

Indian Ethos in the Select Novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

**A Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English**



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PREFACE

Indian people have great regards towards the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam* and great cultural heritage. This has included many communities, cultures, and the ways of living life. The origin and development of human civilization in India has been considered since ancient times. By now this land has become the homeland of many people and communities who had contributed to develop Indian cultural heritage. This creates a difference between rural and urban cultures. India has great religious manuscript's collection of knowledge in form of Vedas, Upanishads, and great epics (*Mahabharata and Ramayana*). In India, there are a number of religions and ideas to increase, different cultures and languages to develop different kind of ideologies. In Indian society, culture and ethos have a different identity which is famous all over the world because India is a land of multicultural society. Hence, varieties of ethos are also seen here, that is why Indian society has been recognised all over the world for its unity and integrity. In the Indian ethos, along with the individual, there is also a collective consciousness, due to which unity is also prevalent in this country with full of diversities. If there is a lack of unity and fraternity in any society, then that society can never develop. India sets an example for the world in terms of social empowerment that is why Indian society is constantly moving forward on the path of progress.

To cover the large span of the present research, the research work is divided into six chapters and deals with two Indian English Diasporic Novelists and their select works. The first chapter is critical analysis of Indian Writing in English. This chapter discusses about the history of Indian English literature in India from pre-independence to post-independence. The second chapter explores the Indian Ethos and values in the select novels. The third chapter explains Indian culture and tradition. This chapter discusses about different types of cultures and its importance. The fourth chapter discusses about the concept of Indian myths and legends in the select novels. The fifth chapter presents the concept of human values and its different types. The last chapter is conclusion which deals with the critical analysis of core chapters.

Indian Diasporic writers in English literature helped in the preservation and promotion of Indian ethos and culture. Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee

Divakaruni depict Indian ethos, society, and culture in their respective novels. Bharati Mukherjee, an Indian-American writer, liberates her women protagonists for a modern world. Bharati Mukherjee portrays her women characters which are inspired by her own experience in India as well as abroad. Her protagonists are sensitive and they require a stable sense of personal and cultural identity. Actually, they are victimized by racism, sexism and other forms of social oppression. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has written primarily on the status of women in Indian and American both the societies. The crisis of identity and discrimination are the characteristics of her literature. She focused her work on immigrant experiences and South Asian women. She highlights the women's experiences and struggle to find their identity in foreign lands. Thus, in this research work, Indian ethos, society, culture, human values, myth, etc. have been analyzed through the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.

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Chapter - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 A Critical Analysis of Indian Writing in English

1.2 Indian English Diasporic Novels: A Background Study

1.3 The Select Novelists and their Contribution

Chapter - 1

Introduction

1.1 A Critical Analysis of Indian Writing in English

India is a country that embodies idea of unity in diversity. It is distinguished by different languages and dialects yet is connected through devotion, nationality, festivity, family values, etc. People of different culture and customs live here. The diversity in every aspect of Indian society serves as a source of strength and prosperity. The first time English language came to India by traders and gradually, the trading organization grew into ruling power.

“English language reached India in the early 1600’s when the East India Company started trading and English missionaries first began their efforts. Some of the early official of the company like Sir William Jones were interested in rediscovery of Indian’s past. Sir William established the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 and Sir Thomas Munro too was much impressed by the Indian culture.”¹

English Language was introduced in India during British rule. Many writers contributed to Indian Writing in English. The Indian Writing in English has been flourishing since Independence more successfully than it ever flourished before. It is preferred now to be Indo-English, which brings together the people from different countries in search of better education, services, commerce, material success, prosperity and so on. As a result, there is increased cross-cultural interaction and awareness about the international communities.

Indian English Literature may be defined as, literature written originally in English by Indian authors, Indian by birth, ancestry or nationality. The earlier comprises the writings of British or western authors concerning India. Kipling, Forster, Francis William Bain,

Sir Edwin Arnold, F.A. Steel, John Masters, Paul Scott, M.M. Kaya and many others have all written about India, but their works belong to British literature. Indian Writing in English is primarily a result of the English colonial rule in India for almost two centuries. It is true that there is a relation between the literary works and the historical background.

“Indian English Literature began as an interesting by-product of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between a vigorous and enterprising Britain and a stagnant and chaotic India. As a result of this encounter, as F.W. Bain puts it, ‘India, a withered trunk...suddenly shot out with foreign foliage.’ One form this foliage took was that of original writing in English by Indians, thus partially fulfilling Samuel Daniel’s sixteenth century prophecy concerning the English language:

Who (in time) knows whither we may vent
The treasures of our tongue? To what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent
T’ enrich unknowing nations with our stores.
What worlds in th’ yet unformed orient
May come refined with th’ accents that are ours.”²

According to M.K. Naik’s book *The History of Indian English Literature* in which he talks about the challenges in Indian Writing in English. He discusses about complicated owing to two factors: first, this body of writing has, from time to time, been designated variously as ‘Indo-Anglian literature’, ‘Indian Writing in English’ and ‘Indo-English literature.’ Literature in the Indian languages translated into English which original composition in English by Indians. Thus, in the book *A Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature* (1908), E.F. Oaten considers the poetry of Henry Derozio as part of ‘Anglo-Indian literature’. He gives more examples of Indian Writing in English. He also wrote essays on Anglo-Indian literature in *The Cambridge History of English literature* (Vol. XIV, Ch. 10) that includes Rabindranath Tagore, Toru Dutt, Aurobindo Ghosh and Sarojini Naidu as ‘Anglo-Indian’ writers. Along with F.A. Steel and F.W. Bain, Bhupal Singh’s *Survey*

of *Anglo-Indian Fiction* (1934) deals with both British and Indian writers on Indian subjects.

V.K. Gokak in his book *English in India: Its Present and Future*, (1964), explained the term 'Indo-Anglian Literature'. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar in his book *Indian Writing in English* (1962) discusses about Tagore's novels and plays in English translations. John B. Alphonso Karkala wrote a book entitled *Indo-English literature in the Nineteenth Century* (1970). In his book, he uses the term 'Indo-English literature' which means 'literature produced by Indians in English.

The British came to India, conquered and ruled and made a lot of profit. The main reason for this was the industrial revolution in England could only sustain itself through the capital made in the Indian territories in the form of revenue collections. Due to this there was a great ruin in agriculture, self-sufficiency of the farmers and trade of silk cloth saw a downslide.

After a few years of colonial rule, the British Empire got involved in a passionately debate and discussed the issue of introduction of the English language in educational institutions. To stabilize their empire, the imperialists encouraged the spread of English education in India. In a watershed decision, English was introduced in the Indian educational system and was understood in which not only the language but life-style and culture was imposed.

The cross-cultural interaction and migratory movement are the issues prominently attached and interlinked with the cultural, social, psychological, economical, political, and geographical concerns. The cross-cultural migration has been continued for centuries and it has increased during the previous couple of decades. It has resulted into emergence of problems related with identity awareness and aspects of assimilation. Thus, the people in migration face various problems with the people and the land they visit, which results into the sufferings in their life.

In this context, it is necessary to acquaint the contemporary educated young generation with the problems emerging due to cross-cultural migration. It has been a need of time to increase awareness in young generation about the possibilities and the problems

emerging in the cross-cultural migration because migrated people belong to a particular cultural background.

“The study of English Literature stimulated literary creation in Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati and the other languages, and some of the greatest writers of the last 100 years have been men and women educated in English, even if they didn’t seek creative expression through English and of course, some have been unrepentant bilingualists, writing in two languages, English and their mother tongue, with equal facility, and if necessary translating their English into their mother tongue or their Bengali or Marathi or Tamil into English. The filiations between the modern Indian literature (including Indo-Anglican literature) and English literature have been close, and the links have been renewed from time to time, and the student of literary history and of comparative literature can find much to interest him in this phenomenon.”³

The natives, adopted English language to express Indian sensibility effectively. The origin of Indian Literature in English is traced back to the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. The Literary works of this period reflect the social and political ethos of the era. The literary renaissance manifested first in Bengal and then spread to Chennai, Mumbai, and other parts of India.

“This spirit soon began to express itself through movements of religious, social and political reform. As already noted, a beginning in this direction had been made by Raja Ram Mohan Roy as early as 1828, when he founded the Brahmo Samaj, an attempt to reorganize Hinduism along the line of monotheism and repudiation of idol-worship and superstition. After Ram Mohan Roy’s death, the movement was strengthened by Dwarkanath Tagore. With Keshub Chunder Sen (1838-84) came a period of expansion, when the movement assumed an all-Indian character, leading to the establishment of similar organizations like the Prarthana Samaj by M.G. Ranade and R.G. Bhandarkar in Bombay in 1867. In spite of a schism in the Brahmo Samaj in 1866, brought about by the growing differences between the conservatives and their former, the movement continued to be

vigorous, especially in Bengal, and influenced, in some measure, he thought of men like Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore.”⁴

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who heralded the Indian Renaissance, a member of colonial Indian parliament who recommended English language education in India were probably aware of what was in store for Indians in terms of literary awareness. The new beginning in India appeared in the 19th century as a social reform movement, to awaken the dormant society, steeped in social evils like child marriage, dowry, polygamy and casteism. Several social movements and organizations were established to liberate the society from the chains of superstition and orthodoxy.

“The British attitude to the Indian thus underwent a radical transformation; the Indian too was changing, and changing very fast. When the first products of higher education in India started coming out of the portals of the earliest Indian universities (established ironically enough in the year of the Revolt itself), the seeds of the ideas sown by Raja Ram Mohan Roy a generation earlier began to sprout vigorously. The gradual spread of the vast railway network, the growth of the native press in the bigger cities and the acquisition of a common language viz., English-soon brought the new Indian intelligentsia close together. While the old Indian aristocracy lay supine, licking its wounds, dreaming of past splendors, and shutting its eyes to the realities of the present, there ‘was born from the middle stratum of society a new integrated all-India class with varied background but a common foreground of knowledge, ideas and values.... It was a dynamic minority. It had a sense of unity, of purpose, and of hope. It was the newborn soul of modern India. In time it was to infuse the whole of India with its spirit.”⁵

In Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s essays on various subjects, written within the first three decades of the nineteenth century are the early prose writing of Indian English literature. Historical perspective contextualizes the growth and rise of Indian English literature from its inception to its present glory. Indian writings in English were heavily influenced by the western art form of the novel.

“The first novel in India, *Rajmohan’s Wife* was serialized in the year 1864 and was later published in the year 1935. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee attempted to

indigenize the form of novel by a liberal use of Indian words and by attempting to tell a story that is truly India.”⁶

It was typical for the early Indian English Language writers to use English unadulterated by Indian words to convey experiences that were primarily Indian. Indian English Literature is an honest enterprise to demonstrate the exceptional charms of Indian Writing in English. From being with particular and special, rather gradual native glare up of geniuses. Indian Writing in English has turned out to be a new form of Indian tradition and culture. Indian English Writers are novelists, essayists, poets, and dramatists have been making momentous and considerable contributions to world literature since pre-Independence era.

“The early novels were attempted to depict Indian social life, family life, interpersonal relations, values and attitudes among high caste Hindus and could be seen as good social documents than truly creative fiction. Indian fiction in English could be said to have come of age with the publication of Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936), R.K. Narayan’s *Swami and Friends* and Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* (1938).”⁷

The core reason behind this was the fact that most of the readers were either British or British educated Indians. In the early twentieth century, a new breed of writers started to emerge on the block. These writers were essentially British who were either born or brought up in India. Their writings consisted of Indian themes and sentiments but the way of story-telling was primarily western.

“It was, however, not Bombay, but Bengal—the first home of Indian English Literature—that was to continue to dominate the poetic scene for many more years. Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848-1909), a cousin of Toru Dutt, was an Indian Civil Service official who retired voluntarily at the age of forty-nine in order to devote himself to scholarly and creative writing. He wrote in both Bengali and English; all his original creative work was in Bengali and his English verse all in the form of translations, while he wrote reflective and critical prose in English. His *lays of Ancient India* (1894) is a collection of workman-like verse-translations from Sanskrit and Prakrit classics including the *Rigveda*, the *Upanishada*,

Kalidasa and Bharavi, and Buddhist texts like the *Dhammapada*. The translation of the *Mahabharata* (1895) and the *Ramayana* (1899) are a far more ambitious undertaking. Dutt's aim was to produce condensed versions of these two great Indian epics; and the method he adopts is not abridgement, but the selection of major incident for complete translation, with the linking up of these portions by short connecting notes.”⁸

In fact, some of the writings of that period are still considered to be the masterpieces of English Literature. In those periods, natives were represented by the likes of Rabindranath Tagore and Sarojini Naidu. In fact, *Gitanjali* helped Tagore to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in the year 1913.

“Indian English fiction is a late development. The earliest writings of Indians in English consisted of prose-letters, memoranda, and translations, religious, social, political, and cultural tracts. The growth of Indian press also contributed to the rise of journalistic prose which was excellently written by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the veritable morning star of Indian Renaissance. The evolution of lucid, clear, simple and idiomatic prose style and the deep concern for multitudinous social and national problem which permeate the work of Ram Mohan Roy, Ram Gopal Ghosh, Surendra Nath Banerjee, G.K. Gokhale and other pioneers of Indian Renaissance paved the way for the growth and development of Indian English fiction, which invariably requires prose medium and which is mainly based on social themes.”⁹

Following track of the early English novels, the Indian English novels of the pre-independence era had its immediate context in the Nationalist movement. Some of the major themes of the novelists of this period were nationalism, Gandhian ideology, and struggle for social and economic issues such as caste discrimination, poverty, and industrial development. In the post-independence era the focus shifted to the colonial period, the re-examination of Imperialism, multiculturalism, the psycho analysis of identity and so on.

“If we look even at the small collection of women's writing from the pre-colonial period in this anthology, it is clear that nearly all of it is either from pre-Aryan or

non-Aryan sources. Further, we see that women often found opportunities for involvement in literary creation in the context of powerful historical movements that questioned Aryan or Brahminic dominance and represented the claims of rival political groups or emerging social classes.”¹⁰

But gradually the novelists of the early twentieth century took up contemporary social issues like caste discrimination, child marriage and poverty. *The Lake of Palms: A Study of Indian Domestic Life* (1909) by Romesh Chandra Dutt is an example of novels written with the aim of social reform, their themes being widow remarriage and caste discrimination.

“Roughly contemporary with Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao makes with them a remarkable triad, affiliated with them in time and sometime in the choice of themes but not in his art as a novelist or in his enchanting prose style. A novelist and a short story writer, he too is a child of the Gandhian Age, and reveals in his work his sensitive awareness of the forces let loose by the Gandhian Revolution as also of the thwarting or steadying pulls of past tradition.”¹¹

With the appearance of the big trio – Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan, the Indian English novel stepped into the world of post colonialism. Mulk Raj Anand’s social novels, *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *Two leaves and a Bud* (1937) exposed the cruelty of exploitation, caste discrimination and economic suppression in colonial India. Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* (1938) portrays a realistic picture of Gandhian philosophy of passive resistance against imperialism in a small south Indian village.

In *Swami and Friends* (1935), R.K. Narayan takes a dig at the educational system of the British Raj which produced masses of subordinates and unimaginative clerks. These three novelists heralded the beginning of Indian English novel in the true sense. They established the suppositions, the language, the style, and the nature of the themes which were to give the Indian novel its particular distinctiveness.

The post-independence writing of the fifties and sixties marks out a new phase of emotional and intellectual growth in the history of Indian novel. The social, economic,

religious, political, and familial problems that were submerged in the flood of freedom movement drew the attention of the creative writers of this era. While Khushwant Singh portrayed the communal riots after partition, in *Train to Pakistan* (1956), and economic problems like the strained relationship between land owners and landless peasants.

“The cleavage of the country on religious-political issues, communal riots leaving millions of people either dead or maimed even after the colonial rules had left, poverty, social injustice, class inequality—all these along with the rapid industrial and technological development created an atmosphere of general distrust and resulted in superficial existence of man. Arun Joshi delves deeply into the crises of the contemporary Indian life and establishes the super significance of humanistic values in the life of the modern man who is under the vicious impact of industrialization and modernization. During industrial revolution striking changes took place in England and in other parts of Europe.”¹²

This makes easy and comfortable life in the field of science and technology. Most of the work of laborious now done by machines. It also includes the progress of science which is helping man to control over the environment and reach from unique level of development, industrialization, automation, communication revolution, urbanization, etc., have posed numerous challenges for human being.

The impact of industrialization on the life of common man and the consequent poverty of the rural folks became the focal point of novelists like Bhabani Bhattacharya and Manohar Malgonkar and Arun Joshi, who appeared in the late sixties, the internal world of the characters became important. His novels plunge into the depth of human mind to enhance the reader a vision of the psychic world of the characters.

The appearance of the women novelists during this period gave a new dimension to Indian English writing. The latter half of the twentieth century witnessed a creative surge in women's writing. Eminent writers like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Rama Mehta, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De and Arundhati Roy emerged during this period.

