Chapter – VII

Conclusion
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Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the leading writers of the diasporic literature. Belonging to the group of South Asian Women Writers, she nourishes a serious concern for contemporary women and gives more importance to women characters. The major themes of Divakaruni's novels are immigration, transnationalism, cross cultural crisis and post colonial problems of identity. Divakaruni explicitly throws light on the term and the concept 'diaspora' to the intellectual public.

Divakaruni's fictional world focuses on women and their efforts and failures in the traditional Indian society and western society. In all her work, the women have been the hub around them the stories are woven and extended with the help of their trial and tribulations. Her depiction of women's world is real, convincing, and authentic. In her novels, she has explored the physical, social and psychological problems and the tortures to which the immigrant women are subjected. She deals with the inner world of the Indian women as well as the immigrant women in her novels.

Chitra Divakaruni has penned down the experiences of immigrants. In this migrant context, Divakaruni specifically tends to focus on women and the challenges they encounter in both India and the United States. A woman, in all cases, has been an immigrant. Either she migrates after her marriage with her husband from parents' home or she crosses the border with her husband or for the professional pursuits. The migrant women's relocation stories are based on the liberating potential of narrative to articulate the trauma of dislocation, translating family traditions across borders and/or creating
transnational families, translating cultural norms, building self-esteem and redefining the concept of ‘home’ and the related experience of homelessness.

Chitra Divakaruni brought new perspectives to contemporary women’s writings. Positioned on the threshold of Indian and American cultures, Divakaruni is the embodiment of the themes prevalent in her writings, as she states on her personal website, those of “women, immigration, the South Asian experience, history, myth, magic and celebrating diversity.” Her writings incorporate feminism, Multiculturalism, with notions of exile, post colonialism, and hybridity mixing with myth and magic situated at the very core of Divakaruni’s numerous narratives.

The main area of Divakaruni’s novels has been the study of the self identity, particularly of women. Divakaruni’s novels draw round the lives of women engaged in a quest for self. Her female protagonists long for the identity in the postcolonial world, and Divakaruni presents a quandary of the contemporary women and aspects of her everyday life. The search for self identity involves various factors such as alienation, relationships, society, etc. Divakaruni’s work has mapped the social, cultural and psychological changes in women brought about by their immigration.

The present thesis has analyzed the novels of Divakaruni to explore the issues of self identity of women.

The Introductory chapter has had its focus on Divakaruni as a writer. It has also identified the author in the contemporary scenario of writers. It delves in detail the themes of the novels of Divakaruni and the chaotic situation of the modern days, forcing the writer to take refuge in the third space.
The second chapter has examined the prevailing social, political and cultural scenario of the contemporary world. In her novels, Divakaruni has depicted the social scenario very dexterously just like a skilled artist. She has explored the stern realities of Indian as well as American society to describe the conditions of her women. The contemporary society acts as an impetus for the women to identify their situation and their status in the society.

Known for her magical realism, Divakaruni has also successfully raised the prevalent issues of society through her novels. She has become a spokesperson of the universal problems of discrimination, displacement, disturbance and disorder and she has created a new canvass filled with colours and shades of India which reflect the past as well as the contemporariness of India.

Chitra Divakaruni has spent her years in both Indian and American society and she is very well aware about the harmonious and the discordant aspects of both the society. The Indian society as exhibited by Chitra Divakaruni, is reflected full of social evils like caste and class system, the atrocities of arranged marriage, preference for the male heir, male dominance, etc. On the other hand, she has closely observed American society which like a mirage, initially seems full of opportunities, but after close monitoring of it, one can find lack of trust, sex and violence. The female protagonists such as Rakhi, Korobi, and Sudha face the darker side of American society. In The Vine of Desire Sara exposes the American society, “see other Americans, there’s too many men chasing after sex and money here, who think the word doesn’t apply them”.
Divakaruni has found the double standard for women in many areas. The women are victimized by both the different culture and the patriarchy. Although American society was free from the vices that women are subjected to, but she found that double standards prevailed regarding women both in the East and the West.

