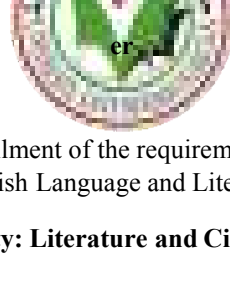


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**Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's**  
*The Mistress of Spices :*  
**A Psychoanalytic Approach**

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## **Dedication 1**

**(HAIOU Oussama)**

*To the light of my life, to my guardian angel, To my mother.*

## **Dedication 2**

**(GHRIB Rekia)**

*I wholeheartedly dedicate this humble research to the souls of my parents whose valuable support I felt up from heaven above. May Allah receive them in his vast paradise.*

*A special feeling of gratitude to my beloved husband Abdeldjalil, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears... may God protect him*

*I also dedicate this dissertation to the light of my life ... my angels ...Redouane, Amira, imane, Hiba and Farouk.*

*To my brothers Toufik and Mohamed To my dear sisters Amina, Nouara, Nadjat and Ahlam*

*To all my family members and friends. To my teachers whom I met during all my educational life.*

*Thank you for being in my life... thank you for believing in me.*

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## Abstract

Literature presents the essence of reality coming together, literature takes a critical approach to reality. With the advent of the British Empire and the spread of English rule in India, Indians began to read, talk, and write in English. Individuals thought of English as a language of comprehension and an important tool of communication among a diverse group of people. During the British reign in India, the germ of Indian writing in English was sowed, and it later flowered into an evergreen tree with fragrant blossoms and fruits. Indian writing in English has emerged as a new kind of writing that has begun to express Indian sentiments. Poets, novelists, essayists, and dramatists from India began to contribute their work to the world of literature. The First World War, which changed people's beliefs and political ideals, affected literature in the twentieth century. Novelists began to write about feminism, racism, colonialism, multiculturalism, and other topics instead of domestic and tragic themes. Because women had less access to education than males, the novel was not a popular genre. The purpose of this research is to see how well the Lacanian Model fits within Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* when it comes to reaching the protagonist's mind.

**Keywords:** Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Mirror stage, Diaspora literature, hybridity, clash of cultures.

## Table of Contents

Dedication 1.....	II
Dedication 2.....	III
Acknowledgments.....	IV
Abstract.....	V
Table of Contents.....	VI
<b>General Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. CHAPTER ONE: CULTURE, HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA LITERATURE</b>	
1.1 Introduction.....	9
1.2 Definition of Terms.....	9
1.2.1 The Concept of Diaspora Literature.....	9
1.2.1.1 Indian Diaspora Literature.....	9
1.2.2 Indo-Anglian Literature.....	10
1.3 A brief historical background of Indian English writings.....	10
1.4 Themes of the Indian Diaspora Literature.....	14
1.4.1 Historical, Political and Nationalist themes.....	15
1.4.1.1 Social Realism.....	16
1.4.1.2 Indian Diaspora and Immigration.....	16
1.4.1.3 Individual Issues.....	17
1.4.1.4 Feminism and Women's Empowerment.....	17
1.4.1.5 Modern Themes.....	18
1.5 Myth in the Indo-Anglian Literature.....	18
1.6 Culture in the Indo-Anglian Literature.....	21
1.7 The Concepts of Hybridity and Ambivalence.....	21
1.8 Conclusion.....	23
<b>2. CHAPTER TWO: CRITICAL REVIEW</b>	
2.1 Introduction.....	26
2.2 Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.....	26
2.2.1 Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's life.....	26
2.2.2 Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Literature Style.....	28
2.3 Plot summary.....	28
2.4 Characters.....	31

2.5	Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage: A Psychoanalytic Overview.....	32
2.6	Conclusion.....	33
<b>3. CHAPTER THREE: PSYCHOANALYSIS</b>		
3.1	Introduction.....	36
3.2	Psychoanalysis.....	37
3.2.1	Sorrow and Frustration.....	37
3.2.2	Disdain.....	38
3.2.3	Nostalgia.....	39
3.2.4	Regret.....	41
3.2.5	Racism.....	42
3.2.6	Affection.....	43
3.2.7	Love and Lust.....	45
3.3	The Significance of Spices in the Mistress of Spices.....	46
3.4	Conclusion.....	48
	<b>General Conclusion</b> .....	50
	Bibliography.....	52
	مراجع الدراسة.....	56

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION



## 1. Topic

Through centuries of change, Indian society has progressed. This collective knowledge has been portrayed in exile compositions through a rich convention of folklore, culture, religious traditions, and so on, in connection with western thinking and their convention. The author's Indian sensibility and character have been intaglio the author's Indian sensibility and character have been fore anchored skillfully with irrelevant consequences of dislocation or rootlessness. The Indian English book has received international acclaim for bringing in civilizations and expressing realities from their own perspective. India has been described as unusual, unearthly, poor, messy, glittering, and so on by various people at various occasions. On many levels, Indian society has been characterized as 'multi'-traditional, pious, racial, ethnic, and phonetic, to name a few. Despite the fact that the family and community are the foundations of all social orders, disagreement can be found even in these most basic places. Researchers have been inspired by the social growth of a Perfect Indian lady to test and delve deeply into the foundations of a sound development. In actuality, India is home to a diverse spectrum of socio-cultural structures, races, faiths, and religious orders.

Indian authors include a lot of images in their works. In contrast to a degenerate lady, who is compared to a 'dasi' or a 'servant,' a virtuous lady is compared to the image of a 'devi' or 'goddess.' The previous image portrays a lady who is intelligent and deserving of being beloved and married as a spouse, with all desirable attributes. While the latter portrays a lady as desirable and a symbol of love and sexuality who requires ethics and is unfit for family life. Both of these pictures run parallel to each other, with one representing her submissiveness to patriarchal norms and standards of conduct and the other representing her natural independence, self-sufficiency, and assertiveness.

The modern novel captures both the pleasurable and repulsive aspects of current life. Because of the inferiority problem, modern writers' characters are complex. These characters embody the uncertainties, struggles, and frustrations that have occurred in the modern world, and the modern novel is affected by psychological ideas.

Indian writings in English presently has carved out a new track, a modern vision which brings out the myths, magical realism, culture and tradition ; It is uncovered that their works are not an imitation of English scholarly design but escalation of Indian subject, their culture, their life style . Through their writing style they have given a new shape and color to literature. It also paved way to women writers, who had always been undervalued due to patriarchal superiority. It also gave women writers a voice, who had previously been overlooked due to patriarchal superiority. Domestic concerns, involvement in in-laws' events, difficulty in adjusting to post- and pre-marital status, melancholy, and so on were common themes among female writers. Ladies worked hard to discover their true selves. The psychological difficulties of dissatisfied homemakers are depicted in the majority of Indian women writers' books.

Women writers in India began to raise concerns about the country's long-standing patriarchal dominance. They feel they are not mere puppets in the hands of mankind. Within the realm of literature, they began to demonstrate their worth, knowledge, and writing style. The development of a feminist or women-centered approach, which approaches the encounter from the perspective of a feminine consciousness, has been a significant advancement in modern Indian fiction. "There appears to be something that we call a woman's point of view on outlook sufficiently distinct to be recognizable across countries," Patricia Meyer Specks observes.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's work focuses on diasporic Indian women who are stuck between two worlds. She shows how her characters find themselves in a position of in-betweenness, attempting to carve out their own identities. As the Diaspora grew, it began to consider the position of women in host countries. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a Bengali writer, is claimed to have moved to the United States. She is considered as one of the first writers of the Diasporic literature. Her novels often reveal, how the character is struggling to preserve a balance in two worlds, Divakaruni at one point states that: "My characters struggle in the balance between family responsibilities and individual happiness which is in away, at the centre of conflict between our Hindu culture, which always shows the mother as the giver, nurture and sacrificing herself for the good of the family and the western concept of self happiness"( The Sunday Statesman).

Dream has been employed by Divakaruni to project supernatural qualities in her writings. She resurrects the long-forgotten myths, beliefs, traditions, and culture of India. It is clear from her works' mythological references that she is well-versed in mythology. Divakaruni believes that myth represents the feminine universe, in which women save other women without asking men to help. In her stories, she uses myth to not only identify herself with India, but also to re-evaluate sacrificing Indian women. Magic realism contributes to the enrichment of notions about what is "real" through the use of imagination, as manifested in magic, myth, and religion. Divakaruni's magical realism allows her to confront reality and try to disentangle it, to understand what is enigmatic in objects, life, and human actions.

The magical elements in her novel bring out the fact that it has a link with psychology. According to Wendy Faris: "Magic Realism often gives voice in the thematic domain to indigenous or ancient myth, legends and cultural practice and the domain of

narrative technique to the literary tradition that express them with the use of non-realistic events and images; it can be seen as a kind of narrative primitivism” (P.103) .

Chitra Banerjee The Mistresses of Spices (1997), Divakaruni's first novel, is unique in that it is written in a hybrid of prose and poetry and employs Magic Realism. Tilo, the protagonist of the narrative, sells spices not only for cooking, but also for the homesickness and alienation that the Indian immigrants at her store feel.

## **2. Motivation**

We tended novelty in our research; hence, the first motive for us was to opt for a corpus which has not been so often dealt with in our department. Another motive for the choice of the topic was our interest in the field of psychoanalytical literary theory.

## **3. Objectives of the Study**

This research aims to:

- To explore the representation of the female psyche in a conservative Indian society.
- To highlight the notion of dual identity and hybridity in the Mistress of Spices.
- To analyse the concept of women empowerment through the eyes of a diaspoic Author.
- To provide a deeper understanding of The Mistress of Spices by approaching the work through Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis.

## **4. Statement of the Problem**

Divakaruni's first novel, The Mistresses of Spices (1997) is unique; it is written with a blend of prose and poetry, by employing Magic Realism. In the novel, the protagonist, Tilo provides spices not only for cooking but also for the homesickness and alienation that the Indian immigrants experience. Tilo stands rebellious against the pressure to suppress her desire and her body. The order of Mistress clearly replicates

patriarchal struggled and Tilo must be made to break free of them, she's going through psychological conflicts both internal and external.

#### **5. Research Questions**

In order to trace the psychoanalytical aspect in Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*, we intend to providing answers to the following questions:

- What do the Spices represent in the novel?
- How does the author portray the protagonist's psychological conflict in her quest for salvation?
- To what extent Lacanian psychological model is appropriate to approach the text?

#### **6. Research Hypotheses**

For the previous questions we hypothesize that Divakaruni depicts the female protagonist's psychological oppression in the Indian patriarchal society. She portrays the life of an immigrant dealing with discrimination issues within a host western society.

