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EXISTENTIAL CRISIS AS EXPRESSED IN INDO-ENGLISH WRITINGS IN GENERAL

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Abstract:- It's a globally known fact that India is a land of many states, languages, cultures, habits, religions and religiosities. Hence, it is not so easy to talk of one tradition, culture, habit etcetera. All the same, there are numerous Indian authors and literary laureates who either have written in English or have got their works translated from vernaculars and have gained national as well as international acclaim.

Key Words: Existential Crisis , globally , international acclaim , Indo-English Writings.

INTRODUCTION:

Though every culture of India has many men and women of such grace and caliber I, hereby, deal with a few writers and authors, at random, who have been outstanding especially in treating the theme of crisis in their works. I could start with a few exemplary works of Rabindranath Tagore who has been the master craftsman of the nation for all the seasons. His very life itself has been one filled with crisis of all sorts. He could feel internal conflicts and external pressures weighing him down at various stages of his existence. He could feel storms of life trying to toss him down. This storm, of course, is symbolically put down in many of his writings. This has been one of crisis point of every stream of national global and universal nature. His times had seen the rise of nationalism, national and international conflicts, global disasters and wars and also flourishing filial feeling of patriotism. All these underwent the storm off cleansing, of course. This is why Reba Som quotes him in her work *Rabindranath Tagore: The Singer and His Song* thus:

“While trudging a lonely oath my lamp has blown out. Storm has descended—hark—storm has descended” (p. 117).

He had undergone and understood the pain of gaining and losing. He witnessed famines. He witnessed devastations of wars. He had witnessed loss of the loved ones. He felt as though the whole existence is temporal. He felt as though nothing is permanent. This is why he writes: “I had found you on a distant morn, only to lose you at night”. (p. 120)

In his play, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, published in the book, *Omnibus IV*, one could come across queen Sudarshana suffering the agony of emptiness and vacuum in spite of her vast realm of admirers; strangeness in spite of her numerous royal-household; loneliness in spite of her so-called abundant friends and companions. She is full of power yet filled with feeling of powerlessness. These are the worst of all situations of the crisis of existence. Yet the king is not pessimistic. He is optimistic rather. One could hear the anger and anguish of the queen who was faced with a dark chamber where she feels frightened and cries out saying, “Light, light! Where is light? Will the lamp never be lighted in this chamber?” (p. 389). She could never ever bear the darkness in that room. She could not just grasp the optimism of her maid Surangama who accepts the darkness and tries to live in it happily. The queen wants the room to be lighted-up. She expresses her impatience irritation and annoyance over such darkness of the room. She blames the king for constructing such a dark chamber in the palace which is otherwise full of light. She could not understand the loyalty of Surangama to the king who had built the room with such cave-like darkness. The queen had never seen the king who was her husband. It was because he met her only in that particular dark room. She did not know how he looked at all; whether he was handsome or ugly; whether he had proper facial expressions; whether he had appropriate gestures and postures etcetera. Her handmaid could listen to the footsteps of the king in her heart while the queen does not possess such sensation. She yearns to have such a feeling of sensing and listening to the footsteps of the king. She longs to have a sight of him. she could not do so due to the darkness of the room. This darkness hurts her. She feels as though this darkness was very death itself. She could not comprehend how the king could bear such darkness. She finds this darkness a blockade between herself and the king. She could not even bear any song or music or merriment. Any event of happiness fills her with pain and tears. She yearns to hear the king's song. When she could not attain this end she wants to be

lonely and solitary. Besides and above all, pride rules her will. She rejects the kings when she feels that he had not turned out to be the person she desired him to be. She regrets about this later when she is disillusioned and when her pride gets shattered. She yearns for his love. She says that “the day has arrived for me to humble myself before the whole world. But why does not the King come to take me back?” (422). Darkness, strangeness, vagueness etcetera are some of the words used to show the absurdity of her existence.