Reviewing the novel *Sister of My Heart*, Peter Nazareth writes, “In Divakaruni's work, despite sex, class and caste oppression, women need not end up as victims. America chips away at ossified Indian tradition, for people to see, as Krishna shows, that the imperative of life is deeper than arranged marriage, America and India are twinned” (Nazareth 819).

Most of her writing addresses the issues pertaining to common and consistent experiences of the women of South Asian Communities, and a few of her themes are the culture shocks, transformations, concepts of home and self faced by immigrant people. In giving words to the description of society, Divakaruni also gives words to her own life reflections both in India and America and her reflection have found a place in her novels.

Divakaruni’s female protagonists survive in these social situations and the conditions make them realize their status in the society. In the Indian setting of the novels, issues of arranged marriages and dowry problems are prominently raised in her work. The women characters like Anju and Sudha are born and brought up in the traditional society of India and after their marriage they migrate to America, they face dilemma as the values they have learnt and they are living with are different. The open minded American society permits certain liberties to the women, but their traditional mindset doesn’t allow them to enjoy.
Divakaruni has delineated the patriarchal society and its impact in America as well. The Indian men who migrate to America carry this patriarchy with them and exercise it there also. Geeta’s grandfather and Mr. Ahuja, Lalita’s husband are the examples of it. In India, the patriarchy poses limitations on women and hampers them in their growth and survival. The society despises the financial stability of a woman or a divorcee woman because the women are making their own decisions and becoming independent against it. The difference in the culture makes them realize their actual situation in the patriarchy. Through the social scenario, Divakaruni presents a platform for the women to think upon their status and situation and thus the women initiate questioning about their identity in patriarchy.

Divakaruni’s characters are very close to reality with which she weaves the story. There is a balance between old treasured beliefs and surprisingly new desires in her novels. The novels of Divakaruni continue to explore such contentious social issues as abortion, the failure of family life, childlessness, loneliness, etc. She not only shows us how contemporary society makes an individual, but also portrays how man’s greed has wreaked havoc and horror in the world we live.

The international events and their implications are also put forward by Divakaruni. The most threatening 9/11 causes identity issues in her protagonist Rakhi, whereas in post 9/11 America, Korobi faces its repercussions. The women who are already struggling to ascertain their identity have to confront the new issues of identity, whether they belong to the country in which they are living. Divakaruni herself has faced such problems during the 9/11 incident. Indians were attacked and their business ventures
were targeted. The social setting and environmental forces compel women to think about their identity. Divakaruni has delineated the social setting skillfully so that the actual situation of women could be understood.

Divakaruni's novels have been the products of an intense intellectual engagement with the socio-economic realities of the writer's contemporary world. The female protagonists of novels are fractured selves at the beginning of the novel. After the interaction with the stern realities of society, they come to terms with their self or persona in their own specific ways. Moreover, situations and events keep adding novel dimensions to the knowledge of life and the shaping of notions since the societal constructs impose rigid standards and restraints on its people.

The prevailing social conditions compel them to question about their identity in the society. Therefore the Chapter Three has had its focus on self identity and women in the novels. Divakaruni's women have been always questioning about their self and are constantly indulged in the discovery of self. The process of this quest is social, environmental and psychological. The social and environmental forces lead to the psychological pressure. For a woman, various multiple social and cultural, external as well as internal forces involve in this quest that contravene upon the path toward female individualization and an understanding of the individual self.

A woman's identity cannot be dissociated from the religious, national, ethnic and cultural context of her existence. The complexity of women's situation and diverse nature of their role in different parts of the world makes the claim about the universality of gender become superfluous. Both men and women have grappled with the question of
identity but with time woman's quest for recognition as an individual has got complicated as she has started realizing her abilities and inabilities. Divakaruni had portrayed the women who become conscious about their self and start analyzing their positions.