#### **7. Research Methodology**

To realize the stated hypotheses, we will be conducting a descriptive psychoanalytical approach. Lacan's Mirror Stage concept serves well to highlight the role played by the author to provide the reader with a deeper fathoming of the protagonist's psyche.

#### **8. Structure of the Dissertaion**

The thesis comprises of three chapters. The two first ones are theoretical; dedicated to provide thorough definitions of the main terms and concepts besides the historical and cultural background of the corpus, in addition to a critical view of the author and an over view of the theory we have chosen to work with. The last chapter advances the application of the Lacanian psychoanalysis on the corpus.

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**CULTURE, HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA**  
**LITERATURE**

## Contents

Introduction .....	9
Definition of terms .....	9
The Concept of Diaspora Literature.....	9
Indian Diaspora Literature.....	9
Indo-Anglian Literature.....	10
A brief historical background of Indian English writings.....	10
Themes of the Indian Diaspora Literature.....	14
Historical, Political and Nationalist themes .....	15
Social Realism .....	16
Indian Diaspora and Immigration .....	16
Individual Issues .....	17
Feminism and Women's Empowerment.....	17
Modern Themes .....	18
Myth in the Indo-Anglian Literature .....	18
Culture in the Indo-Anglian Literature.....	21
The Concepts of Hybridity and Ambivalence.....	21
Conclusion .....	23

### **Introduction**

The first chapter gives a general overview about the Indian Diasporic and the Indo-Anglian Literature in order to facilitate the comprehension of the subject. It displays a brief historical background of the Indian English writings. Then, it moves from historical background to a literary background in order to show the main themes and the dominant writers of this literature. Also, it sheds light on the Definition of Hybridity and Ambivalence concepts.

### **Definition of terms**

#### **The Concept of Diaspora Literature**

The term Diaspora is derived from the Greek word for scattering. It refers to the dispersion of people from their original land. Another definition for the term diaspora is a group of people who descend from a specific nation or whose ancestors come from it but settle in another part of the world. If we want to define diaspora literature, we can define it as the works written by authors who live outside of their homeland or native country. So, this term identifies the distinctive geographic origins of a literary work. (Martien A. Halvorson-Taylor)

#### **Indian Diaspora Literature**

Indian writing exists in different forms such as essays, short stories, novels, and poetry; it is definitely in abundance. Most of these writings are written in the original mother tongue or native language of the writer. On the other hand, Indian writing depends mostly upon the translation of the original works and texts.

Additionally, Indian Diasporic writings are divided into two forms—writings emerging from forced migration and writings emerging from voluntary migration. First, forced migration refers to unwanted migration from the country due to several reasons. Second, voluntary migration is when Indian writers leave the country with their volition to live abroad. Therefore, these divisions harbour the Indian writers who then, either criticize the country or praise it.

It highlights the idea of how exile, in the form of migration, has contributed to the emergence of a huge number of authors who contributed to the development of English Literature. The major contributors are writers who have been accepted as citizens of the



world like Salman Rushdie and V.S. Naipaul. Also, there are Indian-English writers like Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Shashi Tharoor Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Sunetra Gupta, Rohinton Mistry, Jhumpa Lahiri, Hari Kunzru and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni who have established themselves as fine writers in the tradition of the Indian Diasporic writing.

#### **Indo-Anglian Literature**

Indo Anglian Literature refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian diaspora, such as V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri who are of Indian descent.

It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. (Indo-Anglian is a specific term in the sole context of writing that should not be confused with the term Anglo-Indian). As a category, this production comes under the broader realm of postcolonial literature- the production from previously colonized countries such as India.

#### **A brief historical background of Indian English writings**

The rise of Indian writing in English has a historical background. The first connection that we identify is the introduction of the English language as a medium of instruction in India as well as the addition of English literature as a subject at universities. Before Indians could write poetry in English, they should have met two conditions. First, the English language had to be indianised. That is to say, it should be able to express the reality of the situation in India. Second, Indians in their turn had to be Anglicized to use the English language to express their thoughts, ideas and mostly to express themselves. In 1780, James Augustus Hicky published *Hicky's Bengal Gazette* the first Indian newspaper. Afterwards, in 1817, the Hindu college was founded, which later became Presidency College, the premier educational institution of Bengal.

Macaulay's *Minute Upon Indian Education* introduced in 1833 provided for the introduction of English as a medium of instruction with the claim that "the English tongue would be the most useful for our native subjects." While presenting his famous minute, Macaulay admitted quite candidly that he had not read any of the Sanskrit and Arabic books and yet did not desist from making such a pronouncement: "...A single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. ...All the historical information which has been collected in the Sanskrit language is less than what may be found in the paltry abridgements used at preparatory schools of England..."

Thus, India became a fertile ground to test English literature in the classroom while English Universities were still steeped in the Latin and Greek classics. Eventually, English was introduced to educational institutions, courts, and offices which dislodged the traditional use of Arabic and Sanskrit as a tool for communication and documentation. In 1835, Lord William Bentinck announced that the government would prefer the use of English alone; therefore, would move towards knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English language only. In addition to that, English got to be available to students, professors, and government officials through the Wood Dispatch of 1854 that announced the foundation of Colleges at Bombay, Madra, and Calcutta.

To begin with, the introduction of English at these levels had some intriguing consequences. What is sarcastically referred to as "Babu English" is the first offspring of the unholy union of the British English language and the reluctant Babu. The 'art and craft' and discomfort with which they used the language in the offices in course became a matter of derision. Furthermore, in the field of literary studies, English began to demonstrate itself. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* is the first Indian novel in English that appeared in 1864. The setting of this novel is a Bengal village. It illustrated the core concern through a simple domestic story: the virtue of renunciation over self-love. Additionally, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, who rose to prominence as a novelist, published many other novels in Bengali, namely *Anandmatha (1882)* and *Durgeshnandini (1890)*, which are both outstanding. The first novel written in English by an Indian is referred to as a "dud" by Salman Rushdie, who is referring to the same sense of artifice and discomfort felt by the earliest users of the English language.

The era between 1850 and 1900 is known as the imitative process, during which Indian poets dressed as romantic poets in Indian garb, or "Matthew Arnold in a saree" as George Bottomley put it, or "Shakuntala in a mini-skirt" as some mockingly put it. Moreover, the main sources of inspiration for these poets were the British romantic poets

as Wordsworth, Scott, Shelley, Keats, Byron. On the other hand, the period from 1900 to 1947 is called the assimilative period when the romanticism Indian tried to integrate the romanticism of the early nineteenth century British poets as well as the new romantics of the decadent period for expressing the consciousness of the Indian renaissance between nationalism and political changes which ultimately led to the attainment of political freedom in 1947.

The time of literary renaissance in India is the first phase of Indian poetry. There are many poems which are considered as a tribute to the romantic spirit's artistic renaissance sparked by the literary renaissance. To state some examples about these poems, we have Derozio's poems, Kasiprasad Ghose's *The Shair or Minstrel* and other poems. Also, Michael Madhusudan Dutt's *The Captive Lady*, Manmohan Ghose's Love Songs and Elegies. Toru Dutt, one of the romantic poets who belong to the first phase; alone, emphasizes the Indian heritage by including many Indian legends in his verses. The romantic Toru Dutt is a successor in terms of the use of the tree in verse as shown by "Our Casuarina Tree", a successor in respect of childhood memories remembered with nostalgia or regret.

Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Aurobindo Ghose, and Harindranth Chattopadhyaya were poets of the second period, who were still romantic, produced a lot of poetry. These Indian poets' romanticism was different from English romanticism because it was full of nationalism, spirituality and mysticism. Indian romanticism widened the poet's vision. While Aurobindo's was the search for the Divine in Man and Tagore's was the quest for the Beautiful in Man and Nature. Both were philosopher poets. Sarojini was influenced by Persian and Urdu poetry as well as English poetry; thus, she had a good ear for verbal melody that made her bring the charm of traditional Indian life and culture.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed a gradual growth of the form of the English novel in India. One of the most important figures of writing at that time is Romesh Chandra Dutt. Before retiring as the Diwan of the Royal Baroda State, he held crucial government positions. He also produced six novels in Bengali. Two of his novels were translated into English: *The Lake of Palms* (1902) and *The Slave Girl of Agra* (1909). Both of these novels were published in London and were praised for their intricate storyline and fascinating characters. This era includes some other writers like T. Ramakrishna, the author of *Dive for Death*, and Swarna Ghoshal, who wrote *The Fatal Garl*. There is also Krupabai Sathianandan the writer of *Kamala, A Story of Hindu Life* (1894), Bal Krishna the author of *The Love of Kusama* (1910), and A. Madhavan the

writer of *Thillai Gobindan* (1916). All of these productions are noteworthy as links that were quickly building the body of Indian writing in English.

Rabindranath Tagore's name, on the other hand, stands out among this group. It would be inappropriate to classify him as an English writer because he wrote in Bengali with similar felicity and charm. In reality, he was well-known not only as a writer, but also as a poet, playwright, and painter. Above all, he was a visionary, a guy who created institutions like Vishwabharati and provided the world with an original educational paradigm. He has different works that were translated from Bengali into English such as *The Home and the World* (1919), *The Wreck* (1921) and *Gora* (1923). *Gitanjali*, on the other hand, elevated Tagore to the status of world literary icon, bestowing upon him the highest honour, the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913, and, more importantly, is regarded as a key ground that offered a spiritual bridge between East and West. It was written in 1913 and helped Tagore achieve literary immortality. The years after have witnessed a noticeable success in the field of Indian Writing in English. The English critic William Walsh chose three of the most well-known writers on the literary circuit at the time. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao became known as the "Trinity of Indian English Writers. Walsh said: "It is these three writers who defined the area in which the Indian novel was to operate. They established its assumptions; they sketched its main themes, freed the first models of its characters and elaborated its particular logic. Each of them used an easy, natural idiom that was unaffected by the opacity of a British inheritance. Their language has been freed of the foggy taste of Britain and transferred to a wholly new setting of brutal heat and brilliant light."

However, the three were early representatives of the use of the English language in conveying an Indian experience, and their endeavours were defined by a battle. The novel form's prolonged structure increases the difficulty of portraying Indian life in English. Adding to that, certain limits were imposed on the Indian novel; thus, modifying the Indian experience in it due to its Western form. Rao mentioned in the introduction of *Kanthapura* "One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought movement that looks maltreated in an alien language". He further adds "even though English is a language of our intellectual make-up it is not that of our emotional make-up".