In *Gora*, another of his beautiful creations, he depicts the human psychological crises of perplexity, inquisitiveness, anguish, anger, animosity and the incorporation of all these. It brings out the crisis of subjugation of the people to the demands of the society and social order. It shows the crisis that arises as a consequence of violating the social demands and societal traditions. It also depicts the crisis of brokenness caused by the insolence of the individuals to the common human society. Human beings have divided and subdivided themselves. They have made splits and gulfs between relationships. This gulf increases and multiplies unless and until love patches it up. Yet this love itself becomes crisis at certain occasions. It tears one's heart and keeps one under pain and panic. Gora experiences this crisis. He loves Sucharita. At the same time, he does not want this love to be mere flirting or infatuation. He stands firm for his principles. For instance, he does not spare himself in to come in conflict with Sucharita in matter of Binoy his friend's marriage. They were trying to get him married as per the Brahmo customs and traditions. Being a revolutionary and the one who stands for liberalism than traditionalism Gora could not bear it. This was why she cross-questions Sucharita on this issue. She, though full of aware of his open-mindedness and being his sole companion, could not refute him yet confronts him saying that Brahmo wedding need not to be improper. He goes further ahead saying that he did not expect such outlook from her being a modern woman. He does not want her to be an ordinary Hindu woman. He does not want her to be kind of local-party-leader who is interested only in increasing number of the members of the party. He expects much more than all these from her. He wants her to be a revolutionary. This is why he says, “Please don't be misled by others into underestimating yourself. You are not merely an ordinary member of some party: this you yourself must realize clearly within your heart” (p. 176). This was, indeed a challenge for her. She defends her view and protests saying that she was not a politico-kind and rather she wants to hold on to what is Indian and Hindu culture. She does not want to accept that she was doing something wrong by standing firm to the age-old Indian values and traditions. He challenges her again taking the issue of Hindus indulging in party-politics. She has just an opposite view that it is not in party-politics that many Hindus are involved in and it is rather that defend their cause of holding on to their birth-rights. She considers the view of Gora as some bitterness or hatred against Hinduism. She blames him as though acting on his instinct. He could not accept her blame. He considers himself as a revolutionary and he wants her to be one too. The real conflict arises between ardent pure love for her and his commitment for his cause. He blames her; accuses her of being orthodox; screams at her when she failed to look through his eyes and possess his kind of open outlook. Yet he feels sorry for her when he finds that his statements and anger pained her. He loves his country and country-men. He wants her to share this love and work together for the upliftment of the nation. He is torn between his conviction and love for Sucharita. He could not just ignore her love. “When one heart called out to another from within the bottomless abyss, that wordless yearning from the solitary edge of the world seemed to set off a vibration in that remote sky, in those stars so far away” (p. 400).

Mulkraj Anand, another well-known Indian writer, brings to light the crisis of caste cum class-crisis in almost all his works. *Untouchable* is his first novel. In it, he deals with the crisis of Caste System. Eighteen years old untouchable boy Bakha suffers untellable agonies just because of being born as an untouchable which, in no way, was his mistake. His day begins with his father's pestering addressing him as the 'son of a pig' and 'illegally begotten'. What more insult could a child like Bakha get from his very biological father...? His confrontation and compromises and stumbles continue the whole day. He belonged to a scavenger caste which was categorically hated and being hated this day by any man and woman belonging to even any other pettier castes of the Indian society. Bukha had his strong physical strength. He had a very muscular body. He could do any kind of manual labour without any hesitation. He could have been a successful, had he got trained, as a weight-lifter or racing-competitor or hockey-player or foot-ball-champion. Here comes the role of the so-called fate and the social elements. He could not gain any of these. He had to satisfy himself with the mere food-wastes thrown to him by the socially, politically and economically affluent just for the sake of keeping his spirits alive. Any self-styled caste-Hindu, who had just the stamina of a dead-fish could hit at him. he could not hit-back though he had hundred-fold more physical strength than that of his adversary just because he belonged to a socially-secluded caste. This was built by a determined unethical blockade that could not be broken down by his mere physical strength. But do the, supposed higher-ups leave the girls and women of the lower-ones alone. They seduce them; use them and misuse them. Sohini is an example of this fact. She goes to fetch water from the well of the high-castes. First of all, she had to wait for a long time to fetch a little water just to quench the thirst of her thirsty brother. Secondly she had to become a victim for the lust of Kalinath, the self-acclaimed 'Panidit' who wants to quench his thirst of lust amidst the alleged caste-barriers who accuses her guilty as an 'untouchable' when she did not relent to his wish. Irony...? Bukha wants to thrash him up. He could not do so, because, he would be thrashed. It's because he's dirt because he cleans their dirt. He is beaten; spitted at; mocked at; and fed with food from the gutter etcetera. Ultimately he was even thrown out of the house by his very father who said, “get away, swine, run away from my presence.... And don't come back! Don't let me see your face again!” (p. 132). This he did to Bakha for hurting a boy, by mistake, in a hockey match.