“Among ‘the Big Three’ novelists of Indo-English fiction, in Mulk Raj Anand humanism acquires a socialistic and realistic concern, in R.K. Narayan it has social and artistic colour, in Raja Rao it acquires metaphysical and philosophic garb. In Bhabani Bhattacharya it retains social and realistic colour and Arun Joshi it takes an existential form. In Kamala Markandaya social concern acquires a Hardian note. In Anita Desai, humanism centers on the revelation of human psyche and emotional disharmony. In Shashi Deshpande humanism acquires culture and also spiritual overtones. In Arundhati Roy there is a clear note of feminist preoccupation with psychological and romantic notions of repression and fulfilment of the ego and the result. Many rebellious tendencies against social and religious practices and institutions are notable.”¹³

Kamala Markandaya’s novels manifest her awareness of the social problems of post-independent India and her concern for the downtrodden. *Her Nectar in a Sieve* (1954) tells the story of a South Indian village where industry and modern technology play havoc. Ruth Praver Jhabvala too deals with the social and economic problems of the contemporary society, corruption in Indian public life and exploitation of poor. Anita Desai, Rama Mehta and Shashi Deshpande focus on the existential predicaments and travails of the quiet women in a male dominated society. Their motive was to voice their own bitter experiences as women, with a view to influencing the society and thereby effecting social reforms.

The novels of Anita Desai penetrate psychologically into the inner working of women and present the trauma faced by womanhood. Another woman novelist who traverses along the same path of the study of psychic mind is Rama Mehta. Shashi Deshpande projects a realistic picture of the financially independent middle- class educated women who represent larger part of the suffering society.

Women deprived of love and companionship and their search for identity and individuality are the recurrent themes in all her works. The works of Shobha De project the varied facets of Indian metropolises and deal with problems concerning the modern urban society. The Eighties and nineties witnessed the emergence of the second

generation of Indian English novelists whose writing has attracted the attention of readers in India and abroad.

“The new novelists have proved their mettle by winning, competitions with writers whose mother tongue was English, several major literary awards, prizes and distinctions, a complete list of which will occupy pages. To note only the most outstanding of these, three new novelists have won the Booker Prize, supposedly the British equivalent of the Noble Prize: Salman Rushdie for *Midnight's Children* in 1981 (in 1993 this was adjudged the “Booker of Bookers” the best novel to have won the Booker Prize in its first twenty-five years), Arundhati Roy for *The God of Small Things* in 1997 and Kiran Desai for *The Inheritance of Loss* in 2006. (R.P. Jhabvala, from the earlier generation, too had won the Booker Prize). Since then almost every novel by Rushdie has won an award in one country or another: *Spume* bagged the prix the Meilleur Livre Etranger in Paris; *The Satanic Verses* was given the ‘Author of the year’ Award in Germany, and the Whitbread Prize for Next Novel; *Ilaroun* and *The Sea of Sturies* qualified for the Writers Guild Award in England; *The Moor's Last Sigh* was adjudged ‘The Novel of the year’ in 1996, while *The Ground beneath Her Feet* was considered the best book in the Eurasia region of the Commonwealth Writers Prize.”¹⁴

Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* (1986) and *A Suitable Boy* (1993) and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) have won global recognition and acclaim. A new landmark was created when Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* won the Booker prize in 1981. Arundhati Roy repeated the feat in 1997, when her novel *The God of Small Things* won the Booker Prize. These novelists have made Indian sensibility felt outside India and influenced by the wave of post modernism.

The novels of this period indicate a new insight in theme and style, feeling and form. There is a shift in locale from the village to the city and a broadening of the thematic range from Indian to global and transnational. Lack of faith in religion, declining moral standards, corruption in public as well as private lives of individuals are some of the

predominant themes in postmodern novels. The fiction writers of this era have adopted a new way of writing, the mingling of the historical facts with fiction.

Among the women writers Sarojini Naidu, the great poetess charmed the readers with her writings. Feminism themes have also been used by authors like Nayantara Sahgal and Rama Mehta. Regional fiction theme has been aptly used by Kamala Das, Anita Nair and Susan Viswanathan. Novelists like Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai captured the spirit of Indian cultures and its traditional values. During 1990's India became a popular literary nation as a number of women authors made their debut in this era.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Suniti Namjoshi and Anuradha Marwah Roy used realism as main theme of their novels. The novels of authors like Namita Gokhale or Shobha De are really out-spoken, most of these female novelists are known for their bold views that are reflected in their novels. Basically, these are the novels of protest and an outburst of reservations and contaminations. Unlike the past, where the works of women novelists were given less priority and were actually undervalued, classification of feministic or male writings hardly makes any sense today.

Since long, feminism has been used by the women novelists; their novels reflect that the present age women have realized that she is neither helpless nor dependent. But the concept of traditional woman is completely changed in modern time. Modern writers feel that a woman is an equal competent just like a man.

“Across the centuries, woman has been the focus of many literary works. In this age of development and flux, occurring in almost every field, this major bulk of the population cannot be easily neglected. Indian writers in English have also come out of their cocoons of ‘non-attachment’ and ‘non-involvement’ and have started acknowledging the status of Indian woman in a, hitherto, male-dominated society concept of Indian womanhood is as divergent as the country itself and has undergone drastic and dramatic changes from era to era. India has travelled from her glorious past to the present state of degeneration, from spiritual ascendancy to communal clashes, from captivity to independence, from agrarian revolution to cyber technology. The role of Indian woman has also changed from that of deity

to *devadasi*, from *shakti* to *abala* and from a home-bound creature to a professional.”¹⁵

The women of modern era think on different lines and that is what is depicted in the novels of the Indian women authors, these facts are incorporated by the women writers. Indian women writers explore the feminine subjectivity and apply the theme that ranges from childhood to complete womanhood, these women writers say that feminism means putting an end to the silent sufferings of women.

“Post-Independence writer, Kamala Markandaya draws her canvas on the changing socio- economic scene, thereby, making her novels a wonderful kaleidoscope. She shows dexterity in her selection of characters and situations. Her characters represent a wide spectrum – peasants, queen and concubines rule and city-breeds, English officials in India and Indian emigrants in England. An adept teller of tales, ‘she claims to be on the side of the human and life, against machinery, against exploitation of the weak, against war and violence.’ Woman’s struggle is one that ranges from survival at the sheer physical level to the quest for identity. Most women have to grapple with conflicting situations at home and outside, as well. In Markandaya’s wide repertoire of women characters, ranging from the harassed, victimized peasant women to the princesses of *havelis* we discern the plight of the Indian woman crippled by her sex, society and economic condition.”¹⁶

Women writers in India are moving forward with their strong and sure strides, matching the pace of the world. We see them bursting out in full bloom spreading their own individual fragrances. Indian women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and many more have played a pioneering role in conveying the readers a wild range of indigenous Indian issues, punctuated by a strong feministic outlook.

It is remarkable to note that these writers have climbed the steps of success in a slow and painful way. Thus, this new voice of emerging modern India succeeded in drawing the attention of the public towards the pressing problems of gender inequality, social evils,

and encroachment of land by foreign nationals and exploitation of women in a patriarchal society.

The novels of the nineteenth century brought to limelight the social injustice, superstition and the abominable conditions of the peasants and workers that plagued the Indian society. Women's emancipation, education and widow remarriage also became common themes in the novels and this phase is dubbed as the 'renaissance' of Indian writing in English. The tradition of novel writing in India is an imitation of a western phenomenon and thus different from most of the earlier writings that engaged in a quest of metaphysical and transcendental knowledge, where the present world is depicted and painted to be a mere appearance.

Another luminary figure is that of Tagore who wrote an expansive body of prose fiction, poetry, and songs. His creative ingenuity is unparalleled in either Bengali or English. He conceptualized and started a democratic, artistic, and cultural revolution by training young minds in the University founded by him, *Shanti Niketan*, which attracted teachers and students from all over the world.

Rajmohan's Wife (1864) written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee is acclaimed as the earliest Indian novel written in English. The novel which reveals the suffering of a Hindu wife paved way for *Anand Math* (1884) India's first political novel. Writers from the presidencies of Bengal and Madras dominated the period from 1864 to 1900. In this experimental stage of fiction writing, western influence was clearly seen in their works. They drew upon eighteenth and nineteenth century British fiction for their models, especially that of Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding and Walter Scott.

Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) is a great lyrical achievement and his prose fiction deals with human condition and emotions, social norms and also revolution. His works inspired an entire generation of writers, artists, singers, and the common man. Most of his work is in Bengali and is present to us in translation. Besides, the danger of considering Indian English Writing as national literature especially in western universities is manifold, primarily because it is written by a minority that is upwardly mobile. Text written in English language should not be the only source of highlighting Indian culture and way of

life; this would marginalize the importance of the texts produced in regional languages that have their own values and narratives.

Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Upamanyu Chatterjee and Amitav Ghosh are some of the practitioners of this trend. The works of Amitav Ghosh are replete with political, historical, and social consciousness. Like many of his contemporaries he has been greatly influenced by the political and cultural milieu of post-independent India. Following Rushdie, he has brought about the relationship of the socio historical aspects of the country and the individual. In his novels there is a parallel presentation of the historical and the fictional aspects. His works are underpinned by a mass of research, that he remains unquestionable and impartial in his narration.

This literary movement is being fortified by the overwhelming output by novelists and distinguished itself as a remarkable force in world fiction. This has been achieved by novelists who sought to prove their inner creative urges in English language, which is indeed an alien tongue for them. It is to the credit of these novelists that they have overcome the hurdles of writing in a foreign language and have evolved a distinctive style for themselves by mastering the intricacies of the language and assimilating in it the hues and flavors of the Indian sub-continent.

The Indian English fiction has had a meteoritic growth during the dawn of the millennium year and the writing in all genres of literature has gained momentum, particularly the Indian novel, and the doyens of the Indian writing like R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, promoted the conventional mode of writing.

The crusaders of the contemporary and modern era include Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and many more. A host of contemporary post-colonial writers like Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Meena Alexander, Anita Nair and Jhumpa Lahiri have initiated the process of decolonizing the 'Colonial English' and using it as a medium to express Indian thoughts and sensibilities with a distinctive Indian style

1.2 Indian English Diasporic Novels: A Background Study

Diaspora is a kind of movement which mean migration, or scattering of people away from an established homeland. “The dictionary meaning of Diaspora is ‘Dispersion’ used collectively for Jews, after the Babylonian Captivity and also apostolic age for the Jews living outside of Palestine.”¹⁷ Or in other words, people settled far from their ancestral homelands. The term Diaspora was used to dispersal situations that occupy the experiences of immigrants and cultural communities. The Diaspora writers have contributed in English literature with their notable assistance. Their work deals with the problems of exiles, immigrants, and refugees.

A Diaspora is the group of people who are living away from their homeland and settle down somewhere else. Diasporic works shows the problems of immigrant which they are facing in foreign land. Diasporic writers share their personal experience through their works. This literature focuses mainly on themes like, cultural shock and problems in adjustment, adaptation, identity crisis, alienation, uprooting and re-rooting, feeling of nostalgia, displacement, dilemma, and depression. So, these writers focus on these issues and discussing their own physical and emotional conflicts between two societies. Indian English novels depict Indian life and culture of Indian society which resembles the problems of individual’s life and it is determined by society.

“The New Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘Diaspora’ (noun) as the dispersion of the Jews after the exile, among Gentile nations; Jews so dispersed. Etymologically ‘dia’ means ‘thought’ and ‘speiro’ mean ‘to scatter.’ Now, it is being used in a more generalized sense to refer to the migration of a population or a section of it, along with their ways of life to the place of destination abroad.”¹⁸

Diasporic Literature is a very vast concept. The term Diaspora that includes all those literary works written by the authors outside their native country, but these works is associated with native culture.

“The concept of ‘Diaspora’ and its geographical and territorial dimensions have all been subject to various interpretations (Brazier and Mannur 2003). According to Vertovec (1997:277) the term ‘Diaspora’ is often applied to ‘describe

practically any population that is considered “deterritorialized” or “transnational”—that is, which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides in, and whose social, economic, and political networks across the borders of nation-states or, indeed, span the globe.’ It is therefore evident that geographically, ‘Diaspora involves a radical... redefinition of place. To the ancient Greeks, Diaspora was associated with migration and colonization’ (Cohen 1997: ix). However, for Jews, Africans, Palestinians and Armenians, the term had a more ominous connotation: ‘Diaspora is signified as a collective trauma, a banishment, where one dreamed of home but lived-in exile.’¹⁹

Writers of Indian Diaspora are at the middle stage since last decade. Indian Diaspora occupies second largest place in the world. The population of Diaspora is approximately 25 million, who settled whole notable regions of the world. Indian immigrants in the overseas are for various reasons like free trade, better standards of life and earning. Diasporic or immigrant writing occupies a great place of significance between cultures and countries. Diaspora Writings benefits many ways and a powerful web connects the entire globe. The foremost characteristic features of Diaspora writings involve the quest for identity, nostalgia, familiar and marital relationships apart from re-rooting, uprooting, multi-cultural milieu etc.

“With the rise of women’s diasporic writing, the images of immigrant women have often been discussed in literature. Indian women writers in foreign lands are equipped with better themes than the perennially penned subjects like rights of women, injustice, and gender inequality and so on. With the alteration in political, social, and economical scenario, literature by women writers living in India and abroad has evolved to demonstrate some universal experiences like the contradictions of old and new values, conventions and change, ethics and freedom.”²⁰

The ancient human migrations, the medieval resettlements and the modern globalization are the different phases of human quest for the creation of new civilization and also their need for progress and development. Such human movements have generated the concept of Diaspora which means human settlements away from their original home land.

Migration is a universal phenomenon in today's world. "The Diaspora was always a reality in some form or the other, the boundaries of a nation have never been able to contain the minds, imaginations, needs and compulsions of its people."²¹ Thus, people who come from their native land to live permanently in a foreign land are regarded as part of Diaspora. They play a major role in this process.

"Indian Diasporic Literature in English problematizes concept of nation, religion, identity, gender, marginalization, assimilation and acculturation in exploring the experiences of diasporic life. It focuses on experiences of women within families and arena of paid work to bring out the realities and meaning of women's lives. Evident in the works of diaspora writers is the greater ability of the females to adapt, to assimilate and acculturate in a new environment. While as the male sensibility looks back with nostalgia at the culture left behind, women welcome the newfound freedom in the new environment which is free from the constraints and restraints of phallogentric taboos prevalent back home."²²

In this way Indian Diasporic novels reflect typical Indian feminine sensibility, identity crises, isolation, cultural conflict, social conflict, and traditional conflict and feeling of duality. These are the main problems, which immigrants face in foreign land. Diasporic writers mostly wrote their own experiences in their novels. Those writers whose writing depicts such themes can be regarded as Diasporic writers, who write outside their country but still connected to their homeland.

"Bharati Mukherjee's novels, we get a graphical pattern of a female immigrant's self-satisfaction in proportion to the approach she adopts to deal with the dilemma do being out-rooted but still connected. Significantly, it is the revised or modified forms of these concepts that define their typical existence."²³

These types of themes can be easily identified in works of immigrant writers of Indian English literature. Bharati Mukherjee's novels deal with the problem of female suppression but on the other side she gives a new identity to the women of modern times. Bharati Mukherjee portrays the character of Jasmine and Tara Banerjee as the new woman who adopts the new lifestyle in an alien country. They make their identity in new

groups that are shaped by the culture and tradition of their adopted countries but also influenced by their homeland.

“The diasporic experience of culture dislocation needs to be located within this concept of authenticity, in terms of loss, formation of self and its ability to rise above the petty concerns of identity and self- preservation. The diasporic - ness then fades into the background. To that extent a piece of writing shakes free of the writer and his location.”²⁴

Diasporic literature has its roots in the sense of loss and alienation, which emerged as a result of migration and expatriation. Diasporic literature deals with alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity. It also shows the combination of two cultures. They stand between them and that situation develops a dual identity. The immigrant's situations are bound to feel that they stand on the borderline belonging neither to their motherland nor their adopted country.

“In the recent time the migrations of Asians and Africans to the west have invited the attention of the world at large towards the problems posed by the basic differences in the culture of the West and that of the East. However, due to these problems the term Diaspora has been used in varied senses indicating the problem of settlement in a new country and the resultant cultural dilemmas, generational differences, and transformation of identities. This further leads to the re-examination of the relationship between the self and the culture in both the migrated lands as well as in the home country.”²⁵

It reflects the immigrant experience that comes out of the immigrant settlement. The Diasporic Indians too, do not break their relationship with the ancestral land. Settlement in unfamiliar land makes them experience dislocation. Dislocation can be considered as a break with the old identity and accept the new one. Ajaya Sahoo thinks.

“The Indian Diaspora is considered as one of the most modern and largest diasporas in the worlds” The Indian postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha is more concerned with the resultant instability. Uma Parameswaram speaks of a gender

perspective. She thinks woman has the attitude to live in two cultures - the mother's and the husband's."²⁶

The immigrants attempt to assimilate, adapt, and amalgamate with the society of their host country. Their attempts of adaptation and adjustment are not without their concern to maintain their original culture and identity. The most important means used for insulation is the continuation of the cultural practices and social traditions. The first-generation immigrants are always concerned with keeping the social, cultural, tradition for their future generations. Conscious attempts are made by the Diasporic communities to pass their traditions to the future generation. The experiences of these cultural elements have been mixed in different Diasporic situations. Some of these elements have vanished, some have survived.

