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Diaspora, Magical Realism, And Feminine Identity in The Fiction of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

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Abstract

The present paper examines the issues of diaspora, cultural conflict, magic realism and feminine identity in the writings of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. Being a notable representative of Indian English and Asian-American literature, Divakaruni presents the emotional and cultural conflicts that an immigrant goes through, especially when it is a woman living between two cultures. In her writings, the negotiating of identity, tradition and modernity in diasporic spaces is evident in the complex process. Divakaruni uses mythology, folklore, and memory as an influence to narratives in order to blend reality and magic to reveal the cultural and psychological lives of displaced people. This work attempts to analyze immigrant consciousness and cross-cultural tensions which are seen through her fiction especially in *The Mistress of Spices*. The novel demonstrates how magical realism turns into a literary device to convey emotional turmoil of the immigrants having to adapt to a new world without losing their ties to their motherland. The experiences of the main character represent the larger predicaments of the diasporic people who seek to strike the right balance between individual wishes, cultural demands, and demands of the society. Moreover, the paper examines the way Divakaruni provides a voice to the women who challenge the traditions of patriarchy and who want to self-realize in new cultural environments. Divakaruni links myth and magic with the realities of immigrants by embracing both the struggles of displacement and the endurance and continuation of cultures. In this way, her fiction proves to be a strong tool of incorporating identity formation, cultural hybridity, and the changing consciousness of the diasporic women.

Keywords: Diaspora, Magical Realism, Feminine Identity, Cultural Conflict

1. Introduction

Divakaruni mostly writes about enchantment realism and the associated themes of culture and fantasy. Dreams, clairvoyance, and instinct that predicts future events are only a few examples of the magical occurrences that her works explore via their supernatural realism. Since they are associated with brain research, the otherworldly aspects of her work imply that they are indications of reality. By using their imaginations, the story's protagonists demonstrate that those who experience more physical force may be able to predict what's going to happen next. Central to the purpose and aim of fantasy in her works are the dual concerns of demystifying and re-mythifying. By the end, it seems as if the author is tearing down long-held notions like "white

widows," women's enduring value in the house, cultural significance, and many more. The term "remystification" is used in Chitra's works to describe the novel approaches that women find when they reject conventional gender norms.

The essayists complain about their folklores and transfer them to the children, and the favorable evaluation of legend persists even if demystification is the premise of magical realism. Here we see the author bringing Indian culture and heritage to a global audience via the usage of legendary references. Multiple accolades have been bestowed upon the creative mind of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. Fifty treasuries have acknowledged her work, and fifty magazines have published it, including the *New Yorkers* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. Her works are translated into sixteen

languages including Dutch, Hebrew, Russian, and Japanese. She was born in Calcutta, India in 1976 and emigrated to the United States. She presently sits on the Advisory Board of Daya in Houston and the San Francisco Bay area based leadership organization MAITRI. She has won the National Book Award, the PEN Faulkner Award among many others. It is an intriguing attempt to investigate literary representations of feminine awareness. The unexpected revelation of the universe's meaninglessness compels this feminine awareness to question and reject everything of its prior beliefs, experiences, and knowledge. Then it starts to wonder whether its whole life is really that important. In reaction to male-dominated narratives about women's experiences, the idea of female identity has emerged as a means by which women's lived realities might be transformed into self-awareness. It is a style and approach to writing. Women go headfirst into the creative process because it's a way for their egos to find a home. Between sentimental aspirations and the truth of life; between satisfying one's own wishes and dedicating oneself to one's family, the competing forces of modernity and tradition fought. The unpredictability of the fight between passion and reason is a product of the Indian women authors' books' focus on the theme, which ultimately shows them adjusting to the reality.