In *Coolie*. Munoo, the main character of the story undergoes the existential crisis of inch-by-inch suffering and death. Munoo belongs to the lowest social strata of the Indian Society. He gets orphaned owing no fault of his own. He lost his father, who was a bonded labourer and could not pay the mere interest (leave alone the capital) of his debt. Whatsoever little land or cattle he had owned were taken away by his master and money-lender and lord of his entire existence. His mother, a weak lady,

tried her best by doing every little menial work possible so as to make both the ends to meet. She did not spare herself from grinding grains in mill-stones. She gathered her strength to move any stone that could get unmoved. She did not fail to try any work that could be performed even by her loss of spirits. The cruel hands of fate foil all her plans. Her ends become endless except her very end of life. she resigned to her fate. Munoo witnessed the fact of ethically-ravenous land-lords grabbing the little-bits of land left of an improbably innocent deprived ones. He was just a minor of fourteen years old when the doors and windows and even the ventilations of the world get closed to him. He had, in his mind and heart, every little wish of a juvenile of his kind and age could possibly possess. But, would the corrupt social system ever allow him to attain even the minutest of his wishes? He just, as though by the cunning and cruel act of fate, gets to live with his persnickety uncle and concern-less aunt. He, by nature, is responsive, intrusive and reactive. Yet one of his predominant characteristic features is that he is absolutely sincere. At such a tenderly age the unknown atrocities of the mysterious fact called fate forces him to leave the house and earn his living. His child-labour starts from certain clerk in a rootless toothless and faceless nature. His uncle and aunt considered him a burden. He is a child. He wants to play with other children. He wants to mix with them. Yet, could he...? Perhaps, he forgets his identity. How could an under-privileged child mix with a privileged one in the Indian society...? He wants to be treated as an ordinary human being. But, will the corrupt society do so? even during his very childhood he understands the fact that the Indian society is simply just not one ethical or ethnic or cultural or religious or social or political unit but rather it is a unit of money and power. Money speaks. Power speaks. Poverty or powerlessness could just not talk. His uncle also had told him the same thing. He learned from his uncle that in that particular hour and culture even cast did not matter in the Indian society but money mattered. He could realize the concept of his uncle with his very eyes. He could see boys and girls of his very age belonging to castes varying from Brahmins to the scavengers venturing in every possible profession for the sake of earning their living as well as for earning for those who had depended on them as well as, especially, for their so-called care-takers. He philosophizes after much thinking and pondering that why should there be various divisions and categories of men and women in the world. He feels that there could be and could be just only division i.e the rich and the poor. It was because he confronted a hostile world of rich and poor. He tries his hand in every work possible even in a pickle factory. Yet, he finally finds his very self in the streets as a coolie in a grain-market; in the railway station; in circus shows; factories and industries. He dwells in slums. He experiences poverty, hunger, thirst and emptiness and undergoes sub-humanitarian conditions. He is accused of encounters, fights, agitations and riots. The lady owner of the car that knocks him down on Malabar hills tries to please him the job a servant at her residence at Shimla. He does all kinds of odd jobs to her and ends up being a rickshaw-puller at the end. Thus, in short, Munoo tries all sorts of works even at his tender age. He worked as a servant. He labourered in a factory; struggled as a rickshaw-puller; underwent all kinds of exploitations by the rich and the well- heeled who never spared to squeeze him physically, mentally, psychologically both individually as well as collectively as a class; suffered from the life-consuming disease of Tuberculosis and "in the early hours of one unreal, white night he passed away – the tide of his life having reached back to the deeps" (p.318).

