

**ANALYZING FICTION IN THE NOVELS OF CHITRA BANERGEE
DIVAKA RUNI'S**



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ABSTRACT

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni was born in Calcutta in 1957, and she moved to the United States when she was nineteen years old. She attended Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, for her master's degree in English, and then she continued her education by enrolling in the PhD programme at the University of California, Berkeley. She started out her writing career. Career as a poet after the publication of their book titled *The Reason for Nasturtiums* (1990). Arranged Marriage, her debut collection of short stories, was honoured with the American Book Award, the PEN Josephine Miles

Award, and the Bay Area Book Reviewers Award. These honours helped pave the path for her to become a prominent author in the field of English literature. A film with the same name as one of Divakaruni's best-selling novels, *The Mistress of Spices*, has been made into a movie of the same name. Her most notable novels are *The Mistress of Spices* (1995), *Sister of my Heart* (1999), *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *Queen of Dreams* (2004), *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), *One Amazing Thing* (2010), *Oleander Girl* (2013), and *Before We Visit the Goddess* (2016). She is also the author of the *Brotherhood of the Conch Series*,

which consists of *The Conch Bearer* (2003), *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* (2005), and *Shadowland* (2016). (2009).

One of her collections of short stories is titled *Arranged Marriage*.

KEYWORDS: fiction, novels, themes, feminism,

INTRODUCTION

In the piece that was written by "The Terror Fear in the Diasporic Community: The Recent Fiction of Chitra Divakaruni," the author discusses how Chitra Divakaruni's novels *Queen of Dreams*, *One Amazing Thing*, and *Oleander Girl* illustrate how the diasporic community in the United States has changed since the Islamic terrorist attack on the United States that took place on September 11, 2001. The incident not only traumatised inhabitants of the United States but also had less of a negative impact on those living in other countries because to the increased security measures taken by the government of the United States. Through the characters in the novel *Queen of Dreams*, Chakroborty sheds light on the struggles that second generation immigrants face in America. In spite of the fact that second-generation immigrants like Rakhi from "Queen of Dreams," Korobi from "Oleander Girl," and Tariq and his family from "One Amazing Thing" accept the way of life and means of subsistence in the United States, their inner struggle to connect their souls to the land of their ancestors becomes even more important as a result of the increased vigilance of the nation's security apparatus in the wake of the terrible attack that is traced in the article

In the piece written by C. Bharathi and titled "The Portrayal of Sister-friend in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Sister of My Heart*," the author explores the concept of a woman's sense of sisterhood in relation to another female character.

Characters of women predominate throughout the book, including three mothers (Gouri Ma, Nalini, and Aunt Pishi), two young cousin sisters (Anju and Sudha), and an aunt (Pishi). Both Gauri Ma and Nalini are committed to providing their daughters with the best possible upbringing despite their families' precarious financial situations. Bharathi interprets Divakaruni's depiction of friendship in sisterhood as Anju and Sudha giving more importance to each other than they do to their husbands in their lives. This is how Bharathi understands Divakaruni's depiction of friendship in sisterhood. In spite of the fact that the sisters have harboured feelings of resentment, anger, and antipathy toward one another at times, the fact that Sudha gave up her lover Ashoke in order to help Anju fulfil her wedding fantasy and that Anju struggled to bring pathetic Sudha to America in order to build a future

there despite knowing her husband was attracted to Sudha's beauty is evidence of the strong bond that exists between the sisters. According to the review, Divakaruni demonstrates the greater significance that should be attached to the relationships of women and how those relationships have the potential to satisfy the existential theme of life.

The book "The Vine of Desire: A Study of Immigrants' Cultural Dilemmas and Displacements" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni sheds light on the effects of being uprooted. Ashok Chaskar was the translator of this work. The Vine of Desire is the sequel to Sister of My Heart, and it reveals the psychological development that both Sudha and Anju went through between the time of their migration and the present. In the article written by Ashok Chaskar, the topic of Divakaruni's character's reluctance to continue living in the United States is discussed. The article describes how Trideep's father and Sudha initially feel content with their new life in the United States, but later choose their native land as their secure place. Sudha, who was raised in the traditional ways of an orthodox Bengali culture by three different mothers, has a tendency to engage in incestuous behaviour with Sunil after moving in with Anju. As a result, she deceives her adoring sister Anju, for whom she had previously abandoned her relationship with Ashoke. The character of Sudha is used to voice out the nature of American culture, which asserts the maxim "Live for Yourself," and fascinates Orient towards Occident. The article does this by describing the character.

