past has dried up. The modern people are ignorant to keep historical heritage to have evidence for history. The reservoir is full of silt which can be used to quench for people and cattle. People have spiritual faith about gods and goddesses; they give their children the names of gods and goddesses. Also they give the name of gods and goddesses to shop, there are some shops like “Mhalaskant cafe”, “Gorakshanath cutting Saloon”, etc. It has mythical and historical evidence from the era of Ramayana and Mahabharata. So people give the name of gods to their children like Ram, Krishan, Gopal, Ramchandra, Laxman, Mahadev Vishnu, Parvati, Laxmi, Saraswati, etc.

The poem ‘Yeshwant Rao’, ‘Kind of Cross’, ‘The Pattern’ and ‘The Cupboard’, these are last mentioned has vivid surrealistic effects which the consciousness of the sacrificial is shown operating. Yeshwant Rao is the second class god located outside the main temple of god Khandoba. He is without arms, without legs, it is only statue, so Indian people worship basalt figure wholeheartedly in order to fulfil their willing.

Arun Kolatkar gives references of some Indian towns and cities in his poetry. The poem entitled ‘Bombay made me a Beggar’; there are some references of cities like Kalyan,
Nashik, Rotegaon and Kopargaon. He also uses Indian historical event in his poetry in “Bombay made me Beggar” like tinshod hegira:

Dust in my beard, dust in my hair.

The sun like a hammer on the head.

An itching arse.

A night spent on flagstones.

My tinshod hegira

Was hooting up. (The Bloodox- 11-12)

Arvind Krishna says that “it is the autobiographical poem which gives his personal experience about Indian landscape particularly Maharashtra. He ironically used the “tinshod hegira” which used during colonial times Nana Patil’s Patri Sarkar or “horseshoe government”.  

The Indian element Ezekiel’s poetry derives its strength mostly from his choice of themes and allusions. The objection can be raised that a mere reference in a work of literature to something Indian cannot be said to constitute the content in it. One the face of it the objection appears reasonable, but if an allusion to something specifically Indian does not exemplify the presence, what does? An obvious and very valid answer would be that attitude does. However, identifying the specific attitude which is Indian is highly problematic, almost impossible. However, thus, in no way takes away the Indian content of the poem. National presence in a literature finds expression through allusion as well as attitude; the former is more easily recognizable than the latter.

The content is very mildly present in Ezekiel’s early poetry and gathers strength with the passage of years. In the poems Ezekiel wrote between-1945 and 1948 and in a Time to Change (1952, Sixty Poems (1953)’, the Indian presences only a gentle undertone, hardly audible. The large sprawling, rain-soothed town in ‘Town Lore’ for example, could very well be an Indian town and to same can be said of the ‘Heroine’ of the amusingly interesting poem ‘An Affair’ there is a quotation from the Dhammapad in ‘Prayer’.

Sandip J. Nikam says that “Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry contains various aspects of Indianness. Indianness is a vital element in Ezekiel’s thought feeling and imagery. Indianness has become one of the major themes of Ezekiel’s poetry, which he treats as an intense personal exploration”.
More characters, objects, situations have an Indian air about them in 'The Third' (1958) and ‘The Unfinished Man (1960)’. The gentleman, at least sartorially one, in ‘The Queue’, who is tempted crowd of a queue to be indiscreet enough to plant a kiss on a passing female bosom, seems to be quite Indian. Some doubts may perhaps be raised about the location of the party in ‘At the Party’, but the site of the episode in ‘Episode’ is almost surely Indian. The speaker in the poem and a woman, apparently not his wife, seek romantic restfulness on a wooden bench constructed round a tree beside an artificial lake. A beggar’s whine approaches them, his eyes glitter in the darkness. In ‘Letter from Rangoon’, the speaker finds himself in Rangoon which is like home in many ways, smelling as it does of God and the Beast.

Here the gong marks the days
There the temple bells (CP-109).

The hotel where the Cuban dancer performs in ‘At the Hotel’, a poem which offers comparison with Shiv K. Kumar’s ‘Cabaret Dancer’, seems to be as Indian as the hypocrisy of the audience whose motives are concealed but clear. They relish the smell of flesh secretly, and want more. They drink their coffee swiftly, but only when the dancer leaves the floor, the naked Cuban dancer. There certainly is an international dimension to ‘Urban’, but it is also very much a Bombay poem written on Bombay life by a Bombay poet to whom the hills of the ‘Western Ghats’ are always far away and whose life is confined to the predetermined tracks of a circular labyrinth:

The city like a passion burns.
He dreams of morning walks, alone,
And floating on a wave of sand.
But still his mind its traffic turns
Away from beach and tree and stone
To kindred clamour close at hand (CP-117)

The second poem in ‘The Exact Name (1965)’, ‘Night of the Scorpion’, is extremely significant in the study of the Indian content in Ezekiel’s poetry. The poem opens with the speaker’s memory flashing back to the night a scorpion stung his mother.
Bruce King has remarked about ‘Night of the Scorpion’, “The poem is a new direction, a vision of ordinary reality, especially of Indian life, unmediated by cold intellect”.30

The poem achieves a striking authenticity by bringing together, for the first time, the six elements that dominate the mimesis. He finds in Indian poetry in English, of the Indian reality: poverty, superstition, violence, suffering, duplicity, and communal effort. ‘Poverty’ finds its primary objective correlative in the electrified mud-walled hut which is the venue of the incident. It is true that the speaker’s mother suffers for hours from it but, more significantly, the very existence of the peasants, steeped as it is in superstition and poverty, is itself suffering. The speaker’s father, though a sceptic and rationalist, tries every curse and blessing; so much so that one is forced to question the genuineness of his scepticism and rationalism. What is significant is not whether the effort or the village community to bring solace to the groaning woman succeeds, but that the effort is taken.

In contrast to ‘Night of the Scorpion’, in India has not received substantial critical attention. The opening section gives a rather wretched picture of India, a country populated by beggars, hawkers, pavement sleepers and others. It is in this India that the speaker finds himself riding his,

Elephant of thought

A Cezanne slung around my neck (CP-131).

The second recalls the early life of the speaker amidst the duplicity of his comrades. He depicts ‘Background, Casually’ and says that the Roman Catholic Goan boys play with high-heeled toys, the Anglo-Indian boys drink in some Jewish den as do the Islamic boys, but none of them ever miss their prayers. The third section of the poem is on a party in which twenty-three persons from six countries participate. But the wives of the Indian participants are wooden. They don’t drink, they don’t talk, it goes without saying that they don’t kiss. The last section, which flows naturally out of the penultimate, relates an incident which happens to a woman who, obviously, is very different from the “wooden wives”. Instead of the promised lucid talk, her English boss attempts to rape her and then with true British courtesy lends her a safety pin as he has torn her blouse in his not-so-successful effort.

The poem ‘Woman Observed’ exposes the prudery of a pregnant woman who denies being what she accepts in her own life. The speaker is ashamed to observe not the nudes but the consternation and observation of the pregnant human in observing them:
The pregnant human

In the art gallery

Stares at the nudes

That lines the neutral wall:

Her consternation

Frightens me. The fear

Of nakedness offends

The eye. I am ashamed

To witness it. The life

In the woman’s belly

Swelling her erotic lines

Depresses me, the seed

And source denied by this

Expression on her face,

I watch her sadly as

She leaves the place, my eyes

Embracing all that sensual

Movement by bursting through the dress. (CP-140)

‘The Railway Clerk’, the first of the Indian English poem appears in *Collected Poems* 1952-1988, captures the miserable existence of a representative of contemporary lower middle class society in his own idiolect:

My wife is always asking for more money.

Money, money, where to get money?

My job is such; no one is giving bribe,

While other clerks are in fortunate position,

And no promotion even because I am not graduate.

I wish I was bird. (CP-184)
V.K. Dixit’s report in “The Indian Express of 25th September 1967” has been transformed into the found poem “The truth about the floods”. “Death and destruction have been wrought on a massive scale by floods but the villagers refuse to reveal anything until the speaker convinces them that he is not a Government official. He discovers that no relief work has been done up except by a party of five students who turn up with a transistor, a tin of biscuits and, of course, a camera”.  

The villagers ran to them.

They slapped their bellies

And whined;

‘I have not eaten for three days’.

‘My husband has been washed away’.

‘My parents have abandoned me’.

‘My son is dying’.

‘I cannot find my daughter’.

‘Don’t make a noise’,

Said the students,

‘Sit down in a circle’.

They did not say another word.

The transistor was on,

The biscuits were distributed,

The camera clicked.

Then the students left

Humming the tune

Of a popular Hindi film song. (CP-187)

The speaker moves on and says that everywhere people refuse to have anything to do with him until they are sure he is no government official. The district authorities at Balasore openly admit that they have failed but add that Nature has conspired against them. A comparable but more famous poem is Ramanujan’s ‘A River’, which is on the Vaikai, the
river that flows by Madurai, the city of temples and poets, who in turn sing of cities and temples. The river has enough water to be poetic about only once a year but then it wreaks destruction on its banks. The old poets sang only of the floods; the new poets, despite their newness, quote the old poets and neither the old poets nor the new poets are bothered about the helpless victims of the floods.

‘On Bellasis Road’ reveals Ezekiel’s interest in the ordinary. Looking at short, thin, dark woman in purple sari and yellow blouse wearing green bangles and yellow flowers, the speaker reflects,

Of what use then to see and think?
I cannot even say I care or do not care,
Perhaps it is a kind of despair (CP-189).

The focus of ‘Entertainment’ is more on the entertained than on the entertainers, a girl and her two monkeys, reminding one of the frequently mentioned monkeys in the Indian poems of Alum Lewis. The crowd thickens as the show climaxes but melts away when the time for payment comes.

Only the monkeys are sad,
And suddenly
The baby begins to cry.
Anticipating time for payment,
The crowd dissolves.
Some, in shame, part
With the smallest coin they have.
The show moves on. (CP-194)

‘Rural suite’ which has its origin in a letter, opens with the speaker being conducted over a hill or two by a village youth to a part of the river which he had never before seen. They, youth seems to be indistinguishably part of the Indian landscape.

It was like walking
With an animal (CP-197)
On his way back the speaker hears the Bhikshuks the holy, “Holy mendicants who loot the poor villagers of their, rice”/ Chillies, fruit and nuts”. (CP-197)

It is nothing but shameless exploitation, especially as most of the Bhikshuks are well off farmers with a taste for hoarding gold”. That nothing changer here is the speaker’s comment not even the cliché that nothing changes.

The “heroine” of ‘How the English lesson Ended’ is a nineteen year old Muslim girl who becomes the speaker’s student after having failed in English for three consecutive years. An important reason for her becoming the speaker’s student seems to be the fact that she lives next door to him. When she sheds her Burkha, the speaker realizes that she is tall, thin, and dark with shifting eyes, small face and heavy clouds of hair. In half an hour she giggles.

