CONCLUSION

In this study, Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry has been treated as a form of writing in which the poet studies, explores and in a way redefines the self as a construct of writing. It has been thought that Ezekiel’s exploration of the self proceeds from certain basic assumptions of the self, which the poet believes, defines and tries to discover through the various situations and circumstances that he finds around himself. Existence is one of the problems, which is closely interlinked with the problem of the self, since existence is a very important process in which the various forms and aspects of the self are revealed and worked out.

In the first chapter, The Concept of the Self, Nissim Ezekiel’s concept of the self, has been examined in the light of basic assumptions which have been treated as fundamental aspects of his study of the self. His belief in an essential self is being perpetually contested by an acute awareness of the existential process which provides instances of the self in which the idea of essence is being continually undermined by various extraneous factors and conditions.

The second chapter, The Contexts of the Self, explores Ezekiel’s concept of the self as being placed within the post-colonial situation which
has been recognized as an integral feature of his poetry. As a result, Ezekiel's ideas become a part of this post-colonial whole, which circumscribes and determines his poetry. In this chapter, the ambivalent relation between the East and the West are being treated as relevant contexts of Ezekiel's idea of the self. The East and the West are referred to as two distinct cultural areas, where the native Indian space is the periphery of the western centre. However, the East and the West are present in Ezekiel's poetry not as two distinct, distinguishable areas. The interesting fact is, both these areas are involved in his poetry in a very ambivalent relationship. This ambivalence affects his writing in a way, which can only be categorized as a characteristic of a new reality, a new world system, where different cultural areas overlap each other in a new hybridity. Ezekiel's poetry has been placed within this new hybridity, where the East and the West are being redefined, restructured not only in the form of ideas and consciousness, but also in the form of political, social and economic realities.

Ezekiel proceeds with a belief in the essentiality of the self. But as he examines the self in the context of his social, political and cultural reality, he constantly encounters conditions and circumstances which context his basic position. This is very much because of an awareness and
a frame of mind which has been exposed to western texts and ideologies. Especially, when Ezekiel studies his immediate city, Bombay, his mind is already affected by the viewpoints and attitudes which several writers in the western tradition has institutionalized in their study of their own cities. The city in his poems is, therefore, not only Bombay, but a construct which retains the traces of all these texts about the city. The city is also a symbol, a universal sign, as it is also an image of Bombay. This writing of the city is, therefore, referred to as a post-colonial text and it is being assumed that his concept of the self also is a part of this post-colonial text. Therefore, it is suggested that Ezekiel’s concept of the self has certain contexts which it cannot avoid and transcend.

The third chapter, **Redefining the Self**, is an attempt to study Ezekiel’s concept of the self as a text which inheres as it also cannot forego the given limitations of all other texts. The text as a phenomenon is seen as an abstract construct which follows an endless system of derivation that provides neither an origin nor an ultimate reality. Other texts and theories are cited which bears relevance with Ezekiel’s text. Loosely speaking, Ezekiel’s concept is seen as a compromise between the humanist and anti-humanist tradition of thought.
Ezekiel’s poetry seeks to follow the impersonal style of poetry prescribed by Anglo-American Modernist antihumanist tradition which sought to withdraw from the pre-established human centre institutionalized by the humanist tradition. But certain humanist postulates are too deep-rooted in Ezekiel’s poetry and he keeps proceeding towards a discovery of a solution, which inspite of all its complexity, retains an assurance in a human resolution of the self.

The problem of the self has been marked out as an area of study, because it has been considered to bear a crucial place in Ezekiel’s poetry. Ezekiel has clearly stated his belief as a continuity between poetry and life. In ‘Something to Pursue’, he writes:

The answer is: There shall be no more questions,  
No more expenditure of doubt  
But only a limpid style of life  
Whose texture is poetry.  
(Collected Poems 1952-1988, p.18)

Further in ‘A Poem of Dedication’, the interrelation between life and poetry is emphasized:

Both poetry and living illustrate  
Each season brings its own peculiar fruits.  
(Collected Poems 1952-1988, p.39)

The self is one issue which interconnects these two areas and his concept of the self is integral or at least affects both his poetry and life.
The search for an identity and a wholeness of being is one of the main concerns of his poetry and it can be said that the poet hopes to find it in the self. And his answer is a view of the self, which is redefinition since it examines and recombines various other ideas and concepts about the self.