The article "Self Revelation in Chitra Banerjee's The Mistress of Spices" by P.Valli Deivanai reveals the inner conflict that Tilo experiences when attempting to establish her own sense of self. It was Chitra Banerjee's first novel, as well as her most popular, and it received many positive reviews from critics who praised its originality as well as the fusion of prose and poetry that was used as a narrative technique through the use of the literary device of magical realism. The writer of the research article deduces the protagonist Tilo's unique identity, beginning with her birth and continuing into the present day. Being born with the supernatural ability of premonition, her name is Nayan Tara, and when the pirates discovered her, they captured her.

transports her elsewhere. She was given the name Bhagyavathi when she was born, but the snakes on the island gave her the name Sarpakanya. Later, when she decided to become the mistress of spices, she changed her name to Tilo, which means "life."

giver". The article also voiced its disapproval of the test that was administered to Tilo, in which she was had to pick between her identity of rescuing others from the difficulties they faced and her love for Raven (American) in the manner of a regular lady.

Vasigaran, in his doctoral dissertation titled "Cross-Cultural Experiences of the Indian Womanhood through a Postcolonial Feminist Perspective: A Study on the Select Works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni," presents the Cross-Cultural experiences viewed by Divakaruni in her short stories such as Clothes, Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs, and The Word Love from the short story collection Arranged Marriage as well as the novels The Mistress The researcher makes an effort to bring attention to the plight of women living in patriarchal societies by stating, "The ideal of the traditional, oppressed woman persisted in a culture permeated by religious images of virtuous goddesses devoted to their husband, the Hindu goddesses Sita and Savitri, serves as powerful cultural ideals for women." This statement is in reference to the cultural clash that South Asian immigrant women experience in the United States.

Wenyang Xu's research work "Reading Feminine Mysticism in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Queen of Dreams" maps the tale of Mrs. Gupta and Rakhi and shows Divakaruni's feminine mysticism. The article's title is "Reading Feminine Mysticism in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Queen of Dreams." Through the characters of Mrs. Gupta and her daughter Rakhi, Divakaruni undermines the authority of patriarchal society by highlighting the extraordinary and supernatural qualities of women. The interpretation of the prehistoric period in the novel demonstrates the presence of feminine mysticism through the image of a female goddess. The Queen of Dreams comes from a strong Hindu cultural heritage, which includes the custom of worshipping female deities. This stands in contrast to the present gender norms of India, which reduce the chances of women gaining political power.

To put it another way, according to Hindu beliefs, "the Goddess permeates the universe and everything in it.... Beyond and above, inside and outside, nothing exists or stirs in the cosmos that is not imbued with the force of the Goddess" (1). The researcher in the article provides an illustration of Amaterasu, the sun goddess of Japan, along with several Greek Goddesses that are analogous to the Hindu culture in prehistoric religious devotion. This worship encourages feminine mysticism in a society that is dominated by patriarchy. The feministic orientation of Divakaruni's writing is readily apparent in the majority of her works, and in The Queen of Dreams, the author's propensity for giving supernatural abilities and potential to female characters serves as evidence of the author's opposition to patriarchy.

The purpose of Aparna Tiwari's paper, which she titled "Trauma and Repercussion in Golding's Lord of the Flies and Divakaruni's One Amazing Thing," is to compare and contrast the ways in which the two works are similar to one another as well as the ways in

which they are different. The article describes the fundamental aspects of trauma and the ways in which it influences human behaviour by referencing two works of fiction that are comparable in the way that they force their protagonists to fight for their lives. The nine characters from different parts of the world who are trapped in the basement of a Visa office during an earthquake come together and form the basis for the comparison with the theme of trauma, which is a common factor in both *Lord of the Flies* and *One Amazing Thing*. In *Lord of the Flies*, the children are transported to an isolated island after an aeroplane crash and must struggle to send out signals in order to survive. The tale of the nine characters in *One Amazing Thing* is told to one another at the traumatic event of life or death. This reveals the lives of the characters, including the loss, remorse, treachery, and transgressions that bring redemption to all of the characters. Divakaruni focuses on the psychological shifts and behaviours that occur at the end of a person's life, which have a role in the individual's coming to terms with their own identity and the revealing of their own true selves.

