

A Study of Cultural Diversity in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni'

Mistress of Spices

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Abstract

In our world, people migrate to another country for many reasons, including political, socio-economic and educational purposes. People migrate to a foreign land with the expectations of liberty, gratification and existence which clashes with the traditional values of their homeland. Many people also immigrate to other countries. This immigration isolates people from their homeland and brings them into a fully unknown culture and setting. So, they have special attention to the new culture and they try to follow the new customs, religions, traditions, and languages. Meanwhile, they are obsessed with their own culture. It is clearly picturized in the novel *Mistress of Spices* which is written by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. She is an Indian diasporic author. The term 'diaspora' refers to a group of individuals who live in exile. Diasporic writing occupies a distinct position between nations and cultures. The factors that influence diasporic literature are primarily a reaction to homelessness and issues such as displacement, nostalgia, cultural shift, and the crisis of identity are all words that come to mind when thinking about it. As a Diaspora writer, most of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novels deal with the experience of immigrants to the United States. This research paper aims to explore the conflicts of the cultural diversity of the Indian immigrant women who leave behind their homes and try to adapt look into the new culture. Because they want to improve their economic condition. They also carry their dreams and native culture with them and therefore they face nostalgia or homesickness. As they are struck up with their nativity and their dreams, they face many conflicts in their migrated land. The main reason behind the conflict of diasporic literature is cultural diversity. This research paper will explore the deliberation of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's cultural diversity and conflict in *Mistress of Spices*.

Keywords: Immigration, cultural diversity, culture, homeland, nostalgia, diaspora and tradition.

Research question

- What impact did the native people immigrating to another country?
- What are the problems faced by the Indian Immigrants who attempt to assimilate into a foreign lifestyle?
- Why the immigrant people did not live in the other country?
- How do the women characters deal with their trouble in traditional India and in modernized America?

Methodology

Literature-based research perspective will be used for this research paper. In this novel, the novelist has chronicled the journey of self-discovery, identity crises and the gradual process of negotiating two cultures in her novel. The present research has focused on various diasporic dilemmas experienced by the characters and the resolutions sought by them. An in-depth study has been made adopting a diasporic approach, cross-border linkage, and transnational migration.

Data sources

Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Several secondary sources such as books, papers, and articles will be used.

Hypothesis

In this novel, Divakaruni depicts the conflicts of the cultural diversity of the Indian immigrant women who leave behind their homes and look for new homes in their host culture. The new land offers a bright future to those immigrants, a world free of gender and racial inequalities based on global cultures, faiths, traditions, and languages. The author depicts her woman protagonists with their family setups, fighting repressive social structures, she needs to prove her innocence emerging as an independent woman who finds inner harmony and happiness as her own terms.

Research Gap

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novels were interpreted in many ways. Most of the researchers wrote about immigration by using this novel. Their research paper shows the immigrant people's greediness, following the new culture, etc. But in this paper, I explore the immigrant people's suffering, how they adopt the new culture, and why the people feel difficulty adopting the new culture, tradition, and religious belief.

Finding

This research paper's finding is that when people move into another country, they surely lose their identity, cultural and traditional beliefs, and ideologies. In this novel, spices give a touch of Indianness which takes the characters back to their homeland, and here comes the difference in thinking and perceiving both the occident and the orient. The people move to another country for improving their economic condition. But they are not able to live in that place. Because they are not able to adopt new cultures, traditions, and also the other culture of people who lived there. This novel also shows that western culture is materialistic and Indian culture is spiritualistic.

Diasporic literature is focused on the lives of immigrants, as well as their emotional and exterior struggles in a foreign place. It holds a vital place in today's literary world. The notion of diaspora has been drawn from the Greek term meaning "to disperse". The diaspora is a dispersed people with a common origin in a limited geographical region. It refers to the movement of a specific population across cultural domains, with the displaced individuals experiencing nostalgia for their hometown. It does not mean that they have no home; yet, having a home in a foreign nation causes them to suffer. As a result, people can see and feel the difference between living at home and living abroad. The term "diaspora" was introduced by a number of female writers who contributed to the development of English literature by expressing their own issues such as exile, migration, alienation, cultural identity, and ethnicity.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an Indian-American author. She has published over sixteen books. The majority of her novels are about the experiences of immigrants to the United States. The characters in her works are mostly set in Kolkata and the Bay Area of California. She is an excellent interpreter of India's cultural diversity. Her works depict Indian cultural traditions, particularly Bengali cultural traditions, in an intimate family setting that is tightly tied to social, cultural, and psychological standards towards food. The Bengali culture has been explored and returned several times to highlight how immigrants maintain their home culture in the dominant and conflicting culture of the new nation.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* tries to record the immigrants' sufferings and agony. Immigrants face difficulties for a variety of reasons. They feel the anguish of being separated from their homeland. They face disgrace as a result of low-status occupations,