The female protagonists of Divakaruni survive in two spaces simultaneously, one as a woman sharing her private world of feminine experiences that can be defined as a notion of universal womanhood and in the second place, woman defines her identity and status in the context of cultural practices and social commitments. With all her women, the questions of identity arise during the course of their life and very often, they question not only about their role in society but also their existence and inner self.

Women under patriarchal pressure and control are subjected to much more social ostracism. Divakaruni has created budding new women in her novels who are not puppets in the hands of others, but someone who try to assert and carve their own identity in this all man's world. These women are no doubt conditioned by the Indian upbringing, but have risen above the traditional constraints.

Divakaruni has given voice to the women to raise the issues of their self identity and self recognition. Her female protagonists are healer. Just as she is working with the organizations Maitri and Daya to eradicate the ostracism, her protagonists cross their boundaries for the cause of women. The women in Divakaruni's novels not only questions about their identity, but they also assist others in their discovery of self. Tilo and Mrs. Gupta utilize their skills to resolve the problems of immigrant women.

The Chapter Four has been concerned with the alienation and assimilation of the women in the novels. Predominantly women are the expatriates and they face
displacement and complexities which are prevalent in the life of expatriates at a very initial level. The expatriates and their problems have emerged as a major theme in the 20th century authors crossing the barriers of caste, creed and nationality. One of the major problems of displacement has been alienation which has become a universal phenomenon. Modern literature abounds in alienated individuals caused by displacement. Alienation emerges as a natural consequence of existential predicament, both in intrinsic and extrinsic terms.

Divakaruni's women protagonists suffer from a sense of alienation in both India and abroad. Tilo, Anju, Sudha, Lalita, and Rakhi are the character who often suffer from the sense of alienation at one or the other point. Divakaruni has been very effective in communicating the feelings of the characters and reinforcing the theme of the alienated plight. Alienation is the result of loss of identity. She has employed various devices to advance the plot and convey the inner thoughts of her characters.

Divakaruni has portrayed the alienated female protagonists and their failure to connect with the family and society. She has explored that how the cries of Indian women go unheard and her pain goes unfelt. In the novels Divakaruni has presented how the desires, aspirations and dreams of women come to an end when a woman gets married and starts to live in the home of her husband. And as a result, Divakaruni's women become silent after marriage due to their social detachment. If a woman is immigrant then she has to suffer doubly. The protagonist feels alienation which often culminates in the discovery of self.
In case of immigration, cultural conflict is also a major problem which later on results in alienation. In most of Divakaruni's novels a woman migrates either after marriage or chooses America as their workplace. Some of her characters are second generation immigrants who face cultural conflict and feel alienated. Her protagonists are alienated from the world, from society, from families, from parents and even from their own selves because they are not average people but individuals. When these characters have to face alienation, they become rebels and turn reactionaries.

Chitra Divakaruni has given voice to the alienated women and presented their plight in the form of their agony and frustration. She has also provided suggestions so that the women can come out of the alienation and survive on the foreign land. The protagonists face alienation at various places, but they react to it positively. Some of them such as Tilo, Rakhi and Jiang find their way through the understanding of their partners while some others choose to be economically independent in order to assimilate into the society. Anju, Sudha and Lalita are among those who proceed towards being economically independent and thus enabling them to assimilate into the society. Anju and Lalita become the part of the group and thus get rid of their alienation whereas Sudha returns to India to find the new ways.

The central character Tilo of *The Mistress of Spices* searches for an in betweeness that exists in the diaspora. Divakaruni points out in her article “Dissolving Boundaries,” her status in the interstitial space with that of Tilo’s in-betweens as:

For me, Tilo became the quintessential dissolver of boundaries; moving between different ages and worlds and the communities that people, passing through a trial by
water, then a trial by fire, and finally the trial of earth-burial to emerge transformed, each
time with a new name and a new identity. Reading passages aloud as I often do when I
am revising; I was surprised to find how much I identified with her... I too have lived in
the diametrically opposed worlds of India and America. I too have taken on a new
identity in a new land. And I too in my quiet way have visited that emptiness, at once vast
and minute, that shimmers between life and death (2).