Ashalata Kulkarni, in her article titled "Gender and Postcoloniality in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*," argues that Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* should be regarded as a postcolonial work of art. Divakaruni is best known for her retelling of the Indian epic *Mahabharata* in the novel. The author alludes to the reality that India continued to practise gender discrimination even after the British ruled the country in this piece, as noted by the renowned psychologist Ashish Nandi. "According to him, prior to the rule of the British in India, gender roles were significantly more fluid and flexible. However, after the arrival of the British, the imperial ideology of superiority of male and masculinity brought in the change of increase in the Kshatriya mode of masculinity," he said.

Divakaruni tells the story from Draupadi's point of view in the epic she has penned. The postcolonial implications of gender and race, as well as the effects of colonialism, were the primary topics of discussion in the article in which Draupadi exhibits gender prejudice. The ancient period is full with examples of racial prejudice, such as when the renowned legend Dronacharya in the *Mahabharata* refuses to educate Ekalavya because he is a member of a tribe.

In an article titled "Female Quest for Identity by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, with special reference to *Oleander Girl*," Raminderpal Kaur gives voice to Divakaruni's prominence of female characters and their individuality in her novel *Oleander Girl*. Kaur's article is titled "Female Quest for Identity by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, with special reference to

Oleander Girl." The protagonist of the book is named Korobi Roy, and she is an average Indian girl who should have all that she desires, but she does not.

after learning more about her journey to the United States in quest of her father and her prior background, she has a difficult time establishing her identity.

In the piece titled ""The Old Rules Aren't Always right": An Analysis of Four Short Stories by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni," written by Felicity Hand, the author examines the four short stories "Affair," "The Word Love," "Doors," and "Ultrasound" from the collection of short stories titled "Arranged Marriage" in a variety of different contexts.

The researcher who wrote the essay investigates what it is about Divakaruni's works that resonates with Indian women of a more conservative background. Divakaruni, in particular, uses her platform to advocate for the Indian immigrant women who, living in a patriarchal environment, struggle to maintain their sense of self. Divakaruni's four selected short stories are the foundation of the literary movement known as "Social Realism," which is represented by Felicity Hand.

The concept of travelling through time and space is discussed in P.V.L. Sailaja and N. Ramakrishna's paper, which is titled "Travelling through time: A Critical Analysis of The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming and Shadowland." This article was written by P.V.L. Sailaja and N. Ramakrishna. The magical conch that is buried deep within the mountain folds of the Himalayas is the central focus of the first three books in the Conch trilogy. Anand, the protagonist of these books, embarks on a series of perilous journeys in order to obtain the conch, and Divakaruni finds creative ways for the antagonists to be defeated so that she can introduce a more dynamic theme. Divakaruni describes Anand's time travel to the past and future as a way of fighting against evil in order to locate all of his missing companions and to safeguard the conch from contamination.

In the review of the research articles and dissertations, various topics, such as alienation, feminism, patriarchy, cultural conflict, social realism, magical realism, and self-identity, are discussed. These topics are incorporated by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, who is an eminent Indian diasporic writer. The research done on Divakaruni's literary works appeals to her social contribution and the expression of personal experience to the world. This is particularly relevant given that the author herself is an Indian born established in the United States. The assessment uncovered a knowledge gap in the form of a lack of criticism on the male characters and social provocation for the exodus.

REVIEW LITERATURE

To engage their cultural cross-overs, to investigate "conflicting loyalties" (Dhawan 23), their cultural acculturation within home and family, to theorise patterns of family advancement, child-rearing, and emotional needs of parenting, which they have subjectively relocated and restructured in women's language and in psychological negotiations is another aspect of modernist feminists' women writers of diaspora's work. One of the critics describes the Indian diaspora women characters' predicament in their novels, such as Dimple Das Gupta in Bharti Mukherjee's *Wife* (1975), Tara in Bharati Mukherjee's *Tiger's Daughter* (1972), and Feroza in Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat*. These characters go through a process of enchantment, disenchantment, and reenchantment for (1993). He states in a piece that he has written, "In more recent work we see evolving conceptions of home in diaspora and intricate rehomeing procedures" (Dhawan 22).