I learn

Giggling is what she’s really good at,

With plenty of practice not at home. (CP -200)

She takes the speaker’s daughter home one day and show her picture in a certain kind of book when she realizes that her neighbour teacher has come to know of this, she puts an abrupt end to her English lessons on the plea that she has leaned enough. He parents promptly decide that the teacher had made advances and almost hint as much to his mother who curses the girl saying that she never will get husband. A month later- despite the curse- the girl marries. The speaker’s comment is that she does not need the picture book now the Burkha which the girl wears is a synecdoche for the repressive atmosphere which prevails in her home, a typical orthodox Muslim one. The footnote attached to the poem describes the Burkha as garment worn by orthodox Muslim women which covers them completely from head to foot, “hiding even the face”, needless to say; it stunts growth and breeds perversion.

The miserable treatment which domestic servant gets in India at the hands of their masters is the theme of ‘Ganga’. The concluding comment of the poet is, “these people never learn” (CP-202), is ostensibly on servants but actually on their employers. Like the “Ganges”, Ganga has existed from the earliest ages of our civilization and is integral to it. The poem is lighter in tone, but no less effective than Give Patel’s ‘Servants’, where the poet observes that they sit like animals but hastens to add that he means no offence: he has seen animals resting in their stall, the oil flame reflected in their eyes.
'Poverty poems’ satires the concern of a white foreigner for Indian beggars which is almost fully confined to the verbal level and the friendliness of Indian beggars which is reserved for white foreigners:

She paused when the coffee came,

Thanked the waiter, and said:

‘I passed him by, of course,

Poor child, he held my eyes,

Sitting still, almost naked,

Small and slightly bent, alone’.

We sipped the coffee, found it good.

‘Before he released me,

He smiled and I smiled back,

I turned and gave him a coin,

Past belief in that or anything’.

She didn’t know beggars in India

Smile only at white foreigners.

‘Indians are a friendly people anyway’,

She said. ‘So they are’, I agree,

‘So they are’ she stares at me

Dubiously. I listen to the buzzing air.

Perhaps she thinks it best

Not to argue. I think so too.(CP-230-1)

‘Healers’ says that you have to give up everything-or nothing-in order to be saved. Neither the success nor the failure of your marriage or career matters.
Anisur Rahman observes that a “striking feature of Ezekiel’s mature style is the use of Hindi words in his poems. The ultimate origin of these words can be traced to either Sanskrit or Persian and they create “an illusion of the real life as lived in our country”.

The theme of ‘Minority Poem’ can be seen as the interaction between Indian civilization and forces different form it, the guests standing for the former and the speaker for the latter. It is the satire if Indian civilization. The guests are invisible: it is difficult to identify the essence of the civilization. While the speaker talks they wait “till I am exhausted”. The classic strategy of Indian civilization has been to refuse to respond to challenge and to bide time till the challenging force wears itself out and then to overcome it. The “language” in the fourth stanza can mean the entire civilizational terminology.

It’s not the mythology
Or the marriage customs
That you need to know
It’s the will to pass
Through the eye of a needle
To self-forgetfulness. (CP-236)

At the end of the harangue the guests depart dissatisfied, they will never give up their mantras, old or new. All the speaker can do is polish up his alien techniques of observation while the city burns. Ezekiel’s poetry derives much of its richness and strength from the interaction between the “natural outsider” in him and India, a key to the working of which is provided by this poem.

The speaker’s friend in ‘Occasion’, one of the poems written with between 1983 and 1988, is an obviously well to do freelance journalist who showers pity on his typist, a typical south Indian with a typically south Indian name, Ramanathan or Krishnaswamy this man
leads a wretched existence at Ghatkopar, a suburb some twenty miles from Bombay, having to support their children, a mother and an invalid wife. The irony is that knowing all this, the friend pays him only a “hundred rupees or so a month” and arrives at the conclusion that “we should have left this country twenty years ago”, a country where though Ramanathan or Krishnaswamy may be treated scarily, he doesn’t seem to have done badly. The closure of the poem takes the irony further:

He offers me another drink.

The servant brings us more snacks  (CP-277)

Some of the sections of ‘Edinburgh Interlude’ at the close of “collected poems” (1952-1988) process a high degree of Indianness indicating that the Indian presence has come to stay in Ezekiel’s poetry.

What is one to make of the fact that the Indian presence in Ezekiel’s corpus, negligible to begin with, steadily increases over the decades? It could be a manifestation of the poet’s growing as simulations his increasing desire to integrate himself into the Indian reality. In this context, the circumstances under which ‘Night of the Scorpion’ came to be written are significant. It is January 1964. Ezekiel is in Leeds and is to read a few of his poems at a party that evening. He looks through his poems and is dissatisfied because there are not enough recent poems with an Indian ethos. He shuts himself up in his room and decides to actively wait for a poem with a strong Indian element in it. It takes him practically the entire day but by late evening ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is ready. Thus, one of Ezekiel’s most famous poems, a poem with a decidedly Indian ethos comes to be written largely because its author is determined to write it (SP-24-5). There is doubt that Ezekiel’s poetry is the poetry of a minority consciousness which is very much even painfully, aware of its identity, and which, over the decades systematically attempts to assimilate itself into the national consciousness as it understands the national consciousness to be. This is rather in keeping with the general evolution of Ezekiel’s personality, which has displayed a growing conservatism with the passage of time. The child who dreamt of becoming a rabbi ended up as a fanatic vegetarianism. The man who had in his youth dreamt of revolution under the wings of M.N Roy unashamedly campaigned in support of the ban on “the satanic verses” in his old age. In fact after he received ‘The Padmashri’, Ezekiel came to see himself almost as a Government spokesman, saddled with the responsibility of defending all the decisions of the union government relating to culture and the arts. Indianness is common theme for Indian
English poets. They use the way to certain Indian situations and experiences, and how their modes are also peculiar and recognizable. Ezekiel, for instance, can respond Bert to the urban contemporary Indian and the tongue-in-cheek is the chief strategy with which he shapes his experience. A bilingual poet, Arun Kolatkar is neither prolific nor consistent in outlook. He has displayed a considerably active interest in translating into English some of the Marathi saint poets’ especially Tukaram. Dilip Chitre “observes that “Kolatkar’s Marathi poems” shows the impact of the work of the saint poets in their texture, and his automatic, surrealistic method gives their poetic devices uniquely new function”.

The source is further, traced back to Rimbaud and the surrealists. this influence is conspicuous in ‘The Boatride’ and some Marathi poems, though other modes and themes are also present in them. For instance,

A.K. Bhagwat points out in his article on “Arun Kolatkarchya Kavita” that some of the recurring themes are: “the contrast between this world and beyond, inanities of everyday busy life in our time-kept cities, the jungle of modern city like Bombay with its buildings, as wild as animals treating to devour one, and so forth.”

Jejuri is an outstanding poem for Indianness. The images which are Indians like the priest, the priest’s son, protagonist, an old woman, Vaghya, Murli, station master, manager, tea stall boy, Chaitanya, old man, pilgrim, the demons, Yeshwant Rao, the bus, fire, water, tap, insect like butterfly, hills, scratch, stone, tortoise, the reservoir, cross, cupboard, the sun, wheel, indicator, horse, dog, puppies, bitch, themes also Indian like religions, cultural, mythical, social and economic. Faith of gods and goddess about religious people and particular community like shepherd and Brahmin community and Maratha community are Indian. The tradition which is religious about Vaghya and Murli is also Indian. Spiritual and supernatural power of god and second classis also appreciated in India. The nature which is used by Arun Kolatkar is also Indian. R.S. Kimbahyne argues that “the entire poem reveals a lack of contemplative spadework that the material strongly demands”.

Nissim Ezekiel also uses Indian theme and images in his poetry Rajeev Tanath and Meena Belliappa see in his poetry: “Ezekiel’s attitude is contrasted with the verse of the previous generation centred round the rural typical. On other words a substantial part of the verse had a life residing outside the process that the poem was. The movement towards the urban is also a movement towards anonymity in this context. The modern metropolis could been seen as a process of the loss of the typical exotic”.
Ezekiel’s originality lies in his projection of Bombay as metaphor which defines the alienation of the modern Indian intellectual the brought up in the Judeo-Christian and Greco Roman traditions and being forced to come to terms with a culture whose response to life is controlled by “a totally different metaphysic. Shirish Chindhade says have given an interview of Nissim Ezekiel then Ezekiel says” I am conscious of my very special situation in relation to Citizen I identify myself completely with country. Its politics, social life, civil problem, education, economic difficulties, cultural dilemmas are all part of my daily life. I would like that identification to be fully expressed in my poetry but it is perhaps only partially”.37

So Nissim Ezekiel is regarded about Indian way of life he portrays in his poetry Indian politics, social life of Indian people, social community, from Indian, civil problem vividly from the poem ‘The Railway Clerk’ education problem, cultural standard community problem, entertainment facility in India and attitude of people. Both Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel show Indian social atmosphere of the people. Guru of Nissim Ezekiel and priest of Arun Kolatkar both are hypocrisy. Woman, man animals, religious people, couple, tradition, nature Indian, Indian philosophical tradition, myth, superstition, unconventional attitude, towns, cities are common themes and images of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel.

But the theme of sexuality from Indian society and family it is different from Arun Kolatkar. Nissim Ezekiel has used sexuality the Indian poetry in English. ‘The couple, woman observed’, ‘Virginal’, ‘Two Night of Love’ are sensual poems. Indian rising sun and setting sun it’s different from Ezekiel. Kolatkar’s god is omnipresent, he believes on god being protagonist. But Nissim Ezekiel does not believe the power of god. ‘The Professor’, ‘The Patriot’, ‘Healers’, the poster poem which are written by Nissim Ezekiel they are different from Arun Kolatkar. The poem, ‘Yeshwnat Jagtap’ which is written by Nissim Ezekiel and the poem, ‘Yeshwant Rao’ which is written by Arun Kolatkar, Yashwant Jagtap is labour class person who works for himself to earn bread and butter art the station. In other words Yeshwant Rao is a second class god who provides the needs to the people.
4.2. TECHNIQUES AND STYLES OF ARUN KOATKAR AND NISSIM EZEKIEL

“The concept of style, including constituents ranging from affixes and lexis to vision, may help to explain some of the obscurities in the idea of style formed by Sankrit aestheticians. Again, their idea of style may help to enrich our own view of it. They use words like Marga, Riti, Bandha, Rachana and Sanghatana to describe what is known as style in English.” (Gokak-160)

Style has traditionally been defined as the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse - as how speakers say whatever it is that they say. The style specific to a particular work of writer, or else distinctive of a type of writing, has been analysed in such terms as the rhetorical situation and aim; characteristic diction, or choice of words; the type of sentence structure and syntax; and the density and kinds of figurative language (Abram-303)

Style and technique both are speciality of the poetry. The poet uses verse, free verse, rhymes, rhythms and figures of speech in his poetry while composing poetry to look ornamental and musical.

4.2.1. Irony

According to Arvind. M., “Irony implies a statement which is mode to indicate the opposite meaning, something that has a second meaning projected by the write. It is implicit with reference to the circumstance in which the statement is made. Irony may be comprehensive to a situation in which a person thinks something and something contrary happens, such ironic situations make the writing interesting, attention-grabbing, and readable as well as enjoyable.  