“So far Diaspora involved the national and cultural boundaries it affected individual's consciousness and formed a sort of psychological crisis. Despite all these implications the Diaspora writers represent a set of contradictory convictions –the quest for freedom bondages, the pursuit of material progress and the desire to be aloof from that.”²⁷

The feelings of rootlessness, alienation, confusion, nostalgia, dislocation and sufferings arise due to discrimination on the basis of culture, religion and language. This results in the creation of a broken identity. As they are in between the two places and two cultures. Therefore, the migrant writer needs to write their multicultural ethos, understanding of socio-cultural and economic realities which are present in their society. They have been successful in transforming their experiences into writings. As the expatriate writer experiences cultural, geographical and emotional displacement, there emerges a Diasporic sensibility that shows the dual identity of the writer. Their writing is characterized by a dual vision.

“Diasporic literature is characterized by culture and historical dislocation. Diaspora literature is the reflection of cultural and historical crisis, place and identity, East West encounters, multi-identities such as ethnicity, racism, rationality, nationality trans-nationality, gender and cultural locations,

displacement, fragmentation, internalization and marginalization, memory homeland, house and self-identity.”²⁸

It also reflects Displacement or Dislocation, which is important notion that is used not only to express the physical movement of an individual from one place to the other but it also shows how with the movement of a people combined of a whole nation, to which they belonged. Dislocation leads to cross-cultural phenomenon that have always affected the lives of immigrants and there is constantly the possibility of rejection, confusion and tension when people from different cultures mix together. The migrants in the foreign culture lie in soft connection of memory of their motherland. An immigrant experiences a strong sense of emptiness. Loneliness is more than a sense of having company of another person. It is a feeling of being detached or disconnected from other people so that feels isolation and depressed inside.

Nation and Identity are the two important terms in Diaspora literature. While thinking about the concept of nation and identity, because nation gives a particular identity and that is the reason these two terms play an important role in life. Problems of the nation, identity, national identity, individual identity these are the basic needs in modern time. The expatriate novelist's works depict the national identity, individual identity, cultural displacement and its impact on the immigrants.

“With the onset of globalization the large-scale heterogeneity in the world is being replaced by a homogenous global culture. In effect, this is the process described by the term ‘global village’. In the twenty-first century we observed the phenomenon of extra-ordinary and accelerating movement of the people throughout the world. In this new context the word diaspora has also taken a new meaning of relocation of any people away from their homeland into a foreign land.”²⁹

A majority of Diasporic writers mainly focus on life and experience. These experiences include crisis, clashes, a sense of loss, isolation, nostalgia, missing for a past land, the desire to assimilate with the present country of stay and adapt to its life style and its people. The main themes of Diasporic authors are mostly repetitive centering on a

longing for a fixed identity and these approach changes with different authors. While some take it serious approach, for some it comes in the form of a sarcastic attack.

The uprooted immigrants face varied situations, problems of rejection and acceptance. If accepted, the problem would be an adjustment, displacement, monotony, disappointment, isolation and finally they face failure and rejection. Identity becomes the core issue in Diaspora, a particularly Diasporic identity that is made of particular nation. This Diasporic identity is divided into multi-level. It is also based on the history or conditions leading to migration, as well as the individual responses to these circumstances. This experience of dislocation is dependent on factors such as the generation of Diaspora that one belongs, impact of globalization, why the Diasporic has shifted away from his homeland and also the approach of the host country towards the Diasporic community. There are some factors like language, dress, and socio-cultural environment that deepen the problem of nation and identity after migration takes place.

“The post-modern Indian Women novelists in English have been presenting the feminine consciousness of the women characters in their novels. Like Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Ruth Praver Jhabvala and Gita Hariharan, Bharati Mukherjee explores many facts of feminism and immigrant experience in her fiction. The impact of patriarchy on the Indian society varies from the one in the west and therefore the Indian women novelists have tried to evolve their own stream of feminism grounded in reality.”³⁰

The writers of Indian Diaspora through their literary contributions have greatly enriched English literature. They have been aiming the rhythms of ancient legends, mythology, civilization, cultural assimilation and nostalgia. They fall deep into the realms of imaginations and the ocean of memory to paint something quite different and distinct from that portrayed by fellow novelists. The well-known writers in this area include, Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, V.S. Naipaul, Jhumpa Lahiri, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Rohinton Mistry, Kiran Desai. They have given more poignancy to the exploration by dealing with not only geographical dislocation but also socio-cultural sense of displacement.

“With more and more writers of India origin settling abroad and engaging themselves in creative writings in the countries of their domicile, the theoretical problem is that of the critical parameters by which their works have to be defined and assessed. Although there are certain common resonance in the literary representations of the experience of the writers of the ‘indenture’ and the ‘new’ Indian Diaspora, the responses and the narratives of the individual writers vary greatly.”³¹

Writers like A.K. Ramanujan, Meena Alexander, Bharati Mukherjee, Salman Rushdie, Satendra Nandan, David Dabydeen, M.G. Vassanji, Agha Shahid Ali, V.S. Naipaul, Rohinton Mistry, they have some small difference from each other not only in their social and cultural backgrounds but also in their literary writing styles. But the responses of the Diasporic writers to India are also diverse in a different way. They talk about their emotions and feelings of nostalgia. But their Diasporic conditions and sense of exile, isolation, hostility, alienation and their efforts to seek replacement by creation figurative return to their original country.

They clearly bring out the dual feelings of the sense of wonder the immigrants have along with a sense of adventure at the sight of the new land and also their feeling of nostalgia for the world left behind. Diasporic writings are the records of the experiences of the Diasporic communities living in varied socio-cultural settings. As far as Indian Diaspora is concerned, people have acquired a new identity by the process of self-fashioning and increasing acceptance by the West nature, values, and extended families as well as their deepest sympathies and attachments.

The Indian Diasporic writing covers every continent and part of the world and has made a substantial contribution to the literary output of their host countries and serves as a powerful network connecting the entire world. Bharati Mukherjee, an Indian American immigrant writer, liberates her women protagonists for a New World Order. Her portrayal of women is inspired by her experience in India as well as abroad. Her protagonists are sensitive and they lack a stable sense of personal and cultural identity. They are victimized by racism, sexism and other forms of social oppression.

Bharati Mukherjee is concerned with characters that strain and struggle for the articulation of their repressed and stunted voice. As a writer she likes to put much stress on the fact that her characters, whether they are uniquely Indian or superficially western, are basically human. Her women characters vent their feminine sensibility in their frantic desire for an authentic communication with their own selves as well as with the society. A new dimension of the Indian English writing can be seen in the works of Anita Desai. Her writing focuses on alienation, estrangement, anxiety, anguish and threats to individual identity. She articulates the conventional value system, collapses of joint family system, marital discords, cultural responses to the impact of West, social and economic disparities and the quest for identity in a multicultural world.

The India-born writer Bharati Mukherjee is one of the most popular immigrant writers of America. The main theme of her writing discusses the condition of Asian immigrants in North America, with particular attention to the changes taking place in South Asian Women in a new world. She occupies unique place among the Indian women novelists writing in English. Her novels, like *Desirable Daughters*, *The Tiger's Daughter*, *Wife, Jasmine and The Holder of the World*, *Leave it to me*, *The Tree Bride* explore the shifting identities of women in one place to another, both in present-day and in the past. The novels of Bharati Mukherjee are based on self realization. Description of self quest and search for identity, cultural clashes, and traditional conflict are main features of her works. Bharati Mukherjee discusses the theme of isolation, disintegration of personality, dual identity and dual cultural shock in their works. The women characters suffer from depression and frustration and take extreme steps of killing their husbands. Apart from nostalgia these writers recreate their past and share their own experience through their writings.

“Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the foremost writers of the diasporic literature. Many of her works deal with the immigrant experience, especially of women in general. She highlights diasporic women protagonists, living in two cultures, their delineation, isolation, exile, mental trauma, dislocation, home and exile in her novels; she explicitly portrays nostalgia faced by contemporary women. Divakaruni presents the problems faced by Indian women in the United

States, the impact of American culture on them as individuals and the difficulty of the immigrants in adapting to the culture of the adopted land.”³²

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a Diasporic writer, she is famous for her fiction and popular as a poet, essayist, and short story writer. Her works are mainly set in the United States as well as in India. She focuses sometimes on the experiences of South Asian immigrants. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s works are based on the personal problems of Indian Immigrant community, their transformation and bonds with native land.

“Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, one of the Indian Diasporic writers, defined the statues of woman in contemporary time: “Independence with social acceptance, success and autonomy that set its boundaries but do not require a complete break from the traditional, extended, semi-feudal family structure.”³³

Diasporic writers always have dual identity, dual culture, and dual society. But most of them, they will still remember their roots. In her novels, she talks about the set of boundaries, independence and freedom. These all things are today’s life requirement, but do not detached with tradition, culture and family.

1.3 The Select Novelists and their Contribution

Bharati Mukherjee was born in 1940 in Calcutta, daughter of pharmaceutical chemist Sudhir Lal Mukherjee and his wife, Bina. Mukherjee’s was a comparatively wealthy Bengali Hindu Brahmin family, and during her early childhood they lived with their large extended family. Mukherjee was aware of the homeless beggars roaming in the streets, the funerals of freedom fighters during India’s struggle for independence from British imperial rule, and the Hindu-Muslim riots at the partition of India and Pakistan. She enjoyed the affection of a loving father and listened to the tales of her mother. She married a Canadian man, Clark Blaise, at the University of Iowa, in 1963. She got Canadian citizenship and lived in Toronto and then in Montreal and held teaching positions at McGill University. She migrated to the U.S.A. in 1980 with her family and became a U.S.A. citizen in 1988. She is an Indian-born American novelist and short-story

writer who delineated in her writing the cultural changes and alienation in the immigrant experience.

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the most influential literary figures of Indian women writers in English. She has been termed as an Asian-American writer, Indo-American writer, Indian Diaspora writer, writer of immigrant fiction and non-fiction, and American writer of mainstream today. When Mukherjee was eight, her father sent his three daughters to school in England and Switzerland. After three years of this experiment in European education, the sisters returned to Calcutta to live in a home set up within the compound of the pharmaceutical company partly owned by their father in suburban Conspire. From there they attended a school staffed by Irish nuns; en route to school they sometimes had to run a gauntlet of strikers and picketers.

After getting her B.A. from the University of Calcutta in 1959 and her M.A. in English and Ancient Indian Culture from the University of Baroda in 1961, she came to the United States. Having been awarded a scholarship from the University of Iowa, she earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing in 1963 and her Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature in 1969. While studying at the University of Iowa, she met and married a Canadian student from Harvard, Clark Blaise, on September 19, 1963. She has produced two books with her husband, as well as numerous books, essays and short stories of her n the National Book Critics Circle Award for *The Middleman and Other Stories*. Mukherjee's career as a professor and her marriage to Blaise Clark has given her opportunities to teach all over the United States and Canada. Currently she is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Bharati Mukherjee is a versatile writer whose works include five novels, two collections of short stories, some powerful essays, and two nonfiction books which she co-authored with her husband *Clark Blaise*. Her early work led to her being seen as a writer firmly enclosed in the bosom of Indian writing in English. But this was an embrace that Mukherjee herself sought to avoid. With the publication of *Heart of Darkness*, her third book of fiction, she convincingly declared her desire to be seen as a North American writer. She is an educator, author of highly praised novels, two collections of short stories

and non-fiction works. She utilizes her own personal experiences in crossing the cultural boundaries.

She is a well-known writer of Indian Diaspora in USA, though she expects to be seen as American Writer and rejects her identity as Asian-American or Indo-American. Her works can certainly be read in the national context of Indian writing in English and in the international context of the literature of the Indian Diaspora. Also her work locates her in the American context.

“While in Canada, Bharati Mukherjee published two novels, *The Tiger’s Daughter* in 1971 and *Wife* in 1975. She also co-authored a book of memoirs with her husband, entitled *Day and Night in Calcutta* (1977), on their year-long stay in India in 1973-74, after a fire in their Montreal home. Other writings in Canada included articles on civil rights such as “An Invisible Woman” and a few short stories which were later published in the collection *Darkness* (1985). Another collaborative effort with her husband was published in the U.S.A. - *The Sorrow and the Terror* (1987), on the 1985 crash of the Air India plane *Kanishka*, travelling from Toronto to Bombay. Mukherjee’s collection of short stories *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) has won critical recognition and awards. Subsequently there has been on more novel *Jasmine*.”³⁴

All protagonists of her works are Indian and their stories start from Indian life style. She is the strong voice of immigrants from all over the world in USA, because of her determined rejection of exile and her affirmation of the immigrant condition. She wants to transform herself as an expatriate writer into a confident redefined artist in the immigrant tradition which sets her in the tradition of American main-stream writers.

Bharati Mukherjee is a Diasporic writer whose works are based on sense of immigrants. “Bharati Mukherjee’s own struggle is with identity first as an exile from India, then an Indian expatriate in Canada, and finally as an immigrant in the United States has lead to her current contentment of being an immigrant in a country of immigrants”³⁵. The word immigrant defines a physical movement from their homeland to an unknown land with frontward attitude; it indicates an inescapable isolation and a nostalgic anchoring in the past.

“The term immigrant and expatriate in general refer to persons who live outside their own country either by choice or otherwise. But in the works of Bharati Mukherjee’s these two terms assume distinct connotations. The ‘immigrant’ willingly transforms herself/himself to fit in and absorb the best in the host culture. The immigrant experience, therefore, becomes a transformative process of the ‘self’ in its relation to society. The ‘expatriate’ on the other hand is more a reluctant entrant into the new culture and finds it hard to let go a familiar way of life.”³⁶

Immigrant is also a kind of exile in which the people got shifted from one place to another. The word exile evokes the feeling of detachment, relationships with the motherland and feeling of alienation. There are many types of exile like self-imposed exile, forced exile, political exile, and social exile and so on. In India, the migratory movements were started by the labor class and the trading communities.

Bharati Mukherjee, an Indian-American immigrant writer, liberates her women protagonists for a modern world. Her portrayal of women is inspired by her experience in India as well as abroad. Her protagonists are sensitive and they require a stable sense of personal and cultural identity. Actually they are victimized by racism, sexism and other form of social oppression.

“In her novels *Jasmine* and *Tiger’s Daughter*, Bharati Mukherjee has shown a dual cultural shock. Jasmine and Tara leave their respective countries in search of their dream. This migration or ‘cultural transplant’ leads to a crisis of identity and a final reconciliation to the choice. Bharati Mukherjee has deliberately avoided the immigrant writer’s temptation to fall in the trap of glorifying his native country and to belittle and degrade the adopted country. She has presented a fascinating study of the problem of a displaced person in America as well as India.”³⁷

Bharati Mukherjee is concerned with characters that strain and struggle for the articulation of their repressed and stunted voice. As a writer she likes to put much stress on the fact that her characters, whether they are exclusively Indian or superficially western, are basically human. Her women characters vent their feminine sensibility in

their desire for an authentic communication with their own selves as well as with the society. Mukherjee's early novels, *The Tiger's Daughter* and *Wife*, both published in the early 1980s, are novels about the isolation of Indian expatriates.

“The protagonists, Tara and Dimple, are expatriates, geographically as well as in mind and spirit. They share the expatriate characteristic of being ill at ease both in the native culture and in the alien one. They represent the dilemma faced by expatriates. Siva Ramakrishna says about Tara and Dimple that the retention of their identity as Indian is in constant tension with the need for its renunciation if they have to acquire a new identity as immigrants.”³⁸

A reading of *Days and Nights* in Calcutta reveals that there is a strong autobiographical element in *The Tiger's Daughter*. Tara Banerjee, like the Bharati Mukherjee of *Days and Nights* in Calcutta, is an outsider in India because of her decision to leave the subcontinent, to live in North America, and to marry an American man. On her return, Tara sees India through the eyes of a Western imagination rather than through her own childhood eyes. Tara is no longer able to feel a part of her family, who belong to an old Bengal which is now lost to her, nor is she able to feel at ease with her old friends who, like her family, belong to a Calcutta which is rapidly fading, and who, in their different ways are as isolated as Tara from the beast beneath them.

Her novel *Wife* deals with the different problem of expatriates. Dimple is a lost in her private world of fantasy. She is dreaming about her marriage but after marriage she is uncomfortable in her marital relationship. She is emotionally incapable of understanding another human beings and she cannot understand Amit's situation. She feels trapped between two cultures and she wants to break through the traditional taboos of a wife. She aspires for freedom and love in marriage.

The theme of expatriation and isolation which is handled with such assurance in *The Tiger's Daughter* is again treated in her second novel. In *Wife*, Dimple Dasgupta is married off to a young engineer, and soon she finds herself immigrating to America. She finds her new life impossible to adjust to, and her attempts to become American, to learn to speak American-English by watching the television, cause her to question her own cultural values, and even her own happiness. Krishna Balaev Vaid says “Being

essentially in mimetic novel, *Wife* invites the traditional test of plausibility and verisimilitude and passes it without a question.”³⁹ These are the questions she might never have asked herself in Calcutta, and had she done so and found herself equally disillusioned, her solution, the novel suggests, would probably have been suicide. The infidelity and the murder which brings the novel to its shocking close are the alternatives with which Dimple's American experience has provided her.