The young ladies are taught that their destinies are sealed, yet they are compelled to choose between their wants and the authority of their parents. Consequently, many female writers have made transformational concerns for women their top priority. Indian women's worldviews have broadened with the introduction of western ideas and education in the twentieth century. The educated Indian woman has become more aware of the stifling and unfair societal standards and restrictions that control her life due to the expanded perspective of existence. She questions her socially-assigned submissive position and feels confined by her household duty. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a famous novelist from India who was born in 1956. She became aware of her potential and hates going back to her old life (Fox *et al.*, 2018) ^[1]. To further her studies in English, Divakaruni moved to the US in 1976. Over time, her academic pursuits took a back seat to her work in literature. She is a creative writing teacher at the University of Houston in Texas where she resides. Women stuck between cultures and norms are the protagonists of her works, which are inspired by her own experiences. Her books and short stories show empathy for the ladies who were her ancestors. She has written a lot on how her own life changing experiences in the United States and her recollections of India; oral tradition of folk stories and myths have been informing her books. In her role as an engaging professor, she has often considered her work in the context of current literary canons. Divakaruni was fascinated by the books, *Jasmine and Desirable Daughters* which were on changing identities of immigrant women in a more hostile environment. The works of Bharati Mukherjee like *The Middleman and Other Stories* are related to racial and ethnic relationship in literature had a significant impact on her ideas as well. It was Maxine Hong Kingston, who served as Divakaruni's first role model and inspiration when she was in graduate school, as she said in an interview. *The Woman Warrior*, her book, had a profound impact on me. I related

to the recurring themes of racial conflict, myth, gender roles changing, passing tales down through generations, moving to a new country, and reclaiming one's identity. When Divakaruni's work appears in anthologies, people start talking about it. Many people think of her when they hear the names of Asian-American writers working today, particularly those who emigrated from India but opted to write in English. When it comes to this element, Asian American women writers make a big splash. Consequently, most scholars and critics categorize her works into the context of global critique.

Some critics have claimed that Divakaruni exploits the West fascination with the fantastic with some of her works. Some of these works have been characterized as a combination of anti-Semitism, cultural pluralism, mystical realism, acculturation, social issues and immigration (Gita Rajan). C. Wong contrasts and compares the powerful desire of the characters in Divakaruni short stories to escape the suffocating and authoritarian traditional values of their Asian heritage and the problems of complete Americanization. Here are only a few of the many topics that may be explored via Divakaruni's work: cultural integration, exoticism, women's self-respect, and individualism. The ongoing struggle of women to carve out unique identities, both inside and outside society, is the focus of this study.

2. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Immigrant Experiences and Cross-Cultural Conflicts in Her Short Stories

People who leave their home nation and make a new home somewhere else are called diasporas. Diaspora connoted a group experience of trauma, exile where one dreamed of home but lived in banishment, says Robin Cohen in *Global Diaspora* referring to the disturbing association between the original meaning of the term-scattering or dispersal-and the Jewish people's expulsion from their homeland. Although migration was common throughout the colonial era-a time characterized by the free movement of people and goods-the word only really came into its own in the modern era after 1970, particularly in the postcolonial era. Globalization is the world that has no borders in terms of territory, location, and distance as well as questions of identity, citizenship and nationality have come up following the rapid migration of people across borders, state sociologists Ajay Sahoo and Brij Maharaj point out describing how migration has changed during the postmodern era.

Judith Shuval lists the following criteria in her book *International Movement*, which must be satisfied for a movement to result in diaspora:

Feelings, memories, mythology, history, significant tales, group identification, and virtual, allegorical, and symbolic components all contribute to the formation of diaspora realities. One must have a strong enough feeling of belonging to one's country at any one moment to avoid losing touch, blending in, or becoming distant from it.

The six defining features of diaspora are highlighted by this definition: The following relationships characterize collective identity: A desire to retain or keep in memory myths and traditions of the homeland, a sense of alienation in the host country, a desire to come back at some point, a willingness to leave the homeland to continue, and lastly a shared sense of identity. Diasporic communities which are

characterized by those above-stated features negotiate their living circumstances in the migratory country in light of the fact that they are distinct from the original population in regard to gender, religion, class, and race. They want to be a part of the majority population in the migratory land, but they also want to preserve their ethnicity and identity. Since creative writing is a way for individuals to establish their own identity and get attention, the literature they create is the ideal way for their problems and experiences to be portrayed. This is when Jasbir Jain's astute insight becomes evident. Writing about authors from the Indian diaspora, she says in her book:

The literature of expatriates is at the crossroads of many nations and cultures. As it constructs a new identity, it crosses boundaries, transgresses recipes and reacts to everyday and virtual geographies and temporalities; it also develops theory and defines positions. Cultures migrate, settle, or disperse; people internalize nostalgia or suffer from forgetfulness; authors residing abroad occupy the periphery of two civilizations; and, in the present day, marginalized persons are formulating cultural theory.