cultural disparities, identity conflict, assimilation dilemmas, unfriendly attitudes toward foreign cultures, language obstacles, and other factors. The purpose of this research paper is to portray the sorrow and plight of Indian immigrants in America, as shown in Divakaruni's famous novel *The Mistress of Spices*.

Mistress of Spices by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni depicts immigrants who encounter cultural challenges in a foreign nation but also stick to their own cultural beliefs and practices while gradually learning the cultural ways of the host country. This work portrays Divakaruni's own cultural difficulties in West Bengal, India. She has effectively represented Indian culture and heritage in realistic terms. This research paper takes a cross-cultural approach to multiculturalism, postcolonialism, and globalization, concentrating on the American character, culture, and people. Immigration has traditionally been regarded as a symbol of hope for a better life in a foreign nation. Migration to America has traditionally been viewed as a certain road to 'success'. The 'American Dream' is a concept that has been popularized and propagated by the media. Immigrants come to America to achieve this ambition. James Truslow Adams invented the phrase "American Dream" in his book "The Epic of America."(1931). He wrote that *The American Dream* is the vision of a nation in which life should be better, richer, and fuller for all men, with equal opportunity for everyone regardless of talent or success. It is a tough dream to interpret correctly for the European upper classes, and too many of us have become tired and distrustful of it.

Tilo was an Indian girl, who seeks satisfaction, independence, and significance in her life in *The Mistress of Spices*. Tilo was the third female child born to her parents in a small Indian village. Tilo's birth was a burden to her parents. She informs that "My parents' faces were heavy with fallen hope at another girl-child, and this one colored like mud"(TMS 07). Her parents continued to hate and reject her. Tilo was also exposed to gender and race discrimination as a child.

Divakaruni here highlights the true problematic picture of Indian traditional culture, which prefers boy children over girl children. Indians also kill the female child before or after her delivery, and being born with a black complexion is a curse for a girl. It is notable that while Indians condemn other civilizations for their discrimination towards colored people, Indians treat

their own people with color biases. In India, all marriage advertising includes the word 'fair' for girls. Usha Hariprasad also says of her fight against color discrimination in India: Battling mindsets and addressing attitude change is no easy task in a society where fairness is being equated with being attractive (Hariprasad 01).

Tilo's parents named her Nayan Tara, which meant "star of the eye." They rejected her because she was a girl child, and she grew up to be Nayan Tara, "a flower that blooms by the dust road." Nayan Tara lived a restless and pointless existence, neglected by her parents and locals in a poverty-stricken environment. She yearned for affection from her parents and society, but she never received it. Alienated and disregarded, the emptiness within her eventually morphs into wrath, which grants her the ability to predict. The villagers generously showered Nayan Tara with presents as a token of appreciation after discovering that her unknown skills had assisted them in resolving their difficulties.

In India, girls are neglected, while goddesses are respected. Similarly, Nayan Tara was also worshipped as a divinity, and her parents were afraid of her abilities. She was dissatisfied with her existence, in which she receives no affection from anyone. She says that: 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. When I read this in their eyes I felt disdain (TMS 09). Nayan Tara's soul is filled with unhappiness as a result of her parents and society's partiality toward her, and she begins to feel indifferent and dissatisfied with her life.

Divakaruni shows here that children who are devoid of parental affection in their lives become unhappy and stubborn towards everything. Nayan Tara became an arrogant, ambitious, and insatiable soul. The locals disseminated Nayan Tara's name and popularity far and wide. Her power allowed her to attract anybody she wanted to her, but it also had certain drawbacks. When power is utilized irresponsibly and without restraint, it might cause destruction beyond human comprehension.

Young Nayan Tara sent out a call for pirates over the seas. Without realizing it, her activities result in the ruin of her town and the death of her family by Pirates who come in pursuit of her to obtain riches with her unusual skills. Tilo felt guilty about her parent's death. The unexpected eruption of the upheaval awakened Nayan Tara to the deeper reality.