The novel *Untouchable* marked the beginning of Mulk Raj's writing career as a special product because it infringed the tradition of Indian works featuring the highborn and privileged as the principal protagonist. The novel describes the experiences that the

hero, Bakha, lives in one day. The hero is a lower-class sweeper boy. It explains to the reader how his experiences affect his consciousness. The novel's format, which employs the stream-of-consciousness style, is heavily influenced by James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Apart from this Western influence, he was also a member of the famous Bloomsbury group of writers in London too. Another significant influence on his works was Mahatma Gandhi's concept of a socialistic society. The solution to Indian casteism presented in *Untouchable* is consistent with Gandhi's concept of respect for the low-born. He has other works with a reformative agenda such as *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940), and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942).

Unlike the flamboyant Anand with Western influence was the unpretentious and unassuming R.K. Narayan whose first book was *Swami and Friends* (1935). He made up the fake region of Malgudi, a small South Indian village that he describes as "a mixture of oriental and pre-1914." The characters are ordinary people that live in this town and go about their daily lives. However, occasional life-affirming, brilliant flashes come from this daily routine, which the writer depicts for the reader. Except for his book, *Waiting for Mahatma*, which depicts the 1942 Quit India Movement, he does not address current political concerns in his writings. *The Dark Room* (1938) tells the narrative of Savitri, who is married to a cruel husband named Ramani. One of his most well-received pieces is *The Guide* (1958). It depicts the narrative of Raju, a guide, and his love for Rosie, whom he initially meets as the wife of a client

*Kanthapura* (1938), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), *The Cat and Shakespeare* (1965) and *Comrade Kirrilov* (1976) and *The Cow of the Barricades* (1947- short story collection) are all a collection of short stories published by Raja Rao. *Kanthapura* narrates the story of a town in South India that is affected by the Civil Disobedience Movement. The narrative technique used by the author made the story interesting. It is told through the voice of an old inhabitant woman in the village she employs the structure of the Puranas, a traditional folk epic. The novel combines the spirit of the village's ancient religious faith with that of the Nationalist Movement.

**Themes of the Indian Diaspora Literature:**

The diasporic writings have different characteristics and include various elements as well as their focus on specific themes such as homeland, dislocation, displacement, the feeling of loss, tradition, nostalgia, familial and marital relationships apart from re-rooting, alienation and cultural identity and ethnicity. To get a better insight

into the Indian Diasporic Literature, It is important to explain every theme by demonstrating the work of Indian diasporic writers.

The Indian English Writers have written about a wide range of subjects that appeal to the readings of public's numerous interests. How Indian English novels have caught the reader's interest and imagination via sensitive portrayals of diverse themes such as East-West conflict, multi-culturalism, social realism, gender issues, comedic aspect of human nature, ecological concerns, Feminism and Women's Empowerment, magic realism, diasporic works, and the like, has made its impression in the global literary scene.

The new English literature demonstrates confidence in confronting new subjects and experimenting with new techniques and approaches to dealing with these issues. Modern Indian English writers are rapidly expanding India's literary horizons in novels and short tales, and they have produced a fantastic amount of work on a wide range of topics. The distinct mosaic of themes in Indian English writing demonstrates the writers' sincerity and distinctiveness.

#### **Historical, Political and Nationalist themes**

It has been nearly 200 years since the publication of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's '*Sati*'. We have witnessed the difficult and perilous transition from colonial oppression and enslavement to political freedom during this turbulent era. English literature helped the writers express the different stages their nation has gone through and its different situations, as it witnessed hopes and despairs, joy and pain, slavery to revolution, revolution to independence, and again from independence to reconstruction. According to M.K. Naik: "Thus during the period from 1857 to 1920 the Indian ethos gradually underwent a sea-change from the shock of defeat and frustration and the trauma of inferiority to a new found self-awareness and self-confidence. It is against this background that the work of the prominent writers of this period must be viewed..."<sup>4</sup>. These are works that are considered as an example of the themes of the independence struggle and the consequences of the freedom movement in post-independent India: Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, R.K.Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma*, NayantaraSahgal's *A Time to be Happy*, K.A.Abbas's *Inquilaab*... etc. The division left an indelible mark on the minds of a few authors, prompting them to write about its negative consequences. Among such writers is Khushwant Singh's *Train to*

*Pakistan*, ManoharMalgaonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* and Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, H.S.Gill's *Ashes and Petals*, AttiaHosain's *Sun Light on a Broken Column*.

### **Social Realism**

One of the main themes in Indian English writings during that period was portraying social problems to make social change. Some of the writers who have distinguished works that have an important role in social reform were Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, *Two Leaves and a Bud*; R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friend*, *The Dark Room*; Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, *The Serpent and the Rope*, *The Cow of the Barricades*; G. V. Desai's *All About Hatter*; Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers*, and Kamla Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*, *A Silence of Desire* and *Possession*. These works show the reader the construction of Indian society, particularly the common man rather than the elite and sophisticated, preferring the familiar to the fancied. Several aspects of social change, such as exploitation of the lower castes and landless peasants, are extensively discussed in the writings of this time.

Thus, the themes of nationalism, the independence struggle, Partition, social change, rural-urban dispute, freedom, and the plight of the untouchables and landless poor were projected by the first generation of Indian English authors.

### **Indian Diaspora and Immigration**

Another influential feature of the social structure during this period was that it was the age of refugees and people who fled their home countries to look for new life opportunities. To explain their situation and experiences, many of them started writing in English. In their works, the dilemma of Indian immigrants torn between two worlds is a major theme.

They conjure up images of homeland, personal feelings of alienation, transition issues, suppression, frustration, indignation, identity crisis, embarrassment, and moral dilemmas. Bharti Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter*, *Wife*, *Desirable Daughters*, *The Tree Bride*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, *The Namesake* and *Unaccustomed Earth* are all works that fall under the category of immigrants works. This community of Indian English writers expresses the inner struggle that immigrants face as they attempt to establish themselves and their life in a foreign country. Debjani Banerjee remarks that: "Contemporary writing from South Asian Diaspora bears the marks of a cultural encounter that combines the rewriting of

history with nuanced responses to dislocation and marginalization by hegemonic structures. The raw energy of first-generation politics is substituted by a more complex response to issues of race and unbelonging. The new writers retort to their attempted marginalization, not by dissolving into mainstream but by rendering their distinctive voices.”<sup>5</sup>

The Indian writers who wrote in English about their first experiences in foreign countries focused on the theme of East-West encounter and the connection of Oriental and Occidental people and cultures. This is well portrayed in some works as Raja Rao’s *The Serpent and the Rope*, Kamala Markandaya’s *The Nowhere Man*, *Some Inner Fury*, Ruth Praver Jhabvala’s *Heat and Dust* and BalchandranRajan’s *The Dark Dancer* and *Too Long in the West*.

#### **Individual Issues**

Some Indian English writers built a reputation for themselves by assessing specific problems and issues such as the quest for identity, alienation, rootlessness, meaninglessness, and human plight thoroughly and intensively. Among these writers, there are Arun Joshi’s *The Foreigner*, *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* and *Apprentice*, **Anita Desai’s** *Journey to Ithaca* and *Fire on the Mountain*, ShastriBrata’s *Confessions of an Indian Woman*, *Easter* and *She and He*, Saros Cowsjee’s *Goodbye to Elsa* and Shiv K Kumar’s *The Bone’s Prayer* and *Nude before God* and Y.P. Dhawan’s *Beyond the Guru* and *Journey through Hell*.

As a result, the second generation of Indian English writers projected the themes of, social reform, the Indian diaspora, the east-west encounter, degeneration of Values, existential issues.

#### **Feminism and Women’s Empowerment**

The modern Indian English writings witnessed the growth and the presence of a feminist and woman-centred approach that aims at highlighting the experience from a feminine consciousness point of view and sensibility. The representation of the condition of middle-class educated Indian women, their quest for identity, issues relating to parent-child relationships, marriage and sex, and their abuse are all key components of modern Indian English-language writings. Through this writing, authors try to expose the struggle that nowadays womans’ face to identify and achieve self-sufficiency. The popularization of this theme has been aided by female English authors.



Women became more conscious of their needs and their position thanks to the social and cultural change in post-independent India. Female characters in such works go to great lengths to break free from suffocating, conventional constraints. For many Indian English authors, the female's search for identity has been a favourite topic. They celebrate the birth of a new Indian woman, ready to challenge the patriarchal social system's well-entrenched moral orthodoxy. These women are modern, powerful, and make brave decisions to survive in society. The feminist movements in the west influenced feminist thought in India. However, the current feminism in India has progressed beyond its western predecessors. Uma Narayan describes it "third-world feminism is not a mindless mimicking of Western agenda in one clear and simple sense. Indian feminism is clearly a response to the issues related to Indian women."<sup>6</sup> Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Kamala Das, Ruth PraverJhabvala, ShashiDeshpande, Shobha De, NayantaraSahgal and ManjuKapur, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai are some of the prominent writers who have changed the concept of feminism in Indian English literature.

#### **Modern Themes**

The main themes of modern Indian English authors are industrialization, urbanization, globalization, modernization, feminism and women's empowerment, and evolving social structures. As examples of these writers we can look at the following: Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children*, ShashiTharoor's *The Great Indian Novel*, AmitavGhosh's *The Circle of Reason*, TabishKher's *An Angel in Pyjamas*, Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth*, AravindAdiga's *The White Tiger*, Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss*, Vikram Seth's *Golden Gate*.

Moreover, sociology, diaspora elements, feminine subjects, science and technologies, explorative writings and much more were the main concentration of the writers of the third generation of Indian English writers.

#### **Myth in the Indo-Anglian Literature**

Joseph Strelka from the New York State University, Albany, in his paper *Mythe/Myth* states :

"Many literary works serve as excellent examples of the revitalization of myth. No less worthy of note, it is often myth that gives power and vitality to some of the greatest works of literature."(Strelka, *Mythe/Myth*)

Many of the postcolonial Indian English writers of fiction and prose included Indian mythology and legends withing their works. In the *Serpent and the Ropeare*, for example, Raja Rao carried out the emotional, metaphorical, historical, and symbolical appeal of myth. In reality, the recent revival of Indian mythology in mainstream literature and prose is quite clear and noticeable. In today's India, English prose and fiction have become popular. Many Indian and diasporic writers of Indian descent have written prose and fiction that has captivated an interest of Indian readers today, especially among young adults. In such literature, a whole new genre of writings about Indian mythology and legends has exploded onto the scene, with authors like Amish Tripathi, Ashwin Sanghi, and Devdutt Pattnaik... etc gaining a lot of attention for their books and works involving Indian mythology. Indian mythology is one of the most enriching aspects of Indian culture, and it is what distinguishes it from other cultures around the world.