When the first real and widely read book is concerned, *The Mistress of Spices* (1997) by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is considered to be the first one. It is a text written in a lyrical-prose style the book tells the story of immigrant hardships, the tribulations of a particular woman's magical abilities, and the persistence of transferred customs in a distant land. *World Literature Today* reviews the work of Laura Merlin, who says:

A captivating story is built on the fault line in American culture /between the individual and community/ with this electric first novel from the acclaimed author Divakaruni. Focusing on the immigrant experience specifically, she poses the question of how to balance competing demands in the face of intense yearning.

Divakaruni says that American life is complicated in an interview with Robbi Clipper Sethi that appears in *They Forgive My Fiction*. The humiliations and fears she experiences in a foreign land have been voiced by her. At nineteen years old, she is a young wife and immigrant who has several challenges as she adjusts to her new home. The story of Divakaruni is the seed from which Tilo grows. Divakaruni tells Morton Marcus that she had to undergo further surgery after giving birth to her second kid because the incisions became infected. She stayed in the hospital for a month while only being partially aware. She returns with a strong sense of purpose once she heals from the significant problems. The protagonist, Tilo, who inhabits several realities in *The Mistress of Spices*, is born out of her experiences.

The story compares and contrasts Tilo's current existence with his history. The fact that Tilo was born in a little hamlet is revealed by her distinctive and tragic background. The woman had sobbed all over her face after giving birth, and the fate teller looks downcast as he shakes his head in mournful bereavement at her father. They have another daughter, and that is the reason. Her birth is recounted with a touch of bittersweet nostalgia. She explains, "My parents' disappointment in having another daughter muddled me up, so they renamed me Nayan Tara, Star of the Eye they renamed me. Place it her face in the floor & wrapped it with an old bed sheet. Her only contribution to the household is a

dowry obligation.

It is immediately clear that the child has extraordinary abilities soon after she is born. Her parents see her as an annoyance, but she can see into the future, and word of her magical abilities and her stardom eventually brings financial blessings to her family. Despite their disapproval, her parents have valued her extravagant fortune. Thanks to her extraordinary abilities, Nayan Tara becomes a household name, and word of her exploits quickly spreads to nearby towns and beyond. The locals have been raving about the extravagant presents that people send her for days. Her life starts to become rather comfortable. She predicts the downfall of a dictator, heals the daughter of a potentate, and uses her magical drawing skills to maintain the winds of fortune in favor of merchant seamen. The significance of the other name of hers, *Flower That Grows by the Dust Road*, becomes clear to her. Her extraordinary abilities have garnered admiration from all walks of life.

The pirates eventually learn of her magical abilities and abduct her to use as a plundering pawn. Bagyavathi, goddess of good fortune, is her new identity bestowed to her by the pirates. She transforms into a Bhagyavati sorceress, a pirate queen, a fortune teller, and a killer. Becoming the queen of pirates has not brought her any solace, and she has grown tired of life with the pirates. She becomes tired with Pirates after a while and wants to try something else. Meanwhile, the snakes rescue her when she uses her magical abilities to cause a shipwreck on the ocean. On Bhagyavati, the serpents rescue her via their love and inform her about the enchanted spice island. Snakes assist Tilo in her mystical ways. "All sinew and glide against her breast," Tilo adds, describing the oldest and closest animals to the earth mother. My affection for them has never wavered.

3. Diaspora, Multiculturalism and Narrative Techniques

The English word diaspora has Greek origins with the word diasperien (meaning across) and perien (meaning to sow or scatter seeds). Dispersion can be defined as the process of a multitude of people leaving their homeland. The dispersion may be caused by forced exiles, or self-imposed exiles. The membership of these groups is limited to those who have been forcefully expelled in their ancestral land or those who have migrated into another nation. As Braziel adds, it also means a dislocation of the geographical place of origin and a relocation in one or more countries, states or territories. The term Diaspora is a Greek word and as per the Oxford English Dictionary, it can be traced to its use in the Bible. The text refers to the dispersion of the chosen people, the Israelites, by God all over the world. Oxford English Dictionary states that the phrase originates in the Jewish period, when it is stated that two kinds of dispersals occurred: The first was when the Jews were scattered to the Gentiles following the captivity and the second was when Jewish Christians were settled outside Palestine. It is noted that they distributed among the people living beyond their original territory, albeit the names of the groups they dispersed are not specifically given in the latest version. The word "Diaspora" has sacred religious connotations; it is defined as the suffering of Jews residing outside of Palestine in the many allusions to the Jewish Diaspora found in medieval rabbinical texts. The word Diaspora was thus

coined to refer to the Jewish people suffering.