Arun Kolatkatr adds a new dimension to Indian poetry writing in English by using irony in his ‘Jejuri’ (1976). He has handled this poetic device brilliantly and differently. ‘Jejuri’, collection of different poems, is Kolatkar’s masterpiece. Kolatkar writes this poem on one of the most important place of pilgrimage in Maharashtra, known as Jejuri. ‘Manohar’, the protagonist of the poem, is a modern man who visits this small town, which is more or less a
village. He arrives at Jejuri in the morning by a bus in the company of other tourists and what he observes of the God Khandoba and place Jejuri forms the substance of the poem.

‘The Bus’, very first poem of Jejuri shows Kolatkar’s makes use of the weapon of irony expressing ideas and depicting situations. The protagonist finds two reflections of himself in the two glasses of the spectacles which the old man sitting opposite him is wearing. The poem entitled ‘The Priest’ reveals that Kolatkar makes use of irony in portraying a person. The priest ironically portrayed, is a sort of man who is more engaged in his income than any kind of social of religious service. This poem depicts the disposition of the priest who is waiting for the coming of the bus and crowd of pilgrims and tourists for monetary gain. He is more anxious about the offering which the pilgrims always make when they vow reverentially before the image of the god Khandoba. The use of irony in the poem ‘The Priest’ brings out the priest’s worldliness and greed. The priest is not a genuine priest in any sense of the word.

Another poem ‘A Low Temple’ also has its share of irony. The temple of Khandoba at Jejuri does not have a high ceiling. Not much of sunlight can enter the temple. The result is that the pilgrims cannot clearly see the various stones and bronze images of gods kept there. At the temple pilgrim has to light the lamp in order to see inside of the temple and god images. When the matchstick plays one by one god found in the dark. At that time priest says goddess has 8 arms but when the protagonist properly counts the goddess is in 18 arms. But the priest still says that she has 8 arms. Here one finds difference between fact and belief. In the first place, the protagonist does not believe that an idol of a goddess has 8 arms when it actually possesses eighteen arms.

In the poem ‘Makarand’, the protagonist prefers to smoke outside than to go inside shirtless for the worship. The title of the poem ‘Makarand’ means “Honey”, but here it is used as the name of a certain sweet offering to a god, some what like “Modak”. Here the protagonist’s scepticism turns into total disbelief. In fact, he prefers smoking to go into the temple. In other words, the protagonist in the poem objects to the very act or the worshipping a stone or bronze image that supposedly represents a deity. It is very difficult to decide at Jejuri what is god and what a stone is because any stone which pilgrim picks up may attest to be the image of a god:

What is god

And what is stone
The dividing line
If it exists
Is very thin
And very other stone
Is god or his cousin (C-28)

In other words there are many gods and goddesses at Jejuri. Stone at Jejuri is god and
god’s cousin. God is harvested in Jejuri. It is sceptic to worship god because no one is sure
which is god is holy and which fulfil our demands because the stones of Jejuri are sweeter
than honey.

‘The Blue Horse’, again shows modes of irony. The priest of Khandoba’s temple at
Jejuri has arranged a holy ceremony to facilitate the protagonist to watch it in all its details.
The ceremony consists of offering worship to Khanbdoba by means of hymns sung in praise
of that god. The singer of the hymn in praise of god Khandoba is a toothless woman from
whose throat the hymn comes out with some difficulty as if something has gone wrong with
her throat just as something may go wrong with an electric wire because of which the electric
appliances in the house cease to function. Another irony in this poem, the priest allows the
painter to draw a picture of horse on his wall which is made by white colour. The protagonist
asks him Khandoba’s horse is blue; he replies that horse has blue colour at his belly.

The poem ‘Heart of Ruin’ is also example of irony, because the temple which is
dedicated by god Maruti. It is not visited by pilgrims for many years. So, it is ignorant place.
Even god Maruti is not aware about his temple. It is collapsed now. A mongrel bitch has
found this premise to be very suitable for giving birth to her puppies. The temple is no more a
place of worship but it is still nothing less than the house of god. Again irony comes from
‘Yeshwant Rao’. Yeshwant Rao is the name of one of the many gods. This god is assumed to
have no head, no hand, no arms and no feet, but he is second class god. He can remove the
problems of worshippers. He gives child for childless, cure for deadly disease, feet for
feetless, and hand for handless. It is sceptic tone. Yeshwant Rao is armless, feetless and
heedless. It is unbelievable that how can headless provide facility to pilgrims. But people who
have lost a leg or an arm or a hand go to worship this god in the belief that he would restore
to them their lost limbs. The irony in this new is bitter because a god, who is himself,
helpless, is supposed to have the power to make the bodies of helpless human being. Kolatkar is here at his best as far as his irony using in his poetry.

The irony also comes from ‘Railway Station’. The poem ‘Railway Station’ shows its peculiarity to have irony. The two-headed station master, the manager, the station dog and the indicator are elements to show irony. The indicator nothing indicates. The tea stall boy who throws water on tourist. The time table of the railway station which depends on raising the sun and setting the sun. The clerk gives railway tickets without saying anything.

Also irony comes from the poem, ‘An Old Woman’ whose demand is 50 paise coin. When tourist refuses to give money, she grabs his sleeve. The poet compares an old woman with burr. Irony comes from ‘The Temple Rat’ which lives inside Khandoba temple. The rat is as big as the priest which lives near Khandoba. The rat licks offerings as well as god Khandoba. Other poems like ‘Bombay Made Me Beggar’, ‘The Hag’, ‘Three Cups of Tea’, ‘Boatride’, ‘Arun Kolatkarchya’ ‘Marathi Poems’ and ‘Kala Ghoda’ also show quite an ironical movement.

‘The Truth about the Floods’ presents another example of Ezekiel’s use of irony:

A village speaks;

I have eleven children.

Two I have left to the mercy of God

The rest are begging, somewhere. [CP-186]

The point here is that there is hardly any difference between being “left to the mercy of God and “begging somewhere”, unless, of course, the former is interpreted to carry the specific meaning of being dead. What is just humour in the second line becomes pathetic in the third and ironic by the time the stanza closes. At the closure of ‘Advice to Painter’, the ironic effect is achieved in an even more simply way;

Be voracious with your eyes and appetites:

The will to see, the passion in the act of love

Or learning lead to brighter prospects
In landscape, still life, nude, abstract,

And also higher prices. (CP-205)

The poem ‘Entertainment’ shows ironic mood of Indians. It is a faithful description of a monkey-show which one can witness in any street corner in India. The reactions of the audiences are noted briefly but tellingly. They have an intuitive fore-knowing of the time to pay. According to Karnani “it is an ironical and characteristic of the Indian scene that some men watch the entertainment but don’t pay for it”. 41

For Ezekiel, the father of the new poetry in English, in India writes ironical statements in his poems. Irony remains at the centre of his creative process. His poetry from ‘A Time to Change’ to his later books makes use of the form mode consciously. The writer-poet chooses the ironic mode not because he has lost the faith in the existence of a meaningful world, or even because he is subservient to the values governing the self within or in the world outside but rather because he intends to achieve certain objectivity by way of transcending his own self. If Shakespeare has presented in ‘Hamlet’ “one may smile and smile and be a villain”, Ezekiel describes the Smile of Miss Pushpa T S. ironically as a weapon to present the vagueness of Indians.

You are all knowing friends

What sweetness is in Miss. Pushpa.

I don’t mean external sweetness but internal sweet

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling

Even for no reason

But simply because she is feeling. (CP-190)

Miss Pushpa is praised through ironically in culture-laden speech he does not explicitly state but the techniques and the satirical devices he employs reveal the Indian attitude. Thomas Hanna defines irony as “the consciousness of existing of terms of a contradicting and this consciousness is precisely the awareness on one hand of being a finite creature compelled by subject to the demands of the world and on the other hand of being a free responsible being who can never be compelled or subjected by any external force”.” 42
Ezekiel uses irony as a weapon to depict the characteristic features of Indian attitude. He endeavours to demonstrate it mostly in his three poems- ‘A Very Indian Poem in English’, ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S’ and ‘The Professor’. Ezekiel’s style is very refreshing adding humour and irony. Before him there accused no India poet in English, who took the risk of treating such topic using marked by Indianness in his poetry. High sounding learned words and phrase, metaphor from the British ways of thinking and writing, expressions borrowed from Victorian English, long and complex syntax and idiomatic usage usually marked writers writing in English. From these high roads, he made some inserting detour which gave a special Indian aura to several of his poems. Parathasarathy comments: “these poems imitate the idiolect features of English used by Gujarati speakers. Some of these features are also present in other Indian languages: the use of present progressive tense for the simple present tense. Un-English collection of lexical item and literal translation of phrases and idioms and ironic detachment presents in Enterprise”.43

The poem, ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is a fine poem in which English recalls the behaviour of the peasant, his father, his mother and a holy man when his mother got pain poisoned by a scorpion’s sting. Here the aim is to find poetry in ordinary reality as observed, known, felt, experienced rather than as intellect thinks it should be. While the peasants pray and speak of incantations, his farther, “a sceptic, rationalist”, tries “every cure and blessing powder, mixture, herb and hybrid”, and a holy man performs a rite. After a day, the poison is no longer felt and, in a final irony, his mother, in contrast to the previous feverish activity centred on her, makes typical motherly comments;

My mother only said,

Thank god the scorpion picked on me

And spared my children. (LDP-11)

Arun Kolatkar and Nissan Ezekiel, who are Indian English poets, they write poetry on society. They enter through their poetry in the mind of people. They make person real alive and conscious about themselves. Irony, it is the means of poetry which helps reader to be conscious. Arun Kolatkar uses irony in his collection of poems ‘Jejuri’. ‘Jejuri’ is fragmentary poem divided into 31 sections. The poem entitled ‘Low Temple’ creates ironical mood. The statue of a goddess in the temple at Jejuri is supposed to have eight arms. The priest tells the protagonist that this goddess has eight arms. The poem entitled ‘Scratch’ in
which Kolatkar says that there is no crop in Jejuri other than God. God is harvested in Jejuri throughout the year and round the clock. ‘Yeshwant Rao’ also creates irony. Yeshwant Rao is second class god who provides arm, hand, feet and child who is childless, even he is armless, feetless and handles. It is only statue. ‘Railway Station’, ‘Between Jejuri’ and ‘Railway station’, ‘Makarand’ and ‘The Priest’s Son’ are also examples of Arun Kotatkar’s irony. Ezekiel is also ironic poet who creates irony throughout his poems. Ezekiel’s poetry is ironical and reveals different kinds of ironies such as subtle irony, verbal irony, irony of situation, irony of characters and irony of life. In fact, his irony is direct and woven into the very texture of his poetry. Shiv K Kumar rightly writes “his (Ezekiel’s) irony through more incisively in his poems written in Indian English, which mix of Indian vernacular and half-backed English”.


Arun Kotatkar and Nissim Ezekiel show irony through tradition, superstition and daily life of the people. Religion and community are also way to create irony to the poet.