In his novel, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Mulkraj depicts the oppression and exploitation of the poor labour-class and proletarians by feudal lords, land-owners and bourgeois. He brings out in detail the existential struggles of the working class who are always at the receiving ends. The story is concerning Gangu, a labourer, who had come to Assam from Punjab in order to work in the tea-gardens therein. Though he was filled with optimism in the beginning, slowly and gradually he realizes that the tea-estates are like jails and life therein is like imprisonment. The hut he had to live in with his family did not have any basic facilities of health and hygiene. He and his family members had to work roughly hard in order to earn their daily living. Every British man who became his superior or supervisor tried to exploit him and his household. He, together with his family, was paid just eight annas for their hard and tireless labour. He could have earned more in his very village more than this amount. He was lured by a middleman Buta who had told him that the wage in the tea-plantations are higher and that he would be given free land and house and could live happily all through his life. further, he suffers the fury of malarial fever which makes him weak and deprives him of his earnestness towards laboring hard for the welfare of his family. Though his spirit willed his flesh did not cooperate. He felt the pain and after-effects of the disease severely. Yet he did not want to die before he settled his daughter Leila by arranging marriage for her. Meanwhile his wife Sanjani succumbs to cholera and dies leaving him companionless and leaving her children motherless. He had gone such a pauper that he did not have the money even to arrange for Sanjani's cremation. The British estate-owners indulge vigourously in vicious acts of animal-hunting and woman-hunting. They seduce any girl they are interested in and use them for their sexual pleasures. Reggie Hunt's eyes fall on the innocent pretty Leila. He develops lust towards her. This lust increases day by day. Once he meets her and commands her to meet him in his mansion. She gets frightened and tries to avoid him as best as possible. She runs away and hides herself in her hut at her very sight of him. Reggie does not give up. He is after her. He comes to her hut; calls her out; waits for her out of her hut with gun in his hands. Buddhu, her brother, unable to understand what all was about and getting awfully afraid calls out to his father. Reggie, sensing the possible getting-caught, tries to escape the issue would not become sensitive and his superiors would not take any adverse actions on him. Gangu, hearing the cries of his son and feeling as though something was going wrong rushes towards his hut and confronts Reggie face to face. Full of disappointment of the fact that he could not just achieve what he wanted amidst his immense power and getting frightened of the possible consequences of his deed, he fires at Gangu and gets him killed in the process and runs away feeling as though "death itself was chasing him" (p. 275). He faces the trial, of course, for formality-sake. There were many of his colours and kinds who were ready to protect him. He got acquitted and let free with the mere charge of 'culpable homicide'.

The novel touches multiple facets of crises faced by the Indians during the period of the British. People in general and

the poor in particular had to lead a life of wretchedness and affliction. Indians had to face the crisis of inhumanity caused by racial inequality in their own very land. Women suffer harassment under animal-like characters such as Reggie. Any women who railed against faced the music of displeasure and fury of the lords. Negi's wife, for instance, becomes a victim to the lust of Reggie. There is the depiction of how he treats his mistress. He considered her as his possession just like he possessed a ring or a suit or a pair of shoes. She was almost numb at his presence. She had no other option than surrendering to his corporeal heat even though her inner self never willed to lose her chastity, modesty and self-worth. He beat her in the bed when she could not cope-up with her lust; tore her breasts; bit her cheeks; smashed her buttocks and thus almost molested her in the name of making love.