Divakaruni aims to show that, like Nayan Tara, all women should use their feminine strength to handle the ups and downs of life. The pirates took Narayan Tara and renamed her Bhagyavati, which meant "bringer of luck." She is named "queen of pirates" because she leads her pirates to wealth, fame, and glory. She spends several years with them bravely, but she is unhappy with her life and profession. She weeps:

Around me, the ocean lay dark and thick, like clotted iron. It crushed in on me like it was my life. I thought of the years behind me, all the raids I'd led, all the ships I'd plundered, all the riches I'd amassed meaninglessly and meaninglessly given away. I witnessed the same thing in the years ahead, wave after inky frozen wave.
(TMS 21)

Bhagyavati was still dissatisfied with her meaningless life as the queen of pirates, and in irritation and boredom, she sent a call to the sea to express her yearning. Bhagyavati expressed her affection for the serpents who save her because they loved her. Divakaruni has included serpents in her works because she believes they are connected to ancient Indian culture and folklore. The snake tale represents the overcoming of inner fears/dark zones. It also represents bravely accepting a task. The author includes magic realism to represent the religious tradition of Indians, beliefs that function subconsciously to produce conscious activities. It also implies how such stories underlie Indians' subconscious minds, and how their actions give them a feeling of myth and miraculous in their lives. In this novel, Divakaruni has combined the world of magic with the realistic atmosphere of the novel and has utilized the magic realism approach to make the work very symbolic and metaphorical as well as interesting to read.

Serpents, as the mother earth and Indian deities, were also regarded as representations of Indian culture's rebirth and fertility. Tilo adopted various identities in order to find meaning and fulfillment in her life and to integrate into new settings and environments. The sea serpents, having achieved the technique of invisibility, are also said to appear in front of anybody only if the serpent desires to, as the serpents are invisible to human sight. Snakes also helped Bhagyavati in finding direction in her life, and they taught her about the secret magical island of spices, where she might get spiritual wisdom and the meaning or purpose of her life through the usage of spices.

The Snakes offered Bhagyavati the position of Sarpa Kanya, which meant snake maiden, but she was attracted by the mystical spice island. She got the impression that the spices are talking to her. She says that: “The call of the spices coursed up my veins, unstoppable. I turned my face from the serpents to where I imagined the island waiting for me” (TMS 24). Divakaruni depicts how humans are attracted to mystical things in order to forget about their present sufferings and establish a meaningful and meaningful survival strategy. Bhagyavati also enjoyed taking the risk of visiting a dangerous island where she may forget about her history and herself. She also wanted to forget the tragedies of her loveless and estranged life and to create a new existence and identity in order to connect with the universe through her physical and mental abilities.

Bhagyavati jumped into the sea in order to reach the island. Bhagyavati discovered an old lady and her pupil girls on the island. Only women live in this world. The old lady was known as the First Mother, and when she carefully checks Bhagyavati's hands, she discovered that they were ordinary, with strong and fit bones for becoming the mistress of spices. The First Mother informed Bhagyavati that the spices in her hands made her qualified to become the mistress of spices. Bhagyavati, along with the other girls on the hidden island, learned the skill of magic using spices from the First Mother and becomes the mistress of spices. She was informed that she must make numerous sacrifices in order to become the mistress. The First Mother asked her pupil girls that:

Are you ready to give up your young bodies, to take on age and ugliness and unending service? Ready never to step out of the places where you are set down, Are you ready never to love any but the spices? (TMS 40)

Tilo's sacrifice represents, symbolically, how every modern woman must sacrifice many things in her life in order to achieve professional success. At the time of the First Mother's naming ritual for the mistresses, Bhagyavati named her Tilottama' after the spice Til or sesame seeds and picks California in America as her future service location. Tilo's choice of her name and serving location irritates the First Mother. The First Mother informs Tilo symbolically that Tilottama was the principal dancer of God Indra's court and is not permitted to love anybody except her dance, and if she disobeys, she is sent to the ground to suffer seven mortal lifetimes of

disease and age.

Tilo's attitude and strength are unmistakable. She was brave enough to select her own future and does not depend on others, as most women do in their life and are defeated as a result of their submissive attitude. Divakaruni believed that every woman should cultivate the skill of creating her own destiny to live a fulfilling and meaningful life and that she should learn to struggle and be brave. Tilo desired to assist others in order to have a meaningful life. Tilo had chosen to devote her life to serving others.