Myth plays a fundamental role in the society, which often consists of narratives of gods. Myth is a folklore genre, a traditional story concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events. The study of myth is Mythology. The roots of mythology gave a new scope for literature all over the world. Mythological literature derives from literary works like epic, lyric poetry, drama, history and other narratives. The most direct and a simple way to approach mythology is through its subject. In a broader sense we can define myth to be traditional stories of gods, kings, and creation of the world, true essence of human life and much more. Mythology depicts the relationship of god and human and provides a moral code by which we live.

Myth are the popular tales which embody a collective knowledge and are Passed on for generations as grandmother tales. While some may have originated with shamans, priests, or poets, myth belong to a primitive or pre-scientific people as their cultural heritage. (Rathi)

Indian Mythology, as vast as it is, has inspired many people all over the world. This is most likely since mythology and Indian religion are like two sides of the same coin that cannot be separated.

Many German and American Romantic authors showed a strong interest in Indian poetry and literature by the nineteenth century. Furthermore, by the twentieth century, some Westerners, such as T. S. Eliot, who studied Sanskrit at Harvard and devoted an entire section of his epic poem *The Waste Land* to highlighting Indian aspects and philosophy, were interested in Indian thoughts and literature.

Buddhism brought Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder to India. Mexican poet and writer Octavio Paz developed a strong, lasting interest in Indian poetry after living in the country as part of the Mexican diplomatic mission (and as ambassador in the 1960s). He translated Sanskrit kavyas, and wrote extensively about India.

The Australian poet Colin Dean as listed in the Australian Literature resource database shows interested in Indian thought and literature and as such has written many poems on Indian themes: Indian mythology; classical Sanskrit plays; Indian philosophy; Indian folktales and translated Sakrit poetry. (Iyengar)

Many western thinkers were inspired by Indian mythology, which was represented in their works. As it may be the most appreciated and used genre in Indian literature, mythology has been the most influencing factor in Indian writings for a long time, keeping readers under its influence for centuries.

Since the Vedic age, a traditional point of view has been built and influenced Indian writers because Mythology is an-all encompassing an all-inclusive topic in Indian literature. As a result, mythological themes and topics in Indian literature are a popular occurrence, influencing one's daily life and passion for reading, especially in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata because they contain several mythological themes.

Kalidasa and Bhasa, along with other writers who belong to Sanskrit literature, have included mythological characters since the Vedic period. The support of the Vedic Puranas or the Upanishads for Indian literature was expressed by the portrayal of mythological themes in their poetic lines and rhythms. The Puran, with its almost epic-like plot and depiction of the various levels of society that exist, as well as the coexistence of humans, gods, and demons, has always made the modern age wonder about the prowess of people during this supposedly imaginary time. Many well-known works demonstrate Hindu mythology's supremacy over Indian literature. To meet the reader, lesser-known mythological tales have been re-enacted in novel ways. The authors analyzed the unexplored meanings of epic and myth episodes from a modern perspective. Myth and traditional narrative forms and styles were essential in revitalizing culture and acting as a unifying force in society.

Bankim Chandra, Raja Rao, and Mulk Raj Anand are examples of Indian authors. R K Narayan focused on allusions to Hindu mythology as a literary tool for expressing people's religious, political, medical, and contemporary conflicts and dilemmas. In English, every Indian writing genre has its interpretation of the Indian myth. Poets like

Toru Dutt, Sri Aurobindo, Kamala Das, and authors like Ambedkar, Narayan, and Girish Karnard have used their writings to symbolise Hindu mythology in ingenious ways.

In Indian literature, mythological themes are well-represented in Vedic literature. Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Rama, Agni, Vayu, Surya, Varuna, and Indrahad are all Hindu gods who originated during the Vedic Era. The four Vedas, RigVeda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda are also considered to contain a variety of tales of courage, bravery, bloodshed, invasions, and valorous deeds, which can only be found in mythical books, adding to the opulence of mythological themes in Indian literature. The mythological themes are used extensively in contemporary Indian literature. This particular genre captivated generations with its vast repository of stories and ideas, continually inspiring them to compose mythology as a backdrop. Modern writers such as Arundathi Roy, Sashi Tharoor, Amitav Gosh, Salman Rushdie, and others have presented mythology in a whole new light. (Iyengar)

#### **Culture in the Indo-Englian Literature**

Individuals write books, but they are often influenced by the culture in which they live. As a result, it's important to think about a work's cultural context. Culture is defined as the beliefs, customs, values and activities that identify a specific group of people during a specific time. Thus, we can say that objects produced in a given culture express their principles both explicitly and implicitly. Literature is an especially strong index of these ideals because it often engages with society in depth.

Diasporic literature has had a tremendous impact in the last two decades, and its importance has no bounds. Its meaning is spread in many directions. In general, it is regarded as an umbrella term that encompasses all literary works written by writers who are not from their native nation, but whose works are connected with their native culture and history.

#### **The Concepts of Hybridity and Ambivalence**

This chapter is important because it highlights the basic perspectives of Homi Bhabha in the location of Culture. To do so, we will use Bhabha's theoretical standpoints to illustrate the major concepts of our study. In the three major chapters, He identifies his scientific ideas.

The first chapter's importance lies in its central role in explaining the concept of "Hybridity". Bhabha uses western cultural theory to reclaim their perspective on the

other's society. As a result, he criticizes all simplistic oppositions that seek to divide the world into first and third, civilized and uncivilized, West and East, master and slave, self and other, as well as the middle and margin.

In his books, Bhabha tries to deconstruct the principles that break up the world into two main parts. Through this, he explains that the western culture finds a gap to make this variety clear. Therefore, his main focus, along with Franz Fanon and Aroui Abdallah, is on explaining the relationship and the link between the colonizer and the colonized that makes the colonial discourse.

Bhabha's hybridity is concerned with the study of the self's personality and history, as well as how it becomes mixed or hybrid. To further explain, colonialism makes people flee from their homelands to other places to find a safe refuge from colonial power. This results in making their culture mixes with the refuge's culture. According to him, this gives us a culture that takes the third position that he calls "the culture of hybridization" or "cross-cultural relations".

The term "hybrid" refers to the blending and interaction of two cultural traditions, behaviours, and concepts from the colonizing and colonized cultures. Bhabha says that it is not wrong to think that colonization is of no benefit and holds negative effects as it oppresses the colonized. However, by exploring such a definition, he aims at breaking down the biases of western culture, which portrays the colonized as savage, uncivilized, and poor. Furthermore, every culture is an original mix of interact cultures, according to Bhabha's writings, and no one can claim to have the sublime culture. It is Homi Bhabha's usage of the concept of hybridity that has been the most influential and controversial within recent postcolonial studies. Bhabha goes back to Fanon to suggest that liminality and hybridity are necessary attributes of the colonial condition. For Fanon, you will recall, psychic trauma results when the colonial subject realizes that he can never attain the whiteness he has been taught to desire, to shed the blackness that he has learnt to devalue. Bhabha amplifies this to suggest that colonial identities are always a matter of flux and agony. It is always, writes Bhabha in an essay about Fanon's importance of our time, in relation to the place of the other that colonial desire is articulated, correct. (Loomba, 1998: 148)

In postcolonial writings, Bhabha's usage of the word hybridity enhances the colonial discourse. As a consequence, Bhabha's hybridity thoroughly describes the method of filling such a void or interstice created by colonization—between the colonizer and the colonized. To put it another way, Bhabha finds a way to link the core and the

periphery to emphasize the fact that no single culture exists on its own; rather, it is a mixture, and this hybridity gives it the appearance of being complete. Bhabha continues to illustrate the ambivalence in the second chapter. Westerners believe that culture and civilization can only be found in "the North," so they claim the right to educate the "South." Community, according to Bhabha's concept of ambivalence, is made up of conflicting views and dimensions.

This ambivalence is a duality that reflects a break between the identity of the colonized and the colonizer; as a result, he claims that every community that has been colonized must be hybridized and ambivalent due to the changes in the colonized nation's cultural structure. Hybridity and ambivalence are sufficiently distinct from one another. Consequently, ambivalence can be seen as a characteristic of hybridity.

According to Bhabha's definition, this word denotes a vital rejection of Western culture's sublime culture. Furthermore, his ambivalence sets in motion the dual perceptions and dimensions that connect the colonizer and the colonized but in a new way that emerges in the colonial discourse. Hence, Bhabha exists in the space between the colonizer and the colonized, arguing that the place of culture does not belong to the binary oppositions of Said's Orientalism (Self and Other), but rather to a third, composite, and ambivalent location. Bhabha's third location is a place of identity and community, where other cultures' differences are welcomed as well as new connections between them.

#### **Conclusion**

Finally, Indo Anglian Literature refers to the corpus of work produced by Indian writers who write in English but whose native or co-native language is one of India's many languages.

It is also linked to the writings of Indian diaspora writers such as V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, and Jhumpa Lahiri, who are of Indian heritage. Indo-Anglian literature is a term used to describe this type of literature. (Indo-Anglian is a term used exclusively in the context of writing and should not be confused with Anglo-Indian. This work falls within the broader category of postcolonial literature, which includes works from nations that were previously colonized, such as India.

Sake Dean Mahomet's travel story, *Travels of Dean Mahomet*, was published in England in 1793, and it was the first book written in English by an Indian. The book, a Western art form, had an early influence on it. To express an experience that was essentially Indian, early Indian writers utilized English devoid of Indian vocabulary.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**CRITICAL REVIEW**

## Contents

Introduction .....	26
Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.....	26
Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's life .....	26
Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Literature Style.....	28
Plot summary .....	28
Characters .....	31
Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage: A Psychoanalytic Overview.....	32
Conclusion .....	33



### **Introduction**

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an Indian American novelist who has a wide audience from all sides of the world. She is considered as one of the famous Indian diasporic writers. This popularity was gathered by the production of her first novel *The Mistress of Spices* and also *The sister of my heart* and *Lately The Palace of Illusion*.

The novel is the most popular and vital literary medium in the modern times. It is the only literary form that can compete for popularity with the film and the radio, as in *The Mistress of spices* which was adapted into a film in 2005.

The novel examines several themes. It addresses the issues of culture, identity, the immigrant and diasporic experience and is an evocative account of the protagonist Tilo's journey from awareness to self-discovery. Tilo takes the spice route to self-discovery; the spices speak and lead her throughout the narrative.