Desirable Daughters is the story of three sisters, Tara, Parvati, and Padma, born in Calcutta in the 1950s, and hold different characteristics and the different paths they travel in their life journey. Divakaruni portrayed her characters in different shades. Padma, Parvati and Tara they are as close according to the narrator of the story as she begins the novel with the line “Sisters three are we...as like blossom on a tree”⁴⁰ Though they are born and brought up in same culture and environment. But they all have different approach. In the novel, disclosure of the different characteristics of these sisters is exposed. The description is told from the perspective of Tara, the youngest sister who has moved to America. She is divorced from her parent-selected husband; Tara lives in San Francisco with her son Rabi and lover Andy. Tara sees herself as an American, but she still connected with India. *Darkness* (1985) is an important work of Bharati Mukherjee. This book is her first collection of stories.

“Mukherjee’s *Darkness* consists of twelve short stories with an impressive variety of themes and mastery of technique. The themes of the stories amply illustrate Mukherjee’s current claims to the status of an American-Asian writer in contradistinction to that of an expatriate writer. While it is true that she does not completely give up her interest in the Asian Indian expatriates and immigrants, it is equally evident from a cursory glance at these twelve stories that she has decidedly moved away from the India of her earlier two novels, namely, *The Tiger’s Daughter* and *Wife*.”⁴¹

The specifically Canadian stories in this collection continue to explore the painful world of the expatriate she writes about in *Wife*; indeed, the story *Visitors* is a re-working of the essential elements of that novel. Other stories, though, explore North America through the alien voices of its various immigrant cultures.

After a gap of fourteen years, Mukherjee made a welcome return to the novel form with the publication of *Jasmine*, which explores female identity through the story of an Indian peasant woman whose path takes her from the Punjab, to Florida, to New York, to Iowa, and as the novel draws to a close, she is about to set off for California. With each new move the protagonist redevelop herself with a new name – Jyoti, Jasmine, Jase, Jane – and with each new name she moves closer to her dream of being an American, of belonging to the New World. Jasmine's journey highlights her rootless position and her search for identity. She moves to California, which invests resonates with hope and her with the aspirations of America's early pioneers, suggests that Jasmine has finally found her identity in America, which, perhaps more than any other country, can contain her many identities without contradiction.

The Holder of the World is the most accomplished work by Bharati Mukherjee. The novel is also interesting for the way it very subtly parodies the Western construct of India as a nation and the perception of Indians as a one group.

“Hannah's journey of India is fraught with image of adventure, action and passion. She returns to her native land, not as a reformed American but a rebel living on the fringes of society. Like Jasmine, Hannah final contentment and joy in the adapted land and it is the morality of this land that Hannah carries along with her. Bharati Mukherjee describes *The Holder of the World* as a ‘post-modern historical novel’ but at its most basic level, it is a novel of expatriation, of a quest and a journey, not only to geographically diverse lands but to culturally variant societies which help to question and abandon conventional moral and social values. Hannah's life succeeds in questioning and discovering new ways of defining reality in a world which was essentially orthodox.”⁴²

Bharati Mukherjee is a writer who is at her best when she draws on her experiences of the Old World while writing with insight about the New World to which she now belongs. Her more recent books, particularly *The Holder of the World*, confirm that hers is an original voice at the cutting edge of American immigrant or multicultural literature.

In *The Tree Bride*, Tara Chatterjee is married to a tree when her husband died on the day of wedding. Tara's father marries her off to a tree. *The Tree Bride* is not just the story of

Tara Lata. This story connects Tara Lata with their Bengali tradition and custom. She discovers her namesake her great-grand-aunt Tara Lata, a tree bride, who turns into a freedom fighter and a martyr, whose soul must rest in peace. Tara returns to India for her cremation. Like, Tara Lata remakes herself as a new American, because she belongs from typical Bengali family. When she moved to America, she followed Indian culture, and she also accepted American culture. The character of Tara has a combination of dual identity one is Indian and another is American.

Apart from works of fiction and non-fiction, the other writings by Bharati Mukherjee include *Kautilya's Concept of Diplomacy : A New Interpretation* (1976), *Response to American Fiction* (1980), *An Invisible Woman* (1981), *Immigrant Writing: Give Us Your Maximalists* (1988), *Profit and Loss: Salman Rushdie's Migration of Souls* (1989), *After the Fatwa* (1990), *Political Culture and Leadership in India* (1991), *Four Hundred Year Old Woman* (1991), *Regionalism in Indian Perspective* (1992), *On Being an American Writer*, *Two Ways to Belong in America* (1995), *American Dreamer* (1997), *Destiny's Child*, *Imagining Homelands* (1999), etc.

As a Diasporic writer, she has focused on the several identities of her immigrant characters like, hypothesis would be: Mukherjee's heroines pass through the phases of expatriate uncertainty, immigrant confidence and finally acquire the transnational hybrid identity of the world citizen. This process of shifting identities poses dilemma of identity on different levels. In the wake of Globalization people have been moving around across borders as a matter of fact. The cultural collisions and encounters are now a day-to-day reality.

Her contribution in the world of literature includes:

Novels

- *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971)
- *Wife* (1975)
- *Jasmine* (1990)
- *The Holder of the World* (1993)
- *Leave It to Me* (1997)
- *Desirable Daughters* (2003)

- *The Tree Bride* (2004)
- *Miss New India* (2011)

Short story collections

- *Darkness* (1985)
- *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988)
- *A Father*
- *The Management of Grief*

Memoir

- *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977, with Clark Blaise)

Non-fiction

- *The Sorrow and the Terror: The Haunting Legacy of the Air India Tragedy* (1987, with Clark Blaise)
- *Political Culture and Leadership in India* (1991)
- *Regionalism in Indian Perspective* (1992)

Other

- *Kautilya's Concept of Diplomacy: A New Interpretation*. Calcutta, Minerva, 1976.
- *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, with Clark Blaise. New York, Doubleday, 1977; London, Penguin, 1986.
- *The Sorrow and the Terror: The Haunting Legacy of the Air India Tragedy*, with Clark Blaise. Toronto, Viking, 1987.
- *Political Culture and Leadership in India: A Study of West Bengal*. New Delhi, India, Mittal Publications, 1991

The Select Novels of Bharati Mukherjee

The present research study has selected Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971), *Jasmine* (1990) and *Desirable Daughters* (2003) for the purpose of its

study to explore the various aspects of culture, tradition, values, moral, ethics ethos, duality, cross cultural issues, social issues and society at large.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an award-winning author and poet. She was born in Kolkata, India in 1956 and lived there until 1976, when, at age nineteen, she left Kolkata and came to the United States. She continued her education in the field of English by receiving a Master's degree from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. Her work is widely known, as she has been published in over fifty magazines, and her writing has been included in over 30 anthologies. To earn money for her education, she held many odd jobs, including babysitting, selling merchandise in an Indian boutique, slicing bread in a bakery, and washing instruments in a science lab.

At Berkeley, she lived in the International House and worked in the dining hall, slicing Jell-O and removing dishes from the dishwasher. She briefly lived in Chicago and Ohio before she settled in Sunnydale, California in 1979. She currently lives in Houston, Texas and teaches at the University of Houston Creative Writing Program. Since 1991, she has been the president of *MAITRI*, a helpline for South Asian women that particularly helps victims of domestic violence and other abusive situations. She is also involved with *Pratham*, a non-profit that seeks to improve literacy among disadvantaged Indian children. She has said that the one word which would describe her is 'enthusiastic' and she that she is motivated to be excellent in her field and to create literary art of lasting value.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's works encapsulate personal problems of Indian Immigrant community, their transformation and bonds with native land. Her works include *Arranged Marriage* (1966), *Sister of My Heart* (2000), *The View of Desire* (2002), *The Unknown Errors of Our lives* (2002) *The Palace of Illusions* (2008). In her novel *The Mistress of Spices* (1997) the protagonist's ship is wrecked on a remote Island, which carried away only women travelers. Here the protagonist learns magic from a mysterious ugly old woman. The protagonist of their novel is Tilo, who fulfills other's desire or wish through the power of spices, which are more than that of cooking. Divakaruni's second novel *Sister of my Heart* describes realistically the complicated relationships in a family

in Bengal and the third novel is *The Palace of Illusions* in which, she retelling the story of *Mahabharat* the great epic with Draupadi's point of view.

A large amount of Divakaruni's work is partially autobiographical. Most of her stories are set in the Bay Area of California. She is invested in writing about the emigrant's experience. Her book, *Arranged Marriage*, is a collection of short stories about women from India caught between two worlds. In *The Mistress of Spices*, the character Tilo provides spices, not only for cooking, but also for the feelings of isolation, homesickness and alienation, disaffection. Divakaruni writes to unite people by destroying myths and stereotypes. As she breaks down these myths and stereotypes, she dissolves boundaries between people, who belong to different backgrounds, communities and even different worlds. She says:

“Women in particular respond to my work because I'm writing about them, women in love, in difficulties, women in relationships. I want people to relate to my characters, to feel their joy and pain, because it will be harder to prejudice when they meet them in real life.”⁴³

Chitra Banerjee is very much interested to write on women condition. At Berkeley, she runs a women's centre and became interested in helping battered women. She started MAITRI a group of friends, which eventually led her to write *Arranged Marriage*.

The book of short stories, *Arranged Marriage*, and her novel, *The Mistress of Spices*, are both highly acclaimed works. In *Arranged Marriage*, Divakaruni beautifully tells stories about immigrant brides who are trapped by cultural changes and who are struggling to make an identity of their own. In the story, *Doors*, the character Preeti, after moving to the United States, has come to love the Western idea of privacy. She faces a dilemma when her husband's cousin wants to come live with them. She expresses her discontent with the situation and thus demonstrates her new found decisiveness and resistance to her husband's view of a traditional Indian wife. In the story Divakaruni examines the issue of cross culture crisis, marriage, and relationship. The story is mainly focused on the life of Preeti a modern Indian girl and her husband Deepak an Indianised American. Through this novel Divakaruni shows Indian tradition and culture in a positive manner. She highlights the problems of cross-cultural marriages.

Another story entitled *Clothes*, is the story of Susmita, she moves to America to live with her husband Somesh's and his parents. Her in-laws live in America, but still they are very Indian. Susmita is split between the Indian culture and her new life in America, but when her husband dies and she is faced with the decision of staying in America or going back to India to live with her in-laws and serving them as their son's widow. She chooses to stay in America and not go back to her native country. Divakaruni deals with a variety of issues in the book, including racism, economic disparity, abortion, interracial relationships and divorce. She says that these stories are inspired by her imagination and the experiences of others.

The Mistress of Spices is the only novel that it is written with a blend of prose and poetry. The book has a very mystical quality to it, and, as Divakaruni puts it, "I wrote in a spirit of play, collapsing the divisions between the realistic world of twentieth century America and the timeless one of myth and magic in my attempt to create a modern fable."⁴⁴ The main protagonist of this novel, Tilo, a magical figure who runs a grocery store and uses spices to help the customers and how he overcome difficulties. In the process, she develops dilemmas of her own when, she falls in love with a white man. This creates great conflicts, as she has to choose whether to serve her people or to follow the path leading to her own happiness. Tilo has to decide which parts of her inheritance she will keep and which parts she will choose to discard. The novel was later made into a movie of the same name in 2005.

Divakaruni's novel, *Sister of My Heart*, which was published in 2000, this story about the lives of two cousin sisters and how they change marriage as one woman comes to California, and the other stays in India. But after marriage their life was totally changed, they both are separated from each other. Sudha has learned about dark secret of their family's past. Sudha feel shame and guilt over keeping this secret which pulls her away from Anju. Anju knows about her husband's attraction to Sudha. Anju does not blame Sudha, but Sudha's love for Anju does not fade.

The Vine of Desire (2002) continues the story of the two friends. *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives* is a collection of stories about family, culture, and the seduction of memory. Chitra Divakaruni is the editor of *Multitudes*. She states about the book, "I didn't want to

sacrifice quality, and focus on problem solving, not just how terrible things are.”⁴⁵Her anthology includes stories about communication styles across cultures, expectations of friendships; she also uses her anthology in her classroom. The book holds works by a variety of authors and some of them are her students.

Before she starts her career in fiction writing, Divakaruni was a poet. She wrote poems surrounding a wide variety of themes, and she focused her work on the immigrant experience and to South Asian women. She shows experiences and struggles of women to find their own identities in foreign land. Divakaruni’s latest collection, *Leaving Yuba City*, is a series of poems which are inspired by various forms of art, including paintings and photography. With these poems, Divakaruni once again shows how people destroy their boundaries. Another important poem is a poem from *Black Candle*, which appeared in 1991. In this poem, she discussed women from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni’s contribution to the literary world includes –

Novels

- *Arranged Marriage: Stories* (1995)
- *The Mistress of Spices* (1997)
- *Sister of My Heart* (2000)
- *The Unknown Errors of our Lives* (2001)
- *The Vine of Desire* (2002)
- *Queen of Dreams* (2004)
- *The Lives of Strangers* (2007)
- *The Palace of Illusions* (2008)
- *One Amazing Thing* (2010)
- *Oleander Girl* (2013)
- *Before We Visit the Goddess* (2016)
- *The Forest of Enchantments* (2019)

Poetry

- *The Reason for Nasturtiums* (1990)
- *Black Candle* (1991)
- *Leaving Yuba City* (1997)
- *Indian Movie, New Jersey*
- *Tiger Mask Ritual*

Anthologies

- *Multitude: Cross Cultural Readings for Writers* (1993)
- *We Too Sing America* (1997)
- *California Uncovered: Stories for the 21st Century* (2004)

The Select Novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

The present research study has selected Chitra Bannerjee's *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), *Sister of My Heart* (2000) and *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) for the purpose of its study. It explores themes of alienation, isolation, cultural clashes, traditional clashes, and dual identity. These are the main issues in her novels.

To sum up, it can be said that Indian Writing in English is a form of literature which is written in English by Indian authors who have Indian languages as their native tongue. It also includes the body of works in English by Indian Diaspora who are settled in different countries like UK, Canada, USA, Germany and Australia. It has a long history of growth and development as it involves several historical events and distinguished personalities. Indian English literature has attained an independent status in the realm of world literature. Wide ranges of themes are dealt in Indian Writing in English, while this literature continues to reflect Indian culture, tradition, social values and even Indian history through the depiction of life in India and Indians living elsewhere, recent Indian English fiction has been trying to give expressions to the Indian experiences of the modern predicaments.

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Chapter - 2

INDIAN ETHOS

2.1 The Concept of Ethos and Values

2.2 Exploring Ethos

2.3 Ethnographic Dualities

Chapter - 2

Indian Ethos

2.1 The Concept of Ethos and Values

India is a large country, having a vast geographical area. We have our firm faith and believe on the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam* and great cultural heritage. This includes many communities and their ways of living life. Human settlement in India had begun from early age and so far this land becomes homeland of many peoples and communities, who have contributed to developed cultural heritage. These circumstances produced a difference between rural and urban cultures. India has a universally respected collection of knowledge in the form of Vedas, Upanishads and great epics (*The Mahabharat and the Ramayan*). In India, there are number of religions and ideas in various culture and languages to promote different kinds of ideologies.

There are many religions in India; some of these have come from outside its boundaries. Diversity in India is found in terms of language, caste, race, culture and religion. Indian unity has been based on social, political, geographical and cultural condition. Every culture has different festivals, customs, rules and different life style. Religious thinking creates difference among everyone. Every community-people live together. People work together in group not bothering about one's religion, race etc. Indians are proud to have rich cultural heritage, in which people have traditions in arts, music, dance, skills, sculpture, drama and all these classical traditions get transferred from one generation to other. This shows love and respect towards our culture. There are different languages, dialects, dressing styles, eating habits which are different in every state of India.

