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ABSTRACT

In order to develop an identity, several Indian women novelists have given their Female subjectivity. Representation of Psychological Exploration of Women is a major thematic element in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel. Although feminism is a recurring subject in her works, she explores it via fragmentation. To demonstrate the prevalence of psychological feelings of women in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writing, I conduct an exhaustive textual investigation of her first full-length book, *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), in this paper. In 2005, the film "*The Mistress of Spices*" was based on this novel. She hopes that readers of her work would consider the female characters from a feminist perspective.

Keywords: Diaspora, Feminist Sensibility, Identity and cultural conflicts.

INTRODUCTION

Feminism is related with the fundamental reform of society through a woman-centered approach that confronts oppressive and unequal systems. Feminism is a set of groups and beliefs that attempt to shape and preserve a state in which women have equal political, economic, cultural, and social rights. Working to ensure that females have equal access to school and jobs is part of this. A feminist advocates for or supports the rights and equality of women. Liberal Feminism, Marxist (social) Feminism, and Radical Feminism are three types of feminism, according to certain feminist thinkers. Recent classification includes psychoanalytical feminism, postmodern and post-structural feminism, Black feminism, Western feminism, and Eastern feminism. The feminist topic is distinguished by the equal opportunity discussion concerning the disparity between the two. The biological disparities between men and women were the most significant.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER

It seeks to investigate how the female characters in Divakaruni's novel address immigration issues within the context of Indian sensibility. The identities of the East and West combine during this process in order to negotiate and establish a stronger and better identity.

THREE WAVES OF FEMINISM

The term "feminism" comes from the Latin word "femina," which means "woman." According to the Oxford Dictionary, this is a movement or philosophy that advocates for women's rights based on gender equality. According to the New Encyclopedia Britannica, the women's movement is "*a social movement concerned with altering women's roles*" (Encyclopedia, 1974, 732). Whatever attempts are made to define feminism, it is clear that it is a diverse and complex collection of ideas and actions.

As a result, the term "first wave" feminism refers to groups of women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who worked to secure equal rights for women, including the ability to vote. Demonstrations in the 1960s and early 1970s focused on women's inequality, but this time not just on women's lack of equal social and political rights but on family, sexuality, and labor as well. Wage equality, equal education and opportunity, 24-hour nurseries, free contraception, and abortion were the four primary demands of second wave feminism.

The "Third Wave" from 1990 until the present, the term "feminism" has been connected with numerous disputes in feminist activism and study. It all started with the understanding that the second wave had overlooked the diversity of women of different nations, ethnic groups, races, and cultures. Feminists now prefer that women exhibit themselves as essentially strong, self-assured, and fearless persons, bringing themselves to the table for greater inclusion in politics, economics, courts, and social forums. Thus, feminism had many

repercussions and complications over the years, yet it has always fought for the betterment of women.

In her work "*A Vindication for the Rights of Woman*" (1798), Mary Wollstonecraft attempted to argue for the necessity to educate women logically, motivated by the ideas of the French Revolution and Liberalism. Even while she did not call for girls to leave the house, she did fight for their education in order to offer them with the possibility for economic independence, freedom, and dignity.

When Virginia Woolf, a leading feminist literary critic, wrote the classic book *A Room of one's own*, she questioned the need of perceiving the world from a male viewpoint, the economic politics of a society dominated by men, the absence of women in human history, and the insufficiency of "male" language to describe the basically feminine experiences of women writers. Woolf emphasizes the importance of rewriting history in order to give women a fair and truthful portrayal. Demanding a female literary culture, Woolf emphasizes the importance of resurrecting the lost and undervalued female authors of the past and motivating a new generation to express themselves in their own individual voices. Woolf urges women to write like women by establishing a vocabulary that grasps the rhythmic patterns of their own experience and literary forms that are "*adapted to the body*" (Woolf 78).