The Indian peasants found their very ethical authenticity questioned as suspicion on the credibility of them had become a constant phenomenon in the mind of the British officials in the estate. In the name of thieving and insincerity they were coerced by any Dick and Harry of the fare-skinned brutes who became superiors, supervisors, managers and care-takers. They, being capitalists, behaved worst than the Marxian bourgeois and considered the proletarian labourers as possible threat to their very existence. Hence, their supervision of them was very scrupulous and they were not given appropriate breaks even to meet their basic needs. They deducted their wages in the pretext of inappropriate care in plucking the tea-leaves. Poverty forced them to borrow money from the money-lenders and when they could not pay them back on time they levied heavy interest on them and thus made them perennially bonded. Gangu undergoes the crisis of life at every one of his steps and he starts reflecting and pondering over the utility of existence and a streak of doubt on the existence of God creeps in his mind. A sense of insecurity and inconsequentiality starts overshadowing him.

In his many short stories there is one titled "The Barber's Trade Union" appearing in the collection of short stories published in the same title. In it Mulkraj Anand discusses of the insults and embarrassments Chandu the barber-boy undergoes just due to the reason that he belonged to a barber-class and caste. He was not allowed by the caste Hindus even to wear the dresses of his choice. For instance, when he tried to wear a neat and clean dress Bijai Chand, the landlord insults him saying, "go away you, swine, go away and wear clothes befitting your low status as a barber..." (p. 10). All the same, the difference between this story and Coolie or Untouchable or Two leave and a Bud is that unlike Munoo, the Coolie or Bakha, the untouchable, or Gangu, the tea-labourer, Chandu did not get himself weighed down by the insults. He rose above it. He used the insults as stepping stones and finally succeeds forming a barbers' trade union. "Rajkot District Barber Brothers' Hairdressing and Shaving Saloon' has been followed by many other active trade unions of working men". (p. 64).

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* has deep glimpses of crisis that is caused by the conflict and crises between the nationalist thought and activities with religious and cultural conservativeness and orthodoxy. Kanapura is a secluded South Indian village. The ideals of Mahatma got prevalence in the village during the period of national independence. Moorthy is the hero who is depicted as the upholder and preacher of Gandhian ideals of non-violence, Truthfulness and Patriotism. He was a well-educated person. He undergoes the crisis of whether to become a normally-acclaimed scholar or to become a model of Mahatma. He opts to become the spokesperson of Gandhian ideals. He gives-up his formal education for this purpose though he pursues it later. The real crisis comes to fore when he starts fighting against untouchability. The Brahmins especially the temple-priest starts turning against him. He brings the matter to the public and with the help of certain foreign officials gets Moorthy excommunicated. Hearing the fact that his son is exiled his mother Narasamma gets disconsolate and dies unhappy. Moorthy's courage and conviction becomes inspiration, source and strength for his village-folks. One could witness courage and strength and patriotism and religiosity and spirituality overflowing in the hearts of the men and women and especially boys of Kanthapura even during critical situations of fights-for-freedom and martyrdoms.

"O fire, O soul,
Give us the spark of God-eternal,
That friend to friend and friend to foe,
One shall we stand before HIM." (p. 174)

Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* deals with the identity crisis and the crisis of the pain of the meaning of love. The hero very specially undergoes the pain of identity crisis. This is expressed in the moving words of the hero Ramaswamy when he says, "I was born an orphan, and have remained one. I have wandered the world and have sobbed in hotel rooms and in trains, have looked at the cold mountains and sobbed, for I had no mother." (p. 6). He always seems undergoing certain pain within him. This pain seems to be haunting him. This is why his autobiography is poignant. He is, all the same, not able to exactly identify this silent pain or sorrow. This is why we could hear him saying, when he was deciding to go to India, "there was a sorrow that filled me and which had not name." (p. 241). He feels and experiences Medeline's love. He loves her. Yet, he could not persist in his love. This is due to his ego-centeredness or self-centeredness or egocentricity. He confuses his identity with everything. His perception of things does not seem to be objective. Rather, it seems to be coloured by certain self-pity of the past. It might be due to his unpleasant childhood. It might be due to his orphan-reality. He feels certain confusedness. He says, "Love shines as the instinct in the step, where we move... we leave our footsteps behind telling love we have loved." (p. 386).