The Old Mentor Mother advised Tilo to select any Indian continent other than California because it will be difficult for Tilo to conform to Western civilization, but Tilo is stubborn and chooses only California. The Old One permitted her helplessly but warns Tilo that if she disobeyed the spices, the spices will punish her. Tilo travelled through the magical fire to reach California in America, and the fire also transforms Tilo into an old lady, as a youthful woman is not deemed suitable for business. Divakaruni depicts the Indian attitude in which a strong, youthful, attractive, independent, and free-spirited woman is viewed as a danger to the patriarchal system. She was either restricted and imprisoned, or she was deprived of her exterior radiance. Tilo moved to America and opens a spice business. She was completely comfortable in the world of spices. She says joyfully that:

I, too, sigh my pleasure...the city will pulse its anguish, terror, and eager love into me from every direction. All night if I wish I can live it, the ordinary life I gave up for the spices! (TMS 60).

Tilo was happy for helping problematic individuals and sacrificing a normal human life for her humanitarian duty. Tilo not only sold spices and other Indian items at her shop, but she also treated her clients' mental or physical diseases using her magical ability to read their thoughts and hearts. She narrates her story as:

I am a Mistress of Spices...I know their origins, and what their colors signify, and their smells...Their heat runs in my blood. They all bow to my command, from Amchur to Zafran. At a whisper, they yield up to me their hidden properties, their magic powers! (TMS 03).

Tilo's strength, pleasure, and confidence in her life are portrayed in these above sentences.

There were many restrictions for Tilo in order to conserve and safeguard her magical powers, such as she was not allowed to use the spices for herself; she was not allowed to indulge herself in the lives of her customers; she was not allowed to leave her store; she was not allowed to see herself in the mirror, she was not allowed to touch her customers, she was not allowed to read the newspaper to learn about America. If she violated the rules, the spices will reclaim their powers and punish her and her customers. Tilo was attracted to immigrants and loves relieving their sorrows and difficulties with her wonderful art. Tilo's moral nature strengthens her since, in order to find genuine purpose in life. Tilo's life had significance because she has a purpose in life, which is to assist others.

Tilo helped various individuals, including Haroun, Jaggi, and Lalita, as well as Geeta and Geeta's grandpa. Lalita was married to Mr. Ahuja, a man considerably older than her, who abused and molests her psychologically and physically and confines her from the outside world. He destroyed Lalita's hopes of having her own tailoring shop in America and destroyed her happiness by subjecting her to a life of loneliness and hardship in an unfamiliar American society. Tilo used her magical skill to read Lalita's thoughts.

Tilo's inspiration and the magic of Tilo's spice medicine gave Lalita the strength to fight back against her violent husband and eventually leave the horror of marital rape and violence. Tilo helps Lalita with turmeric, which is thought to be a wound and sad healer. Divakaruni used an instance from Lalita's tragic life to depict the reality of immigrant women in America. She discusses how some innocent Indian ladies marry American-based Indian men with a lot of hope and dreams, and how some women are mistreated by their husbands since they know their wives will not be able to receive aid readily in America. Immigrant women in America continue to be unaware of their rights and are subjected to the aggression and oppression of their husbands. Lalita's personality was inspired by one of those exploited South Asian immigrant ladies.

Tilo also assisted Haroun, who came to America from Kashmir after terrorists murdered her whole family. He became dissatisfied with his exploitation by rich Indians in America. Tilo helped Haroun with Sandalwood powder, which was supposed to heal past grief. She also chose to separate Kalo Jeera from Haroun in order to eradicate the future threat. Haroun's life story depicted the agony of lower-class Indians in America who are tortured by wealthier Indians.

Haroun says:

All these rich people, they think they're still in India. Treat you like Janwaars, animals. Order this, order that, no end to it, and after you wear out your soles running around for them, not even a nod in thanks (TMS 28-9).

Divakaruni draws the attention of her readers to the issue of class discrimination against Indians in America. After abandoning his work as a harsh Indian, Haroun decided to start his own taxi company. He asks Tilo to come out of her store and look at his new cab. Tilo feels powerless as she remembers that she is not permitted to leave her spice business as a mistress of spices. Tilo, being a strong woman, chooses humanity over her own safety and leaves her business to share Haroun's joy.