The Concept and Definitions of Ethos

It is believed that the word Ethos was first used by Aristotle. He has outlined three essential elements for a persuasive speech for the speaker, one of which is the ethos. Aristotle has used the word Ethos as:

“Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker (ethos); the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind (pathos); the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself (logos). Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible.”¹

Ethos defined by various dictionaries and scholarly critics, the foremost of which is: “Ethos is a discipline that examines one’s morality or the moral standard of the society. Ethics means expected standards terms of your personal and social welfare. It includes honesty, morality, responsibility etc.”²The literal meaning of ethos according to *Merriam Webster dictionary*: “The distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature, or guiding beliefs of a person, group, or institution.”³

Ethos in the *Merriam Webster dictionary* is also interpreted as:

“*Ethos* means ‘custom’ or ‘character’ in Greek. As originally used by Aristotle, it referred to a man’s character or personality, especially in its balance between passion and caution. Today *ethos* is used to refer to the practices or values that distinguish one person, organization, or society from others. So we often hear of the ethos of rugged individualism and self-sufficiency on the American frontier in the 19th century; and a critic might complain about, for example, the ethos of violence in the inner cities or the ethos of permissiveness in the suburbs.”⁴

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Ethos is-“The moral ideas and attitudes that belong to a particular group or society.”⁵Ethos according to Collins English Dictionary- “is the set of ideas and attitudes that is associated with a particular group of people or a particular type of activity.”⁶According to Cambridge Dictionary Ethos is-

“The set of beliefs, ideas, etc. about the social behavior and relationships of a person or group.”⁷

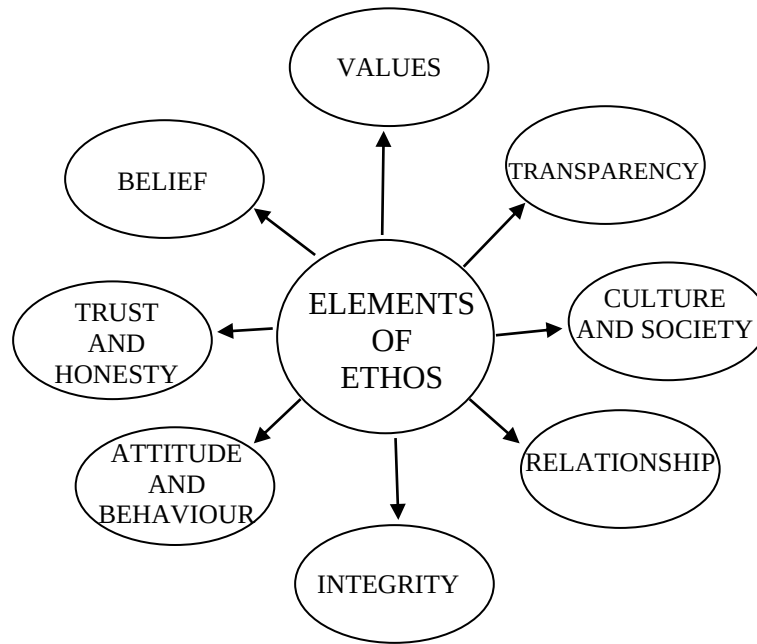


Figure No. 1: Elements of Ethos (Based on Literature Review)

According to the *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, Ethos is:

- “1. The fundamental character or spirit of a culture; the underlying sentimental that inform the beliefs, customs or practices of a group or society; dominant assumption of a people or period.
2. The moral element in dramatic literature that determines a man's action rather than his thought or emotion,
3. The character or disposition of a community, group, person, etc.”⁸

Like Indian society and culture, Indian ethos has a different identity all over the world because India is a land of multicultural society. Indian society has been known all over the world for its unity and integrity. In the Indian ethos, along with the individual, there is also a collective consciousness, due to which unity is also prevalent in this country full of

diversities. If there is a lack of unity and fraternity in any society, then that society can never develop, but India sets an example for the world in terms of social empowerment. Indian society is constantly moving forward on the path of progress.

It is visible by the people and their atmosphere. Different kinds of people are living in India and they have different type of language which depends on geographical areas. It divides into multiple sects like Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Kerala and many more; these are some parts of India. The language of human being depends on these areas. Like for i.e. a person who has been born in Punjab. The one speaks Punjabi. The reason every human has their own language which depends on their birth place. In which different kinds of people live. Like Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian and they all live together like one family which is called unity. India is a land of different kinds of culture. The culture is not that which belongs to one particular group but it is related with many group of people placed under some geographical limits. It is based on the principle of virtues, morality, justice, honesty ethics and these are the things which we learn from our religion which seeks unity in diversity.

Indian culture is the culture of humanity and spirituality. In which people worship tree, they treat India as their mother, giving respect to everyone either they are elder, younger or of the same age. So, these are the assets which people acquire from Indian culture. To understand the social values it is essential first to understand the Indian culture, which is the fundamental behaviour in the society. The understanding of these Indian cultural values, norms, traditions, morals, ethics is necessary to adopt and learn from it. In fact India is a great country; so much talk about it in its praise will surely be short-sighted. K.K. Sinha writes about the pride of India in his book *Social and Cultural Ethos of India*:

“Many cultural and religious practices of India were adopted by countries in these regions. Buddhism, which originated in India, found many followers in these countries. Through Buddhism, which was essentially an Indian thought, India was able to spread its message to these countries and Buddhism is the prevalent religion in many countries belonging to these regions even today. In material terms, India’s gift extends to cultivation of rice, cotton, sugarcane, spices, invention of the game of chess, discovery of

Zero and decimal system of notation of Aryabhata from India. This cultural and material influence from India percolated to other parts of the world mostly through maritime trade which was reciprocal in nature as Indian merchants also brought back, some of the culture of other countries and assimilated by Kushans to blend them with more indigenous forms. Similarly, language of common masses known as Prakrit got enriched by its interactions with Persian, Greek, Arabic and Aramaic. These interactions and assimilations resulted in enrichment of Indian culture and civilization and made her more resilient to face future foreign invasion.”⁹

The Concept and Definitions of Values

Value is defined as the principles and ideals, which helps to making the judgment of what is more important. It is the moral responsibility of every person to take innate care about these values which are transcended from generation to generation. Values are the things which people innate before birth. The process of learning will start from their family; society and their culture play an important role which is helpful to develop individual personality.

According to Cambridge Dictionary Value is:

“The beliefs people have, especially about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life that controls their behavior.”¹⁰

According to Collins English Dictionary Value is:

“The value of something such as a quality, attitude, or method is its importance or usefulness. If you place a particular value on something, that is the importance or usefulness you think it has.”¹¹

According to M. Haralambos:

“A value is a belief that something is good and desirable.”¹²

According to Zaleznik and David:

“Values are the ideas in the mind of men compared to norms in that they specify how people should behave. Values also attach degrees of goodness to activities and relationships.”¹³

According to T.W. Hippie:

“Values are conscious or unconscious motivators and justifiers of the actions and judgment.”¹⁴

According to R.K. Mukherjee:

“Values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning or socialization and that become subjective references, standards, and aspirations.”¹⁵

According to I.J. Lehner and N.J. Kube:

“Values are an integral part of the personal philosophy of life by which we generally mean the system of values by which we live. The philosophy of life includes our aims, ideals, and manner of thinking and the principles by which we guide our behavior.”¹⁶

Values are standards for thoughts and ideals, which evaluate by actions of people, things, or situations. Beauty, integrity, tranquility, liberality honesty are all examples of values, which followed by many people. Values are distinguished on three levels: -

- **Personal values:** Values is authorized by an individual. For example, some people like to spend more time with their family and this is the most important values for them. But for other people's value is success, instead of giving less time to their families and focused to achieve their goals.
- **Moral values:** Values that help to decide what is morally right or wrong or it is a kind of principle which guides or evaluates what is good or bad. Moral values such as determination, freedom, justice, honesty, loyalty,

truthfulness, honesty, giving respect to each other. These are the things which innate by every individual.

- **Aesthetic values:** Values which are associated with the evaluation of nature and beauty. It considers what happens in people's mind, when they engage with environment and aesthetic objects. Such as viewing visual art, listening music, exploring nature, reading poetry and enjoying natural beauty. That all are incorporated under aesthetic values.

Thus, value refers to the importance of beliefs and principles, based on individual making judgments in life. Values are focuses that cause an individual to act in a particular manner. It reflects what is more important in human life. Values are the establishment of a person's ability to judge between right and wrong. Values comprise a deep-rooted system of beliefs. Value are the thing which people acquire from their ancestor's family members and it is passed through generation to generation. But the real concept of values is changing gradually. People do not try to understand the importance of values. They detect from their culture and adopt western culture.

Values are the patterns of thought and behaviour of people. It includes moral values, spiritual values and ethical values. These are passed on from one generation to the next by formal as well as informal way. It also expresses itself through social habits, simplicity, acceptance, honesty, as we all know that Indian people are specially known for their moral values since ancient times.

The Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads and all the holy books depict the moral values or the moral duties of a human being which is considered as an important part of daily life. It is believed that following moral and ethical values lead a person to attain salvation i.e. Moksha. These are the beliefs which people follow from Vedic period. With these beliefs and values people lead their life. India is a mixture of many types of culture, in which people have their personal faiths and beliefs to regulate their life.

India is a multicultural society where we have various religions like as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Sufi tradition as well as Islam and Christianity. Many social reformers, spiritual saints, and statesmen have come to guide and influence the human

life and culture of Indians. The Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Bhagavat Gita as well as the Guru Bani, the Quran, the Bible etc. all these holy books have molded the thinking pattern of human beings in a right direction. When a person meets someone, they give some gesture like Namaste or touching feet. All these things come under values. Following these rites human begin learning from their childhood.

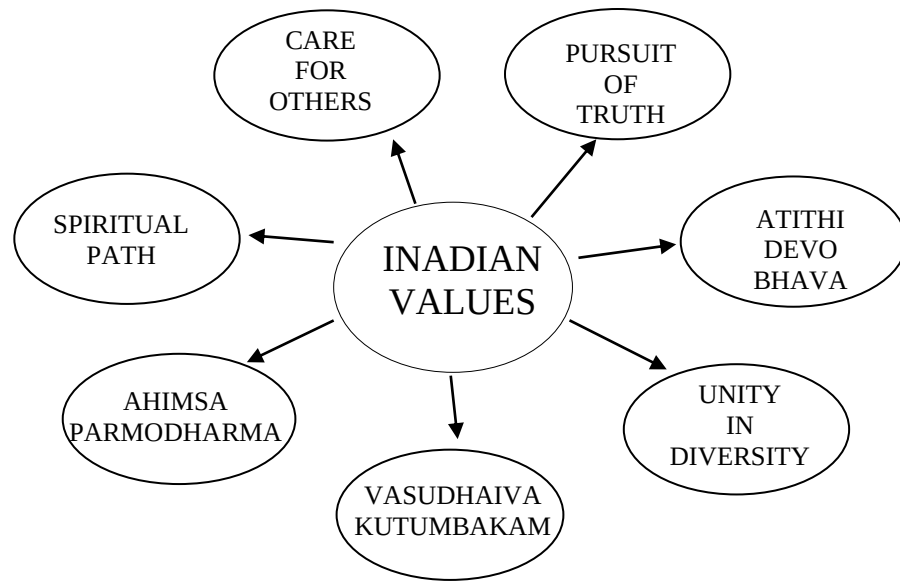


Figure No. 2: Atithi Devo Bhava, Unity in Diversity, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Ahimsa Parmodharamah, Spiritual Path, Care for others, and pursuit of Truth are Indian values that can lead humanity on the right path of harmony and wealth. (Based on Literature Review)

1. **Atithi Devo Bhava:** The word ‘Atithi’ is basically a Sanskrit word, which is also used in Hindi in the same sense. This word in its original sense is used for a person who has no fixed date for coming and going. The word ‘Atithi’ is used in English to mean the word guest. ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’ is the Sanskrit logion taken from the Hindu scriptures and which became part of the Hindu society which means ‘guest is like God’. *Atithi Devo Bhav* or guest as God is an ancient Indian tradition of great Indian hospitality. Atithi Devo Bhava, the

Indian way of welcoming guests. It also means that the person whose arrival and departure date is not fixed, that is, the guest is given the status of God under the Indian ethos.

2. **Unity and Diversity:** India is a diverse country in terms of languages, dialects, castes, religions, clothing habits, food, and beliefs. Today's India is what the world would look like in coming decades in terms of achieving unity in diversity. We would have “Unity in Diversity” in many places. India is the best example for this statement. Split into many states but unified by patriotism, distinguished by living styles, but oneness in the culture and tradition. There are many languages spoken in India, but the voices are one. We Indians are brought up with the thought of peace and harmony. India is a country that is united in diversified society.

The languages, religions, dressings, customs and everything differ yet the people of our country are united. Being a country of rich cultural heritage, there are various cultural resources and traditional practices in every state. The music, dances, dramas, writing and speaking languages everything is different from one state to another.

3. **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:** Ancient Indian literature has an important contribution in organizing the Indian ethos. In Indian ethos, more importance is given to ancient beliefs and traditions. Ancient Indian literature has an important contribution in organizing the Indian ethos. It was for this purpose that the text of the Hitopadesha was created. The concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam originates from Hitopadesha. Hitopadesha is a collection of Sanskrit fables in prose and verse. According to the writer of Hitopadesha, the main purpose of creating the Hitopadesha is to teach young generation the philosophy of life in an easy way. So that they can be grown as a responsible human being. In Hitopadesha, the whole world is like a family:

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥ (महोपनिषद्, अध्याय 4, श्लोक 71)

udāracaritānā tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam||

The word Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is made up of three Sanskrit words - Vasudha, Iv and Kutumbakam. Vasudha means the earth, Iv means similar or equivalent and Kutumbakam means a family. For a person who is generous, that is mine, this is yours, and there is no difference. A man of generous nature considers the whole world as one family. This is a unique concept of India which also makes Indian ethos unique.

4. **Ahimsa Parmodharma:** Ahimsa which translates into non-violence has ancient roots in Indian tradition. All great religions of India like Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism are professing non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi throughout his life professed and practised non-violence for India's independence struggle. 'Ahimsa Paramo Dharma' is a Sanskrit phrase that was originally narrated by Lord Mahavir Swami during his discourse and stressed and popularized by Mahatma Gandhi and after him many leaders repeated this phrase to demonstrate the universality of Ahimsa. Which *Ahimsa* means Non-violence, *paramo* means topmost, ultimate, or extreme, and *dharma* means duty.

It means the non-violence is the topmost duty in all other duties. Ahimsa is a general dharma that is replaced with himsa (violence) in order to protect dharma. Therefore, there is no place for violence in Indian ethos. This country runs on the strength of non-violence and love. This message of Indian ethos is spread throughout the world with the medium of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. In particular, a very large section of Buddhism accepts Buddha's message of peace.

5. **Spiritual Path:** The spiritual path is the journey of peace which moves towards the light. In spiritual terms this means the highest knowledge. This is the journey

to attain Union with the Divine. This journey requires you to act ethically or in religious terms “according to Righteousness”.

To retain a clean conscience and continue to be spiritually connected to others, the person needs to follow a simple procedure. If he or she has done some wrongdoing, then he or she must acknowledge the wrongdoing and have remorse, i.e., a change of heart-mind and it is also important to be willing and eager to make amends. Maintaining one’s level of consciousness one become worthy of being granted a higher state of consciousness; A higher awakening or enlightenment. This means the person is awakened more and more until he or she reaches full awakening and eternal life. Thus, Union with God is the Ultimate Reality. The conscious being is eternal but without full awakening it has no spiritual life. Religion helps a person because they have a community of others, who are on the same journey.

6. **Care for Others:** There is a sense of cooperation in Indian ethos. This feeling of cooperation is free from any kind of distinction. Prayers are done for every living, dead and lifeless in Indian society. This feature of Indian ethos is also its cultural identity. It is always wished in Indian society that all be happy, be free from all diseases, be witness to all auspicious events and no one has to be a victim of sorrow. According to Indian belief:

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः,

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःख भाग्भवेत् । (गरुड पुराण 35 / 51)

Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Nir-Aamayaah |

Sarve Bhadraani Pashyantu, Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet ||

In this form, the wish of the welfare of the entire creation is seen only in the Indian ethos. Care of everyone is taken here. It is not only a matter of saying, but it is in the culture here that the good of others is concerned.

7. **Pursuit of Truth:** This is the greatest feature of Indian ethos and values, here truth is considered superior. Truth is considered acceptable and holy. Satya is recognized as a duty. Many ancient beliefs are followed in Indian society even today, including the concept of the victory of truth itself. A mantra of Mundaka Upanishad is as follows:

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः ।

येनाक्रमंत्यृषयो ह्याप्तकामो यत्र तत् सत्यस्य परमम् निधानम् ।।(मुण्डकउपनिषद 3.1.6.)

satyameva jayate nānṛtaṁ satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ |

yenākramantyrṣayo hyāptakāmo yatra tat satyasya paramaṁ nidhānam ||

It means that ultimately truth prevails and not untruth. This is the path through which all human beings get fulfilled their desires, achieve the ultimate goal of life. The importance of truth in Indian ethos can be understood in such a way that Satyamev Jayate is the national motto of India. It means that truth only wins. In the Ashoka Stambha which is the national symbol of India, *Satyamev Jayate* is also written in it, which is written with great respect in the Gazette and judicial documents of India. This quality of Indian ethos is constitutionally recognized. In the Indian ethos, only the truth has been accepted. The concept of *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* and *Satyamev Jayate* has been followed in India since time immemorial. *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* is a sentence that presents the criterion for the investigation of an object or policy. It means that if something is true, welfare doing, and beautiful-then it is acceptable.

In this chapter, the research study has found ethos and values both are important aspects in human life. They have to make a choice between two things, wherein human ethics make out what is right, and value discover what is important in human life. When the person himself attempts to make them fit to live in the social sphere, then he pays attention to the customs used by the society, In fact, the behaviour of a person which is useful for him and the group is a folk practice. The same folk custom is accepted by the whole society. So, it becomes useful and welfare for the time being. Then this folk tradition changes into ethos. Indian society's ethos and values are preserved even with many variations. In fact, India is a land of values.

2.2 Exploring Ethos

In the novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a detailed depiction of Indian society, culture, living, etc. is found. With which the characteristics of Indian ethos is also present in their novels. Indian ethos is known for its characteristics in the world. Indians reside in any region of the world, but they always try to maintain their cultural identity. When an Indian citizen goes to western countries and resides there due to employment and other needs. Even then, that Indian follows their ethos and values with great devotion. Narrative variety is found in selected novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Bharati Mukherjee, but even though the narrative is different, their novels depict the folklore, ethos, values, beliefs, etc. of their country in a similar way. *Desirable Daughters*, *Jasmine* and *The Tiger's Daughter* are written by Bharati Mukherjee feature diverse scenes of Indian ethos. Similarly, *Sister of My Heart*, *The Palace of Illusions* and *The Mistress of Spices* are written by Chitra Banerjee.