Divakaruni herself has felt that isolation which she has reflected through one of
her character Tilo.

The Chapter Five has explored myths and legend used in the novels. In her
novels, Divakaruni has also referred liberally to fables, myths and legends and woven
story so beautifully around them that it makes reading her enchantingly enriching. Fiction
becomes an important place for questioning the validity of the patriarchal myths that have
created a faulty impression of women and womanhood. Through her protagonists
Divakaruni has also questioned and reinterpreted the male created myths in their works
they tend to explore their power both as women and as creative writers. Divakaruni has
not rejected myths altogether, but made a positive reconstruction of it.

Divakaruni has dealt with the myths in an entirely different way. The ancient
epics of India, Mahabharata and Ramayana have been the decisive forces in the formation
of the ideals of the Indian mind and norms of Indian society. Divakaruni has retold the
story of Mahabhharata in her novel The Palace of Illusions from the perspective of
Draupadi. Even she has taken the help of Indian mythology to describe various
perceptions of the women and their interaction with the society. In her other novels,
Divakaruni has reconstructed the myths and presented in a feministic way. The myths used in the *Sister of My Heart* are exclusively patriarchal myths, but she has presented them from the women’s point of view. Divakaruni’s female protagonists questions on the validity of myths and most of them discards it because they bring them to the margins. Reconstruction of myths is a striking trait of Divakaruni’s novels. No direct comparison has been made in the novels of Divakaruni, but parallel with the mythological women can be drawn in her works.

The Sixth Chapter Man Woman Relationship is concerned with the relationships of women with their male counterparts in the novels. Divakaruni deals with the phenomenon of man and woman relations not made by fragmentation, but working as a whole representing the constant flux of emotional clashes born out of the shift of geography and cultural transformation.

Divakaruni has delineated the man- woman relationships with various dimensions. Some relationships in her novels are happy and cherishing the conventional values while other relationships in her novels bring the justice and cruelty to the forefront. Women are expected to perform the roles that will best satisfy men’s dreams and fantasies about them. Divakaruni’s women shatter the perception of male dominated society and move with the time. Even they don’t compromise with the issue of their freedom in a male dominated society. Divakaruni has justified the female psyche as far as their oppression and subordination in various relationships from their childhood to married life by examining to the pathetic condition of Indian women from various social strata due to tradition, religion, culture, family institution and patriarchal system.
Divakaruni seems to establish that traditions are the foundation of human behaviour and all modifications in the pattern of human relationship must have its base in tradition. Beneath the surface of the dynamics of marital harmony, she has successfully represented the issues like gender identities, issue of motherhood and socio-cultural and psycho-philosophical perspectives of the feminine psyche, built out of the migration of culture. The men in the novels have been instrumental in bringing out the consciousness among women. Divakaruni has also brought out the exploitation and negligence faced by women from their male counterpart. Her women are more well rounded and sympathetic than her male counterparts who seem stereotypical and flat. Her novels are a microscopic scanning of the complexity, creeping up in the wake of globalization, working as a compulsive force in search of a new definition and dimension of man and woman relationship.

The major concerns of Divakaruni have been the feminism issues and their resolutions. She has been highly influenced by the writers who have been giving voice to the women's concern. On being asked about the influences that shaped her writing, Divakaruni says:

Mahasweta Devi - an Indian feminist writer - has been a wonderful role model for me. She wrote about women's issues long before it became fashionable or political to do so - when it was really dangerous - and she suffered a lot for it. I look up to her enormously. She's in her seventies and still writing.

But a lot of women from different traditions have influenced me as well. When I started writing, I didn't have any confidence in my writing. I didn't have the confidence
that my subject would be of interest to anyone. So reading Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, example, was a big moment in my life... The poet Adrienne Rich also gave me courage to write. Anita Desai gave me a lot of inspiration. And I've admired the work of Sandra Cisneros and Louise Erdrich immensely. I think of these writers as my extended community. They gave me permission, as it were, and inspiration, to write my stories. (Atlantic)

In examining the novels of Divakaruni, it is found that the immigrant women are caught between the traditional customs of India from which they have emigrated and their present experiences with the more westernized culture of America. The self-perceptions of these women are dramatically altered due to the change in the environment and the displacement from the culture. The women that Divakaruni has created are capable of living in a world in which the individual exists not as a unified one, but rather as many, bound by no borders and infinite in the possibilities of creating consciousness and inventing identities.