Tilo's emotional conflict and struggle are brilliantly depicted by Divakaruni. Divakaruni has also utilized spices as a symbol of Indian customs and patriarchal culture, which has historically limited its female representations. Tilo's ability to integrate into the host culture was hampered by the spices. Tilo, who felt lonely and alienated in America, wishes to integrate with other immigrants. That is why Tilo continues to help others by crossing her bounds. Tilo also assisted Jagjit, a timid Sikh immigrant youngster who doesn't speak much English. He was mocked and tortured by American lads at his school. They spit in his face, cursed at him, beat him, remove his clothes and leave him on the school grounds. Jagjit was afraid of going to school and is even frightened to disclose the truth to her strict parents, who push him to go. Tilo assisted Jagjit by concealing a bit of cinnamon in his turban, which was thought to be a friend-making and strength-giving spice. Divakaruni highlights the subject of violence in the framework of cultural conflict theory against the Sikh immigrant community in America through Jagjit's story.

Tilo, who had lived as an immigrant in America, believed that Americans are cruel and indifferent to human interactions. As a result, she believed she should assist more and more immigrants. It was challenging to find one's way in life as an immigrant in a foreign place. She also recommends strategies for immigrants to find significance. By depicting various immigrants' lives in her work, she demonstrated that in order to exist, one must have a meaningful existence. Divakaruni depicts the difficulties that immigrants face in seeking significance in their lives. Tilo considers the plight of Indian immigrants in America and chooses to assist them in any way she

can, particularly with her amazing ability of writing.

Tilo helped Geeta, a second-generation Indian-American girl, and her traditional Indian grandpa understand each other's views on marriage. Geeta's grandfather disliked her working with males and arriving late at night with them; he wanted his granddaughter to marry only an Indian man. He exclusively prefers planned weddings. On the other hand, Geeta has a different perspective on her life and is staunchly opposed to arranged marriages.

Divakaruni used the story of Geeta, a second-generation girl, to explore the answers to the prevalent topic of cultural clashes between first and second-generation immigrants in America. The thoughts of first and second-generation Indian-American immigrants toward America and India have always been a primary concern to indicate metaphorically the release of diaspora emotions and enlightenment that reopens the question of racialization, marginalization, and individualism. In this work, Divakaruni depicts the dominant's ignorance against the controlled other's geopolitical helplessness. That is the main ethical and political dilemma. First-generation Indian Americans attempt to respect their Indian culture in a foreign nation, however second-generation immigrants who are born there as citizens understand only American concepts of life and seek to live an American lifestyle. There are several differences between non-resident Indians and the Indian diaspora.

Geeta and Geeta's family were well-known examples of this disparity. When Geeta tells her family that she is in love with a Chicano boy called Juan, her entire family was angry and chastises her for violating the gender and South-Asian barriers. Geeta left her house, and her grandpa approaches Tilo for help in making Geeta realize. He wanted Tilo to leave her store and meet Geeta in Geeta's workplace.

Tilo believed that her primary responsibility is to assist her clients in need, so she began assisting them by breaking some minor restrictions. She has begun to console her clients by touching their hands and faces, wiping away their tears, and relieving their grief. Tilo believed she had enchanted spices through her mysterious skill to assist her in treating customers, but spices always make her feel that she must practice restraint in order to be the mistress of spices. Tilo says: I hear the spices crying to me, a sound like hot hands pressed over the ears. Tilo, before you're welded down (TMS 99). Tilo was in a struggle over which culture to adopt in order to

survive and assist her clients in America. Tilo's ambivalence not only depicted Indian religious variety in a US setting, but it also displayed amalgamation, segregation, synthesis, and bi-culturalism from the perspective of Indian traditional humanism. Modern Tilo examined how sociocultural and binational factors shape religious identity, which is negotiated and shaped by ethnic restrictions and possibilities. Tilo was asked for indulgence by American culture in order to assist her clients, but Tilo is restricted by Indian society. Despite the fact that Tilo possessed magical abilities, she felt useless and limited. She yearns for independence in order to find meaning in her existence.

Raven, a lonely handsome American, walked into the shop one day to buy a spice for himself. Raven was attracted to Tilo's secret Indian beauty and talked to her affectionately. He assisted Tilo in finding the spice for him, but she did not recognize it. Tilo believed that no one was paying attention to her and attempts to be kind to Raven. Tilo discovered that she was unable to read his thinking since she is in love with Raven. Tilo's attraction to Raven was seen by spices, because it was forbidden for a mistress of spices to be linked to anybody other than spices. She lost control over spices due to physical attraction to the opposite sex.