The priority of Indian ethos is humanism and humanity. There is a sense of collectively appeal and cooperation at its center. Mutual harmony and spirituality are the criteria of Indian ethos. People have been collectively accepting to live in a group since time immemorial. The concept of various blood relations, cross culture, cultural identity and difference between ancient and modern life, was established with the aim of ordering and organizing collectivism. But modernity has affected the collectively appeal of the masses and the concept of relations has also started to disintegrate. As a result of this, various family scenarios are displayed in Indian ethos in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee.

Life gets a lot of material comforts in the mirror of modernity, but on one stage, relationships get shattered. Human beings need family and relationships to reach such a halt. In Bharati Mukherjee's novel she highlights cultural identity, woman identity, identity crises, cultural clashes, immigrants-sufferings, and cross-cultural issues. So, these are the topics which Mukherjee focuses in their novels.

In *Desirable Daughters*, she describes the life of three sisters. They three are from same family but their Ethos is very much different. Mainly story is revolving around the main

protagonist Tara who is the younger one. Through the character Tara Lata, Bharati Mukherjee tries to show Indian Ethos. The story starts from Mishtigunj town to the jungle edge. "The bride is named Tara Lata; a name was almost share. The name of the father is Jai Krishna Gangooly. Tara Lata is five years old and headed deep into the forest to marry a tree."¹⁷ According to Indian culture when bride's groom died on wedding day is a sign of bad omen and for saving his daughter's life. Tara Lata's father decides to do her marriage with a tree. This is considered a better fate for her.

This is the Indian society in which every ritual has their rules. There are some myths in India. The story is started with the family myth about a "Tree Bride" Tara Lata, who is the daughter of Tara Banerjee's great grandfather, who is the narrator of this story. The story starts with the Tara Lata (Tree Bride) marriage. But just before the ceremony, the groom is bitten by snake and dies. After the death of groom, his father "Surendranath Lahiri, still holding the body of his son in his arms, spoke. "You will arrange posthaste for the dowry cash and the dowry gifts to be brought on board, Jai Krishna Babu."¹⁸ The bridegroom's father comes to claim his share of the dowry even though the marriage has not taken place. Her father said "The marriage did not take place," His voice lawyerly, loud, authoritative. "Therefore, there is no question of dowry giving."¹⁹ The bride's father refuses to give it to him. In India dowry is a kind of tradition. When parents doing their girl marriage. They give her some money, jewelry, and daily uses things for their better life.

The character Tara Lata follows all the rituals and rites of their culture, she cares for others, this is the reason. When her father asks for her marriage, she is ready without any argue. She said "I approved of, because my father told me it was time to get married and this was the best husband in the market."²⁰ She was ready because undoubtedly her father chooses good husband for Tara Lata.

In Indian family, when parents talk about their child's marriage, especially in case of girl's marriage. Girls don't have right to speak in matter of their marriage and this is Indian culture in which situation women don't interfere in the matter of their marriage. Same case in Tara Lata, she agreed with her father's choice.

Here the main protagonist name is also Tara Banerjee. In starting of this novel she lives in Calcutta, with her parents and two sisters. But after her marriage, when she is moved to America, she realized that she is detached from her culture. Changing of society is a big cause of this. She lives in America but she worried about her family in India, she is also worried about her sisters too and that is why on every Sunday she calls Parvati didi, who lives in Bombay.

These are Indian values, when she missed and care for their sister and family. She lives in America and there she thinks about her parents and sisters. This is the real ethos. In this condition people go anywhere in this world they will not forget their culture and values, because Indian parents have first priority to learn Indian ethos to their child.

In America, Tara Banerjee is in dilemma as she lives in America and worried about India. She is fighting between two cultures (Indian or American). In starting of second chapter she said “Sisters three are we... as like as blossoms on a tree.”²¹ It indicates unity of one family, unity between three sisters. It shows oneness of family. In India a family plays an important role in Indian society. In this novel she also shows the changes in values. She moved to America and there she lives with her boyfriend and son. In this novel Bharati Mukherjee very clearly describes the changing values in Indian society.

In *The Tiger's Daughter*, she focused on duality in culture, traditions, values and ethics. The protagonist of this novel is Tara Banerjee, who belonged from Bengali family. Through the character Tara she tries to describe the Indian values, culture, tradition, ethics and morals. Tara is America Return. She was born in Calcutta but she went America for study. But in America there she falls in love with David Cartwright and she gets married. After spending seven years in America, she came back to India for rerooted herself with their native land.

Tara Banerjee's returning home and the purpose for return to India is to reconnect with her parents, as well as with her other relatives and friends. The purpose of her visit is to rediscover her roots and to know more about her Bengali Indian culture. In America, she follows all their culture and traditional values and she starts to follow American culture too. Her character shows duality between cultures, because one side she is an Indian girl. But after marriage she becomes an American. After married with white man, she became

Christian. There is no other choice; she has to accept American culture too. So, there is contrast between two cultures which create two identities of Tara, one is American and other is Indian.

Relationship is an important part of Indian society. In this society every relation is very important in human life like mother, father, husband, wife, sister, brother and many more. And the aim of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writings is to redevelop family relation, reconnecting with human nature and native society. Family relationship is the main source to reunite one emigrant with their nation. So, these are the basic relations in human life.

When Tara came back to India after seven years, her father said "He sat on the brocaded swing and looked at his daughter. "All these years we're feeling lonely without you. Now we'll have fun."²² This shows how much her parents missed her when she is not there.

There are some rules in every culture and every culture has their rituals and rites. Like marriage, festival, birth, death. For example, marriage, it has some rules and criteria like marriage done in same caste and community. So, these are social rules. But in this novel, Tara married with an American boy which is against the rules of Indian society "Tara thought, in India she felt she was not married to a person but to a foreigner and this foreignness was burden. It was hard for her to talk about marriage responsibilities in Camac Street; her friends were curious only about the adjustments she had made."²³ She knows that her marriage was not accepted by Indian society. Even her family will not accept her marriage.

But "Tara had admitted this monstrous fear."²⁴ She prepares herself to accept family and society fear. She already knows all the circumstances after cross culture marriage. When her mother sitting in front of god, she said "After all Tara had will fully abandoned her caste by marrying a foreigner. Perhaps her mother was offended that she, no longer a real Brahmin."²⁵ Her mother too has problem with her marriage. In India marriage is done in same caste and this is very common in Indian society, which she breaks and this is the reason her mother will not accept her marriage.

In *Jasmine*, Mukherjee focuses on the issue of cross-culture reality through a sequence of journeys of female emigrant's displacement from one place to another. Her experiences based on between two culture, two aspirations, two lifestyles, and two places. In the beginning of the novel, Bharati Mukherjee deals with the beliefs, customs, habits, rituals, and ideologies which are well-established in the Indian philosophy. *Jasmine* expresses the conflict between two cultures - Eastern and Western, ancient and modern.

Bharati Mukherjee portrayed character of *Jasmine* in a progressive manner. But through the character of *Jasmine*; Mukherjee tries to show women willingness and cultural identity. In this novel, *Jasmine's* dadi is very saintly woman, she is always busy in worshipping. "She spent most months of the year in an ashram in the holy city of Hardwar."²⁶ She spent most of the months in Hardwar, the holy place of India, Where people spent their time peacefully. Her dadi becomes very old, so spent most of her time in doing worship. *Jyoti* born in village of Hasanpur, she said "My whole world was the village of Hasanpur."²⁷ This shows how much she is attached with her birth place. This is human nature, the place of birth where people spend their childhood. They will not forget their roots easily. After the death of *Jyoti's* husband, she becomes widow. After that she moved to America. She tries to adjust in the new society. One day she said:

"Remarrying was out of the question within the normal community. There were always much older widowers with children to look after who might consider me, and this, I know, we secretly discussed, but my marriage life and chance at motherhood were safely over."²⁸

She moved to America, but she did not forget their Ethos and values. But there in America too, she follows all the rules of widowhood. She believes that the concept of remarriage is not a part of any community or culture. If person remarrying, the society will not accept or approve.

The Mistress of Spices by Chitra Banerjee is a wonderful novel based on power of spices. The protagonist of this novel is *Tilo*. She helps others and fulfills other desires through the powers of spices. Through the character of *Tilo* she describes Indian culture, values, tradition, uses of spices in a different manner. *Tilo* has supernatural powers which she uses for others. This way she satisfied the other's desires. In India helping others is a duty

of every people. She opens a shop in America and she helps others to solve their problems. Helping others is a characteristic of ethos and value of India.

“Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in *The Mistress of Spices*, has manipulated the entire spectrum of spices to construct her poetics of “home” and “homelessness”. Tilo admits that most of the immigrants in spite of their fascination for American life, again and again want the same thing. Hence in *The Mistress of Spices*, the idea of immigrants is presented with a distinctive colour of human sympathy. The nostalgia and the psyche of homesickness is interrupted by Tilo as a sickness.”²⁹

Tilo's always helps their customers like teenager boy Jagjit, Ahuja's wife, a taxi driver Haroun, Indians pay too much attention and regard to their values and traditions. They go to any place in the world but they would not forget their ethos and values. One of Tilo's customers Haroun, came to shop and said, ‘Lady please kindly read my palm. She said, ‘I can't read the future, and she told him that the old one did not teach this to the mistress, but when she looks his hand. He remembers his past how his father and grandfather die. He starts telling his past story,

“One day the fighting started, and tourists stopped coming. Rebels rode down from mountain passes with machine guns and eyes like black holes in their face, yes, into the streets of Srinagar, the name which is meaning auspicious city. I am telling father Abbajan we must leave now but grandfather said, “*Toba toba*, where will we go, this is the land of our ancestors.”³⁰

Indians are deeply attached to their roots and that is the reason Haroun's grandfather does not leave his native land. Still, he fought and died.

Geeta's grandfather an elderly man worried about his granddaughter Geeta. She was going against their family ethos. Her grandfather very much worried about her marriage. But she is influenced by Western culture, and she falls in love with white man who is against by her family reputation and society. Tilo slowly gets attached to them and their lives. She always tries to solve other problems. In India, spices are the main essence of

dish but without spices dish is nothing. In a same way it gives essence in human life too. She dedicatedly helps to others, and fulfills other's desires.

In *Sister of My Heart*, she describes relationship between cousin sisters Anju and Sudha. In India, relationship plays an important role in Indian society. These two sisters live in the same house and they are very much concern about each others' well being. Anju said "But never Sudha. I could never hate Sudha because she is my other half, the sister of my heart."³¹ It shows strength of their relationship.

In India, relations are very important in particular life. Relationship is the basic structure of family, in which people are interconnected with each other's. It is a kind of chain which continues from generation to generation. Anju and Sudha they live with their mothers and Pishi (Buya). They call her Pishi as their third mother, because there Pishi's treating them as their own child that is why she takes caring both of them. This is the reason they call her as their third mother. This type of treatment and caring has made some connection between children and Pshi.

In Indian culture when husband dies, woman starts wearing white clothes. Always wearing white clothes is a symbol of widow. Women spend their life in a very simple manner. In this novel, Pishi is shown as a widow woman. She spends her life to caring others child, because she didn't have her child.

Sudha told about "There's Pishi, our widow aunt who threw herself heart-first into her younger brother's household when she lost her husband at the age of eighteen. Dressed in austere white her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style."³²

In *The Palace of Illusions*, Chitra Banerjee tries to retell the story of *Mahabharata* in the context of Droupadi. Indian culture has their spiritual text like Upanishad, Veda, Puranas, Mahabharata, and Ramayana. These are the main scripture of Indian culture. This novel is based on the epic *Mahabharata*, in which she describes Mahabharata as Droupadi's point of view. Telling stories from grandfather or grandmother is a kind of culture which is popular in India.

Telling story from elders is the old trend in India and gradually it becomes part of Indian culture. In starting of this novel she goes to their nurse and asks for a story "And thought

she knew many wondrous and edifying tales, the one I made her tell me over and over was the story of my birth.”³³ She goes to Dhai maa and asks to tell the story of her birth and she agrees to tell her story. The trend of telling story emerges from India.

In India Guru and Shishya Parampara is coming from Vedic period. In ancient time there is no written form of teaching, they verbally speak and the students are only listening. This is the rule of teaching when their students study is complete. The student’s responsibility is to give their guru some gift as Guru Dakshina. When they attacked on Droupad, he asks who you are and Arjun replies:

“A flash of proud love illumined Arjun’s face. He is the greatest teacher of warcraft, he said. He taught us princes for many years. Now our studies are complete, and for his dakshina he has asked that we capture you. You must know of him. His name is Drona.”³⁴

Arjun’s Guru Drona wants Droupad in Guru Dakshina and he fulfils his demand. In this story when Droupad was captured by Drona, he said to Drona that “Kill me, but do not mock me.”³⁵ This is the value of a king, because now he is under of Drona. In that condition he becomes helpless. Droupad is the king of Panchal. The King has some dignity but when they capture him, and start humiliating and insulting him, it is against king’s dignity and this is the reason he wishes to kill him, better to insulting.

2.3 Ethnographic Duality

Ethnography is a branch of anthropology that deals with the description of particular human cultures, using methods such as close observation and interviews. *Ethnography is the study of social and cultural change.* It is a gap between sociology and anthropology. It seeks to promote research that fuses close-up observation and social evaluation. Ethnography addresses to findings and methods to understanding the culture, authority, domination, and social structure. Ethnography is “A branch of anthropology dealing with the scientific description of individual cultures.”³⁶ Ethnography is study of a particular human society. Contemporary ethnography is based entirely on fieldwork and it requires

the complete attention of the anthropologist in the culture and everyday life of the people, who live in the society.

Definitions of Ethnography

According to Cambridge Dictionary:

“A scientific description of the culture of a society by someone who has lived in it, or a book containing this.”³⁷

According to Free Dictionary Ethnography is:

“A branch of anthropology that deals with the description of specific human cultures, using methods such as close observation and interviews.”³⁸

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary Ethnography is:

“The study and systematic recording of human cultures *also*: a descriptive work produced from such research.”³⁹

According to Collins Dictionary Ethnography is:

“The branch of anthropology that deals with the scientific description of individual human societies.”⁴⁰

According to Learner’s Dictionary:

“The study of human races and cultures.”⁴¹

Definitions of Duality

The term ‘duality’ stands for an opposition or dichotomy between, two different things. Some examples of dualities are - Right and Wrong, Day and Night, Life and Death, Positive and Negative, Left and Right, True and False, Male and Female, Up and Down, etc. The term ‘duality’ is the concept which is used in different fields of consideration in opposing ways. Duality is a thing which creates conflict between two things. Consequently, the term ‘duality’ is used in two different contrasts between the concepts or two aspects of something in one and the same work. As hinted at by the word "dual" within it, duality refers to having two parts, often with opposite meanings, like the duality

of good and evil. If there are two sides to a coin, symbolically speaking, there's a duality. Black and white, Peace and war, love and hate, up and down, dark and light these are dualities. Another term for a duality is a dichotomy.

According to Chogyal Namkai Norbu:

“Dualism is the real root of our suffering and of all our conflicts. All our concepts and beliefs, no matter how profound they may seem, are like nets which trap us in dualism.”⁴²

According to Cambridge Dictionary, duality is:

“His poems reveal the duality of his nature, the joy and hope, the fear and despair.”⁴³

According to Webster Dictionary:

“Being two-fold; a classification into two opposed parts or subclasses; the dichotomy between eastern and western culture.”⁴⁴

According to Learner’s Dictionary:

“the quality or state of having two parts.”⁴⁵

According to Collins Dictionary:

“Duality is a situation in which two opposite ideas or feelings exist at the same time.”⁴⁶

The Ethnographic Duality means when two persons from different culture and whatever differences are created between them including their manners, habits, customs, culture and various approaches of living life. Ethnography covers up the point of human culture and their habits. It is a study which is related to a man and their life style. Sociological Ethnography traces the scientific development of human society.

The term duality in plural form indicates conflict in two societies. It also creates argument in two cultures. In the case of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni they both portray characters in dilemma. Characters are very much confused

between Indian culture and western culture, native land and foreign land, Indian identity and American identity. They are not able to decide from where they belong.

The Tiger's Daughter, is the fine expression of cultural conflict and social conflict. When Tara Banerjee moves to America, she realizes that she is detached with their culture and after seven years she came back to India and she finds herself a total stranger in her own homeland. She comes to India to know much more about her Bengali culture. She is in dilemma, because she realized that she is now neither Indian nor truly American.

When she was studying in America, one day she feels homesick. As a typical Indian, who are proud of their family and country? She always defends her family and country. At such moment, she prays to goddess Kali for strength. She feels very homesick and this nostalgic feeling, she also expresses in her letter too.