More than 2,600 years have passed since the Jewish people left their homeland. It is even older if the local customs' features are real. The Jewish people have been without a functional governmental hierarchy for about 1500 years. This particular diaspora group includes it. A number of schisms among Israel's Jewish population served as a template for the diaspora. As a diaspora group, Jews maintained a presence in their own nation. About 70 A.D., the Jewish dominion ended. The Jews had lived in their country for almost three thousand years when the Romans arrived and ended their authority. The Jewish people's exodus from their homeland began long before the Roman conquest. After the Assyrian conquest of Israel in 722 BC, the Hebrew population expanded over the region. These early dispersal victims are no longer mentioned in historical records. But when Nebuchadnezzar banished the Jews in 597 and 588 BC, they were subsequently permitted to stay in Babylon with the rest of the Babylonian population. The Jews who survived found their way to Egypt where they later settled along the river Nile.

In 597 BC there were three distinct groups of Hebrews, one in Judae, one in Egypt, and one in Babylon and the rest of the Middle East. The Jewish diaspora, therefore, began around 597 BC and spread to several countries. The Jewish people, however, maintained not only their religious and cultural traditions but also their status as an ethnoreligious group. In the grand scheme of things, diasporic societies used a novel power technique to preserve their cultural values and traditions. Jewish perspectives on diaspora are heavily influenced by their status as the first people to experience its harsh realities, the longest continuous human migration. The majority of post-colonial cultural policies and disadvantaged arrangements have their roots in Jewish history. Influential concepts from Jewish cultural studies have permeated all diaspora studies.

The desire for freedom, tyranny, and enslavement, according to Segal, gave rise to the diaspora. Although it has not fully blossomed to be termed liberation, the diaspora symbolizes a combination of opposites - victimization and heroism, sorrow and endurance, oppression and creation. Courage, perseverance, and inventiveness would not have been associated with oppression, debasement, victimization, and suffering if it had linked itself with a source of dignity. There are around ten million South Asians residing in countries other than their homeland, including the Caribbean, Fiji, Canada, and New Zealand. As a group, they have settled mostly in the Americas, Europe, Southeast Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, and, more recently, West Asia. Over nearly 2,000 years, South Asians had travelled and settled all over Central Asia and Southeast Asia. China, Japan, and the East African coast. Nonetheless, in contrast to other rural populations, South Asians did not permanently relocate in large numbers. They don't set foot on foreign soil until the 1800s.

Massive migration from the subcontinent occurred around 1830, when slavery was abolished in the Caribbean. The sugar and cocoa plantations of British, French, and Dutch colonies were dependent on cheap labor that was complemented by the common emancipation of slaves. The indentured labor system was developed by the British government to help them get immigrants to work on

contracts overseas of five to 10 years. Hugh Tinker, a British historian, He wrote in his landmark book *A New System of Slavery* that the mass exodus out of South Asia was not considered as a natural process, especially given the dire conditions in which it occurred. With the hope of one day returning home, they abandon their own land.

Emigrants often experience shock and alienation when they leave their home for the first time and enter a foreign land, where they must trust the company of strangers whose speech is unintelligible, whose physical features are foreign, and whose eating habits and other things seem wrong. They could not get out of the bad working conditions and living conditions in the country despite their efforts. The housing and healthcare systems are also relatively rudimentary, and the salaries have remained very low for a hundred years. Roughly a third of the workforce went broke after returning home from their harrowing ordeal in a faraway country. Research conducted by Tinker in 1916 reveals that 76% of the workers returned home empty-handed. While the majority of them returned with utterly ruined health, only 10% brought back a little quantity.