4.2.2. Imagery

Arun Kolatkar is Indian English poet, he is known for using imagery in his poetry. Jejuri is the best work of Arun Kolatkar’s using imagery. L.S Deshpande says “Arun Kolatkar’s ‘Jejuri’ is a poem remarkable in many ways; it is complex in terms of theme, characterization and imagery. Its structure is as much symbolic as and mythological and naturalistic. Its most striking qualities are ambiguity and multivalence, the relating to its tone and the other to its meaning. But what impress one, at the very outset, is its miraculous. The poem lore tends to be special, but is not actually so. It is neither theistic not atheistic in tone as unfolded at times in our study of its diction also, style, and imagery. It is the “cold wind” that whips the protagonist, ‘Manohar’, on his way to Jejuri. And, surprisingly enough, the alter from where
the priest is waiting for the pilgrim is also “cold”. The bus that takes him to Jejuri stops in the bus –station, “purring softly” with pilgrim “held between its teeth” in a cat like manner”.46

The poem ‘The Bus’ is full of images. It is the opening poem in ‘Jejuri’. The bus is full of the pilgrims who are bound for the temple of Khandoba where they want to offer worship; and the passengers might have included a few tourists who merely want to satisfy their curiosity about what kind of a temple it is and in what surrounding the temple stands. One of the passengers sits opposite, an old man wearing glasses; and this passenger, while looking at the old man, sees his reflection in both the glasses of the spectacles which the old man is wearing. The old man has caste mark on his forehead being Hindu. In this poem Kolatkar uses some images of old man, pilgrims, tourists, bus, caste mark, glasses, spectacles, the sun, horizon which are remarkable to know the importance of the poem.

The poem ‘Priest’ also shows quite images, the priest waits for pilgrims in order to order to money and fulfil his demands from pilgrims by worshipping god Khandoba. The priest is a chief-Pujari and custodian of God Khandoba which stone image or bronze image. The sun, priest’s cheek, the rays of the sun, village barber; are images from the priest. Another poem which is correlated to priest is ‘The Priest’s Son’. The Priest’s Son who is young boy, guides the pilgrims to know various Legends about god Khandoba. In this poem the priest’s son takes the protagonist who is major image of poet to the different places connected with various legends about Khandoba and his deeds. There are five hills, situated close to one another, which are described by the priest’s son to the protagonist as being the stone figures of five demons whom Khandoba had killed. But priest’s son is not much aware about legendary story of five demons. So, he pursuits the protagonist towards little and beautiful insects butterfly. So Kolatkar uses images like hills, five demons, and butterfly in his poem.

Another poem ‘A Low Temple’ indicates full of images. The temple of Khandoba at Jejuri does not have a high ceiling. It is a rather low temple. The result is that the pilgrims can not clearly see the various stone and bronze images or statues which are kept there. A pilgrim has to light a match in order to be able to see the images in its light. The protagonist offers a match box to the priest who lights a match so that the protagonist is able to see all the mages one by one. The bronze image of one of the deities has an amused look on its face. A stone image of another deity seems to be smiling. Yet another image seems absolutely unsurprised by the presence of the devotees. When the matchstick has burned itself out, another matchstick is lighted so that the pilgrims can continue to see the images or statues of the
various deities. The protagonist sees eighteen arms goddess whereas the priest counts 8arms. The poem ‘Makrand’ and ‘The Temple Rat’ show images of stone image god, and rat. Arun Kolatkar writes in his poem Jejuri is full of stones and gods.

The poem ‘A Scratch’ shows the image of murdered wife of Lord Khandoba. There is one huge portion of a rock, of the size of a bedroom. This portion of the rock is Khandoba’s wife who had been turned into a stone figure of Khandoba when he had struck her down with his sword in his fit of fury. Also another poem ‘The Blue Horse’ has some figures of the blue horse, female singers and male singers painting of blue horse. ‘The Heart of Ruin’ indicates some images like bitch, puppies, dogs, stone image like Maruti, collection box, etc. The poems like ‘The railway station’, ‘Yeshwant Rao’, ‘The Butterfly’, ‘The Door’, ‘The Pattern’, ‘The Doorsteps’, ‘A Song for Vaghya’, ‘A Song for Murli’ and ‘The Reservoir’, these poems show some images like butterfly, station dog, cock, and hen, human figure like a railway clerk, the manager and the tea stall boy.

So, Arun Kolatkar uses imagery in his various poems. Animals imagery in ‘The Heart of Ruin’, ‘The Railway Station’, ‘The Blue Horse’ and ‘The Pattern’. Insect imagery is in ‘Butterfly’. Stone imagery is in ‘Scratch’, ‘A Low Temple’ and ‘Yeshwant Rao’. Water image is in ‘The Reservoir’ and ‘The Water Supply’. Also other images are like the human body, trees, shapes, timetable, the bus, the train, match box, cigarettes, paintings and eatable image like Puran Poli. ‘Bombay made me Beggar’ is also full of imagery poem. There are some images like dead dog, cities, villages, temple, and villagers who help him journey life are Indian images which show Indian sensibility.

Another poet is Nissim Ezekiel he also uses various images in his poetry. Time, space, sound, light, the human body, dream, Movement-imagery of these make up much of the fabric of Ezekiel’s verse. This is not to suggest that these are the only images in Ezekiel’s; in fact, a striking aspect of Ezekiel’s poetry is its breadth of imagery.

A rather oblique way in which the imagery of time walks into Ezekiel’s poetry is through the various seasons and the months of the year. Summer evenings melt in rich fatness on the pedant’s tongue in “on meeting a pedant”. The seasons come and go in ‘To a Certain Cady’. ‘Failure’ speaks of ungreeted spring. ‘Preferences’ opens with the phrase, “on a common summer day” (CP-32). ‘Transmutation’ mentions “seasons, breath”, ‘Song of Spring’ speaks of the “freshness of the first spring green”. ‘After Rain’ recalls “winter/ when
it snowed” (CP-63). In ‘Retrospect’ complains of the “spring being late”. ‘Platonic’ speaks of “season”. In ‘Poem of Separation’, “the season”, time and place rejects their “usual names”. While ‘November’ is mentioned in “the prophet, June figures in ‘The crows’.

The imagery of space which describes by Nissim Ezekiel, however, finds in ‘Jewish wedding in Bombay’ sleep in the kitchen:

Still later,

We lay on floor-mattress in the kitchen of

My wife’s

Family apartment and though it was past

Midnight, she

Kept saying let’s do it darling let’s do it

Darling

So we did it. (CP-235)

The drawing room in ‘Preferences’ blisters with conversation and colloquialism of the speaker. The speaker’s awkward prose is misspelt by difference in drawing rooms in the language of loves. ‘The poem of dedication’ (CP-39) and ‘The Room’, in the context of this discussion, demands quotation in full he says:

To live in this room

Without a fever or exaggeration

Proves beyond my means,

My ready cash or doctrine

And deliberation. The door

Is always open

But I cannot leave.
I mock myself here
As if my very existence
Is presumption. One cannot stare for long
At nothing, or contemplate a view
Where only obstacles reflect
The view within.
I have to name anew
The things I see.
There are too many contradictions and books,
Two much love and not enough love,
The attempt to dance
Without learning to walk.
Arranged and rearranged,
The room is always the same.
Its shadows shift about restlessly
And fall into different patterns:
The light is unsteady, thin and flat.
Yet some events are to happen here
Not of moods only but of visions.
For this the room is not yet ready. (CP-206- 7)

The speaker talks to his invisible quests in ‘Minority poem’, ‘In my Room’ (CP-236). The twentieth section of ‘Edinburgh interlude’ is entitled ‘A little Room’. 
Other imagery is sound – excluding that of music – is not strong in Ezekiel’s poetry: The whirring or wings in ‘Speech and Silence’ the sobbing of the sky in ‘Episode’, the moaning of the sea in ‘Song of Desolation’, the voice of thunder in ‘Enterprise’, the voice of thunder in Enterprise and of beggars and hawkers in ‘A Morning Walk’ makes up much of it. The largest part of sound imagery in Ezekiel’s poetry consists of the Imagery of music. In the very first page of his first book, ‘A Time to Change’, we are told;

But when the mind determines everything

The leap is never made, the music

Never quite completed redemption

Never fully won. (Enterprise-30)

In the last paragraph of ‘To a Certain Lady’ love is asked to teach us “fidelity to music” (CP-36). The penultimate paragraph of ‘The Prophet’ speaks of the “Distinctive music of an individual mind imitated by many men” (CP-33).

In the poem, ‘For William Carlos Williams’, there is an allusion to the music of William’s poetry. In ‘The Party’, we are told that parties have a perilous music and in ‘For Love’s Record’, the speaker hears “the music of her quickened breach” (CP-110). The second paragraph of ‘For Her’ opens with:

“The song of deeds across the way

In March or July finds me still

Unready in your binding arms (CP-67).

In ‘Division’, the speaker hears his heart of song:

“Sing of blessedness

upon a nuptial day (CP-87).

“Waking” expresses the view that:

Not the words that are found
But the singing counts (CP-89).

The poem, ‘Admissions’ holds that:

The blood must leap before the spirit sings (CP-90).

Another imagery of Ezekiel is light. The imagery of light occurs in Ezekiel as early in the poem, ‘A Time to Change’ the titular poem of his first collection, where the legends of a recent birth are said to be bright. The lines that conclude the poem are as:

And metaphors

Insight illumination

Secret faults concealed no more (CP-6).

Similarly, ‘Morning Prayers’ Concludes with:

Light, light, light

Unveil, expose, expound

Your metaphors of meaning,

And let the know lucidity,

White wings of morning. (CP-20)

A long stretch of light shoots up at the speaker in ‘Occupation’. In ‘Scriptures’ there are luminosities hidden in the words of the homespun parable. In ‘Town Lore’, we are told of: “The clear light of words”. (CP-81)

We hear of the oblique light of mind in ‘Conclusion’. There are groupings of the inner light in ‘Two Adolescents’. The light if the city figures in ‘Love Sonnet’. ‘Philosophy’; tells us of “a final formula of light” (CP-129). ‘Mind’ speaks of “the light of reason” (CP-207).

Imagery is darkness. The imagery of darkness is found in poems like ‘Occupation’ and ‘The Crows’. In ‘The Latter’, “saints of haven” get “Lost in the gloomy close of day” (CP-41. ‘Two Nights of Love’ closes with “The centuries of darkened loveliness” (CP-47).
The penultimate stanza of ‘The Fisherman’ goes: It comes to met at last/as the darkness falls upon the sleepy waters/Fish in the darkness comes to me at last (CP-69). The poem of ‘Declaration’ says; the sensual form may serve to calm/The senses and keep the darkness pure/Darkness, disturbed and turbulent, /Is also dear. (CP-93-4)

In ‘December – 58’, the speaker brings home the darkness: “At night, returning home, I bring/with me the darkness” (CP-113). ‘Perspective’ concludes with leaving “the rest to Darkness or to God” (CP-135). ‘Hymns in Darkness’ advises, “Don’t cure the darkness” (CP-223).