### **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni**

#### **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's life**

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, the Indian-American novelist and poet, was born in 1956 in Calcutta, India. Her father, Rajendra Kumar Banerjee, was an accountant and her mother Tatini Banerjee was a teacher at school. Divakaruni was raised as, and still is, a devout Hindu. During her childhood, she attended a convent school in India run by Irish nuns. She obtained the bachelor's degree from the University of Calcutta.

When she was 19, Divakaruni immigrated to the United States in 1976 where she pursued her studies by obtaining a masters degree in English from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and then a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley.

Divakaruni held many different jobs to pay for tuition fees including babysitting, selling merchandise in an Indian boutique, slicing bread at a bakery, and washing instruments in a science laboratory. Divakaruni started to write fiction after she graduated from Berkeley, when she came to the realization that, "I loved teaching but did not want to do academic writing. I did not have enough heart in it. I wanted to write something more immediate" (Mehta).

Divakaruni lived in Chicago and Ohio before moving to her location in Sunnyvale, California, in 1979. She currently lives with her husband and two children and teaches

creative writing at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, CA. She has also been active in her community. In 1991, she established MAITRI that was a hotline for South Asian women who are victims of abusive situations or domestic abuse.

Divakaruni's books, which are written in India and America, "feature Indian-born women who are torn between Old and New World values. She demonstrates insight and skilled use of story, plot, and lyrical description to give readers a multilayered look at her characters and their respective worlds, which are filled with fear, hope, and discovery" (Doubleday). Most of her work is partially autobiographical and based on the lives of Indian immigrants she has dealt with. She says that she writes to help unite people by decomposing old stereotypes.

Her first works were in the form of books of poetry; *Dark like the River* (1987), *The Reason for Nasturtiums* (1990), and *Black Candle* (1991). She was still not very well-known after these works. Divakaruni then decided to write prose so she enrolled in a fiction writing class. The professor was so impressed by her work that he showed it to an agent, who, in return, secured a contract for Divakaruni with Doubleday. In 1995 Divakaruni published a collection of short stories entitled *Arranged Marriage* where she tells stories about immigrant brides who are "both liberated and trapped by cultural changes and who are struggling to carve out an identity of their own" (Patel). The book addresses important issues such as interracial relationships, racism, economic disparity, divorce and abortion. The book was awarded the Bay Area Book Reviewers Award for Fiction, the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Prize for Fiction and the American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation.

In 1997, Divakaruni wrote her first novel, *The Mistress of Spices*. "The book has a very mystical quality to it, and, as Divakaruni puts it, 'I wrote in a spirit of play, collapsing the divisions between the realistic world of the twentieth century America and the timeless one of myth and magic in my attempt to create a modern fable'" (Patel). The book was shortlisted for the Orange Prize from England and was labeled as one of the best books of 1997 by the Los Angeles Times.

*Sister of My Heart*, published in 1998, is the most recent novel of Divakaruni. The latter has published another collection of poetry, *Leaving Yuba City*, in 1997. These poems also tackle the struggles of immigrant women to find their identities in a New World. Selections from this collection have won the Allen Ginsberg prize and the Pushcart Prize.

Divakaruni explained her reason for writing saying: "There is a certain spirituality, not necessarily religious -the essence of spirituality- that is at the heart of the Indian psyche that finds the divine in everything. It was important for me to start writing about my own reality and that of my community" (Doubleday).

#### **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Literature Style**

Among numerous Diasporic Indian authors, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni flourished as a talented novelist. Myth, Cultural Conflict, Indian Experience, History, Magic Realism, and other topics are present in her work. The *Mistress of Spices* (1997), a bestselling novel by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, is written in a unique way that combines prose and poetry, enchantment and truth.

Divakaruni immerses us in a heady blend of mysticism, romance, and realism as complex and sensual as the spices she writes about. Divakaruni stated that her novel *Mistress of Spices* "was written in a spirit of play, collapsing the divisions between the realistic world of twentieth century America and timeless one of myth in my attempt to create a modern fable."

#### **Plot summary**

The novel is divided into fifteen chapters. The first chapter is called *Tilo* (the major character in the narrative) which begins with the title "I am a Mistress of Spices." The protagonist Tilo was born as a third girl child in a lower class family and is named NAYAN TARA. As a result of her parents' neglect, she had a careless life. Later when she discovers her previously undisclosed abilities, she decides to aid the locals to overcome difficulties; in return they give her luxurious presents as a matter of gratitude.

She has grown proud and determined and even her family members benefited from the luxury life style she had brought them. However, this does not last long, when she was a child the pirates kidnapped her, killed her parents and burned the village to gain more and more riches with her exotic powers, and then made her the Queen of Pirates.

One day the Serpents told her about the Island of spices, the place where if she reaches she would lose everything; sight, voice, name and possibly her identity. Therefore, she jumped into the ocean in the hopes of reaching the Island of Spice.

She awoke the next morning to find the Old One and her novices. She did not remember her past. Here under the guidance of the Old One she renames herself as

TILOTTAMA. Tilo passed the ceremony of purification i.e., entering the Shampati's fire. First time you enter the shampati's fire - you will not burn, you will not feel pain and you will wake in your new body as though it has been yours forever – a body that has lost its youth and took on age and ugliness and unending service.(Divakaruni)

Mistresses' lives would be exotic, mysterious, dramatic, and dangerous. If she becomes disobedient, self-indulgent, and fails to perform her duties, she will be recalled; a warning will be sent to her, and she will have just three days to settle her affairs. Tilo chooses to go to Oakland because she loves because she is knowledgeable about their origins, what their colors signify, their smells and even their true names. Every Indian spice was found in her store and when placed in her hand they speak to her and even direct her at necessary times. Her shop was called SPICE BAZAAR, and it was located on the corner.

She was considered by some as a witch woman but when they face problems they come to her for solutions. As a Mistress it is her duty to understand their longings for the ways they chose to leave behind when they chose America without their revealing.

Each chapter of this novel is named after a spice which uncovers their powers and their origins, thus making the novel very interesting to the reader to continue without postponing. In the chapters she deals with different problems that women face and even found solutions for them and healed them with the help of spices. People who are disturbed in the society, suffers from alienation and isolation or who suffer with the internal struggle ensures to come to terms with this lady. For them she is a human goddess for resolving their problems.

Even Tilo, the grocery store owner, goes after the problems despite her limits and unfulfilled promises; she is the keeper of human issues and their ups and downs. For instance Turmeric, also named Halud meaning yellow, color of day break, corals and shell sound is used as a shield for heart's sorrow, an ointment for death and hope for rebirth. It is put on the heads of new born for luck, sprinkled over coconuts at puja, rubbed into the borders of new and even wedding saris. Black pepper is boiled and drunk to loosen the throat and learn to say 'No -and hear me no' which is so hard for Indian women. Almond power and kesar boiled in milk to drink at bed time to sweeten your words and thoughts, to remember the love buried beneath the outrage and so on.

Despite the fact that many come to Tilo's shop, she tempts to speak only to a few of them. Some were Lalitha, Haroun, Jagjit, Kwesi, Geeta, her Grandfather, Lateefa the lonely American who usually comes on Friday evenings. The first time when she saw him

her heart skipped a beat, though she was warned by the spices that his love will cause her to lose control over herself and even the spices.

When asked by Tilo, the American recollects his childhood, how his mother used to maintain everything clean and neat, how she loved him and so on. But he despises her like anything. Till that time he believed himself to be a true American but now he realizes that he isn't and his name is RAVEN; he is constantly upset, confused and angry. He met Tilo-the old woman in the spice bazaar on some one's advice and invites her to accompany him to discover earthly paradise. As a Mistress she wasn't allowed to touch others but Tilo has crossed this rule many times. The Mistress of spices must feel other's pain and leave her own passions behind, but Tilo from the time she was attracted to the American, spices start working against her.

First mother appears that night and warns her saying "if you try to help outside the protected walls turns on itself ". (Divakaruni) Tilo then decides not to look outside even out of the window. One day The Raven meets her and offers her a white dress which settles on her like the petals of lotus. In his company she enjoys a bit of wine too. When she returns back to the store she receives a message that says "Shampathis fire is calling back and she has only three days for decision" (Divakaruni). In the second last night she asks the spices to give her such a beauty for one night in such a way that after spending with her he would never be with another woman without remembrance and regret. On the last day of sale she gets a lot of money. Tilo then makes love to the American and their desire has been satisfied. She is willing to take whatever burden they lay but needs one hour of sleep so she lies down.

After a while, when she hears Raven, she was in perplexity whether she was dead or alive but spices spoke to her saying that as she accepted the punishment in mind without battling that was sufficient for her and no need to undergo any physical punishment. Now she

was neither like the old mistress nor like the young lady of the last day, but a moderate Woman-just as Raven imagined her to be.

In search of earthly paradise when they cross a Tollbooth, she hears about the destruction of the earthquake caused in Oakland. Looking into the water she recollects the destruction caused by her in the village during her childhood. She feels responsible and decides to go back to Oakland instead of with Raven; at the end some things are more important than one's own joy. The novel ends with Tilo finding a new life and re-naming

herself as (Maya) to give meaning to her existence. The name has a number of connotations like illusion, spell and enchantment.

*The Mistress of Spices* depicts life's paradoxes and incongruity. Divakaruni's characters reflect the predicament of being caught between two conflicting cultures (the Indian and the American culture) two different approaches to life, the internal and the external. (Divakaruni)

#### Characters

The novel *The Mistress of Spices* contains many characters which are:

**Tilo:** the protagonist, a 'round character' because she has several qualities and develops herself in the story. Tilo is the owner of 'Spice Store' in Oakland, California. She does not only sell Indian Spices but also helps her customers to find solutions to their problems through her magical power of reading people's minds.

**The Old One:** the one who teaches everything about spices and the land of spices to Tilo and the other mistresses.

**The Lonely American:** His real name is Raven and he is the man who falls in love with Tilo.

**Geeta:** her family comes from India but she was born in America. She falls in love with a Mexican boy, which is something not forbidden in her family.

**Rau and Sheela:** Geeta's parents, who felt disappointed with the behavior of their daughter.

**Geeta's Grandfather:** at first he was against his granddaughter, but then realizes that she is happy so he tries to help her and her parents to get together.

**Kwesi:** An American karate teacher, who usually goes to the bazaar to buy few things.

**Jagit:** an Indian little boy that first is bullied by his classmates. Tilo gives him a potion to make him brave.

**Haroun:** He is a Taxi driver that feels affection for Tilo, because she connects him with his country India.

**Hameeda:** Haroun's neighbor who is in love with him.

**Lalitha:** An Indian woman abused by her husband. (Roca).

**The spicers:** are treated as characters in the novel. They are 'flat characters' because they remain unchanged and stable in the novel.