Divakaruni has succeeded in giving words to her own experiences. She has distinguished herself from the groundbreaking novelists in the genre of South Asian diasporic literature. Her experience of the diaspora and its effect upon women not only provide the readers with insight into the lives of the South Asians who currently reside in the United States, but also present a model with which the process of constructions of identities could be better understood. She also has varied interests as a social activist. She is associated with social organizations such as *Maitri* and *Daya* which help women in problematic situations. Much of Divakaruni's writing is inspired by her experiences and
encounters with suffering women in the organization ‘Maitri’, which she has established to help battered women in America. “My work with ‘Maitri’ has been at once valuable and harrowing. I have seen things I would never have believed could happen. I have heard of acts of cruelty beyond imagining. The lives of many of the women I have met through this organization have touched me deeply”. Through her association with Maitri and Daya, Divakaruni has provided the support and courage to the women. In other words, she has been a healer for the immigrant and estranged women. She has created such women in her fiction who have also been healer to the humanity in general and the female fraternity in particular.

Divakaruni has written about strong family bonds, sisterhood and the courage of women who find themselves in a different world after immigration. According to her, women, in association with other women can transcend men and attain a power of their own, which will lift them from isolation, liberate them from oppression, help them to begin a new productive life to attain a sense of self, and reaffirm their identity with a sense of being responsible for their own life. Female bonding is not only a refuge from oppression and a challenge to patriarchy, but is a universal kinship that women share. Her women are both feeble and strong. In each of the novels, both types of women can be found and it is also observed that it is women who help the other women so that she could gain her recognition. Not even a single man is there to support or to identify them.

Divakaruni’s writing is full of humanistic values. In today’s world, where self-absorbed individuals very often foster separations and conflicts, Divakaruni’s depiction of deep and often unseen connections among the individuals with trust, interdependence
and necessary reliance is not just refreshing but a powerful reminder of a potential that humanity needs to uncover at the earliest to avoid more crises and catastrophes. Divakaruni's prose writings transmit profound ethical values and the promise of togetherness to the world with literature as an efficient and convincing tool for mutual understanding and love.

The female protagonists in the works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni reflect the conflict and tensions arising out of the attempt to negotiate between tradition and the desire to lead a new life. In her fiction, the women characters are distanced from their homeland; they are logical in their mind but traditional by heart. They are torn between old and new values. They question about their lives and its nature, their roles as mothers, daughters, wives and professionals. This awareness directs them to rethink about their own lives as women, and instill in them the confidence and strength to forge ahead. The women find themselves in an in-between state, struggling to carve out identities of their own and their social responsibilities. Divakaruni excels at depicting the cultural dialectics of the immigrant experience, like many other contemporary writers.

All Divakaruni’s women find themselves within the constraining boundaries of their cultures and religions. She presents the disruptiveness of change and the power, beauty, strength and validity of redefining one’s own identity within a broader universal context. In her novels, Divakaruni emphasizes upon the understanding of the important aspects of cultures because it can only be a panacea for the society which is full of oppression and hate. Divakaruni dreams of the society which not only respect women, but place them on their rightful place.
Divakaruni represents the women characters who change identities many times in order to arrive at a final identity, which redefines their self-hood. The identity of the South Asian diaspora woman comprises numerous consciousnesses encompassing various conflicting characteristics. Even for the women of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, to exist is to be many. It is to embrace the paradoxes of perception that arise as life is lived astride the boundaries of many worlds.

Divakaruni stands for liberation of women in the patriarchal society which actually doesn’t allow a woman to shape and mould her individual identity. The identity of a woman is dictated by the perceptions of others. She has no rights to decide, but have to adjust and accommodate as per the image predetermined for her.