Feminine crisis could be said to be central themes of many of the writings of Shobhaa De. Her *Bollywood Nights* speaks of a simple girl Asha Rani who had to sell his body in order to survive in Bollywood and find a place of her own. She had to love a person who was already married. She had to live just as a mistress for him. She does not get her emotional satisfaction anywhere. The people who use her just want to satiate their lust or greed. She, moreover, lives an unhappy life even though she

had become an acclaimed actress and did not lack money. She is almost pushed to the fate of feeling guilt-conscience ultimately. She talks out painfully saying, "God has punished me. It is nothing else but that. I deserve it. I have been evil. I have sinned. Heaven knows what made me do that." (p. 329).

In *A Suitable Boy*, a lengthy literary work of one thousand three hundred and forty nine pages, Vikram Seth discusses of the times of crisis faced by men and women of different calibers in the infant-independent-India. Though the struggles tensions of the individuals and families are shown the tensions and turmoils of the country also are equally highlighted. Like many others dealing with the Indian-National-Level crises and criticalities, Vikram Seth, perhaps more clearly discusses these issues. Communalism, Communal-violence, killings for suitable reasons, games of politics etcetera are the crisis points. The agonies and pains born by the innocent multitude during demolitions of temples and mosques and the consequent communal violences are, no doubt, different from international crises of Classism Communalism and Colour-differences. All of a sudden certain riot breaks out. A mob marches in all directs with all kinds of weapons. They know who is a Hindu and who is a Muslim. They finish of whomsoever they dislike or hate. Thus the innocents are persecuted for no reason. They are killed. Their dreams come to an end abruptly. Seth says, "Like humanity gone mad, each element indistinguishable from the other, all bent on a kind of collective suicide." (p. 734).

The crisis of love and the sufferings together with their- filial, conjugal, erotic, platonic phenomena and paraphernalia- are not devoid of hatred, jealousy, selfishness and betrayal. Caste, colour, creed, culture, economy, politics, philosophy etcetera play havoc as well. This is why Lata, for whose marriage her family and friends are desperately searching for a suitable boy, when happened to fall in love with a Muslim, Kabir, did not hesitate to betray him and give him up. This was why she could not sleep. She feels as though "where she could go and be by herself for a week and wash away the image of Kabir that she had, despite herself, stored away with the most treasured of her memories." (p. 1153).

In Anita Desai's *In Custody*, a book short-listed for the man-booker-award, the struggles and conflicts Devan the hero undergoes could be said to be a crisis of physical, psychological, social, political as well as temperamental nature. He feels himself a failure as a professor. He is a professor at Delhi College. He lives in the beginning an indifferent and dull life. This indifference and dullness gets altered when he was assigned by his friend Murad with the task of interviewing Nur, the Urdu poet. Devan found the task very difficult and disturbing. He undergoes so much troubles and sufferings. This was because he could not haul out anything from the poet as he had grown an ascetic. His tireless efforts become unsuccessful and ineffective. He becomes wretched, dismal and pitiable. As such things happen and as he starts losing his name he could not command respect from his students. He does not seem to be happy with his marital life as his wife has not a bit of taste for poetry or literature. His wife loathes and ferns at him just because he was becoming less and less successful in becoming rich and enabling her lead a luxurious life. Rather he ruins his financial standing and accumulates debt after debt in the process of accomplishing his task of collecting facts about Nur. He slowly and gradually realizes that the world seldom offers any opportunity and possibility for success. He gets frustrated. As Neeru Tandon observes in her *Anita Desai's In Custody – A Critical Appraisal*, "he lives with a sense of defeat and failure." (p. 53).