#### **Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage: A Psychoanalytic Overview**

The idea of the "mirror stage" is an important early component in Lacan's critical reinterpretation of Freud's work. Drawing on work in physiology and animal psychology, Lacan suggests that human infants go through a stage in which an external image of the body (reflected in a mirror, or represented to the infant through the mother or primary caregiver) produces a psychic response that gives rise to the mental representation of an "I". The infant identifies with the image which serves as a gestalt of the infant's emerging perceptions of selfhood, but because the image of a unified body does not correspond with the underdeveloped infant's physical vulnerability and weakness, the latter is established as an Ideal-I toward which the subject will perpetually strive throughout his or her life. According to Lacan, the mirror stage establishes the ego as fundamentally dependent upon external objects, on another. As the so-called "individual" matures and evolves into social relations through language, this "other" will be elaborated within social and linguistic frameworks that will give each subject's personality (and his or her neuroses and other psychic disturbances) its particular characteristics.

Lacan's ideas about the formation of the "I" developed over time in conjunction with his other elaborations of Freudian theory. On August 3, 1936, he presented a paper on the mirror stage at a conference of the International Psychoanalytical Association in Marienbad (It is to this conference that Lacan is referring in the first sentence of the essay). Thirteen years later, Lacan delivered another version of the mirror stage on July 17, 1949, at a conference of the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Zurich, that later in the same year appeared in print in the *Revue Francais de Psychanalyse*. The essay was reprinted in the French publication of *Ecrits* in 1966. Jean Roussel prepared the first translation into English, which appeared in *New Left Review* 51 (September/October 1968): 63-77. This publication in English is significant because it contributed to the introduction of Lacanian theory, specifically the model of the mirror stage into leftist intellectual circles in Britain at the time when cultural studies was emerging as a field.

### Conclusion

Chitra Divakaruni's writing career included three genres: poetry, fiction, and short tales. Divakaruni illustrates the theme of woman's rebellion against the urge to conceal their desire in her classic work *The Mistress of Spices*, in which she powerfully conveys topics such as racism, immigration, anarchy, sadness, and domestic violence utilizing magic realism. Based on everything we've seen so far in Divakaruni's trip, we can safely conclude that everything she creates in her works is inextricably linked to various aspects of her life, particularly her psychological issues.



**CHAPTER THREE**

**PSYCHOANALYSIS**

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	36
<b>Psychoanalysis</b> .....	37
<b>Sorrow and Frustration</b> .....	37
<b>Disdain</b> .....	38
<b>Nostalgia</b> .....	39
<b>Regret</b> .....	41
<b>Racism</b> .....	42
<b>Affection</b> .....	43
<b>Love and Lust</b> .....	45
<b>The Significance of Spices in the Mistress of Spices</b> .....	46
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	48

## Introduction

Jacques Lacan the French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist is known by his teachings exploring the significance of Sigmund Freud's discovery of the unconscious, proposing a "Return to Freud". Lacan exerted his influence primarily through his yearly seminars in Paris, with a total of 27 seminars completed during his life time. Lacan founded his own analytic organization after being rejected by the conventional institutions. His magnum opus is the 900 pages "Ecrits" or "writings".

The best way to start with Lacan is through his seminars, his vision recovers in Freud the intimate relationship between the unconscious and the Ego. According to Lacan the ego is an object rather than a subject. The portrait of the ego-as-object is at the heart of Lacan's lifelong critical polemics against the Anglo-American ego psychology. For Lacan, their error is that they pretend to explain human behavior through the desire and rationality of an autonomous ego. However the ego is nothing more than an epiphenomenon that is far from managing desire; it is a mere product of it. We desire things to become a more fulfilled self, though we can never truly be ourselves as our desire is never quenched. Lacan tells that the psyche is composed of stages, or what he calls "Registers". The Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. These three form the skeletal framework for most of Lacan's intellectual life. These registers do not have a linear stage of development but rather a mutual dependence on one another. Before starting with the imaginary stage, the very first significant stage in human development is the "the Mirror Stage". As infants, we depend on our parents for protection and food. Our inability to physically do the necessary bodily needs to satisfy our necessities produces frustration and anxiety. The feeling of impotence, especially between 6 and 18 months of life, makes children experience their body as fragmented. During this time infants have their first experience of seeing their own reflection in a mirror, Lacan calls this encounter "Specular Image" from which the ego-as-object emerges. When facing the mirror the child is fascinated by this "Other Self" because he sees his body as integrated and projects itself as a unified ego, as something distinct from what he is. He sees in the possibility of overcoming his fragmented condition to become a whole self. Through the identification with the idealized image, the infant enters a lifelong quest to achieve

this “Ideal I”. However this quest can never be fulfilled to some extent. This gives way to alienation, anxiety and neurosis.

Lacan precedes his explanation with the next phase he called “Castration” or the stage of growth. The pursuit now has officially began, as we may no longer be trying to secure our mother’s love or attention per se. We try to secure the love of our friends, society or even a sense of affiliation to any kind of sects so as to stop the feeling of not being enough or of not being a complete self. We are missing something, trying to get things, if we just reach a certain goal, person, job or some living standards, only then we can \_maybe\_ fill that hole and finally feel whole. Objects we seek are called “object A”. Life is a never ending search for subject A. Right when we think we got it, we realize we want something more. It is a perpetual cycle of pain and pleasure. Lacan has a term for this journey of searching for subject A called “Jouissance”. It’s our attempts to fill that emptiness inside of us, our way of shielding ourselves from the prospect of remaining empty forever, as if it is our way of avoiding the terror we felt when our mother first abandoned us in ab lactation, when we felt like we lost everything we knew. This specter of pure loss that lurks in the back of our minds is what Lacan calls the “Thing”. It’s at the root of all our existential anguish.

#### **Psychoanalysis**

The Mirror stage notion is remarkable through the story telling within the work under study. After we delved into deep readings and analysis, we have quoted the most notable and appropriate statements that support our thesis within the framework of our theory. The quotes are categorized thematically.

#### **Sorrow and Frustration**

Tilottama the protagonist expresses her resentment about the fact that no one knows about her real story or what she has been through. A feeling of sorrow mixed with lack of affiliation runs bitter through her veins.

“Sometimes it fills me with a heaviness, lake of black ice, when I think that across the entire length of this land not one person knows who I am.” (Chitra 5)

Tilo tells the story of her birth within what it appears to be a patriarchal society; it is not exaggerating to say it's a shame to bring a girl in their world. Tilo sustains fear, guilt and different feelings of self-contempt from these clutches of anarchy. It was the emerge of the inferiority complex in the psyche of the protagonist.

The midwife cried out at the veiny purple cowl over my face,  
and a fortune-teller in the rainfly-filled evening shook his  
head sorrowfully at my father. They named me Nayan Tara,  
Star of the Eye, but my parents' faces were heavy with fall  
hope at another girlchild, and this one colored like mud.  
Wrap her in old cloth, lay her face down on the floor. What  
does she bring to the family except a dowry debt. (Ibid 8)

Tilottama falls into deep sorrow as the lonely American was leaving. She didn't possess his heart or even a clear sign of attention, yet she is so intimidating by the idea of losing him as if she knew him all her life.

Then he moves away. And says in a voice grown formal, 'I  
have kept you too long already. You should be closing up.'  
Tilottama. Fool who should know better. To think he'd be  
interested. At the door he raises his hand, in salute or good-  
bye or maybe just to wave away the hovering moth. I feel a  
great sorrow because he is leaving empty-handed, because I  
couldn't find what he was looking for. Because something is  
twisting inside, telling me I am losing him, the one man  
whose heart I could not read. (Ibid 73)

#### **Disdain**

After Tilo has discovered her supernatural gift, she states how she was deriving severe pleasure mixed with glory and pride from men pleading for her help. She became incredibly cruel and ruthless, she knows what is capable of and she sees the dread even in her parents eyes who were afraid of her power but still admiring their new welfare life it brought them, and for that she despise them badly. All these senses of predominance she had churning her guts, she's feeling empty deep inside still she chooses to deny it every time.

I slapped servant maids if they were slow to my bidding. At meal-times I ate the best portions and threw the leavings on the floor for my brothers and sisters. My mother and father dared not voice their anger, for they were afraid of my power but also they loved the luxury-life it brought them. And when I read this in their eyes I felt disdain, and a bile-black triumph that churned in my belly because I who had been last was now first. There was something else too, a deep wordless sorrow, but I pushed it away and would not look at it. (Ibid 9) When I looked at them, grown men trembled and threw themselves at my feet, and that too seemed easy and right. (Ibid 9)

### **Nostalgia**

Tilo explains her perception of questioning reality as if she shows interest towards the tales about the pirates.

“Sometimes I wonder if there is such a thing as reality, an objective and untouched nature of being. Or if all that we encounter has already been changed by what we had imagined it to be. If we have dreamed it into being. I think this most when I remember the pirates.” (Ibid 17)

Tilo shows some sort of fright yet too much admiration to the adventurous life of the pirates in her monologues. She was fed up with her luxury life, it was pointless according to her, emptiness has already consumed her thus, she desired for any kind of escape far from worldliness. She is now obsessed with the idea of pirates so she called upon them using her unusual abilities unaware of the ordeals she just unleashed on her people. It was the no turning point for her; she wanted that misery to fade away off her chest even if the price was bringing terror and bloodshed.

All this I knew from the stories we children were told at bedtime. They raided and pillaged and burned, and when they left they took the children. Boychildren to make into more pirates, and girlchildren, whispered our old maidservant, shuddering with relish as she blew out our bedside lamps, for their evil pleasure.”; “Long after the stories were done I lay awake and thought of them with yearning. Somewhere out in the great ocean they stood, tall and resolute at the prows of their ship.”; “Restlessness. How tiresome my life had

become, the endless praise, the songs of adulation, the mountains of gifts, my parents' fearful deference." "I would turn my face into my pillow to escape the emptiness opening like a black hand inside my chest. I would focus my attention on my discontent until it glittered sharp as a hook, and then I would cast it out over the ocean in search of my pirates. I was using the calling thought, though only later on the island would I learn it's name. (Ibid 17-18)

The protagonist is pursuing her inner struggle again what it seems to be a wish of death this time. She faces death for the really first time and despite the fact that she has already nothing left to lose, horror took over and made life a less bitter choice for her. At that very moment the instinct of survival hit hard awakening a sudden meaning of life to the young girl.