Divakaruni’s female protagonists are educated, independent and confident, but they are not completely free from nagging doubts of cultural transgression. Divakaruni’s stories work as a medium to transmit the message to the readers and she uses her stories as a means to empower women, to encourage them to be themselves. Patriarchy definitely bears a large share of responsibility for the low status that women have in India. Her stories spread message that the female consciousness can be made only if women themselves begin to take the responsibility of their own fate and demand for their rightful position in the family.

The women characters in the novels not only support each other, but they also emphasize with each others’ predicaments and stand as examples of empowered women. Divakaruni shifts her focus from the traditional portrayal of women who submit to the pressure from all the sides to the empowered protagonists. They become audacious and
free fighting all odds against them even in difficult situations. Divakaruni probably wishes that women need to be bold and active even in difficult situations; and they can create a life of their own, a destiny of their own, if they find out the solution by thinking practically. Divakaruni’s women don’t accept the situation, but they change and grow by recognizing the opportunities and grabbing them. The women identify the strength of mind and potential to get freedom and autonomy in leading their lives.

Divakaruni’s female characters struggle in their balance between family responsibilities and individual happiness. In this way they are at the center of the conflict between the Hindu culture which always shows the mother as the giver, as the nurturer, and as sacrificing herself for the good of the family and the western concept of self-happiness. But when they determine to explore their identity, they become human beings, independent of their traditional role as a daughter, wife or mother. Divakaruni’s female protagonists demonstrate the female independence that she celebrates although such independence is achieved not without trauma and pain. She suggests that women can determine to assert themselves as individuals who can set their own boundaries with their partners only through the importance given to education in their lives.

Divakaruni has perfectly blended the theme of the East-West encounter and especially of the Indo-American meeting in her novels and her masterly treatment of it with great depth and seriousness shows her genuine and resolute concern for the global and the existing situation. Confrontation with the west for the discovery of one’s own self is evident through her women protagonists. This search constitutes a quest for a satisfactory attitude towards the west, and for a realistic image of the east. The fusion of
the western and eastern cultures is beautifully brought out by the novelist. Thus, apart from the melting of the two cultures, Divakaruni succeeds in presenting the expatriate sensibility of the South Asian diasporic women and the process of identity formation.

K.S. Dhanum in his essay “Negotiation with the New Culture: A Study of Chitra Banerjee Divakuruni’s The Mistress of Spices” perfectly describes the female protagonists of Divakaruni, “Divakaruni’s books are directed mainly to women of all races and faiths who share a common female experience. All her heroines must find themselves within the contrasting boundaries of their cultures and religions... she also contrasts the lives and perceptions of first generation immigrants with that of their children born and raised in a foreign land. And inevitably, it includes the Indian American experience of grappling with two identities. She has her finger accurately on the diasporic pulse, fusing eastern values with western ethos. Her writing course with her identification is with a brave new world forging to life. Her sensitivity to contemporary voices, today’s issues are threaded through with an ongoing search for identity beyond anthropology, beyond sociology and beyond academia” (62).

Divakaruni as a writer was directly or indirectly engaged in the fundamental mission of formulating a new consciousness regarding women in the rapidly changing environment in India. Divakaruni projects the different categories of exploitive forces confronted by the protagonists. She fascinatingly imprints her outlook to establish female self-hood.

As a post colonial writer, Divakaruni has brought the nuances of the complexities faced by the immigrants in an elaborate way through her works. The post colonial
problems of identity and cross cultural crisis occupy the themes in the works of Divakaruni. The problem of gender in the postcolonial pretext adds to the agonizing situation of the immigrant women. Divakaruni has herself claimed several times in interviews that the diaspora has changed the lives of Indians and that women are concerned about their identity and the question of being Indian as a space they are negotiating and an identity they are reinventing constantly.