Maya in Anita Desai's *Cry, The Peacock*, is a typical example of persons undergoing psychological crisis. Maya did not suffer from any financial want. Rather she enjoyed normally luxurious riches of all kind. All the same, there was something haunting her. It's a prediction from an astrologer. He foretells the doom of both her husband as well as herself. This prediction leaves a deep imprint in her. She starts looking at life and all happenings in it in this perspective. Her relationship with her husband turns out to be a tug-of-war. She undergoes inner pain, agony, loneliness and solitude. She feels as though unloved. She does not want to die. Rather she wants to live. All the same the prediction of the astrologer predominates her person more than her love for life or her love for the life of her husband. She does not even hesitate to kill his husband as though to prove that the prediction is right. She does it in a rather cruelest way as she herself narrates, "I screamed in fury, and thrust out my arms towards him, out at him, into him and past him, saw him fall then, pass through an intensity of air, down to the very bottom." (p. 208).

Maya loved her father dearly. As she had lost her mother and as her brother had gone to U.S for earning his living she could find her father as the only person for him. she relied on him and moreover psychologically got attached to him. This, as a consequence, makes her to evaluate her life and the very existence in an irregular and imbalanced way. She wants the world to rotate on the basis of her whims and fancies. She feels that this would happen too. But, when it does not happen so, she feels depressed. She wants her husband to love her exactly as her father loved her. Gautam, her husband could not, womehow, fulfill her aspirations as he was absolutely devoted to his work of a lawyer and as he wanted o perform it at the best of his ability. This makes Maya feel as though he does not love her and that he is not very much interested in her. She feels as though she is a loner. A thought of emptiness and meaninglessness fills her heart and starts to eats her up. The astrologer's predictions devastate her hopes and make her condition really hopeless. One could see tenderness and sensitivity and even childishness sweeping over Maya very often and blinding her reasons which is just opposed to the character of Gautam who is more of logical than sentimental. It is hence the clash between both of them go on increasing. Their marital life becomes more or less vacuum-filled. There is no psychological harmony between both the spouses. Maya is almost cornered to psychological level of insanity. He gets into tantrums. She finds visions which as, as per Jung, "invasions by unconscious contents" (*Dreams*, p. 122). He suffers nightmares. She dreams as though rats and snakes and all kind of dangerous creature crawling over her and frightening her as though to the extent of the very death itself. She finds her bed as death-bed and her home as the tomb. Nothing could be of any saving effect to her as the insanity takes absolute possession of her.

More or less like the character of Maya in her psychological novel, *Voices in the City*, Anita Desai brings out the

concept of feministic psychological crisis vividly. The society, whether nationally or globally, has been showing certain kind of prejudiced, biased and unfair attitude towards women. They are projected as lesser, substandard and mediocre beings. The male- chauvinism has considered the female physiological nature as something to be dominated and utilized for lust and sexual satiation. Women, as a consequence, have been undergoing psychological conflicts, inferiority complexes, psychic shocks and strains and stresses, internal imbalance and external lack of equilibrium. This is also case with Monisha of *Voices in the City* in which Monisha finds herself damned, predestined and condemned after her marriage. She is caught up with the confinements in an orthodox family where she finds her life and existence have not scope of hope of attaining its essence. She feels as though separated and alienated from the outside world and thus no windows of optimism is open to her. She longs for a better and happier life. she dreams of getting out from her in-laws' house and walking through her maternal home and living therein. But, when she realizes that it is not possible for her she gets distressed and depressed and resigns to the fate saying: " I think that what separates me from this family is the fact that not one of them ever sleeps out under the stars at night. They have indoor minds, starless and darkles. Mine is all dark now"(p. 139). Ultimately, unable to hold her firm and not willing to compromise with the internal and external darkness and finding life no more than absurdity she sets herself ablaze.

Thus, one could go on endlessly exploring the tinges and touches of existential crisis intertwining among the characters, situations, time-frames and timeless-limitations of the works of prominent Indo-English literary masters. Research on each one of these would, indeed, go endless.

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