I want, I want, I whispered but what I longed for I did not know except that it was not this. Was it death? It seemed possible", "But when I saw that funnel mouth poised over me, and in it flashes of grey like whirling knives, a heavy coldness filled my limbs. I knew I was not ready. (Ibid 22-23)

The pursuit of a purpose in the protagonist's life continues as she hears about the island of spice from the sea serpents, she felt like that will give meaning to her existence, all she is planning to search for the island. Another internal conflict emerges when Tilo finds herself obliged to choose between her new family who saved her and accepted her the way she is or the dream of the island where she craves to be. Eventually she caved to her desire and left the sea serpents with a sighing heart. It was her first loss for the spices she said.

"The island of spice I said and I seemed that I had finally found a name to my wanting.", "I did not the serpents again, they were the first among all that spices were to take from me." (Ibid 24-25)

Tilottama tells about the day the "Old One" set her to a magical fire sending her to America, a virtuous old lady that took care of her and all the girls whom she met from the moment she first arrived to the island, The old lady taught her everything she knows about the power of spices but moreover she taught her about love and compassion. The old lady brought up the best in Tilo's heart and in all the girl-disciples. Tilo felt so intimately loved and secure, her heart maintained

peace for once. The day of departure has finally come, time for the Mistresses to be sent to their final destination where they remain forever bereft of their young bodies and abstain from worldly desires serving with the power of spices people who seek help. Tilo knew that day that come, but as soon as she watched her sister-Mistresses leaving sorrow knocks on her doors again and her peace was demolished. It was the loss of another family, emptiness strikes again hard.

I remembered all this as I watched my sister-Mistresses. One by one they walked into the fire, and when they reached its center they disappear. Watching the empty air flicker where a moment earlier, I was struck by a sorrow deeper than I had thought I could feel. Always I had kept my distance all these years on the island, knowing this day was to come. Yet when had they slipped into my heart, these girl-women glowing, chaste as alabaster, the last ones in the world to know who I was, and how it felt to be that." (Ibid 59-60)

Tilo knew that day that come, but as soon as she watched her sister-Mistresses leaving sorrow knocks on her doors again and her peace was demolished. It was the loss of another family, emptiness strikes again hard.

#### **Regret**

Tillotama appears to instantly regret her wish as soon as the pirates arrived slaughtering her village, she tried to stop them but her powers did not work for some reason. After the pirates took her to the ship, she did not rest an eye till she got rid of the captain stating that her powers had been strengthened more with that hate and grief she held inside of her chest.

Mother I never thought it would be like this. I tried to stop them. Cried out all the charms I knew till my throat was raw", "Father, sisters forgive me, I who had been Nayan Tara who had wanted your love but only won your fear, forgive me my village, I who in boredom and disappointment did this to you. Their pain stung like live coals in my chest", "Long after the calling thought had worked itself out and my powers came to me again.", "Long after I overthrew the chief to become queen of the pirates (for what else I could be I did not know), that pain ate at me. Vengeance did not appease it, as I had thought it would.. Ah I thought I would burn forever,



scar and peel and still burn, and I welcomed the punishment.  
(Ibid 19-20)

However she's not satisfied again, vengeance did not provide her with the peace she expected. Pain was gnawing her heart yet she accepted it as a punishment.

At that first waking in the silent store, the smell of damp cement flowing down the walls down my body. How lifted my arm, so heavy in its loose-lapped skin and felt the scream taking shape like a dark hole in my chest. Not this not this. The trembling in my knees as I pushed myself up, the pain that jabbed the twisted bones of my hands. My beautiful hands. Anger whose other name is regret surged like wildfire through me. Yet who could I blame.", "After a while it receded, the anger the pain. Perhaps I grew used to it. Or was it the spicesong? For when I held them in my misshapen hands the spices sang clearer than ever before, their notes true and high like ecstasy, like they knew I was now theirs wholly. And I was. Am. Happy.(Ibid 61-62)

The heroine expresses another frustration she had after she was sent to the store in Oakland. A store full of different spices ready to change people's lives. Her body was aching badly; it was old and totally weak. She has been warned by the old lady and knew it all along, yet she walked boldly into the magical fire to fulfill her wish. Her knees could barely lift her off the ground while she gazes to that wrinkled skin of her, she regrets it all now. She gets used to it with the help of the spices that sang to her with joy as if they knew she is devoted to them from now on, and for that she was happy she said.

### **Racism**

The protagonist depicts the sordidness of discrimination and racial micro aggression that Indians have to deal with, simply because they obviously look and speak differently. They hold the most decadent jobs; they have to bear incompliantly with all kinds of verbal abuse and even physical assault sometimes. In the other hand even the police who are supposed to protect them seem to treat them contemptuously. A huge external struggle is manifested through her

monologue. She experiences the feelings of displacement, divisiveness and hybridity. That clash of identities made by traditional, religious, ethnic and linguistic socio-cultural formations rock the heroine's Self integrity once again. Moreover Tilo projects speaking on behalf of the immigrated Indians for the slightest unpretentious life needs they wish they have, and even for the American physical features hoping to be seen as normal as the host community confines.

No one told us it would be so hard here in Amreekah, all day scrubbing greasy floors, lying under engines that drip black oil, driving the belching monster trucks that coat our lungs with tar. Standing behind counters of dim motels where we must smile as we hand keys to whores. Yes always smile, even when people say "Bastard foreigner taking over the country stealing our jobs." "Even when cops pulls us over because we're in the wrong part of the town." "I dip my mouth into its sweetness, milkwhite lines my lips, and it's like New Year, and like New Year I can wish for anything. So I do, for a big two-story house with flowers in front and no clothes and no clothes hanging out of windows, and enough rooms so we don't sleep two to a bed, enough bathrooms enough for long long baths and hot water also.", "For Mother, a new pair of shoes instead of the one she lines with newspaper, and sparkly earrings like the women on TV. And for me, for me, lots and lots of Barbie dolls.", "And most of all skin so white, and yes, even though I know I shouldn't, I must be proud like Mother says to be Indian, I wish for that American skin that American hair those blue blue American eyes so that no one will stare at me except to say WOW. (Ibid 65-66)

#### **Affection**

Tilottama opens up admitting for the very first time about her admiration for one of her man customers, she tells that she often got seduced by his beauty and prestige yet she can't confess to the man, she already made vows to the "Old One" before she enters the Shampati fire and any breach will cost the power of spices, she may even lose her life too due to the Shampati's fire wrath. She suppresses her thoughts and desires every time they knock upon her mind.

Sometimes I am tempted. For instance. When Kwesi comes in, with his wine-dark skin, his hair the tight-curved tendrils of night clouds. Kwesi who walks like a warrior, without sound, who holds his body in grace and without fear I long to ask what he does.". "But I do not. It is not permitted.", "And all the while I keep the door of my mind firmly shut. (Ibid 69-70)

As the events rise escalating, Tilo describes the outlandish first encounter with who she named the lonely American. This time the struggle is real, she can barely resist his eyes gazing into hers, reaching beneath her elderly body. She felt so differently, but all the voices in her head were screaming no! Yet she's astonished by the fact that how she could rebel against them a little more this time. Affection is so powerful in the air that she was trying to busy herself off the man. An unbridled desire took over her from the inside and nearly exposed her. This time it's not overstating to say she is willing to give up the spices for him. Her passion now is no longer for an immortal superstitious wizardry life, she just want a man's compassion, attention and maybe love to heal what's left of her sooty heart of her. She thinks that lonely American can make her wholly again. She even got the guts to call him 'mine' in subtle.

But the lonely American feels different, feels like I might have trouble doing the same with him.", "There's nothing in him to show lonely except a spiderweb thought in the corner of my mind, nothing to account for why I'm drown so.", "Just looking , and gives a surprisingly lopsided smile and gazes at me from under straight brows, as though he's really seeing me, me underneath this body, and likes what he sees. Though how can that be. He keeps on gazing straight into my eyes as no one except the Old One has ever done. There's a lurching inside me, like something stitched up tearing loose. O danger.", "I want it, though. I want him to know. And I want him, knowing, to be amused. How long it has been since someone looked at me except in ignorance. Or awe. As I think this, loneliness fills my chest, a new dull aching weight, like drowning water. It is a surprise. I did not know that Mistresses could feel so lonely. American I too am looking. I thought all my looking was done when I found spices but then I saw you and now I no longer know.", "You are welcome to look, I tell the American, my tone all

business. 'I must be getting ready to close the shop'. To give myself something to do I restack packets of papads." "Here let me help you. And before I have stopped thinking that his voice is like gold-roasted besan all mixed with sugar, his hand is on the rim of the bin, touching mine. What words can I choose to describe it, this touch that goes through me like a blade of fire, yet so sweet that the hurting to never stop. I snatch my hand away obedient to the Mistress laws, but the sensation stays." "Yes I know it's a liberty I take, to call him mine. To smile my response when I should be saying please go, it is much too late, it's much too late, good-bye good night (Ibid 70-71-72)

### **Love and Lust**

The heroine experiences something that she has never felt before in her entire life. She was so curious to know more about the lonely American, to know if he has someone, a lover maybe. A triumph of wondering want through her mind, so she used her magical powers to enter some kind of a clear vision, she can see him in his bedroom now getting undressed. She felt so odd yet to good. It was lust that drove her to feel so, for the very first time and she wanted more. Tilo couldn't erase the thought of the American out of her mind since then.

And why I persist in calling him lonely? Perhaps even now, even as I stalk discontented down the aisle of lentils, as I plunge restive arms elbow-deep in a bin of rajma and let the cool red pods roll over my skin, he is turning a key. The door opens, and a woman with hair like gold mist rises from the couch to take him in her~, I enter the inner room and close my eyes. In the dark my hands glow like lanterns. I trail my fingers along the dusty shelves. Phosphorous fingers coral fingers, I wait for you to tell me what I must do. In his bedroom the lonely American kicks off his shoes, turns down the silk covers of his bed. He shrugs off his shirt and lets it fall to the floor. Candlelight plays liquid on his shoulders, his back, the hard, muscled swell of his buttocks as he lets his pants fall too and stands straight, lithe, made of ivory. In a moment he will turn~. Fluids fill my mouth in a hot sweet rush. In all my lives before, fortune -teller and pirate queen and apprentice of spices, I have never seen a naked man, never desired to see it. Then my hands shudder to a stop. Not

now, hands, not now. Give me just a moment more. (Ibid 74-75)

### **The Significance of Spices in the Mistress of Spices**

Each chapter of this novel is named after a spice which reveals their powers and their origins and thus making the novel very interesting to the reader to continue without postponing. In the chapters she deals with different problems faced by women and even found a solution for them, healing them with the help of spices. She just doesn't want needs for physical satisfaction or ailments but for emotional satisfaction and ultimately leads to spiritual contentment. People who are disturbed in the society, suffers from alienation and isolation or who suffers with the internal struggle ensures to come to terms with this lady. The painful process of resolving the conflict within themselves many times is difficult. For them she is human goddess to resolve their problems. Even, Tilo who runs the grocery shop runs after the problems in spite of her limitations and bounded promises, She is the care taker of human problems and their ups and downs.