“She saw herself sleeping in a large carton on a sidewalk while hatred men made impious remarks to her. Headless monsters winked at her from eyes embedded in pudgy shoulders. The sound of classroom and dorms were cut off by the cardboard side of her carton. Not of a rainy of weather report from someone’s radio, no one scores an emphatic point in a seminar, not even the smell of instant coffee in the corridor. She suffered fainting spells, headaches and nightmares. She complained of homesickness in letters to her mother, who promptly prayed to kali to save Tara’s conscience, chastity and complexion.”⁴⁷

She dreads with her dream and this is why she feels lonely. But incidentally, she falls in love with an American man and they get married. In America when Tara Banerjee falls in love with white man, she starts feeling very comfortable in America. Before that she is very much scared about her dreams. Before meeting him, she is very protective for her family and country. She also remembers goddess Kali for giving power for her. But after meeting him, she is mixed with their culture and accepts all the things, which he belongs. So, here Bharati Mukherjee, tries to show the duality of culture. When she starts living in America, she takes a long time to adjust. But when she met him, she can easily accept his society. This is the duality in character, Tara Banerjee has made two identities, the one is Tara Banerjee, who belongs to typical Bengali family and other is Tara Banerjee

Cartwright which she becomes after marriage. She talks about the transformation of identity.

“Bharati Mukherjee’s works chronologically reveals the transformations she underwent and her experiences in the new land. Her movement from India to Iowa for her education, her marriage with the Canadian writer Clark Blaise and their shifting to Canada enabled her to experience the position of an expatriate. Her stay in Canada for fourteen years was a tougher one which affected her psychologically. She suffered the feeling of alienation in the new land due to the cultural clash she faced.”⁴⁸

Tara accepts his society and cultural things and became Tara Banerjee Cartwright. She knows that David belongs from Western culture. She cannot communicate with him in matter of her family background and life in Calcutta, because she belongs to Indian culture and David belongs to Western culture.

She married an American man. Doing marriage out of her caste is unacceptable by Indian society “In India she felt she was not married to a person but to a foreigner and this foreignness was a burden.”⁴⁹ After marriage she thinks about their life and she realized that this marriage is against their culture and society. But she falls in love with David and they got married. After marriage she becomes Tara Banerjee Cartwright (Christian), now she has to follow David’s culture but she daily remembers like *Pooja Path* and all. When she realized she gradually forgot their cultural activities, she thought she has to visit India for rerooting herself.

“Tara’s Mother, Arati, was a saintly woman.”⁵⁰ Her mother is traditional woman. She does all the hold house works and she is very devoted towards god, she always about religious things including her whole day activities. But when Tara describes her mother’s image before her husband, she said “My mother’s a very modern woman.”⁵¹ One hand, she follows all cultural and traditional things. Another hand she follows modern things like she took an insurance policy for securing their family future. Arati’s conflict between ancient and modern life, in which she follows both life style, because in this modern society insurance policies are the things which people take for their time of trouble and need. Her life is in between ancient and modern life.

Her husband David is an American (Christian) man but he is very interested to know about Indian culture. He asks many times from Tara to tell about her Indian culture. She tells him that her mother takes three times bath in a day was her principle. David asked “Why three baths a day for god’s sake?”⁵² She reply to him “Would you like to touch God when you’re all horrible sweaty and dirty?”⁵³ She explains him, why her mother doing all such things. He asks lot of questions from Tara, there was no end to David’s native questions. He is very curious to know about her culture and family members.

David is a writer and when he married with Tara, he wished to know about Tara’s culture. Even though he is a Christian, he is eager to know Hindu culture. Even he is ready to read books about India. “Tara was with David’s letter, which had arrived earlier that day. David wrote that he had brought two or three books on India.”⁵⁴ It shows his interest towards Indian books, Indian culture and all in all he wanted to know about India that’s why he buys some Indian books and tries to read and understand.

Same case is with Tara Banerjee in *Desirable Daughters*, she is from Bengal. But after marriage she moved to America. She lives there with her son Rabi and her boyfriend. She followed all the rituals of their culture when she was living in India. “I, of course, as a good Hindu wife-to-be, could not utter any of his names to his face. But we’re progressive people; after crossing the dark water to California I call him Bishu, then Bish.”⁵⁵ She is doing marriage as her parent’s choice, after marriage she even doesn’t speak her husband name, because speaking husband’s name is bad thing in Indian culture. But when she moved to America, she started calling him by his name; she knows that this is against her culture rules.

All Banerjee’s sisters are well cultured women. But both her elder sisters Padma and Parvati married with their choice. “Padma is already established herself in New York and Parvati’s husband was waiting for his Green Card.”⁵⁶ But in all of three, only she will be doing marriage to their father’s choice. Parvati the middle one sister, she wrote a letter for her father. In that letter she said “Daddy, I have found a boy and we have fallen in love. Parvati, the pliable middle daughter had one the unthinkable: she’d made a love match.”⁵⁷ She belongs to Brahmin family and in the letter; she talks about her love and this thing she shares with her father. This is the effect of modern society in which

daughter reveals her feeling of love with their father, without hesitation and shame. This is the impact of modern society from which all three sisters are affected. All three are born in same place, same family. They had grown up in same environment, culture and society. But the difference is, two sisters married with their choice and one is agreed to her father's choice.

But after marriage of Tara, she moved to America with her husband and after some years she got separated from him and because of influence of Western culture, she left him and started living with her son Rabi and her boyfriend "Hungarian Buddhist contractor/yoga instructor."⁵⁸ Tara is a typical Bengali girl who believes in sanctity of arrange marriage and considers it is better than love marriage. But now in America, she lives in relationship with American boy Andy. But this thing will not allow in Indian society. Making relationship after divorce is unacceptable by the society. Tara's journey started from "Tree Bride" in Mishtigunj to modern world America. She started adjusting and enjoying in modern life, which she really liked.

Tilo is the protagonist of *Mistress of Spices* in which she also moved to America. There she runs her spices shop. But there are some rules for mistress "cannot touch another person, cannot step out of the shop and cannot use spices for their own"⁵⁹. But Tilo breaks all three rules. She knows going against the rules are harmful to her and against her dignity as Mistress of Spices. Although it is her duty to maintain her image as a mistress, but Tilo breaks the rules of the spices and as a punishment, it started giving effect in the life of her customers. When unexpected relation blossoms with a white stranger, Tilo is forced to choose between the supernatural life and immortal life of modern time. She is in There is some rule for mistress does not use spices for own sake, but she tries to use power of magical spices for herself to become beautiful and spend one night with Ravan. She knows her limitations, she also knows if she goes against spices rules. She will be punished, but she falls in love with Ravan. For him she wants to become beautiful, which is against her rules.

She was born in Indian village with special power. The first mother teaches her the entire characteristics and how spices are important in human life. But when she opens a shop in America and she starts to solve other's problems. She breaks all three rules of her

magical powers. She falls in love with white man. Actually, Tilo seeks personal fulfillment by reaching earthly paradise as her desire by her American lover Ravan. She also gets a dual identity as Indian American. She is in dilemma; of what path to choose. At that point she lost all her powers, which she already knows. But she always focuses on social responsibility.

Indian values are very much different as compared to other countries, in the aspects of culture, tradition, values, caste, and community. Indian society has its proper rules which people to follow with great faith. On the basic of these, people live their life. When Geeta's grandfather came to her shop with newly indignant tales. He said:

“That girl, that Sunday she cut her hair short-short so that even her neck is showing I am telling her, Geeta, what did you do, and your hair is the essence of your womanhood. Do you know what she is replying to? She was laughing and pushing all those messy ends back from her face, saying, oh Grandpa, I needed a new look.”⁶⁰

In India, women have long hair and man have short hair. Tilo's customer, Geeta's grandfather is so much worried about Geeta's marriage. But when her father talks about her marriage, she refuses and said, “arrange marriages aren't for me either. When I marry, I'll choose my own husband.”⁶¹ She said to everyone that “I've already found someone I love. ‘Chee chee, no shame at all, making talk of love in front of her parents, in front of me, her grandfather.”⁶² She is grown up in American culture, so she believes in love marriage but when her family becomes aware about Geeta's affair with white man, they totally disagree with her choice, because marriage is done in same community. She knows all these things, but she falls in love with that white man. Even she doesn't care about her cultural rules; she only wants to marry him. But her family is against with her decision. Ahuja's wife Lalita separates from her husband, because she is not happy with him. In India separation in husband, wife relationship is bad thing. Here:

“Divakaruni's center around the disappointment of marriage and single motherhood has organized around the psychosomatic shortcoming sustained by the Hindu rationality that keeps running in Indian families. For an Indian Hindu spouse, to get divorced and stay single is a mortification to the finesse of a

woman`s soul. In India a divorce is looked downward on, and she can't talk about her own particulars tresses and nerves hushing her wrath and dissatisfaction. The idea of divorce is essentially a thought imported from the west and it got the lawful status just in the post-Independence years. Be that as it may, her despairing is reminiscent of Srinivas in Kamala Markandaya's novel, a South Indian Brahmin, who having lived in England for almost 50 years, getting confused as he feels confiscated of India, and abandoned by England, a totally nowhere man searching for a no place city.”⁶³

Indian women always try to protect their relationship at any cost; Lalita also does the same thing. She always tries to support her husband. But her husband does not understand her feelings. She is typical Indian wife, who takes care of her house and family. But her husband very much tortures her. In the end of this novel, she wrote a letter for Tilo, in that letter she said to Tilo to remember the magazine that he gave her. “If you are a battered woman, call this number for help. I looked at it for a long time. One minute I would think Why not. Next minute I would think Chee Chee, what sharam to tell strangers yours husband is beating you.”⁶⁴

She is always in favour of her husband. On one hand, she thinks about her better sake, but another hand she also thinks about her husband image. Who even never cares her and that is the reason she wanted to separate from him. Her husband thinks that his wife is not able to have born child that is why, he is treating her badly.

Jasmine's Masterji is very much attracted towards American things. He is living in India, but he appreciates American life. “Masterji loved things American. He had a nephew in California.”⁶⁵ Jasmine's Masterji is a progressive character. He is an Indian but he is in favor of American things, and motivates her students to doing better in their life. He is the only one in her village who works for girl's education.

Jasmine's Dadi is a very spiritual lady. “She spent most months of the year in an ashram in the holy city of Hardwar.”⁶⁶ She becomes an old, and she spent lot of her time in doing *Pooja Path*. Her Dadi is very orthodox kind of lady, one side she is doing *Pooja Path* and all. But another side she said “Some women think they own the world because their husbands are too lazy to beat them.”⁶⁷ If her Dadi is truly devoted towards god, then why

she thinks badly for other women. Humanity is to protect others, helping others, supporting others. These are the things; which people learn from their culture. But Jasmine's Dadi thinks like an orthodox, she is in favor of beating women is a good thing.

Jasmine's husband Prakash Viji is a very simple man, who is working as an engineer. He had a dream to settle in America. He thinks that real life will start after shifting in America. He said "Listen to me, Jasmine. I want for us to go away and have a real life. "I've had it up to here with backward, corrupt, mediocre fools."⁶⁸ Prakash, who was born in India and work in India. But he thinks to become a rich man; he has to move to America and there starts a real life. A person whose native land is India and he wants to live in America, because he thinks that America's life is very peaceful and that is better place to spend relaxed life.

Sister of My Heart, is based on women characters like Sudha, Anju, Abha, Gouri, Nalini. Here Sudha and Anju are cousins, but their mothers and Pishi (buya) are surviving as Indian widows. Sudha and Anju are brought up in a same family, where women are heads. These girls were born and brought up in traditional Indian families and they are aware of the condition of their values, morals, ethics, and aspiration of the family members. According to psychoanalytic theory propounded by Sigmund Freud, "Children learn from the environment surrounding them. There are different stages in the development of a child, the first stage being the oral, the second stage is anal stage, and the third stage is Phallic Stage which is also called social learning stage.

Sudha is little different from Anju, "because Sudha "believes in magic, demons and gods and falling stars to wish on, the way I never could."⁶⁹ But the Anju's case is totally different she said "There are no demons. I am not sure."⁷⁰ There is some difference in nature of two sisters, who are brought up in same environment. But the difference is the way of thinking. One believes in supernatural things, but other totally rejects these things. Here Sudha was very interested to know, how their father died. She always wants to know the story of that day. She many times requested Pishi, but she refuses. One day Pishi is ready to tell the story. When she knows that, because of her father, Anju's father died. She feels very guilty, when she becomes aware about truth. She thinks that because of her father Anju lost her father. But Anju was not aware about the reason of her father's

death and this is the reason Sudha misbehaves with Anju. Anju did not know the reason of Sudha's behavior. Anju said:

“Whenever Sudha thinks she's alone, she gazes into the distance with her great dark eyes, and sadness seeps over her face like a stain. I must've asked her a hundred times, Sudha, What is it, what's wrong? But all she'll say is Nothing. Then she'll make an excuse and go to her room, and if I follow her she'll say she has a headache and wants to lie down.”⁷¹

Sudha is aware about their past, this is the reason she behaves like this. But Anju never hates her at all. She said “But never Sudha. I could never hate Sudha because she is my other half, the sister of my heart.”⁷² This is the true love of Anju and Sudha both. Sudha somehow, behaves badly but in reality she also loves Anju.

After marriage Anju shifted to America and Sudha is still in India Sudha's mother-in-law wants a baby boy. She believes that a male child will bring good luck to the family. She said “Eat, eat, Bau Ma, “smiles my mother-in-law, counting out, by my plate, the expensive prenatal vitamin tablets she's had shipped from Dey's Medical Stores in Calcutta. “Remember, you're eating for my grandson, too.”⁷³ Sudha's mother-in-law is very caring for her. She takes care for Sudha, because she wants a baby boy from her. She is doing all the households works, which Sudha is doing before “Since, the pregnancy, my mother-in-law's taken over a lot of my duties. She doesn't want me bending over a hot unun, or lifting sacks of rice and lentils from the storage room, or running up to the terrace to check on the pickles set out in the sun.”⁷⁴ These all things, she will be doing for their grandson, who is not born at all. But when she is aware about Subha is carrying a girl child in her womb. She does not accept her baby girl and being woman, she does not like the birth of a girl child in the family. This shows biasness in society between male and female. Sudha leaves her mother-in-law's house and back to her mother's house.

The Palace of Illusions is the story of the ancient Hindu epic *Mahabharata* through the eyes of Droupadi. It is about the war between Kauravas and Pandavas. Droupdi explores this story by her points of view and itself having a concept of duality. This is kind of traditional story which mainly focuses on heroes. She focuses on heroes, but she also

discusses about Droupadi. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni tries to portray Droupadi's character, shows her intense feelings at every stage of her life.

The story of this novel based on Droupadi's perception. Mahabharat is story of the war, between Kauravas and Pandavas. This war happened for the respect of women 'Droupadi'. But the concept of duality is not there in ancient Mahabharata. Here, Divakaruni tries to portray the concept of duality in her novel. In this novel, she highlights both male and female issues.

When Dhairya Maa tells her story, she said: "Even before we'd finished cheering and clapping, even before your father had a chance to greet your brother, you appeared. You were as dark as he was fair."⁷⁵ It shows complexity between white and black. Droupadi is not fair as much as her brother and that is why, she compares herself with Krishna. She said "Krishna and I got along so well was that we were both severely dark-skinned. In a society that looked down its patrician nose on anything except milk-and- almond hues, this was considered most unfortunate, especially for a girl."⁷⁶ In the society, dark people are not considered good in manners. But she was comforting herself, because she knows that type of people considered them as unlucky people. There is a heartily friendship created between the son of Brahmin (Drona) and the son of King (Drupad) as:

"Once in an innocent time, the son of Brahmin and the son of a king were sent to the ashram of a great sage to study. Here they spent many years together, growing into the best of friends, and when it was time for each to return to his home, they wept. The prince said to his schoolmate, Drona, I will never forget you. Come to me I become king of Panchaal, and all I have will be yours as well. The Brahmin embraced the prince and said, Dear Drupad, your friendship means more to me than all the riches in the treasure of the gods. I will hold your words in my heart forever."⁷⁷

One day, the king held court, Brahmin came into the hall in front of him and he refused to know him. He said:

"Drupad, his voice reverberating through the hall, I am no beggar! I come to hold you to your promise of friendship. Once you asked that I should come

and live with you that you all had would be mine also. I do not want your riches, but I ask that you find a place for me at your court. You will gain much from this, for I will share with you the secret science of warcraft that my guru taught me. No enemy would dare to approach Panchaal with me at your side.”⁷⁸

Drupad is totally opposed with his advice and promise. He said “Do you know that friendship is possible only between equals.”⁷⁹ Here Drupad changes his statement, when he studied in ashram with Drone and they became good friend. Even Drupad promised him for everlasting friendship. But when Drupad became the king of Panchaal and after that one-day Drona comes in his court. He totally refused to even knowing him. This is the nature of human, when he doesn’t have anything, he is a kind person. But when he has power, he becomes a proud person.

To conclude, it can be said that ethos and values are the branches of the same tree. India is a land of multicultural society and variety of people are lived here. There are many religions, languages, castes and cultures found in India. Every culture has its customs, festivals and different life styles. In India, people live together with love and brotherhood, this is the reason we as Indians feel pride on our rich cultural heritage. Ethos is described as a set of beliefs, moral ideas and attitudes that belongs to a particular group or society. Values are the beliefs of people which they have, especially about what is right and wrong and from them they learn better manner to live. This chapter shows Ethos and Values in Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s novels. Their characters belong to modern society but they represent Indian ethos and values.