The writings of Amulya Malladi's *Serving crazy with Curry* (2004), Chitra Divakaruni's *Queen of Dreams* (2004), Iqbal Ramoowalia's *The Death of a Passport* (2004), and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) are considered to be the beginning of the post-feminist phase in the context of Indian women writers. These authors "sniff around for ways to secure salvation from uncertainty" (Dhawan 131) (130). These pieces make reference to the ongoing reality of the struggle for self-reliance and representations that can sustain themselves. Following this, works by women writers and critics of the Indian Diaspora as well as native Indian women brought these problematic features to the forefront for further examination and analysis. What characteristics give subsequent novels written by Indian women writers their particular relevance as representations of the post-feminist phase? What evidence exists to demonstrate that feminist rhetoric has ceded the field to post-feminism? How exactly does post-modern feminism do away with women's political agency in relation to both gender and nation?

Many Indian women writers, while representing social constructs, initiate feminist discourse analyses in the theoretical framework opined by Jasbir Jain in her book entitled *Indigenous Roots of Feminism: Culture, Subjectivity and Agency* (2003), in which she writes: "Feminism is not necessarily an ideology of resistance to patriarchal control but rather a movement that seeks integration of the public and the private space and the collapsing of the divisions between two different kinds of subjectivities." It expresses the need to be heard, to have a choice, and the freedom to act in line with that decision. It also expresses the freedom to act in accordance with that choice. It is impossible for there to be a

reconstruction of feminine space that occurs in a vacuum; rather, it must include interaction with the concept of masculinity (Jain 124).

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an Indian-American writer who is a member of the diaspora. She is known for destroying the deeply organised totalitarianism of domination and masculine submission by either admitting culpability or denying that any damage was done. This has been the figurative intervention of the author to let its women protagonist in a certain kind of magic realist tendency either to bear the cost of their decision or to deter from self-denial or internal ambivalence to exactly formulate the preferred stance and notion of their meaningful existence. This has been the case either because the author wanted the women to bear the cost of their decision or because the author wanted the women to deter from self-denial or internal ambivalence.

Her feminist characters rewrite their borders in an effort to break free from myths and images that are stereotypical of them. In point of fact, the plots of two of the novels take a stance on "feminism's relationships to sexuality," specifically sisterhood, which is an attempt to destabilise heteronormative sexuality, which is observed as a site of danger and oppression for women, but later it turns into a troubled one, because of their incommensurable differences that liberates body and sexuality, but does not obscure the male/female binary, nor does it stop the risks of moving (Martin:1994). In addition, Chitra Divakaruni does not subscribe to the homo-affirmative objective; rather, she bets her survival on the existence of heterosexuals. If analysed within the aforementioned theoretical framework, Chitra Divakaruni's three novels, *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), *The Sister of My Heart* (1999), and *The Vine of Desire* (2004), then "questions feminism and its role in producing the discursive strictures that require to be there to be women, the feminine, and the femininity, that cannot escape the charge of heteronormativity and thus cannot hardly merit the name of feminism" (Halley 610).

CHITRA DIVAKARUNI BANERJEE'S FICTION

Chitra Divakaruni Banerjee, an Indian-American novelist and one of the most prolific writers in India, holds citizenship in both India and the United States. She is also a citizen of both nations. She was the only girl in a family of four children and the only child to be born in Calcutta on July 29, 1956. She was also the only child to have been born in India. She wanted to get her Master's degree at Wright State University in Ohio, so she uprooted her life and travelled to the United States. Following the completion of her Master's programme, she continued her education by enrolling in the Doctor of Philosophy programme at the University of California, Berkeley. Following the completion of her schooling, she moved

to the Bay region where she worked as a teacher for a number of years. Divakaruni is curious about the challenges that women in the host nation are dealing against. As a direct consequence of this, she opened a support line in San Francisco for women who were immigrants. She progressed through the ranks to become the president of the South Asian women's rights organisation known as MAITRI. This organisation is an advocate for South Asian women who are residing in difficult situations.