Divakaruni has depicted the plight of every immigrant through the figure of Tilo. As Tilo struggled to choose between her magical gift and Raven's love in order to live a meaningful life, every immigrant was forced to choose between Indian traditions and American modernism. Indian native ethos and values prevented Indians from fully blending into Western society. Tilo's predicament exemplifies the cultural tension that every Indian lady immigrant in America faces. Divakaruni had transformed spices into emblems of Indian traditions embedded in the spirit of an Indian immigrant. An immigrant lady who desired to keep her traditions alive and well wishes to adopt new practices in order to find an expression for her psychological freedom in the host society. Tilo's battle contextualizes the deconstruction of traditions, culture, magical power, and supernatural effects on the human mind and emotions. Tilo was likewise depicted as being caught between ancient and modern ways of existence. Tilo's eyes were opened to her own existence by the conventions of American individuality.

Divakaruni has written an appealing novel on immigrant difficulties, magic realism, and introspection from the perspective of an Indian woman. Because of Tilo's cultural crossover, the

spices have no impact on Tilo's consumers, and her customers suffer as a result. Tilo's customer, Lalita was subjected to more physical and emotional abuse by her husband, Mr. Ahuja; Jagjit has also been involved with violent criminals; and Haroun gets battered by the Dotbusters in his cab. Tilo realizes that the spices have begun to punish her by preventing her from treating her customers and destroying their lives. She feels responsible for her customer's plight. She mourns: Spices is this. The way. You have chosen. To. Punish me! (TMS 122).

The spices limit Tilo's ability to break the regulations and impose the conventions necessary to assist her clients. The spices also prevented her from integrating into the host culture, yet the host society's new ways of life demand that she integrates, acculturate, and redeem herself from the left past and homeland standards. Tilo wished for a meaningful existence in which she is free to pursue her dreams. In her personal life, the norms and regulations for becoming a mistress of spices confined her behind a cocoon of spices' internal universe. she narrates:

When I woke in this land the store is already around me, it's hard, protective shell. The spices, like a shell of scents and sounds, enveloped me. My aging flesh forcing its wrinkles into me, and that other shell. Shell within a shell within a shell, and in most of all my heart beating as a bird (TMS 125).

Tilo was a bold woman who can achieve everything she wanted for herself without losing anything. Tilo's character is portrayed by Divakaruni as a modern woman who is always dissatisfied with her existence yet has the guts to pursue her dreams. Divakaruni encourages women to become powerful in order to attain their goals and find fulfillment through self-sufficiency.

Tilo knew Raven loves her and the spices, but he did not love her on those terms. Tilo believed she has the right to be happy and to receive unconditional affection. She began to dream of a life different than that of a spice mistress. Tilo believed that the essence of her mistress of spices prohibits her from living her own meaningful feminine existence. Tilo wanted to live her life with purpose; she does not want to perform her duty for the sake of doing it. She wanted to make a difference in her life by solving everyone's issues with complete freedom and using her full strength. The spices enable her and return their magical power to her. Tilo breached all the

conventions of mistress-hood and delves into American life and trends in order to assist all of her customers who have suffered as a result of her error. Tilo herself feels the pangs of love, which was why she assisted Geeta and Haroun by personally meeting with them to have them married with Juan and Hameeda, respectively, with the blessings of their families. Tilo assisted Lalita with encouragement and spices. Lalita was finally free of her husband's maltreatment. Tilo also assisted Jagjit by giving him money to practice Karate, and he grows into a brave and virtuous young man. Tilo assisted her customers without hesitation or dread of having to give her life in a few days. Tilo followed her own desires rather than those of the spices in this manner, setting an example of womanly power. Despite the warnings from the First Mother and the spices, Tilo stayed brave, helping her clients and loving Raven. Tilo gained the First Mother's trust by pledging her loyalty to the spices. Tilo ensures the spices that:

Spices trust me to give me a chance. In spite of America, in spite of love, your
Tilo will not let you down (TMS 143).