Divakaruni's professed manifesto is to celebrate the courage and humanity of suffering women who have rebelled against oppressive patriarchy and have joined a universal sisterhood. In charting out the possibilities of the role of the new woman, Divakaruni, as already looks not only to the western ideology of feminism, but also to her own literary tradition as well as to the literary tradition of ethnic women writers.

The women often face the dilemma of whether to opt for tradition, custom or to be untraditional. In immigrant literature, the polarity between tradition and westernization is presented in an undeviating manner. Divakaruni has succeeded in presenting the feelings of alienation, marginalization, rootlessness and assimilation. Divakaruni has the symbiotic link between her own roots and the quality of her art. Divakaruni's protagonists find the mid way by keeping the traditional values with them and proceeding in the direction of self development. All her protagonists, whether they are entangled in the arranged marriages, families or exploitation, keep the values with them and choose the path of self discovery. The women in her novels become healer to the society and rebuild their identity by breaking down cultural differences and at last recognizing common humanity. Divakaruni has succeeded in expressing the spirit of the Indian
psyche. She has dissolved the boundaries and has shattered stereotypes. She has been a soothing bridge between cultures of both the countries in her real life through her service at Maitri and also through her novels. In fact Divakaruni has been mirrored as a healer in her novels.

Psychological independence is essential for the free expression of thought. Intellectual oppression is a major cause of conflict in the minds of female characters. Writing can help women in attaining an identity and female subjectivity. Divakaruni has not only expressed the women's plight, but also delineated the characters like Anju and Mrs. Gupta, who has found their psychological independence after their self analysis, for Divakaruni believes, “Strong women, when respected, make the whole society strong. One must be careful with rapid changes, though, and make an effort to preserve at the same time, the positive traditions of Indian culture.”

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s narrative techniques are reflections of the artistry of a painter. She colours her characters' inner and outer strength and struggle with such poetic descriptions that a reader ultimately finds an uplifting story about women who learn to make peace with the difficult choices that the circumstances have forced upon them. Divakaruni’s vaunted style is evident and emotionally charged; “poetic and bewitching, observant and compassionate, has a remarkable gift for intertwining romance with trenchant insights into the harsh realities of women’s lives, whether they live in material comfort, both visceral pleasure and clarifying aesthetic revelation”.

The study proves that Divakaruni's handling of the complexities of the women in a simple and lucid manner undoubtedly establishes her as a mature writer. Through her
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novels, Divakaruni has brought reality and change in the depiction of women. The women of her novels long for India, but they find America more secure place for them. They actually face problems in America as well, but deal with them and establish themselves as an independent being. In this process, they discover their complex, hyphenated identity.

The female protagonists Divakaruni’s protagonists consider the United States as a safe haven and a promised land as immigrants. Clear binaries are also constructed between the United States and India with the United States being endowed with redeeming qualities and India being portrayed as in need of redemption. The women look at the orient culture when they face problems in America.

The study also confirms that the immigrant writers not only present the problems in a multi-cultural society, they also try to offer some solutions to it. Some of Divakaruni’s work is autobiographical and she has undergone the problems that she has discussed in her novels. In this way she has come across the solutions which have been presented through the protagonists activities. Through her writing, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni may continue to inscribe herself among the prominent writers of our times who believe in the power of words to bring about change in human consciousness.

The research restricted itself to the single aspect of the novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, although poetry, short story and children’s literature are also in her credit. An inclusion of these works would have made the dissertation more comprehensive and complete. But the novels, poetry and short stories are distinct genre. An in depth study of these genres would be beyond the scope of this research and hence the omission.
For a great creative writer, the last word can never be said. Divakaruni’s fiction lends itself to various interpretations owing to its variety and complexity. Being a post colonial writer, Magic Realism is obviously present in the writings of Divakaruni. A researcher can exclusively deal with the usage of Myths in her writings. A comparative perspective on Divakaruni, Bharathi Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri and also with Margaret Laurence and Dorris Lessing can be undertaken to throw more light on the discovery of self. Divakaruni’s language and Divakaruni’s works explicitly show the inextricable complexities the women have to face throughout their life span.
WORK CITED