Another vivid imagery is human body in Ezekiel’ poem shows a substantial segment of the imagery in Ezekiel’s poetry is related to the human body. In ‘A Times to Change’, “flesh is defined by dreams of flesh and eyes are turned away”.

In ‘Robert’ the humourous character advises the speaker to keep his fingers crossed. ‘The worm’ is directed towards a dryer place by an inner eye. ‘Poetry’ opens with:

If it were so as I say it is

In poetry, precisely so,

A face, a savage, singular,

But well defined identity. (CP-13)

In ‘Something to Pursue’, The speaker says about businessmen:

At the second stage I to touched the listened

With my finger-tips the breasts of harlots,

The swollen belly of the fool,

Lions of the poet,

Hearts or businessmen,

Princes’ eyes. (CP-19)
The old human in ‘The Old Woman’ reflects a poem in the hearts of men. The two concluding stanzas of ‘And God Revealed’ are as follows:

As lover love, you know that I am lost
In continents or thought, and every urge
To see, know, hear, touch and praise the earth
Is contracted on your lips and thighs
The strange mysterious way of earthly love,
Yet we, to keep our love as fresh as earth
Must charge our earthly love with love of earth.
We were not made for love alone, my love,
Although our flesh and bones would have it so.
A thousand small intricacies of brain
Hold the blood-streams captive, which will not flow
Freely to serve the ends of love, until
They know the various ways of men,
The soul in solitude and god revealed. (CP-25)

In ‘Planning’ the planners slap each other on the back. In ‘Situation’, the Woman caresses the air with one hand and places the other on the speaker’s knee. ‘Two Night of Love’ the speaker speaks “threshing thighs and breast” (CP-47).

In open of ‘Blindness’ the speaker about the eyes and vision:

All things are hostile to the seeing eyes, and I have often felt
Across the clearest landscape some disguise
With subtle fingers drawn, to melt
and mould the vision,

    twist disturb, distort the vision

    none in what I do can recognize (CP-49)

The speaker in ‘The Child’ wakes in the morning to wind and sun “with upturned face” (CP-56). In the poem ‘Nakedness-I’ the speaker wonders about nakedness and he says:

    This longing is for nakedness;

    Soul naked, body naked. Why

    Is every contour strange, unknown?

    Why, then, are limbs so sad, so thin,

    So shapeless, white and lost to earth,

    As though no maleness lived in them ? (CP-60)

‘Remember’ and ‘Forget’ speaker of; the first vibration in the conscious blood/The swift rising of the flesh (CP-61). In ‘Delighted by Love’ we are told of stripped bodies that dared the Everest. ‘Perspective’ speaks of the body’s movement in the dance. If imagery of the human body is subtracted from ‘Nudes 1978’, there would little left behind at the conclusion of Latter-Day Psalms the speaker says that the psalms are part of “my flesh” (CP-261).

Closely related to the facial imagery is the imagery of the mask which figures as early as on ‘An African Mask’. In ‘Commitment’, the speaker admits about human face;

    I wear

    A human face bat prowl about the streets (CP-26)

There is the advice, in ‘Admission’, “do not reveal the face behind the mask (CP-90).

Dream imagery is also favourable and remarkable of Ezekiel. It is found in ‘A Time to Change’ which speaks of knowing the lives and dreams of men –men are drugged with dreams in ‘Morning Prayers’. There is an allusion to broken hearted dreams in “words in a gentle wind”. In ‘To A Certain Lady’, we are told about nightmare and he describes: And
nightmares whisper to our sleep/Of terrors past and yet to be/These merely contribute to our symbology. (CP-27)

In ‘Planning’ the speaker speaks; Set to work as we had planned, /not for us the dream, the dark illusion (CP-32). “The prayer”, in ‘Prayer II’ is also dream, he says; Let me dream the dream of man (CP-55).

In ‘Confession’, the speaker asks and what is in this loneliness? And himself answers, ‘Perfection’, A fantasy / of lucid being (CP-63).

The poet says that in ‘The Female Image’, there is “this harlot of a dream” (CP-68). “The second themes and variations” speaks of “soft luxurious dream of yet-to – be (CP-78). ‘Dualism’ opens with the statement, “somewhere among my dreams/ the essential you is lost” (CP-83). In ‘Heart-Hardening’, your blind dream baiting/succumbs to fate” (CP-84) ‘Admission’ opens with the advice, “do not admit the monstrous truth, the touch /of cold and cowardice in stubborn dreams” (CP-89). ‘Conclusion’ speaks of “the common dream/ of daily wages for the common day” (CP-97). The protagonist of ‘A Morning Walk’ is driven from his bed by troubled sleep in which he dreams of being lost. In ‘Morning Prayer’, we have “day-dreams”. There is shopping around for dramas in ‘Case Study’. ‘Happening’ says, “we have lost/ the language of dreams” (CP-163). In ‘Background, Casually’, we are told “the later dreams were all of words” (CP-181).The speaker in ‘Distance’ says, “I wait for understanding; love is our fiction/ the crux of the matter is the sexual dream” (CP-192).

The imagery of movement is consistently presents throughout Ezekiel’s poetry, imparting a sense of dynamism to his poetry. There is the imagery of crawling movement in the worm, flowing movement in ‘Poetry’, weaving movement of the spider in ‘Something to Pursue’, driving movement in ‘Tribute’ to the Upanishads, soaring movement in ‘Something to Pursue’, dancing movement in ‘To A Certain Lady’, vibrating movement in ‘Remember and Forget’, riding movement in ‘In India’, fluttering movement in ‘Two Images’ and wagging movement in ‘At Fifty’ also ‘A Time to Change’ is best to the images of workman, road and grapes.

I will be penitent,
My heart, and carve
No more impulse
Of a wave.

But I am till a sea
And hold within
The muffled tumult
Of a sin. (CP-71)


And now again the simple thrust
Of all that lives is love within me reaching
Down for water
Up for un-light
Sprouting greenly in the fragrant air. (CP-57)

Nissim Ezekiel is superior to Arun Kolatkat for using imagery. He uses different kinds of imagery in his poems. These images are vivid and note worthy. He uses imagery time, space, sound, light, the human body, dream and movement. These are picturesque throughout the poems. Ezekiel is on of modernist poet in Indian English literature who writes number of poems on human, nature, animal, river, flowers, and mortal and immortal things. Arun Kolatkar also uses imagery in his poem. Human bodies from the poem entitled ‘The Bus’, ‘Priest’, ‘Priest’s Son’, ‘Chaitanya’, ‘Makarand’, ‘The Boatride’, ‘Bombay made me

4.2.3. Symbol

The symbols indicate reality of the society. Most of the poems which are written by Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel show symbols. Symbolism is peculiarity of Indian English poetry. M.H. Abrams defines that, “symbol is anything which signifies something; in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however, the term “symbol” is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies and object or event which in its turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself”.47

A symbol, in general is one thing standing for or presenting another, beyond itself. It can be a word, a phrase, an object or anything having a complex and acceptable or familiar meaning. A simple example is that of a flag standing for a nation, a concept or even a religious sect. A mountain can stand for high excellence, an invincible object or an obstacle impossible to overcome; it can a stand for peace and tranquillity, for divinity, etc. Eliot used the title of his work, “Hollow man” to stand for decadence. Poets, generally, use conventional as well as private symbols, the latter mostly developed by them in their works. Ted Hugh’s’ “crow” is such a private symbol, appearing with varied shades of meaning.

Arun Kolatkar has used symbols in his poetry. The poem, Jejuri is best for symbols. He uses living and non-living symbols in his poetry. N.P. Archary says “Jejuri has evoked mixed reactions. It has been called “a poem of extraordinary qualities”.48 (kavi-p-28) Shantinath Desai says, that, “a poem that depicts symbolically the tortured psyche of modern man” (Jeiuri devachivasti-37)49.

While E.V. Ramakrishna say that, “an x-ray vision of the enveloping dilapidation and the poet’s reaction to it” (Jejuri-19)50
Jejuri the attention of the poet is fixed to the symbol of dilapidation and he has exhausted his power in giving us graphic details or the same. It is because of this that the poem at times becomes little monotonous.

The poem is called one-dimensional and also mere catalogues of lifeless details like wall painting. The poet or the protagonist is a kind of traveller or a tourist.

Arun Kolatkat has written Jejuri is itself is symbolic. According to M. R. Satyanarayana “Jejuri is Arun Kolalkar’s Waste Land, so Jejuri stands for holy place as well as Waste Land”.51

In this poem Arun Kolatkar uses various characters which are symbolic. In very first poem ‘The Bus’ is symbolic poem. The bus stands for journey of like to go to heaven or holy place. It is mechanical symbol. The pilgrim, an old man stands for religious person also he has caste mark on his forehead it stands for being Hindu. The day break and the rays of the sun indicate arising emotion. The poem, ‘The Priest’ which stands for hypocrisy and money mind. Another symbol in this poem is ‘Puran Poli’ stands for scared and purity. The priest’s son is known as guide of the people. The poem, Makarand literately means honey. But here this word has been used to mean any sweetmeat which is offered to a god or to the stone image of a god at the time of worship. Also Makarand means ‘honey’, but here it is used as the name of a certain sweet offering to a god, somewhat like ‘Modak’. The poem “Heart of Ruin” stands for heart broken. The bitch and puppies stand for creatures of god. The butterfly stands all living being, the bronze statue stands for lifeless and inanimate. Yeshwant Rao stands of second class god who saves the lives of people. The poem ‘The Railway Station’ indicates some of the symbols which are visible everywhere at Jejuri. The dog stands for saint or demi-god. The clerk stands for wooden saint, the sun wheel stands for the wheel of bus, and the tortoise stands for silence. The Vaghya and Murli stand for devotees of god Khandoba. The demons stand for evil. ‘The boatride’ stands for stillness. The poem ‘Three cups of a tea’ he says police commissioner as “prick face” which stands for male sexual organ.

Kolatkar’s another poem ‘Woman’; Kolatkar raises the issue of woman and questions a society’s views about her. He uses powerful symbols like ‘cat’ which symbolizes in difference. ‘Lizard’ which symbolizes the multiple personalities and a ‘sewing machine’ which symbolizes her sexuality. The poem entitled ‘Crabs’ the image of the crab symbolizes
the fear of the unconscious taking over and the image of the eye represents the true self that is ultimately eaten by the crabs in the poem.

Nissim Ezekiel also use symbols in his poetry to show peculiarity of Indian English language. The pilgrimage in ‘Enterprise’ can be said to symbolize of like itself. It is also ‘The Waste Land’. The crowd of pilgrims could stand for the individual and life is seen as a journey undertaken by a group of men, a communal endeavour which begins with excitement but concludes in disillusionment. The cultivation of lawns in “lawn” can be to symbolize the cultivation of artistic gifts.

The lizard in ‘In the Country Cottage’ can symbolize any of dynamic figures which history throws up from time to time. While the general mass of humanity falls victim to its own indolence, the achiever is both patient and energetic and succeeds in doing the job he sets for himself. There is not much depth of symbolism in Ezekiel’s poetry and a similar observation would not be untrue of large patches of post-independence Indian poetry in English.