There were essentially two distinct subsets of South Asians that emigrated in large numbers after 1950. To make up for the scarcity of workers in the lowest-paying unskilled and manual jobs that plagued British cities after WWII, the majority of those who immigrated in the 1950s and 1960s were unskilled immigrants. The bulk of immigrants, on the other hand, have been highly educated professionals, technicians, engineers, physicians, and professors who sought out better economic opportunities elsewhere, mostly in North America, after 1970. More than that, the oil-producing nations of West Asia also attracted a large influx of transient South Asians. The Indian diaspora has strong ties to its ancestral homeland and continues to engage in vibrant cultural exchanges there. It has been very important in the Indian culture and history. Due to the high population of the Indian immigrants and the cultural baggage they carried along with them, Indian culture and way of life are no longer limited to India itself.

4. Exploring Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Fiction: Magical Realism and Immigrant Narratives

One of the main ways that humans comprehend time and the distinctions that come with its rapidly passing nature is through narrative. It maintains an empathy bound by shared experiences and strengthens the effects of the dominant hierarchy. It expresses one's opinions and forces others to see the world and its darkness and light polarities through his eyes. The only way to instill in people a profound feeling of humility and perfection is to acquire noble qualities. It is the most efficient method of communicating the emotionally and mentally traumatic experiences of those who are weighed down by the problems of caste, color, and sex stigma, as well as the turmoil of estrangement. It is a method of thinking through life's challenges that expose intricate conditions from a particular age brought about by unique and uncomfortable circumstances. Many people's political practices, emotions, and mentality have been profoundly impacted by the First World War. The basis of our nation is based on inclusive and socially progressive ideals. Because they feel that the demands of immigrant conditions negatively affect their postcolonial situations,

some people migrate for material and professional reasons. The study of logic and the ideas that underlie these representations is known as narrative theory. Indian English literature enjoys a great status in the world of literature. A million people's brains have been profoundly impacted by Indian English fiction, which conveys both the suffering and confusion brought on by the demonic forces of sociopolitical difficulties as well as issues of personal consciousness. Its influence is seen in a variety of literary genres. Based on its global presence, the Indian diaspora has nearly attained the highest level in the world, and its members have enhanced the postcolonial literary field as a whole.

In general, the growing aspirations that people have for the literary world have often been the focus of Indian English fiction. It reflects a number of existential crises that people with diverse immigrant backgrounds go through, including the loss of identity. Regardless of the societal knowledge of gender, a hidden tension in human nature governs the throne of authority and prevents the equality of the sexes. He still hasn't overcome the too obsessive nature of his situation. Literature lacks a clear demarcation between the past and present. In this study, magic realism is employed as a storytelling approach to give voice to the underrepresented voices that were not intended to be heard in a society where women are consistently on the receiving end of unconscious bias regarding sex differences. The phenomena of "magical realism" is as old as humanity itself, despite the fact that it was not widely recognized and discussed as a genre in the past. It is a study of self-related problems and feelings that revolve on selfhood. Any human being, regardless of gender, caste, or class, suffers from anxiety related to the dread of making the wrong decision in any situation. Given that a virus is threatening the entire world, things are now far more difficult than they were when the current thesis was being prepared. The piece aims to convey the concept that the world has to come together, but a unifying virus has soiled it irrevocably and swept away its differences.

A drop of blood appeared under the door, and went on through the living room, out into the street, went straight ahead over the uneven terraces, went down stairs and over curbs, went along the Street of the Turks, turned a right angle at the Buendia house, entered under the closed door, went through the parlor, hugging the walls to avoid straining the rugs, went along the porch with the begonias, went under the chair where Amaranta was teaching Aureliano Jose arithmetic, went through the pantry and out into the kitchen, where Ursula was Gods holy mother! Ursula yelled. Many "Indian" elements are weaved into a vastly distinct and remote world of Euro-derived culture and values through the Indo-Anglian writer's use of English in a multilingual Indian society, which aims to drastically alter Indians' perspectives. This is a tactic for building one's own universe in an entirely distinct setting. Indian culture is undeniably timeless and will always be enthralling. Because they can work as catalysts in projecting the finer spirit of society by blending into history and obfuscating the boundaries between reality and fiction, myth, magic, and dreaming hold a significant role in our culture. Nearly all of the work focuses on the realities of magic realism as a narrative approach, which is heightened by various patterns of amazing aspects that weaken the projection of the real.

When magic realism recreates a new universe with new living possibilities in its ideal state, the fantastic does appear to be real.