Feminine (1840-1880), Feminist (1882-1920), and Female (1920-present) are the three stages of the evolutionary epoch according to Elaine Showalter. Elaine Showalter divides feminism into two categories: woman as reader and woman as writer. Feminism is a fantastic movement that has had a global influence. All kinds of literature, including poetry, theatre, short fiction, and novels, have been employed by women writers all around the world. A feminist wave swept the world, with both female and male writers writing about feminist topics.

FEMINISM IN THE MISTRESS OF SPICES

Several Indian women writers made their debut in the 1990s, writing books that represent the true status of Indian society and its treatment of women. Despite the fact that Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has just relocated to the United States. There are several factors that contribute to this, including her strong feelings of belonging to India as well as her interest in women. She has grappled with modern challenges and topics such as parenthood, mothering, marriage, individualization, class, conflicts, marginalization, and woman as wife, mother, and sister, as well as, maybe most significantly, woman as person, not simply a sex object. She looks dubious of tradition, but they find solutions to modern-day women's wants and ambitions in their past.

Chitra Banerjee's works depict the lives of women seeking ideals. The diverse experiences of female characters, as well as their use of conscience, highlight the obstacles that women face. Displacement in *The Mistress of Spices* offers a more complex portrayal of diasporic identity. Not only that, but it also possessed a feminist diasporic sensibility on times. The excellent depiction of characters' inner and outer speech adds a significant emotional dimension to *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), an emancipating novel about women who are actually easy to accept the difficult decisions that life has forced upon them. The tale takes a wild turn as the people become entangled with one another.

Acclaimed style, as well as emotionally charged insights into the naked bones of women's lives in all its vivid detail—whether in material sensual physiological pleasure or confusing flashes of larger levels of consciousness are on show. Nayan Tara, the protagonist's first name, was born in a small village and given the name Tilo. This is what Nayan Tara tells her parents about her arrival: "They named me Nayan Tara, the Star of the Eye; my parents' cheeks were heavy with fallen hope at another girl—child, and this one colored like mud" (MS 7). Bhagyavati is the name given to her by the pirates, who kidnap her. The snakes renamed her Sarpakanya when she decided to visit the island.

When pirates attack and abduct her town, her yearning to depart is realized. Bhagyavati, or "*Bringer of Luck*," is her new name (MOS 19). She takes the death of her family, and consequently the ensuing inner grief, into her new life as the pirate queen. A woman has no push, no aspirations to continue pursuing, and no objectives to meet. If she breaches this circle, only tragedy will ensue, and she will be tormented by remorse. Upon becoming mistress of spices, she renamed her "*Tilo meaning a life giver, a healer of health and hope*" (MOS 42). In the lives of her store's characters, Divakaruni tells captivating tales of difficulty, failure, and success.

Tilo has matured and is unhappy in her duty as spice mistress. She is to heal and be kind to her people, but she is not to become emotionally engaged in their pain. Immigrant characters like as Haroun, Geeta and her grandfather, Jagjit, and Lalita seek the mistress' assistance in overcoming their physical, emotional, and psychological concerns throughout the novel. Tilo's previous existence explains how the Old one, the first mother who taught her magic and groomed her, ordained her as a mistress of spices. As a mistress at a spice store on the crooked corner where Oakland buses stop, Tilo spends much of her time in the store.

Because *The Mistress of Spices* is wrapped in fiction, the prologue, with its strong undercurrent of reality, continues to run at the start of the work, and as the narrative develops, the fantastical element fades and the realistic element emerges. Tilo's real love is demonstrated by Divakaruni through Raven. She falls in love with Raven and decides to give up her rheumatic body in order to be youthful and full of passion. She must

choose between a life of supernatural powers and immortality, a life of compassion and love, and a life of worldly and sensual delights. Finally, she evaluates everyone and devises a strategy to stir Shampati's rage. Raven changes her name to Maya. She should depart with her beloved to fulfill his wish, but she is called back by reality. She lets go of her preconceived notions and embraces who she is, her new relationship, and the new responsibilities that come with it. The works of Divakaruni are primarily directed at women of all races and faiths who share a universal feminine experience. All of her heroines must traverse the many religious and cultural boundaries.