The insects, serpents, birds, animals, landscape and urban environment and society are the main sources of symbolism in men’s poetry. In Nissim Ezekiel’s ‘Night of the Scorpion’, scorpion with its “diabolic tail” is symbol of vices and sins perpetrated in the past birth. ‘Lizard’ is the symbol of cleanliness, perseverance and dutifulness. (In the country cottage). ‘Squirrel’ symbolizes agility (squirrel) and ‘cat’ is symbol of legtharrargy, domesticity and passivity (my cat). Crows, the saints or heaven; are portentous and symbolic of some ‘hidden duty’ (the crows).The poem, “paean”, the poet is an artist in plying with words and selected his contours with care;

Always the body knows its nakedness.

The first baptisms is not in water

But in fire. (ZM. C.E- P. 232)

The word “nakedness”, “baptism”, “water” and “fire” are not used according to their denotative meaning. They are rather suggestive of a different set of meaning. “Nakedness” stands for passion, “baptism” for sexual indulgence, “water” for holy drink offered to the child in the process of “baptism” and “fire” for sex.

‘Marriage’, for example, alludes to the “primal fall” of man and “the mark of Cain”. The visitor comes to the guest and “prayer” records that man is “measure of mankind”. The
The poet uses some proper noun in his poetry ‘Ganga’ and ‘Dhanya’ which stand for the Indian masses. Guru stands for money mind and hypocrisy and his collection and ashram stands for his collection area.

The poem, ‘Urban’ deals with the city life and mechanical movements and actions of its inhabitants. A city is a symbol of distracting noises, “kindred clamour” and “shadows of the light”. The woman in his poetry stands for sexuality and man stands for passion. The putrid city and the pagan woman both are complete symbols of corruption and banality. According to K.D. Verma, “the nature images are the archetypal life symbols”.

The basement room stands for artistic creation. Animals, birds and beasts are also parts of nature and so they are also symbols of purity, innocence and goodness, and so are contrasted with the defined man, corrupted by life in the city.

Arun Kolatkat and Nissim Ezekiel use living and non-living or human and non-human symbols in their poetry. Jejuri is a symbol of Waste Land or barren mind and reaction of poet or psyche of modern man, also it is the symbol of wall painting, old man stands for religious person, the bus is symbol of journey of life, Makarand stands for honey or sweet, Yeshwant Rao stands for second class god, Vaghya and Murli stand for devotees, boatride and tortoise stand for stillness, woman stands for sexuality and soon so forth. Whereas Nissim Ezekiel also uses some symbols in his journey of poetry as ‘Enterprise’ stands for life, lawn stands for cultivation, scorpion stands for sin, lizard stands for cleanliness, nakedness stands for passion, and marriage stands for primal fall, prayer stands for mankind, city stands for kindred clamour, nature stands for archetypal life. So, the entire symbols are different from each other in their poetry. But only the woman who symbols sexuality she is similar to each other.

4.2.4. Diction

The most important consideration, so far as poetic technique is concerned, is the diction. After all, poetry is expression; poetry is statement; poetry is an unfolding and a revelation. And expression, statement, etc. are possible only through the use of words. To what extent has a poet succeeded in expressing himself? What kind of words has he used to express his ideas, to depict as scene, to describe an incident, and so on? These are the questions to be asked. Words may be simple or words may be difficult. Words may be ordinary and words may be scholarly. And then there is the arrangement of words on which
depends the syntax of the infer-relationships between the words as arranged by the writer. 
Now, in all these contexts Arun Kolatkar rises to the occasion. Like every major Indo-
Anglian poet, he has a thorough understanding of the meaning of English words and an 
unerring instinct for choosing the right words for his purpose. The diction in his poems is not 
erudite, nor is his diction ornate or ostentatious. At the same time the diction is not too 
ordinary or prosaic. His diction is perfectly appropriate, and frequently elicits our admiration. 
Very often his choice of words shows an exquisite taste and he arranges those words 
skillfully. A few lines from ‘The Boatride’ may be taken as an example of how beautifully 
sometimes Kolatkar handles the English language.

In these lines Kolatkar speaks of a two year old child who renounces his mother's ear, and begins down her person, rejecting her tattooed arm, denying her thighs, undaunted by her 
knees, and further down her shakes in order to go to his father nearby and get balloons from 
him. The diction employed is highly satisfactory and even praise worthy. In fact, we would 
affirm that the felicity of word and phrase in this poem is its greatest merit. This felicity gives 
a lie to those snobs who, having studied at Oxford or Cambridge or even Chicago University, 
assert that Indians should not write poetry in the English language. The commend over 
English of poets like Arun Kolatkar and some others, who have been dealt with in this theory, 
clearly shows that Indians can not only write their poetry in English competently but can do 
so excellently and admirably. To take only example from this poem, we may quote the 
following lines from sections-5 of the poem as beautifully composed:

Familiar perspectives
Reoccupy
A cleanlier eye
Sad as a century
The gateway of India
Struggles back to its feet
Wobby but sober enough
To account for itself …..(The Boatride-cp-329)

Like the English poetry of the other leading Indian authors, the poetry of Arun Kolatkar also 
serves to confirm our view that Indians are capable of writing excellent poetry in the English 
language. It is, indeed, a cheering thought that the great indo-Anglian poets have neither
borrowed their themes from other nor made a mess of the English language though they have certainly played havoc with punctuation and with the rules requiring the use of capital letters. Kolatkar shows himself to be a true master of the English language; and he surpasses most other Indo-Anglian poets in so far as his poetry is characterised by the quality of lucidity. How easy is the poem! ‘Heart of Ruin’ to understand, for instance? How easy is the poem entitled an old woman? How easy is the poem entitled ‘A Scratch’? Apart from lucidity, the choice of words by Kolatkar also satisfies us, and even delights us, by its aptness. Such lines as the following may be quoted as examples: the poem entitled ‘Heart of Ruin’;

- The pariah puppies tumble over her.
- Maybe they like temples better this way. (HOR-16)

Another poem entitled ‘The Butterfly’:

- There is no story behind it.
- It is split like a second.
- It hinges around itself. (TB-31)

The poem entitled ‘Yeshwant Rao’

- He doesn’t promise you the earth
- Or book you seat on the next rocket to heaven.
- But if any bones are broken,
- You know he’ll mend them. (YR-50)

Many are the phrases which please us by their ‘alliteration’: which are from ‘The Boatride’:

- The biriny burnt
- Hurl its hulk
- Hitched on hump
- Trail toils. (The Boatride- cp-329)

From the poem Jejuri, there are some lines which show ‘Alliteration’.

- “Twiddles, tweaks and twangs” (TBH-)
- “A cold wind keeps whipping” (TB-13)
- “An offering of heel and haunch
Will there be a Puran Poli in his plate

Dew drenched stone
And under his lazy lizard stone”. (TP-14-15)

“The pariah pappies tumble over her”. (HOR -16)

“Shoots straight up

A brass mouse with a broken neck”. (WS-18)

“Fleeing from flint”. (HS-23)

“Sand blasted shoulders bladed with shale
San stroked thighs or sand stone”. (H-29)

“In a scanty patch of scruffy dry grass” (TPS-30)

“He is free to play a flute all day”. (A&T-36)

“A demon a demigod
And certain ceremonies connected

The parallels of a prophecy” (TRS-56-62)

The above lines show figurative language of ‘alliteration’ in *Jejuri*. Most often Kolatkar makes use of the colloquial manner, the best example of this style being his poem ‘Makarand’:

Take my shirt off
And go in there to do the puja?

No, thanks.

Not me. (M-43)

Much of Kolatkar’s poetry is written in a colloquial style. Almost every poem in ‘Jejuri’ is written in the colloquial or conversation style. Obvious examples of this style are: ‘The
Priest’s Son’, ‘A Scratch’, ‘Yeshwant Rao’ and ‘Makarand’. The poem entitled ‘The Priest’s son’ shows conversational style;

    Do you really believe that story?
    You ask him
    And says
    Look
    There’s a butterfly
    There                        (PS-30)

Another example from ‘Yeshwant Rao’ is about colloquial style:

    Are you looking for a god?
    I know a good one.
    His name is Yeshwant Rao
    And he’s one of the best.
    Look him up.
    When you are in Jejuri next. (YR-49)

The poem, ‘The Railway Station’ into ‘The Station Master’ is also example of colloquial style:

    When conversation turns to time
    He takes his tongue
    Hands it to you across the counter
    And directs you to a superior (TSM-59)

‘A Low Temple’ is also example colloquial:
Who was that, you ask.

The eight arm goddess, the priest replies,

A sceptic match coughs.

You can count. (ALT-21)

‘An Old Woman’ and ‘The Blue Horse’ both are also best example of conversational style:

When you hear her say,

What else can an old woman do

On hills as wretched as these? (AOW-25)

Look blue to me

Says the priest, (TBH-52)

Arun Kolatkat also used another figure of speech in his poetry, ‘simile’. The poem, ‘The Priest’ is the best example for simile. He uses simile in his poem as the sun patting the priest’s cheek familiarly like “the village barber”, the priest’s stare beginning to grow slowly like “a wart upon his nose”, “a catgrin on its face/ ready to eat pilgrim”. Simile and metaphor both are peculiarity of Arun Kolatkar’s poetry. A number of similes have been employed by Kolatlar in this poem; and each simile is not only appropriate but highly commendable, as are the metaphors:

According to R. Parthasarathy “Jejuri is a long poem in thirty-one sections. Apparently it is about the poet’s irreverent odyssey to the temple of Khandoba at Jejuri, a small faith and scepticism in a tradition that has run its course”. 53

Kolatkar expresses what he sees with the eye of a competent reporter in a language that is colloquial and spare. The result is a poem of unexpected beauty and power.

Arun Kolatkat also uses another figure of speech in his poem entitled A Scratch which is personification. Personification means non- living and non-human things are attributed
human qualities. At Jejuri the only crop grown and reaped consists of gods. In other words, anybody walking over the rocky area around the temple of Khandoba would find that every stone, which he picks up at any time of the day or the night, is regarded by the pious people as the image of some god. Pilgrim may pick up a stone from the dirty, loose earth or the he may pick up a stone from the hard rock; but, whatever the case, he would find the stone to be a sacred stone and personification of some god. Using of hyperbole is also feature or Arun Kolatkar’s poem. The poem, ‘The Butterfly’ shows exaggeration of overstatement. The butterfly lives in the present and dies in the present. It is a little, yellow coloured creature which has taken the miserable hills of Jejuri under its wings. It is merely a pinch of yellow colour; and it has a fleeting existence again this meaning creates ‘pun’ because it looks like a pinch of yellow colour, it also means a pinch of salt a small quantity of salt. There is also hyperbole in ‘Yeshwant Rao’. Being armless, handless, feetless, Yeshwant Rao restore, those who are armless, feetless and handless and provides them hand, feet, arm and those who are childless, he gives child.