“Turmeric, also named Halud meaning yellow, color of day break, corals and shell sound is used as a shield for heart's sorrow, an ointment for death and hope for rebirth. It is placed on the heads of new born for luck, sprinkled over coconuts at puja, rubbed into the borders of new and even wedding saris. When rubbed on skin it erases, blemishes and wrinkles, sucks away age and fat and gives the skin a pale golden glow.

“Cinnamon or Dalchini is a friend maker and a destroyer of enemies, and gives strength in legs, arms and mouth. Fenugreek, the speckled seed first sown by Shabari, oldest woman in the world, renders the body sweet again ready for loving.

“Dhania or Coriander seed is used for clearing sight. When you soak it and drink the water it purges you of old guilts.

“ Amchur is used to heal the taste buds and bring back love of life.

“Mahamul -the root spice is used to enhance fortune, to bring success of joy and to avert ill luck.

“Tulsi the basil plant of humility. It is the curber of ego. It slakes the craving for power, turns the thoughts inwards and away from worldliness.

“Hartuki-shriveled seed in the shape of a womb helps mothers to bear the pain that starts with birthing.

“Astringent leaf dried dark on the stem is used to reduce mistrust and avarice.

“Black pepper is boiled and drunk to loosen the throat and learn to say 'No - and hear me no' which is so hard for Indian women.

“Powder of almond and kesar to boil in milk, to drink at bed time to sweeten your words and thoughts to remember the love buried under the anger.

“Fenugreek, the Tuesday's spice is as fresh as river wind to the tongue. It plants desire in a plot which turned even barren. It renders the body sweet again ready for loving. It is told that this speckled seed was first found by Shabari the oldest woman of the world.

“Fennel-the spice of Wednesday -the day of averages of middle aged people. It is as brown as mud and dark and leaf dancing in a fall breeze, smelling of changes to come. Fennel when taken a pinch of it raw and whole after every meal freshens the breath and helps digestion. It gives mental strength for what must be done. It even cools the temper. It is a spice to digest sorrows and makes strong. It is the equalizer too. When two people eat this at the same time it takes the power from the one and gives it to the other

### Conclusion

All in all, the given work was a great manifestation of both our psychoanalytic critical theory and the descriptive aspect of the study being conducted. To conclude this chapter we would like to state with absolute graciousness from the words of a wise anonymous man.

“What’s the point? If we can’t believe that the aching emptiness inside of us can be filled by something...anything. Then what’s the point of any of this? We will always feel like there’s something missing, we keep trying anyway. That’s... that’s all we can do ... or is it? What if we all feel like there is something missing but the truth is that nothing could ever be missing from our lives in any given moment, what if we stopped searching for things to fill some lack inside of us. And begin to appreciate what’s already here. What if everything you need to be happy is right here, in this very moment and has been there all along. What if we could just let ourselves be whatever we are, and feel whatever we’re feeling, because that’s exactly how things should be. What if you looked back at yourself in the mirror once more reflected on the ego you had always hated for lacking something and finally just let go. Maybe you would find that emptiness doesn’t feel so empty after all.”

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**



Divakaruni symbolizes the feminine world where women save women without expecting support from men. She uses myth in her novels not only as a hold to associate herself with India but also reevaluate sacrificing Indian women. Myth enables Divakaruni to confront reality and tries to untangle it, to discover what is mysterious in things, in life and in human acts. The magical elements in her novel bring out the fact that it has a link with psychology. According to Wendy Faris: "Magic Realism often gives voice in the thematic domain to indigenous or ancient myth, legends and cultural practice and the domain of narrative technique to the literary tradition that express them with the use of non-realistic events and images; it can be seen as a kind of narrative primitivism" (P.103).

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's first novel, *The Mistresses of Spices* (1997) is unique; it is written with a blend of prose and poetry, by employing Magic Realism. In the novel, the protagonist, Tilo provides spices not only for cooking but also for the homesickness and alienation that the Indian immigrants experience.

Tilo stands rebellious against the pressure to suppress her desire and her body. The order of Mistress clearly replicates patriarchal struggled and Tilo must be made to break free of them, she's going through psychological conflicts both internal and external, trying to maintain inner peace as she struggles within her conservative community, as she fell trapped to emptiness and anxiety. The external conflict hit the protagonist even harder when she discovers the cross-cultural boundaries imposed between the host community and her homeland community.

The second chapter is devoted for the author's life and writing style, in addition to the plot summary and characters. A preapprehension about our Jacques Lacan's theory of psychoanalysis to be applied is also included in the end of the chapter two. We also discussed the various ways in which Divakaruni depicted the psychological anguish and denounced the patriarchy in her most notable works. She was inspired by the ordeals around her and tried to convey her personal outlooks on the various things that captivated her interest and spiked her creativity through her writings. Most of all, she drew inspiration from her own life and experiences and used many aspects of her livelihood in her stories to the extent that each of them showcased a piece of her life and of those who were closest to her.

In the last chapter we delved deep for a better understanding of our critical theory particularly Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage. We engaged the process of psychoanalyses

selecting the major predominant themes within the novel to support our thesis. We also listed some of the spices including their significance according to the story.

This study therefore, aimed to argue mainly on three important issues:

- The great mythology and culture of the Indian society
- The Diaspora and Anglo-Indian literature.
- To analyze the psyche of a female immigrant from a conservative society within the framework of Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The novel is a magnificent representation of diversity, a blend of myth, culture and self discovery. A total cause against society mind oppression and iniquity over women. Furthermore, Divakaruni covered the Indian immigrants' issues such as racism, discrimination and all kinds of despicable behaviors they have to deal with through their lives in the host country.

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Page 96 *The Mistress of Spices –A Memorable Work of Chitra Banerjee  
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## ملخص الدراسة

This study aims to find out the relevance of Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage with the novel "The Mistress of Spices" by Chitra Banerjee Divakarani when it comes to accessing the mind of the protagonist. The study also explores the problem of immigrants and expatriates in post-colonialism as Diaspora is a prominent subject. Literature presents the essence of reality and fiction homogeneous together, and takes a critical approach to reality. With the rise of the British Empire and the spread of English rule in India, Indians began to read, speak and write in English. They consider English as a language of understanding and tool for communication between a variety of people. During the period of British rule in India, the Indian writing plant was planted in English, and later blossomed into a perennial tree. Hindi writing in English emerged as a new type of writing that began to express Indian sentiments and poets, novelists, essayists and playwrights from India were quick to contribute their work to the world of literature. The First World War radically affected people's political beliefs and ideals, and the literature of the twentieth century. Novelists began writing on feminism, racism, colonialism, multiculturalism, and other topics rather than local tragic ones.

**Keywords:** Chitra Banerjee Divakarani, Mirror stage, Diaspora literature, crossbreeding, clash of cultures.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة مدى ملاءمة نموذج جاك لاكان للتحليل النفسي الخاص بنظرية المرأة Mirror Stage مع رواية "سيده البهارات" للكاتبه شيترا بانيرجي ديفاكاروني عندما يتعلق الأمر بالوصول إلى عقل بطلة الرواية. تستكشف الدراسة أيضا مشكلة المهاجرين والمعتربين في أدب ما بعد الاستعمار حيث أن الشتات موضوع بارز يقدم الأدب جوهر الواقع والخيال متجانسين معا ، ويأخذ الأدب مقاربة نقدية للواقع مع ظهور الإمبراطورية البريطانية وانتشار الحكم الإنجليزي في الهند، بدأ الهنود في القراءة والتحدث والكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية معتبرين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة فهم وأداة مهمة للتواصل بين مجموعة متنوعة من الناس. خلال فترة الحكم البريطاني في الهند ، زرعت نبتة الكتابة الهندية بالإنجليزية ، وازدهرت فيما بعد لتصبح شجرة دائمة. ظهرت الكتابة الهندية بالإنجليزية كنوع جديد من الكتابة بدأت في التعبير عن المشاعر الهندية و سارع الشعراء والروائيون وكتاب المقالات والمسرحيون من الهند من المساهمة بعملهم في عالم الأدب. أثرت الحرب العالمية الأولى جذريا على معتقدات الناس ومثلهم السياسية، و على الأدب في القرن العشرين بدأ الروائيون في الكتابة عن النسوية والعنصرية والاستعمار والتعددية الثقافية وموضوعت أخرى بدلاً من الموضوعات المحلية المساوية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** شيترا بانيرجي ديفاكاروني ، نموذج لاكان نظرية المرأة ، أدب الشتات ، التهجين، صراع الثقافات.

Cette étude vise à découvrir la pertinence de Stade du Miroir de Jacques Lacan avec le roman "The Mistress of Spices" de Chitra Banerjee Divakarani lorsqu'il s'agit d'accéder à l'esprit du protagoniste. L'étude explore également le problème des immigrants et des expatriés dans le post-colonialisme, la Diaspora étant un sujet de premier plan. La littérature présente l'essence de la réalité et de la fiction homogènes ensemble, et adopte une approche critique de la réalité. Avec la montée de l'Empire britannique et la propagation de la domination anglaise en Inde, les Indiens ont commencé à lire, parler et écrire en anglais. Ils considèrent l'anglais comme une langue de compréhension et un outil de communication entre diverses personnes. Pendant la période de domination britannique en Inde, la plante à écriture indienne a été plantée en anglais et s'est ensuite épanouie en un arbre vivace. L'écriture hindi en anglais est apparue comme un nouveau type d'écriture qui a commencé à exprimer les sentiments indiens et les poètes, les romanciers, les essayistes et les dramaturges de l'Inde ont rapidement contribué leur travail au monde de la littérature. La Première Guerre mondiale a radicalement affecté les croyances et les idéaux politiques des gens, ainsi que la littérature du vingtième siècle. Les romanciers ont commencé à écrire sur le féminisme, le racisme, le colonialisme, le multiculturalisme et d'autres sujets plutôt que les tragiques locaux.

**Mots-clés :** Chitra Banerjee Divakarani, Stade du Miroir, Littérature de la Diaspora, métissage, choc des cultures.