In addition, it is helpful to South Asian women who are suffering with the emotional abuse, cultural isolation, and domestic violence that often accompany these issues. It works in conjunction with other organisations to expand the scope of help offered by such organisations to female members of the community. The connection between Divakaruni's higher devotion to organisation and her work can be observed easily. In addition to this, Divakaruni is a member of the advisory board of Daya, which is a non-profit organisation that is based in Houston and is committed to the elimination of violence against women. As a consequence of this, Chitra Divakaruni was in a position to keep her relationships within the South Asian country in a healthy state. In addition to that, she is employed by PRATHAM, an international organisation that is dedicated to charitable activities. It is successful in lowering the percentage of people in India who cannot read or write. This organisation devotes the most of its resources and efforts to assisting communities that are comprised of urban slums, rural outposts, and poison's labour sites where children are employed.

The writings of Chitra Banerjee had a substantial impact on these establishments, which may be seen in the following sentences. She states that it forced her to think a lot more deeply about things, and she came to see how those worries tied to the lives of immigrants, which is what prompted her to want to write about them as a result of wanting to write about them. It is necessary in order to realise the full potential of her writing. After she had left India, she began to develop an interest in various aspects of female culture. It is necessary for her to gain an understanding of the issues and obstacles that women in the host nation confront. A significant portion of her body of work centres on the female immigrant experience as a central theme. She asserts that women in particular respond to her work because she feels compelled to write about issues that are pertinent to them, such as being in love or experiencing difficulties in their relationships. She says this is why her work resonates with women. She wanted people to be able to connect with her characters and feel their joy and suffering because she knew that it would be more difficult for individuals to project their feelings onto other people when they encountered them in real

life. Chitra Divakaruni is a lady that hails from the Indian subcontinent, but you can find her living in the United States of America at the moment. She is a gifted storyteller and exemplifies the double ancestry, which includes characteristics of both Indian and American culture. Her background combines the best of both worlds.

DIASPORIC APPROACH TO SELECTED WORKS OF CHITRA BANERJEE

In the book "The Mistress of Spices," the author weaves together aspects of Indian mythology, American reality, and the significance of each to women. The action of the book takes place in Oakland, and it tells the story of a woman named Tilo, who is a spice expert and who owns a grocery shop with the signboard SPICE BAZAAR. Tilo tries to find a solution to the day-to-day challenges faced by Indian immigrants in America by employing a mystical remedy involving spices. The difficulties that are disclosed are relatable to real life. She has been schooled in the therapeutic properties of spices, and combined with her own magical skills, she is able to sense issues confronted by her clients even when she is not in direct communication with them. She makes sure to pick out the perfect spice for each of her clients so that she may get them out of their problem. The book tells various different experiences about people who immigrated from India and their attempts to understand their heritage, as well as their struggles with acculturation, racism, and identity issues. The diasporic challenges they face are illuminated and, to a certain extent, resolved thanks to Tilo and the charms of spices. Even Tilo has identity uncertainty on occasion due to the fact that she has assumed a number of different identities throughout the course of her existence. In 2005, a movie that was based on the novel and kept its name was released in theatres.

In her work, Divakaruni explores the mental state of immigrants via the use of the magic realism literary technique. Tilo is able to pry into the thoughts of her clients thanks to the mystical skill she has. Through Tilo's point of view, the reader is transported to the hidden worlds of immigrants, where he or she may experience all of the emotions of joy, despair, expectation, reality, struggle, and frustration. Tilo is able to relay the ideas of her clients to the readers, and she uses spices to help cure their ills. Tilo is able to converse with the spices, who have been represented as beings with magical qualities. Tilo can also talk with the spices. Not only do customers come to the shop to buy food, but they also come in search of personal satisfaction. These customers come from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds.

Divakaruni paints a large cast of characters onto the canvas of her story, but the most of her empathy is directed at the female characters. She explores issues that arise for female

characters as a result of patriarchal attitudes and cultural friction. Her protagonists come from the working class and struggle with a variety of problems, including racial prejudice, while living in the diaspora. The lifestyles of Divakaruni's female characters serve as a model for how to navigate the challenges of life while maintaining a comfortable lifestyle. The characters she writes centre mostly on one another's pursuit of their own unique identities. Her female subjects shatter the confines of outmoded conventional norms and lead lives of complete autonomy.