It is encouraging to observe that India is a land that is open to all beliefs and philosophies; it is a combination of elements from different civilizations and religions. The history of the motherland, where civilization and culture have flourished, is largely responsible for the "Indianness" and irresistibility of the socio-cultural activities. Things have changed a lot since then, and the cosmos has begun to hear the silent cries of many people who lack enough room both inside and outdoors. Nationalistic ties, which are the lifeblood and actual essence of society, have been greatly impacted by globalization. Because of this, the oppressed have been able to make their unique voices heard, upending hegemonic systems and reducing tensions brought on by various forms of oppression. Thousands of people who long for a culture that celebrates unity in variety have been impacted by the literary genius of the novelists who were influenced by spectacular events and ancient mythology. Every facet of a person's successful realization of self-forgetfulness, which enables him to get over the anxieties and mental conflicts brought on by a lack of rights, is covered by psychic phenomena, apparitional experiences, and near-death experiences. The aim of the study is to create awareness in the society regarding the significance of human solidarity in the event of life challenges. particularly during periods of mass migration to far-off places.

An internationally recognized Indian author with a strong voice in the Indian literary community, Hitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the most important actors in the postcolonial literary environment. She is a special author who has gained global dominance in exposing frustrations of the abused and the assaulted. and she has made exceptional contributions to post-independence Indian English fiction. She has achieved success as a novelist, professor, poet, essayist, and short story writer. According to her interviews, she was influenced by the beliefs of Swami Chinmayananda, a Hindu spiritual leader, and Vedanta, one of the orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy. These beliefs helped her achieve the regal heights of fiction, and it is no wonder that her ability to achieve the beautiful union of various cultures has garnered her praise from the literary community. By examining the expatriates' anxiety of being the "other," she has expanded her scope. A prominent figure in Indian English fiction, Divakaruni's works mostly address timeless themes such as ethnicity, family life, exile, alienation, immigrant sensibility, and the unsaid emotional suffering of women. Among overseas migrants, women make up less than half. She was born in Calcutta, spent her first nineteen years in India and moved to the United States. She had to perform a variety of odd tasks, such as babysitting, product sales, bakery slicing, and scientific lab instrument washing, all of which helped her become more conscious of the issues that women face and their cultural demands. As a result of this experience, she often incorporates Indian culture into her novels and captures the genuine sentimental fervor of the immigrant population in her writing, which serves as a way for her to recall the memories of her early years in Calcutta.

An excellent description of oral traditions that have been transmitted to modern culture over the generations can be

found. Through their transformative and powerful narrative styles, Divakaruni's works provide us a pleasant spectacle. They also reveal her profound care for the lives of women of her own ancestry, emphasizing the less well-known facets of their life. A kind of emotional aristocracy is evident in her works. Her life experiences are translated into a spiritual journey. Since 1991, she has been the president of Maitri, a South Asian organization of women, Divakaruni has made significant contributions to the organization. She has helped ladies from broken and dysfunctional households as well as Afghani refugees. She has made an attempt to draw society's attention to the predicament of women. She has also shown her capability of encouraging the liberated consciousness of women by serving on the advisory board of Daya, an organization that cares about the well-being of South Asian women. She has also done quite a bit of work with an organization called Pratham which helps disadvantaged Indian children learn how to read.

5. Conclusion

As the paper points out, the fiction of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a deep exploration of the concept of diaspora, identity and cultural negotiation. Her stories reflect emotional and psychological conflicts of the immigrants trying to find the balance between the need to stay close to their motherland and the requirements of the new cultural world around them. In texts like *The Mistress of Spices*, Divakaruni has effectively utilized magical realism to blur the real and the imaginary world and thus allow a reader to see the hidden emotional life of a diasporic person. The discussion shows that her fiction especially highlights the experiences of women who break the stereotypical gender roles as they work their way through the intricate cultural demands. These women are always torn between the ancient and the modern world, family demands and individual desires. The stories told by Divakaruni thus turn into the arena of expressing a female consciousness and empowerment in a diasporic context. In conclusion, her writings show the importance of literature in depicting the plight of individuals in multicultural societies, their strength, and change. Through mythology, cultural memory, and experience of the immigrants, Divakaruni draws out stories to emphasize the role of identity, belonging, and cultural continuity in an ever more globalized world.

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