The feminism theme has an impact on even the novel's minor characters, Lalita, Geeta, and Hameeda. Lalita is Ahuja's wife's name. In spite of her good looks and charisma, she struggles from being bound to her village by an arranged marriage to a dominating Indian. She abandons her ambition of creating her own tailor business in India and moves to a faraway country with no help, no friends, and no employment. Her existence is devoid of true pleasure. Tilo offers her turmeric because he watches her sorrows and loneliness discreetly. Turmeric may reduce Lalita's loneliness. However, it will only draw her closer to her husband and the house, placing even more strain on a life of unusual stillness. Tilo urges her to eat fennel in order to increase her mental stamina. Finally, Lalita exposes herself, and she or he resolves to live her or his life according to her or his heart, chasing joy in her or his own precious manner. Lalita, like Tilo, tried to tackle the opposite difficulties using the spices.

Next, Geeta, the American-born daughter of exiled Indians, is scolded by her grandpa for her reportedly loose conduct with men. The story of Geeta and her grandfather illustrates the Indian-American cultural knot. The grandpa complains that his granddaughter, Geeta, works late with other men and arrives home late, as well as in other automobiles. Geeta's grandfather is surprised when she cuts her hair short, because hair is the essence of women. Geeta's remark, "Oh Grandpa, I needed a new look," (MOS 89) surprises him even more. Here is a combination of India and America. Her affections for Chicano Jaun Condero are expressed. She can also choose to live with him. The grandpa responds by pleading with his son Ram to secure a ticket to India. Geeta's grandpa would go to any extent to ensure that she lives as an Indian girl. After the Indian spices work their magic, Geeta is reunited with her family.

Hameeda, too, suffers much at the hands of her husband, but paradoxically begins life fresh and new with the help of his brother, a sharp reminder of the inherent paradoxes involved in the lives of women in this story. She even attempts to learn English so that she and her daughter can sustain themselves in America. Contradictions do not just exist in Social or Physical Space. While economic growth motivates migration to advanced cultures, disparities in economic rewards and opportunities occur in this dynamic situation.

Shalini Gupta in her work "In Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Arranged Marriage: A Perspective, she writes on good elements, such as strong family bonds and the courage of those who find themselves in a new world following immigration. In a word, she presents Indians as eating a nutritious diet." (Gupta). Women find a microcosm of their bad position in their homeland's patriarchal society here as well, due to economic inequalities. As she begins singing the atonement song, she is the widow, and they are in love.

FINDINGS

Chitra Banerjee's work depicts her own immigration experiences, allowing Americans to appreciate the richness of India and Indian flavors. This article depicts how the Indian female immigrants may utilize magic to overcome problems faced by Indians Diaspora.

FUTURE SCOPE OF EXTENSION

This paper may be used to investigate the many aspects of feminism in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*. It has only studied feminism in one of Divakaruni's works, but it might be broadened to include ecofeminism in her other writings as well as the works of other Indo American and Indo Anglian authors.

CONCLUSION

Women struggling for liberation also fight for a stronger conceptual framework and a better knowledge of the movement's, histories, and investigative research concerns. This articulation has brought them together in order to develop power through solidarity action.

Chitra Banerjee, on the other hand, not only asks the concerns, but also answers them for her female characters by suggesting realistic solutions to achieve freedom and financial stability, frequently through vocational labor. In *The Mistress of Spices*, all of the characters strive to navigate their new society. Tilo and her spices assist every character in the narrative that is trapped during immigration.

In her works, Divakaruni presents women as a class in the same manner as Marxian epistolary does. While other writers merely write about numerous themes, Divakaruni takes the time to address the delicate problems. She hopes that readers would view the female characters from a feminist standpoint after reading her work. Tilo's experience is more of a delicate study of the defining issue of feminism.

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