Tilo believed that in order to have wholeness and significance in her life, she must also have the pleasures of freedom. After meeting Raven, she sold most of her business's spices in order to close the store and sacrifice her life. She left her shop for a one-night affair with Raven, and she enjoyed the sexual pleasures of a regular woman. Tilo came to her spice store faithfully the next morning, while Raven is sleeping, to give her life to the spices. Tilo makes her own funeral pyre for the submission and requests that the spices kill her. Meanwhile, a severe earthquake struck America, and she is rescued from the rubble of the shattered and burned spice store by Raven. When she regained her conscience, she was startled to find herself alive and unpunished by the spices. Tilo had been forgiven by the spices since they were impressed by his dedication to them. The spices observed that she returned to them with the intention of sacrificing her life for them and fulfilling her pledge. The spices tell Tilo that:

Mistress who was, when you accepted our punishment in your heart without
battling it, that was enough. Having readied your mind to suffer, you did not need
to undergo that suffering in body also (TMS 305).

Tilo had shown her devotion to the spices, and as a result, the spices grant her full access to their magical abilities. Tilo achieved her goals via her commitment and bravery. Tilo can cheat the

rules and live with Raven, but she did not act evilly, which was she gets anything she wanted. She was also dedicated to spices, which are a sign of Indian customs, and gained triumph through her daring and courageous attitude. Divakaruni here teaches to today's immigrant ladies that they must conserve their national customs and qualities in order to achieve success and significance in their lives. Tilo may also leave Raven and live happily with her magical and strong spices, but she does not abandon her own life, which was filled with the delights of unselfish love, nor does she become disloyal to her spices, which are the source of her strength. Tilo got both her family and her profession as a result of her feminine ability and honesty. The conflict between work and personal life is a key concern for today's women. Through their courage, honesty, and hardship, author Divakaruni had offered a manner of balancing both regions.

Raven took Tilo with him on his quest to locate his earthly paradise outside of the ruins of America. Tilo believed she will be unable to live calmly in her life while her immigrant and American neighbors suffer as a result of the earthquake. She believes she has incited spices' rage and caused the disaster in America, therefore she should assist the people there. Tilo might have stayed with Raven and lived happily ever after, but as a liberated woman, she chose to labor for the poor in order to grow closer to her humanitarian purpose, which was similar to healing people with spices. Tilo believed that her people in America require her assistance and that her earthly paradise exists only for them. Tilo also decided to continue providing social assistance and welfare in the public good, inspiring the spirit of biculturalism and bi-nationalism.

Divakaruni here demonstrates that, like Tilo, immigrant women do not rush to discover their identity in an unfamiliar nation, but instead concentrate on the fact that know nature, know spirit, and labor for God. Divakaruni's novels modify the traditional picture of migrant women by presenting them with a lady who is strong enough to overcome frailty and hardships. Tilo regained her mistress of spices identity with full freedom, and she may live with Raven or spices if she wishes; her objective is not to acquire an identity, but to acquire a feeling of being as human, so she decided to help the needy people of America and discover a really worthwhile life for herself. Tilo pulled over to the side of the road and informs Raven that she cannot join him because her people require her. Raven understands Tilo was correct, and the two return to America. Divakaruni implies here that people have the ability to build their own earthly paradise or meaningful existence via constructive deeds. She also conveys the idea that in order to have a

meaningful life, individuals must maintain their sense of humanity and pleasure, which is found in engaging with the world and aiding those in need. People must work together to overcome all class and national borders. Through this work, she conveys the concept that participation and integration in society may lead to success.

Divakaruni argues that there is no greater happiness in life than that which may be achieved by serving others. She also claims that the ultimate purpose of life can only be discovered via moral means of independence, courage, and learning to adapt to society. She claims that a meaningful existence is one in which a person finds fulfillment and mental serenity. Tilo derived happiness and mental serenity from assisting others in need, and she discovered the actual meaning or purpose of her existence. Tilo discovered her genuine meaning in life through living for others. Tilo assisted her clients without leaving Raven. She also honored the feelings of her male opponent, and she won. Tilo, through the process of synthesis and transformation, self-actualizes her image and perception in order to maintain her identity as it seems appropriate to her. She gains genuine inner strength and the true purpose of her life with Raven's help. Raven had given her the name Maya. Tilo remembers her entire life journey and the process of her liberation from Nayan Tara, Bhagyavanti, Tilo to Maya, or from an Indian to an Indian-American, or from a meaningless existence to a meaningful one. The novel *The Mistress of Spices* demonstrates that the female characters of Divakaruni do not accept failure, but instead strive for success by discovering their actual purpose in life and living within their community.

The paper concludes by demonstrating how, as a result of "a double consciousness," the characters grow up cosmopolitan, that is "vernacular," in nature, allowing "the local, provincial, rooted, culturally distinctive" one to coexist with the "transnational" and "transcendent" one.

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