Arun Kolatlar uses duality in his poetry. Duality is the base of his poetry. There is no autonomy among death, passion, society, ambition and consciousness in his poetry. Meaningful words, lines and stanzas are features of his diction. There is an experiment of skilful words, stanzas, structure, lines. Kolatkar, s poetry is so beautiful of using symbolic words rhythms, pictures, and colures of the lines are the speciality or his poetry.

Actually Kolatkar’s poems show duality. Dilip Dhondge says that “he uses contrastive and apposite words in his poems as city x village/ original x fake/ real x unreal/ absorbent x absorbed/ employer x employee/ primitive x modern/ rich x poor/ country x citizen/ birth x death”. 54 (Patankar)

He writes poems with folklore to find out the inner voice of the human. He gives timid titles to his poetry which create fearful atmosphere throughout of the scene. Kolatkar uses appropriate language and syntax in each words, lines and stanzas. He uses correctly punctuation marks whereas necessary. But the poem, Jejuri is different form usual poems of Arun Kolatkar. In this, Aurn Kolatkar rarely uses punctuation marks in it. The poem, ‘Between Jejuri and the Railway station’, it is musical poem because Kolatkar uses dancing words to show dance of the hens.

Nissim Ezekiel is comparative poet with Arun Kolatkar. He also uses various types of styles in his poetry. The stylistics is a meeting ground of language and literature. It is the
study of the use of language in literature diction of poetry; the study of language as a complement and aid to the study of literature; a characteristic manner of expression; how a particular writer or speaker says things. It is such part of linguistics as concentrates on various or innovation in the use or language, often, but not exclusively, with special attention to the most conscious and contemplated use of language in literature. Stylistic is not a stylish word, but it is well connected. The true nature of it is elusive and needs subtle net to catch the variations. Thus, a detailed stylistic study of Ezekiel’s poems reveals interesting features of his poetic language and style. R. Ohman says that “style is a characteristic way of deploying the transformational apparatus of a language”. (R-ohman-431)

The word ‘stylistic’ fills the readers mind with a plethora of questions for instance, what kind of word strings are used phrases, sentences complete or not, or heavily modified? What kinds of constructions are worked out – passive-active, transitive or intransitive? Are the verbs lexical, auxiliary, or modal? What kinds of words are used: formal, technical, slang, archaic, poetic, and so on? What is mood: interrogative, Imperative or declarative? There any use of polysemy- multiple meaning, figurative meaning, and hybrid notion? And so on. In Ezekiel’s case, most of his sentences are simple but he embellishes his language with certain kinds of devices. He wrote longer sentences by the time he composed poems, in Exact Name. Then came a change in his style. The sentences of Hymns in Darkness are somewhat big. In, Latter–Day Psalms, the sentences are shorter, but the language is more figurative. Most of the words used by the poet are monosyllabic. Some disyllabic words have also been used regularly.

The poem The Exact Name which is Ezekiel’s poetry is not able for an extreme technique formality. That, of course, reflects the conventions of the 1950’s, when most poets of the English–speaking world would have an interest in low toned poetry and carefully work in traditional metrical and stanza forms. The poem The Unfinished Man is an example of the poet’s traditional style. All ten poems in this volume are precisely regular in form. All are fully rhymed and written in regular stanzas and iambic metre like most poets, he uses strict forms and relies heavily on variations to give rhythmic power and subtlety, especially through the application of foot- substitutions, run on lines and half rhymes. Eight out of the twenty poems in The Exact Name are in the traditional style, and show to a large digress, the finicky use of the technique. The poems are ‘Philosophy’, ‘Poetry Reading’, ‘Virginal’, ‘Love Poem’, ‘Platonic’, ‘Perspective’, ‘Fruit’ and ‘Art Lecture’.
Similarly ‘Case Study’, with its very tight rhyme scheme (ab aa bb ) suffers from a startling inflexibility in so far as the use of metre is concerned. Let us consider the last stanza:

    He came to me and this is what I said:
    “The pattern will remain, unless you break
    It with a sudden jerk; but use your head....
    Not all returned as heroes who had fled
    In wanting both to have and eat the cake.

    Not all who fails are counted with the fake.(case, study-41 . Vilas S)

Here, one cannot help hearing too sonorous echo of the iambic feet which are increased by the finicky use of the enjambment after the second line. The inflexible sound is exaggerated by more number of monosyllabic words which directly pour the metre into the ear with massive force. In the whole thirty lines pentameter poem, there are only there minor foot substitutions and only two rhymes. One finds the examples of blank verse and free verse for the first time, and the emphasis on the new content. The transitional poems differ from the regular poems. The poet’s mind inclines towards some earnest business and here the transitional style prevails over the traditional style. A bunch of poems such as ‘Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher’, ‘Paradise Flycatcher’, ‘Night of the Scorpion’, ‘In India’, ‘Beachscene’, ‘A Warning’, ‘The Visitor’ and “Two Images’ are of the highest quality. Also, they demonstrate the pull away from the traditional style and context. In the poem, “In India”, one can see the traditional qualities where, instead of attempting a whole poem in a new style, Ezekiel breaks it into four sections of varying degrees of formal freedom, and lets each section play against and modify the others.

The poem, ‘In India’ is highly interesting, marked by a break-through in style. It exemplifies the microcosm of Ezekiel’s struggle to free himself from traditional restrictions. The poem is an emblem of the Indian culture, a little damaged by westernization. In this poem, the rhythm moves with the mind and feelings. The line breaks and the syntax play with words. The voice is personal, dramatic and strong due to wide tonal colouring. The short lines, the free verse, the flexibility of syntax and tone are here perfectly appropriate for assuming potency.

The better part of Ezekiel’s poetic oeuvre is in verse libre. This new form defies the classical verse form and prosodies, encourages natural speech rhythms and liberates the rigid
In his early days, Ezekiel wrote mostly under the influence of poets like W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot. The former can be seen echoed in his formal, rhymed metric verse, while the latter in his verse libre. However, gradually he developed greater regularity and skills in form, progression, sequence, rhyme, stanza and syntax. Some of the well-crafted poems of his early period include ‘Enterprise’, ‘Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher’, ‘Urban’, ‘Case Study’. The poem ‘Enterprise’ has a direct opening and a dynamic linear movement leading to a climactic stage in stanzas-5 and 6; “when we / .....lost our way./ A section claimed its liberty / To leave the group... / some were broken, some merely bent... / we hardly knew why we were there”, followed by a denouement in stanza-6; “Home is where we have to gather our grace” (CP-117-18)

In Collected Poems, the poet has replaced the word “gather” with “earn our”- probably, to emphasise the point that even obligations at home are no less than a pilgrimage. Thus, the pilgrimage that started with “Exalting minds and making all / the burdens light....”, “ends on the note of doubt”, “we hardly knew why we were there” and a realization that “our deeds were neither great nor rare”, and a resolution that “Home is where we have to gather grace”. It is noteworthy that there is marked decent in progression after stanza-5, where the pace gradually slows down to a final stop (Home) in the concluding line. The poem has a regular rhyme scheme ab ab a through all the almost -evenly structured stanza, without much variation in line- length.

‘Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher’ is another well-structured poem in two regular stanzas having the rhyme pattern a bb aa cddcd in each of them. It has a casual, conversational opening with a direct address to the poets, urging them to patiently “wait for words”; as does “birdwatcher for birds”, and “a lover for his lady love”. The aesthetic reward of the poem lies in its parallelism among acts of bird- watching, loving and composing poems, along with the abstraction of patience. ‘Night of the Scorpion’, though written in a free verse, is devoid of rhyme and regular form. It is, however, remarkable for its verbal felicities its sinuous and flowing speech rhythm with repeated words / phrases.

Ezekiel’s avowed aim has been to write clear and direct poetry, resulting from continuity between the lived and the poetry written, the same thread unravelled from flesh and blood on to the page. Apart from a few poems in the volume entitled The Exact Name,
Ezekiel has been adopting a conversational style. The frequent use of a colloquial idiom imparts to these poems a fine combination of the clarity of expression and a cogency of argument. Poets, he has said in one of his poems, are not counterfeiters and cannot afford to cheat their readers with words. The last poem in the volume called *The Exact Name* has the title of “A conjugation” and it pleads for an end to pretence. According to Dr. Raghukul Tilak “the language of the poem is simple and colloquial throughout. The difficulty of this lyric arises not from its diction but from the profundity and complexity of the content”.56

The poem, ‘Night of the Scorpion’ is also shows colloquial style Christopher Wiseman says that “The poem demonstrates a deliberate attempt at formal innovation by using loose, seemingly free verse and narrative structure”.57

It is much more relaxed and openly worked than Ezekiel’s formal poetry, with a new quality of natural colloquialism in diction and tone. We notice in the poem the abandonment of capitals at the start of each line, the dramatic casualness of the recalls crisis, the long paragraph set off abruptly from the three -line climax, all of which give ‘Night of the Scorpion’ a new feel, a sense of unhurried lucid progression- through time. It is an interesting and very valid poem, containing a fascinating tension between personal crises and mocking social observation, but the discrepancies of form confuse the tone which swings between the natural and the colloquial reporting of experience and more removed literary formality. And yet, for all the problems, a real voice is heard in this poem, with its own rhythms and cadences so Ezekiel has made a substantial contribution to the use of colloquial English and conversational manner and tone in Indo English poetry. The whole of his autobiographical poem, ‘Background, casually’ is written in a conversational tone, and the poem entitled ‘The Way it Went’ is a good example of his use of colloquial English.

Cold lucidity is also another feature of language which is used by Ezekiel in ‘Philosophy’. This poem begins with Ezekiel’s telling us that philosophy is the place of to which he often goes, not by planning or by a conscious effort, but spontaneously and naturally as If that is the place which he visits instinctively.

Philosophy and science offers to us abstractions which leave us cold and unmoved like a naked person who is already dead and therefore unable to feel anything. What Ezekiel really means to say is that poetry provides us with wisdom whereas philosophy and science provide us with only knowledge, and that philosophy and science have their limitations because they leave behind “residues of meaning and dark myth” which poetry can illumine.
The language of poetry, says Ezekiel, is warm and emotional in contrast to the cold lucidity of philosophy. Thus, Ezekiel asserts the superiority of the poet’s vocation over that of the philosopher and the scientist.

The poems like ‘The Egoist’s Prayers’, ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Perspective’ show economy in spoken language make poetry really memorable. Ezekiel has tried to bring the idiom of poetry closer to the spoken language. Ezekiel says “Even the most complex of my poems are relatively simple and direct, Judged by the norms of difficult poetry properly. His poems like, ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Perspective’ do contain some abstract thought and vague expressions like “myth of light” and “parable of hell”; but most often his phraseology, like his ideas, Possesses the quality of correctness.

Nissim Ezekiel also uses outstanding simile in his poetry. Ezekiel’s simile, as those of any other poet can be divided in to two groups: those in which the tenor is more concrete than vehicle and vice versa. An example of the former is the simile in ‘Squirrel’, where the comparison is between the squirrel and a thought:

An agile flick of grey and brown
And is gone, like a thought (CP-62)
Others include the one in “subject of change”;
The waves
Rise and fall like nightmare graves
That cannot hold their dead (CP-177)
And the simile at the opening of ‘Tone Poem’:
Your breasts are small
Tender
Like your feeling (CP-203)
Examples of simile in which the vehicle is more concrete than the tenor include the simile in ‘A Morning Walk’:
His past is like a muddy pool (CP-120)
And that in ‘Guru’;
Dropping our follies
Like old clothes (CP-191).

