ABSTRACT

The thesis highlights the main themes of magic realism, myth and culture in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s select novels. It elaborates how those are related to one another and gives novelty to her novels. It also points out how the various techniques help to embellish and to bring out the themes in her novels effectively and successfully. While exploring the main themes of Banerjee, the problems of immigrants have also been culled out and their decision which helps to face the world boldly by breaking all the obstacles.

Divakaruni has used mainly dream as a technique to project the magical elements in her novels. She has blended magic with realism. She has treated the inanimate things and reptiles such as snakes, spices and conch as if they have the ability to speak. The novelist uses stream of conscious techniques, dreams and flash back techniques and other related techniques. The magical elements in her novel prove that they portent reality and it has a link with psychology also.

Divakaruni resurrects the long forgotten Indian myth, belief, tradition, culture and even dreams which are so essential for existence, which in reality is only a mixture of all in magic realism. However, as the novel progresses, the fantasy element diminishes and the realistic element becomes prominent. Socially and culturally positioning herself as an immigrant Indian, the protagonists in her novels either acculturates nor assimilates but just adapts or adjusts with life around her, without changing or transforming herself. As cultural offshoots, the author heaps her novels with rituals, customs and practices pertaining to food, dress, and her mother tongue. The novels which have been chosen for research are The Mistress of Spices (1995), Sister of my Heart (1999), The Vine of Desire (2002), The Conch Bearer (2003), Queen of Dreams (2004) and The Palace of Illusion (2008).