The majority of the characters in the book "The Mistress of Spices" are first-generation immigrants. They come to the United States with the desire to find happiness and prosperity, but the harsh reality of life as an immigrant causes them to feel depressed. The novel "The Mistress of Spices" is set in India. They contrast the state of their minds on the inside with the status of the world around them. It's possible that the disparity between the two will cause them to experience sensations of displacement. Tilo, the heroine of the book, struggles with emotions of homelessness over the length of the story, and as a result, she feels estranged from everyone and everything she encounters. She goes by a multitude of identities, and each one of those names is tailored to the context in which she is now found. In point of fact, Tilo was not her real name; rather, she was given the name Nayan Tara, which means "star of the eye," and she was born in a hamlet in India. Her parents saw her birth as nothing more than a dowry debt, and they did not celebrate it. When it is revealed that the daughter who was left unattended is born with the ability to predict the future, the happy ending is that her parents do indeed come to see her as their "star of the eye." However, despite the fact that her magical gift has brought her fame and money, she does not believe that her life is full of joy and excitement. Even though she is at home, she does not feel at ease there.

Her parents and siblings obey her orders because of the great fortune she has amassed via the presents she has received, but as the narrative progresses, she finds herself increasingly isolated. How wearisome my existence had become with all of the unending acclaim, the songs of admiration, the mountains of presents, and the frightened respect shown by my parents. And then there were those never-ending evenings spent laying awake in a room full of girls who moaned out the names of boys they saw in their nightmares. When I wanted to escape the emptiness that was opening out like a black hand inside of my chest, I would turn my face into my pillow. I would concentrate my concentration on my unhappiness until it was resolved.

Later, her thoughts entice pirates to kidnap her so that they may take use of her extraordinary power and get wealthy. She assumes the role of a pirate queen, and her crew obeys her every order. She is now known by her new name, Bhagyavati, which means "Bringer of Luck" (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 19). Tilo's life, however, is devoid of either enjoyment or a sense of purpose on this front as well. Once more, her thoughts bring about a catastrophe, this time in the shape of a hurricane that sinks the ship and kills all of the pirates on board. She is saved by legendary serpents that live in the ocean. They explain to her that on the island of spices, women are educated in the proper use of spices and can eventually become spice masters. She is offered the opportunity to join the serpents and be granted the title of Sarpa Kanya, which translates to "snake maiden," but she rejects that offer in favour of the spice island (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 22-24). She eventually makes it to the island of spices, where she receives instruction in spices from an elderly woman who is the trainer.

Each mistress is given a new name by the old mother once they have completed the official training of spices; in this passage, she expresses wish to be called by Tilo, which is a short form for Tilottama. The term originates from a sesame seed, which is more commonly referred as as a seasoning that provides nutrients. The elderly mother gives each mistress a specific location at which they are to feed the people with the use of various spices. Tilo has made the decision to settle in Oakland because she hopes to spend her life working to better the lives of South Asians who now reside in the United States. She arrives in Oakland thanks to a supernatural phenomenon known as "Shampati's fire." A mistress enters a blaze and emerges in a new body at a different location; this bonfire takes place in a new location. According to tradition, Shampati is a bird of legend and memory that dove into the flames and emerged as a fresh bird from the ashes (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 56). Tilo's rebirth is symbolised by the fire of Shampati, which represents her transition into a new form while taking on the appearance of an elderly lady.

She is confined to the store because of the regulations that were established for the mistress, and she frequently feels lonely by heart. Her sense of estrangement is exacerbated when, for the first time, she ventures outside of the store and experiences a powerful need for a location that she can refer to as "home." The closing of her shop is a step in the right direction toward integration with the settled country, but on the inside, she still feels like an outsider. As a result of her change, Tilo has been given a new function and a new identity. She has been transformed into an elderly woman who is responsible for watching after the business on the street in Oakland. Her natural nature and passions are repressed due to the

obligations she must fulfil in her role as mistress of spices, giving her the appearance of a conventional elderly Indian woman who is unsightly and ageless. The depth of her anguish is frequently communicated through her thoughts, as in the following example: "This masquerade collapsing like old snakeskin around my feet, and I rising scarlet and fresh and wetgleaming" (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 49)