Paradox is another figure which is used in ‘Happening’ where the speaker says;

A man withdrawn into himself
May be a man moving forward (CP-163).

Another example is provided in ‘Dilemma’;

The further I move
Away from madness
Towards stability
And a measure of sense,
The closer I seem
To the verge of madness. (CP-244)

‘Epithets’ found in Ezekiel’s poetry include; “He walls the hard, accustomed way” (CP-87). In ‘Portrait’ the speaker says; “Bawdy darkness” (CP-107).

‘At the Party’ provides an instance of Ezekiel’s use of “apostrophe”, the poems open thus”;

He curbed his abstract insights with a will,
His proper answer softer than the drinks,
And scrutinized the women for the kill,
But as the evening moves, his spirit sinks. (CP-98)

Also ‘Song of Desolation’ concludes with an “apostrophe” to religion:

Come, religion, confront me
Your lifeless moralists prescribe your laws,
And make me sees
My secret flaws. (CP-103)

Ezekiel’s use of “zeugma” is exemplified in ‘Sorting to Pursue’: “When the female animal no longer/Hunts the he bed in flesh or dream” (CP-18).

“Night piece” makes striking use of the firer:
Listening to rain or something in the sky
Made to carry death, or wireless sets
Left on in fear the silence may be heard,
I am aware of what I hold precariously,
Exposed to war in china or to friends;
Repose in balanced means and ends. (CP-58)

Another speciality of Ezekiel’s poetry is using language. He uses familiar language and tense with Indian people. Most Indians, while speaking English, commit errors of tense, of syntax, and of idiom. For Instance, they use the present continuous tense when only the present tense is required also they use present continuous tense when future tense is needed. There are some examples from ‘Goodbye party for Miss Pushpa T.S’: “our dear sister is departing for foreign in two three days” correct form is “our dear sister will be departing for a foreign country in two or three days”. “You are all knowing friends” correct from is “you all know”, “Miss Pushpa is coming from a very high family” correct form is “Miss Pushpa comes from a very high family”. Yet another example of the misuse of the present continuous tense is: “I am not remembering now which place”. The correct form here would be to say: “I do not remember now which place.

The language of Indian English poetry and the language of British and American English poetry are fully different. The words, phrases, sentences, syntax are complex in western and America English literature. But the words, phrases, idioms, sentences and syntax are simple and quite familiar of Indian English poetry. Arun Kolatkar’s diction is perfectly appropriate, and frequently elicits our admiration; very often his choice of words shows an exquisite taste and arranges those words skilfully. But in Ezekiel’s case, most of his sentences are simple but he embellishes his language with certain kinds of devices. He wrote longer sentences by the time he composed poems. Indian English poets are more capable to write poems in English without any difficulty. So Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel are eye witness to know language of poetry. Kolatkar shows himself to be a true master of the English language; and he surpasses most other indo-Anglian poets in so far as his poetry is characterised by the quality of lucidity. Lucidity, colloquial style or conversational style, using figures of speech like personification, metaphor, simile and alliteration are the unique style of Arun Kolatkar to write poetry. Arun Kolatkar uses an outstanding stanza pattern, punctuations where necessary and appropriate subject matter throughout his collection.
Nissim Ezekiel also uses lucidity, colloquial style, and figures of speech like alliteration, Rhetorical, Apostrophe, metaphor, simile, paradox, Epithets, and zeugma to show his poetry beautiful and meaningful.

Nissim Ezekiel is different from Arun Kolatkar for using imaginative and suggestive style. He is perfectly aware of the significance of suggestiveness in poetry and he feels that the Imaginative faculty should be allowed to play its role. Arun Kolatkar cannot suggest anything through the poetry. He is only alienator and observer. Sophisticated style is also quite different from Arun Kolatkar. Sophisticated means complex, subtle, involved and having deeper layers of meanings. ‘Enterprise’, ‘Philosophy’ and ‘The Visitor’ are examples of sophisticated style.

Another unique of Ezekiel is using of allegory in the poem. The poem, ‘Enterprise’, this poem is an allegory or a parable. A group of men set out on a journey in pursuit for a certain goal. An allegory is a narrative, whether in prose or verse, in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived by the author. But Arun Kolatkar uses simple language, small stanza patterns like Connotative and denotative meaning of the words in the poem. The poem entitled ‘Makarand’ it means ‘honey’ or sweet in traditional Marathi it means “Modak”. So, diction is the body of poetry and syntax is the soul of poetry. Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel use appropriate body and soul to the poetry.

4.2.5. The Study of Humour, Wit and Satire

‘Wit’ and ‘humour’ designate species of the comic: any element in the work of literature, whether a character, event, or utterance, which is designed to amuse or to excite mirth in the reader or audience. The words “wit” and “humour”, however, had a variety of meanings in earlier literary criticism, and a brief comment on their history will help to clarify the differences between them in present usage. \(^{58}\) (329-31)

“Satire” can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward, it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation. It differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire derides; that is, it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt that exists outside the work itself. \(^{59}\) (275)

Arun Kolatkar uses satirical tone in his poetry particularly in ‘Jejuri’. The satire in the poem becomes pungent when the protagonist gives us a catalogue of the other gods which are worshipped by the people. Each of these gods is characterized in just one or two lines; and
each of the gods is characterized satirically. The catalogue of gods contains references to
gods who are better looking; gods who seek worshippers because of the gold offerings which
they are likely to make, gods who want to take possession of the souls of their worshippers;
gods who claim to endow their offerings with the power to walk on a bed of burning coals,
gods who claim to have the power to bless the barren wives of their worshippers with
children; gods who can put to death the enemies of their worshippers; and so on. Above
references are from ‘Yeshwant Rao’. It is the satirical poem. ‘Yeshwant Rao’, ‘Heart of
Ruin’, ‘Blue Horse’, ‘Railway Station’ and ‘Three Cups of Tea’ are satirical, humorous and
witty poems.

The poem ‘The Blue Horse’ is full of absurdity and satirical. The priest of
Khandoba’s temple at Jejuri has arranged a religious ceremony at his residence in order to
enable the protagonist to watch the ceremony informally and in all its details. The ceremony
consists in offering worship to Khandoba by means of hymns sung in praise of that god. The
manner in which the protagonist describes the performance of the ceremony is satirical; and
an abundant use of Irony has been made in the poem so that the whole ceremony is made to
appear absurd and ridiculous to us. Also this poem shows Kolatkar’s wit, his consummate use
of Irony and his satirical talent. “The Blue horse” tells of “keyless passion” of a group
singing the praise of Khandoba’s horse, led by a toothless singer. The strange spectacle
appears to be “a bit of sacred cabaret” act to the pilgrim. The poem entitled ‘The Railway
Station’ also depicts a railway station which is the very embodiment of futility,
ineffectiveness, and absurdity. This is not a railway station but travesty of railway station.
And the poem is not only a satire on this railway station but a most depressing account of
desolation and despair.

The poem entitled ‘Three Cups of Tea’ also shows humour. Although there is some
exaggeration in the portrayal of the conduct of the employee here, yet the situation, on the
whole, and in essence, is a common one. Workers in India have really become bullies. The
trade union movement has gathered so much momentum that the employees can paralyze any
firm, any group of firms, any industry, and, in fact, the entire administration of the country.
Of course, the poem before us is very amusing; but our amusement would turn into distress
any helplessness if any one among ourselves were the manger in the place of one depicted in
the poem.

Nissim Ezekiel also uses humour, satire and wit in his poetry. Humour is not wanting
in Nissim Ezekiel. He arouses humour, for example, in this poem ‘Jewish Wedding in
Bombay’ in which the wife quarrels with the husband for his having taken her virginity and the husband’s desire to return it provided he knows how to do that. The relevant passage reads thus:

During our first serious marriage quarrel she said why did
You take my virginity from me? I would gladly have
Returned it, but not one of the books I had read instructed
Me how. (LDP, P. 19)

There is mischievous humour when the bridegroom is silly enough to sympathise with the bride’s mother, who is pretending to be crying on the occasion of her daughter’s marriage but is actually enjoying every moment. The poet reports the incident in the following lines:

Her mother shed a tear or two but wasn’t really
Crying. It was the thing to do so, she did it,
Enjoying every moment, the bride laughed when I
Sympathized, and said don’t be silly.  (LDP, p.18)

Self-deception is one of the facts he finds ludicrous: one who does not practice humility speaks of humility, maturity makes one commit follies which one did not commit during youth, and one loses what is certain for things of dubious value, while ridiculing such persons Ezekiel writes:

He knows how to speak of humility, without humility.
He has exchanged the wisdom of youthfulness for the
Follies of maturity.
What is lost is certain, what is gained of dubious value,
Self-esteem stunts his growth.
He has not learnt how to be nobody. (H.D, p. 53)

Satire is another device, Ezekiel employs to arouse humour. He has a keen eye for the ludicrous and usually he exposes hypocrisy. He satirizes the politician in poem ‘Waking’ in which a politician’s wife exposes her husband:

When the politician boasted
How he had made two hundred speeches,

“No, Tom”, his wife declared,

“You made the same speech two hundred times”. (JSAL, xi, 3-4, P-49)

Ezekiel ridicules the ways of Indian bureaucracy in the following lines in ‘The Railway Clerk;

When the female railway clerk

Received an offer of marriage

From her neighbour the customs clerk,

She told him to apply in triplicate. (The Railway Clerk-45 )

It is quite common in India to invite applications in duplicate, triplicate, quadruplicate and so on, and if the required numbers of copies are not submitted, the application is likely to be rejected. The incident narrated here also shows how one’s professional behaviour enters one’s domestic and social behaviour too. Just as the railway clerk here treats even her suitor as an applicant, in the same way a teacher treats even his neighbours as his students, and a policeman treats even the members of his family as criminals.

In the poem, ‘Portrait’ the poet laughs at a man who undulates from a positive resolution to a negative one has no consistency in his character, he is no longer young but he is still foolish, he has toughened his will but breaks his faith, he plans his day but walks the accustomed way, one day he sharpens his voice and wit, but the second day he turns the other check;

Against the grain he keeps at it

And checks his progress week by week,

Today he sharpens voice and wit

Tomorrow turns the other cheek. (JSAL, XI 3-4, p-47)

Thus, Humour, wit, and satire are the qualities of Indian English poetry. Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekel use Humour, wit and satire in their poetry to catch attention of readers and scholars. Poetry is philosophy, psychology, knowledge, means of entertainment, means of discovery and criticism of society. The poems like ‘Makarand’, ‘A Low Temple’, ‘An Old Woman’, ‘The Boatride’, ‘The Railway Station’, ‘The Hag’ and ‘Bombay made me Beggar’

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2. Ibid, pp. 72-83.
45. Ibid, p.10.