Because she cannot truly consider the shop to be her home in the traditional sense of the term, she experiences moments of unease whenever she is there. Only in Oakland does Tilo feel what can only be described as a sense of dislocation for the very first time. She never had feelings of unhomeliness in her previous incarnations as Nayan Tara, Bhagyavati, or as a trainee on the spice island; nonetheless, she has reported experiencing troubling emotions consistent with homelessness since moving to Oakland. Her previous jobs can be interpreted, in one sense, as stepping stones along the path that led her to the culminating point of her career. However, the location of her final destiny does not calm her down. It is a symbolic revelation of the sensation of alienation and identity issues that immigrants feel when they move to a new country. When a person migrates to a new country voluntarily, they are typically drawn to the prospect of better opportunities and more freedom in the new country; however, once they arrive there and begin their lives as immigrants, they quickly learn that they are unable to integrate into the social structure of the host country. Confusion over one's identity is the inevitable result of having the experience of being uprooted. Tilo is able to discern the reasons behind the mental, bodily, and spiritual distress that her clients are experiencing thanks to the supernatural capacity she possesses.

She is able to read her customers' minds and comprehend their desires the moment they walk through the door of her shop. She is constantly aware of the fact that she possesses the extraordinary capacity to heal people using the enchanted powers of spices. She takes great pride in her role as mistress of spices, and she often boasts that she is the one who "can make it all happen," including obtaining green cards, promotions, and dating females with lotus eyes. I. Tilo, "the builder of the dream of immigrants" (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 28). As a mistress, she is tasked with serving immigrants who are having trouble surviving in the United States, as well as those who are experiencing cultural tensions or identity crises. However, while she is serving her customers, she is not permitted to interfere in the lives of any of her customers, nor is she permitted to incite any desires in them. Tilo does not want to breach any of the regulations that have been established for the mistresses, but she does so unwittingly when she becomes involved sympathetically and emotionally with other residents. Although it is against the rules to touch a client or to leave the store, she

nevertheless does both. Her romantic involvement with an American man whose name is Raven is another thing that violates the rule that her mother has set. It would appear from all of these occasions that Tilo is continually looking for particular associations in the hopes of curing her own feelings of alienation.

Therefore, Divakaruni depicts in vivid detail the problems that immigrants face in real life, particularly the difficulties faced by women. They make an effort to blend in with the host culture, because doing so adds a new dimension to their lives, but they are unable to completely abandon their indigenous way of life. They gradually develop feelings of alienation as a result of the collision of their cultures, traditions, and customs, as well as their own reluctance to disregard male dominance.

Indian immigrants are drawn to the Spice Bazaar because it has become a community for them where they can truly feel at ease. The smell of spices and the mention of various products sold in the shop, such as rajma (red kidney beans), basmati rice, kheer (pudding), pudina leaves, pakodas (fritters), and papads, as well as well-known Indian brand products, such as Mysore sandalwood soap, Singer machines, Bedekar pickles, and Bata shoes, amongst others, stir up a native spirit and cause immigrants to feel sentimental about their homeland and There are a lot of things in the store that bring back memories of the past, such as Indian candies, different kinds of vegetables and pulses, music cassettes and video tapes of Indian movies, and a number of other things that are reminiscent of India. Tilo boasts with great pride that her shop carries all the spices, including the ones that were previously lost. She makes the following observation: "If you stand in the centre of this room and slowly turn around, you will be looking at every Indian spice that has ever been – even the lost ones – gathered here upon the shelves of my store.

When I say that there is no other place on earth quite like this one, I do not believe that I am overstating the case (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 3). There is a mention of additional stores in California that are similar to these, but it seems that the majority of them are just regular grocery stores. The uniqueness of Spice Bazaar can be attributed to both the extensive selection of spices and Tilo's miraculous ability. In addition to groceries and seasonings, the shop is also the repository of culture and customs, elements of which cannot be disentangled from one another. Her shop brings back fond memories of their homeland for a significant number of Indian immigrants living in California. People who are struggling in their diasporic lives come to her store in the hopes of finding happiness, and the store becomes an oasis for them. Regular customers at her shop include Lalita, Jagjit and his mother, Daksha, Haroun, and Geeta, along with a number of other Indian immigrants who come to purchase

Indian groceries and spices. Tilo refers to a group of young women as the "bougainvillea girls," and they are known to frequent his store on occasion to purchase rice and spices in order to prepare biryani. Tilo is quoted as saying, "All those voices, in Hindi, Oriya, Assamese, Urdu, Tamil, and English, layered one on the other like notes from a tanpura, all those voices asking for more than their words, asking for happiness, except no one seems to know where" (Divakaruni, *Mistress* 78). Memory and longing play essential parts in the lives of people who are dislocated, as Divakaruni convincingly illustrates in her novel. [Citation needed] People in this situation often find solace and comfort in their memories, which also serve as a window into their previous lives and the places they once called home. It not only helps them cope with the issues they are facing at the moment, but it also reinforces their connection to the root cause.

During the process of relocating, Tilo runs into her fair share of difficulties. Her journey from home to the seas as a pirate queen, then from the seas to the island of spices as a trainee, and finally from the island of spices to California as the mistress of spices raises questions of belongingness and creates confusion regarding identity. When she first moves to California, she is exposed to the ideas of homeland, nationality, and cultural values for the first time in her life. Her education in spices paves the way for the generation of a sense of affiliation with spices and the country of origin from which they come, namely India. As the mistress of spices, she is obligated to adhere to certain guidelines and maintain her allegiance to spices. Tilo demonstrates his loyalty to Indian culture and tradition by maintaining his dedication to spices. The immigrant customers frequent the store because it allows them to celebrate their cultural heritage, and for many of them, it also provides a sense of familiarity and identity. The store, in a certain sense, comes to represent the culture of the Indian people.

A trip to the shop will transport the customer back to memories of their time spent in India. When they look at the different materials available at the store, it brings back memories of the past and the ways in which things were utilised. Tilo's narration of certain immigrant customers and their purchases demonstrates that these customers buy the same things over and over again, which is evidence that these customers are consciously affiliated with their roots and strive to keep them alive. Their history and their connection to their roots are not going to be erased by the influence of the west. In addition, the cuisines and methods of preparation utilised by members of the immigrant community are evidence of their efforts to maintain their traditions and culture. They remember and feel a connection to their past through the rituals and traditions surrounding the food they eat. In difficult times, the

immigrants' memories and sentimental attachments are what keep their lives moving forward. The only thing that brings Ahuja's wife, Lalita, solace is taking refuge in her recollections of the past. Before she got married and moved to India, she had a successful career as a skilled tailor. Her union with an NRI has not been a source of comfort for her. Due to her husband's patriarchal attitude and his frequent outbursts of abuse, she is forced to shelve her dreams of becoming a tailor in the United States. Despite her passion for the craft, she is unable to pursue it.

CONCLUSION

It is based on a thematic analysis, and it has been summarised into three sections, including an introduction to Indian writers in India, a critical survey of this thesis, and a suggestion for further research. These components are listed below. The evolution of Indian literature written in English is the subject of the first chapter. The term "Indian English literature" refers to the body of work done in the English language by authors of Indian descent. Indian writers wrote in both English and their original languages, and during the early stages of writing in English, many of the Indian writers' works were translated into English. Because India is so diverse, a number of its writers have taken to embracing the country's many different writing traditions and styles. The pre-independence writers typically dealt with topics like as war and peace, crime and passion, loyalty and betrayal, love and jealousy in their works. Many authors writing in the post-independence era are looking for fresh topics to write about: With the conventional mould shattered beyond repair, many of these new novelists are groping to figure out their own technique, giving full reins to their creative imagination. India provides imaginary homelands to many writers, allowing them to better control their creative vision and exercise more creative control. (Naik, 9) The truth of life is mirrored in various works of literature. The term "Indian English literature" refers to the body of works created in the English language by authors of Indian descent. Indian literature has a lengthy history, and the primary subject matter of Indian authors' works is the culture and customs of the Indian people. Prose was the genre that was used for the earliest known Indian works in English. Many Indian authors use their writings to explore a variety of topics and subjects.

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