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Chapter - 3

CULTURE AND TRADITION

3.1 The Concept of Culture and Tradition

3.2 Society and Cultural Values

3.3 The Select Novels: Social and Culture Issues

Chapter - 3

Culture and Tradition

3.1 The Concept of Culture and Tradition

The way of living life is called culture. The language which people speak, the way of clothing, living style, beliefs, adorable goddess, and deity, all the rites that people get from their ancestors and it will be transferred to their future generations, these all are the parts of culture. Culture is an achievement, which is formed by the participation of individual people of a social group. It is not the inheritance of any individual or class, but it is a social property which people automatically learn. Culture is a system, which is followed by a large group of people and they transfer their accumulated practical knowledge to their generation.

The word culture shares experience and knowledge. It is not bound with particular person or class; it is a process which is instinctively driven by every human being. It is automatically transferred from generation to generation. Culture is frequently transmitted as a social learning. It gathered knowledge and morals that human beings do not need any special training to learn and understand. Culture is a bond of personal behaviour and beliefs which is practiced by a large group of people.

Culture can also be called symbolic communication. It symbolizes skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and purpose of a group. Such symbols whose meaning can be learned easily, and pervades the society without any opposition. The path of culture is clear and automatic, human beings store many symbols and information for behaving in their life, which is transmitted even in the generations to come, their achievements and knowledge amount to various characters, artefacts and keeps alive through festivals, which are called accumulated culture.

In the context of the origin of the word ‘Culture’, there is a different opinion of various scholars. Basically, culture is an English word and it is formed from the Latin word ‘cult or cultus’, which means religion, creed, faith, sect and worship system etc. In other contexts, the literal meaning of culture is related to unity and respect. Culture word is also similar to the ‘Sanskrit’ word ‘Sanskriti’. The term culture has been interpreted more broadly by Christina De Rossi. Culture can be considered as a part of development in its reality.

“Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, told Live Science. The word ‘culture’ derives from a French term, which in turn derives from the Latin ‘colere,’ which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture. ‘It shares its etymology with a number of other words related to actively fostering growth.’”¹

Just as the word culture is disputed for its origin, in the same way its meaning and interpretation are also found separately. According to the *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* Semantics of ‘Culture’ is:

- “The quality in a person or society that arises from an interest in and acquaintance with what is generally regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits etc.
- The sum total of ways or living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to an-other.”²

Cambridge Dictionary defined ‘Culture’ as:

“the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.”³

According to the Dictionary of Modern Sociology:

“culture sees it as consisting of three elements: Values, norms, and artefacts.”⁴

Culture is defined in The Harper Collins Dictionary of Sociology as:

“the way of life for an entire society. As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, and norms of behaviour such as law and morality, and systems of belief.”⁵

Certainly, culture is a defining term, but the broadness of culture cannot be identified through words. Clearly in the words of Vinayak Krishna Gokak: “Culture in, no doubt, a comprehensive term.”⁶ Some scholars incorporate culture, civilization and tradition into a single camp. But there is a difference between culture, civilization and tradition. While registering his objection to this distinction, Vinayak Krishna Gokak wrote in his book *India and World Culture*:

“It is well known that the anthropologists, who claim to have culture as their special field of study, are themselves not agreed on the connotation of the word. Anthropologists like Weber and Maclver are inclined to make a distinction between culture and civilization to science and technology and culture to philosophy, religion, and the arts. But Kroeber used the word ‘culture’ as the customary term applicable alike to high or low products of societies. ‘Civilization’ is used as a term for the larger and richer cultures, carrying an overtone of high development of a specific society.”⁷

Civilization and culture are often considered synonymous, while these two concepts are different. However, the distinction is exactly the same as flower is civilization and a fragrance is culture. Civilization indicates the outer extreme state of a culture. If culture is expansion then civilization hardens stability. The material aspect predominates in civilization, while the ideological aspect prevails in culture. If civilization is body then culture is its soul. The concept of defining civilization and culture on a common plane is very old, in 1871, Edward Burnet Tyler wrote in his book *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*:

“culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The

condition of culture among the various societies of mankind, in so far as it is capable of being investigated on general principles, is a subject apt for the study of laws of human thought and action.”⁸

In a same way, in order to define the culture, Roland B. Dixon in his book *The Building of Cultures* talks about all the elements of culture, but ultimately all of them have been called civilizations, whereas all the standards, facts, elements and perceptions of civilization and culture are different.

According to Roland B. Dixon, culture is:

“That totality of a people’s products and activities, social and religious order, customs and beliefs which... we have been accustomed to call their civilization.”⁹

These combined definitions of civilization and culture by Edward Burnett Taylor and Dixon created an illusion that culture is generally understood by civilization, but this view is completely wrong. The fundamental difference between civilization and culture is that civilization is related to external objects of living or comfort, while culture is related to internal things. Civilization can be measured, but culture cannot be measured. For example, it is easy to say that airplane is more comfortable than bullock cart, but it is difficult to illustrate that Indian culture is better than Western culture. There is no criterion for this. Civilization is developed in a short term, while culture is the culmination of extended civilization. The civilization spreads quickly, and the culture spreads slowly, but continuously.

Cultural elements are competition free, but the basis of civilization is competition. There is competition in civilization related inventions, but there is no competition in cultural element spirituality. Culture is also defined as a special phase of civilization, which marked as a special period of civilization.

Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language also defined culture as:

“A particular form or stage of civilization, as that of a certain nation or period.”¹⁰

There are many critics define duality between tradition and culture. In many places, culture and tradition are declared to be the same fact even though this belief is completely wrong. The reality is that characteristics of culture come from tradition, so according to the general belief, culture and tradition are accepted as one. “The terms culture and tradition have very similar meanings and it is easy to believe that they refer to the same thing. They are generalized terms that are often used interchangeably. However, there are distinct differences between them.”¹¹ Some scholars call tradition as a social legacy. But in fact, the way tradition works is similar to biological heritage or heritage of beings and it also determines the way of act and behaves like our biological heritage. In the tradition, achievements of the past continue themselves uninterrupted, so just like biological heritage, tradition also has the nature to know or transfer the achievements of the past from the future, despite all this being true, social heritage and tradition is not the same.

In Allen Ginsberg’s words:

“Tradition is the sum of all habits and practices that belong to the community of individuals, and continues to move from one generation to another.”¹²

James Dreyer wrote:

“Tradition is a collection of laws, practices, stories and legends that are transferred orally from one generation to another.”¹³

According to the Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, Tradition is:

“The handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, etc. from generation to generation, esp. by word of mouth or by tradition.”¹⁴

Thomas A. Green, in his *Folklore: an encyclopedia of beliefs, customs, tales, music, and art*, defines tradition as a set of values and materials specific to a genre, he believes that these specific values are transmitted from one generation to another. Defining tradition as he wrote:

“Tradition as something passed down from one generation to the next, generally by informal means, with little or no change in the transmission of

that item or in the item that is transmitted. However, particularly in the latter decades of the twentieth century, many folklorists have asserted that tradition entails a complex set of relationships between the past and the present, in which the past sets precedent for the present and the present reflects the past in its adherence to a particular tradition... tradition is understood as a set of preexisting values and materials particular to a genre, which have been passed from one generation to the next.”¹⁵

It is clear from the above definitions that tradition is an essential part of society that represents accepted ways of our behaviour which is transferred from generation to generation. In fact, the specific rites and practices that come through tradition are indicative of culture. Tradition plays an important role in development of culture. It is the medium on which culture operates. Tradition only contributes to maintain culture in society. In both normal and special circumstances, tradition holds an important position in human life. How tradition affects person's life can be understood through the following definition:

“Tradition consists in the passing down of beliefs and practices from one generation to the next. It can be practiced and passed down between two people (personal tradition), within a small group (family tradition), within a community (town tradition) or within an entire society (country tradition). Traditions can be very punctual or they can dictate the way people behave on an occasion. For example, it can be a tradition to greet people in a certain way on the morning of a national holiday. On the other hand, traditions can also dictate what to wear, what to do and what to eat on a religious holiday.”¹⁶

Even though culture is interwoven with civilization and tradition, but ultimately culture maintains its independent existence. There are many reasons behind linking civilization and tradition with culture. Culture is a broad term which explores particular religious values, beliefs or ideas and it is also a greatest example of communication medium; one can say that culture is communication whereas Tradition is a reflection human way of behaviour, not material achievements.

Indian and Western critics have clarified the concept of culture, but for the concept of culture has different values in both places which can be easily seen. Indian culture is one of the best cultures in the world. It is clearly seen from Vedic period society to modern society. The excellence of culture can also be seen in Vedas, Puranas, Buddhist Tripitaka literature and Jain literature. India is known for unity in diversity. Indian society has diversity at the level of appearance, language, dialect, food, living, caste-religion, poor-rich, urban-rural, costumes etc. as well as geographical, political, social aspects etc. In this way, there is a confluence of different type of culture in India. Many Indian scholars have tried to define the culture:-

The great anthropologist of India Shyamacharan Dubey described the culture in his book *Manav Aur Sanskriti* in this way:

“The word sanskriti, like its synonymous English word ‘culture’, has many meanings. Generally, the scheme of Susankar is considered to be culture, and in this sense such individuals or groups, who lack the best practices in life, are considered devoid of Sanskrit, the classical vision of dance embraces the facts of life in a valueless context.”¹⁷

In the words of Kanhaiya Lal Maniklal Munshi:

“Culture is the name of the stages of life, which cultivate behavior, perseverance and wisdom in human beings. It determines the behavior of human beings, gives light to the ideals and principles of their life.”¹⁸

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru as expressed his view on culture:

“Culture means the internal development of man and his moral advancement is traditional behavior and has the power to understand each other.”¹⁹

Satyaketu Vidyalankar has written:

“What man creates in the field of karma using his intellect is called culture.”²⁰

According to Ramdhari Singh Dinkar:

“Culture pervades human life in the same way as fragrance in flowers and butter in milk. It is not built in a day or two; culture is built in the future.”²¹

Based on the definitions given by various critics, *David Bidney* has tried to clarify the concepts of definitions of culture in his book titled *On the concept of Culture and some Cultural fallacies*, he writes:

“One concept which is being increasingly employed in contemporary social thought is that of culture. Anthropologists and sociologists are in general agreement that human culture is acquired or created by man as a member of society and that it is communicated largely by language. There is disagreement, however, as to the definition and role of culture. Anthropologists such as Tylor, Boas, Wissler, Benedict and Mead, maintain that culture consists of acquired capabilities, habits or customs and that culture is a quality or attribute of human social behavior and has no independent existence of its own. From a philosophical point of view, this position may be designated as realistic since culture is regarded as an attribute of actual or real individuals and societies which exists independent of the observer. Other anthropologists, notably Marett, Redfield and Osgood, tend to define culture in terms of “communicable intelligence,” “conventional understandings” or “communicated ideas.” Their implicit presupposition seems to be that the distinguishing feature of culture is the fact that it is communicated knowledge. Philosophically, this position may be described as epistemological idealism, since those who hold it maintain that culture is to be defined primarily in terms of ideas.”²²

Furthering David Bidney’s ideological legacy, A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn also expanded the cultural pervasiveness. To examine the definitions of culture, he included definitions of around two hundred critics, who wrote in his book *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* put his perspective in terms of culture. A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn prepared a list of definitions of culture and classified them into eight categories as:

- Topical: A list of topics such as social structure, religion, economic system, and so forth
- Historical: Social heritage, or tradition, passed from generation to generation
- Behavioural: Shared, learned human behaviour, a way of life
- Normative: Ideals, values, norms, or standards for life
- Functional: The way people solve problems and adapt to their environment
- Mental: Complex of ideas, or learned habits, that distinguish people from animals
- Structural: Patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviour
- Symbolic: Arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared by a society.

Finally, Kluckhohn suggested that “Culture is to society what memory is to individuals.”²³ Culture is not limited it is limitless and it is not associated with one culture, class, category, or community but for every class of human being who lives in the society they all have equal right on their culture. It is divided into many parts and every culture has their rules and regulations. Therefore, the definition of culture is widespread, various Western sociologists and anthropologists have defined culture:

Hiller defined Culture as:

“The beliefs, systems of thought, practical arts, manner of living, customs, traditions, and all socially regularized ways of acting are also called culture. So defined, culture includes all the activities which develop in the association between persons or which are learned from a social group, but excludes those specific forms of behavior which are predetermined by inherited nature.”²⁴

According to Mead:

“*Culture* means the whole complex of traditional behaviour which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each

generation. A *culture* is less precise. It can mean the forms of traditional behaviour which are characteristic of a given society, or of a group of societies, or of a certain race, or of a certain area, or of a certain period of time.”²⁵

According to the Radcliffe-Brown:

“As a sociologist the reality to which I regard the word “culture” as applying is the process of cultural tradition, the process by which in a given social group or social class language, beliefs, ideas, aesthetic tastes, knowledge, skills and usages of many kinds are handed on (“tradition” means “handing on”) from person to person and from one generation to another.”²⁶

According to Dixon, culture is:

“The sum of all (a people’s) activities, customs, and beliefs.”²⁷

According to Franz Boas:

“Culture embraces all the manifestations of social habits of a community, the reactions of the individual as affected by the habits of the group in which he lives, and the products of human activities as determined by these habits.”²⁸

According to Panunzio:

“It [culture] is the complex whole of the system of concepts and usages, organizations, skills, and instruments by means of which mankind deals with physical, biological, and human nature in satisfaction of its needs.”²⁹

According to Kluckhohn and Kelly:

“Culture in general as a descriptive concept means the accumulated treasury of human creation: books, paintings, buildings, and the like; the knowledge of ways of adjusting to our surroundings, both human and physical;

language, customs, and systems of etiquette, ethics, religion, and morals that have been built up through the ages.”³⁰

According to Kroeber:

“the mass of learned and transmitted motor reactions, habits, techniques, ideas, and values - and the behaviour they induce - is what constitutes *culture*. Culture is the special and exclusive product of men, and is their distinctive quality in the cosmos. . . Culture. . . is at one and the same time the totality of products of social men, and a tremendous force affecting all human beings, socially and individually.”³¹

According to Benedict:

“that complex whole which includes all the habits acquired by man as a member of society.”³²

According to Kluckhohn and Kelly:

“Culture is that complex whole which includes artefacts, beliefs, art, all the other habits acquired by man as a member of society, and all products of human activity as determined by these habits.”³³

According to Winston:

“Culture may be considered as the totality of material and non-material traits, together with their associated behaviour patterns, plus the language uses which a society possesses.”³⁴

According to Herskovits:

“Culture is essentially a construct that describes the total body of belief, behaviour, knowledge, sanctions, values, and goals that mark the way of life of any people. That is, though a culture may be treated by the student as capable of objective description, in the final analysis it comprises the things that people have, the things they do, and what they think.”³⁵

Clifford Geertz defined culture as follows:

“Culture denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.”³⁶

According to Malinowski:

“It [culture] obviously is the integral whole consisting of implements and consumers’ ‘roods, of constitutional charters for the various social groupings, of human ideas and crafts, beliefs and customs.”³⁷

According to Bose:

“Culture is the crystallized phase of man’s life activities. It includes certain forms of action closely associated with particular objects and institutions; habitual attitudes of mind transferable from one person to another with the aid of mental images conveyed by speech-symbols . . . Culture also include certain material objects and techniques...”³⁸

According to Winston:

“Culture may be considered as the totality of material and non-material traits, together with their associated behaviour patterns, plus the language uses which a society possesses.”³⁹

According to Burkitt, Culture is:

“the sum of the activities of a people as shown by their industries and other discoverable characteristics.”⁴⁰

According to Linton, Culture is:

“the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour which the members of that society have acquired through instruction or imitation and which they share to a greater or less degree.”⁴¹

According to Murray:

“The various industries of a people, as well as art, burial customs, etc., which throw light upon their life and thought.”⁴²

According to Herskovits:

“refers to that part of the total setting of human existence which includes the material objects of human manufacture, techniques, social orientations, points of view, and sanctioned ends that are the immediate conditioning factors underlying behaviour.”⁴³

According to Wissler:

“all social activities in the broadest sense, such as language, marriage, property system, etiquette, industries, art, etc...”⁴⁴

According to Bidney:

“Functionally and secondarily, culture refers to the acquired forms of technique, behaviour, feeling and thought of individuals within society and to the social institutions in which they cooperate for the attainment of common ends.”⁴⁵

According to Linton:

“The culture of any society consists of the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour which the members of that society have acquired through instruction or imitation and which they share to a greater or less degree.”⁴⁶

Culture is also defined by the international organization ‘*The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*’ (UNESCO). Culture was defined on 2 November 2011 at a UNESCO General Conference in Paris, according to which, Culture is:

“Set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and

literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”⁴⁷

According to the UNESCO:

“This definition is in line with the conclusions of the World Conference on Cultural Policies (MONDIACULT, Mexico City, 1982), of the World Commission on Culture and Development (Our Creative Diversity, 1995), and of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998).”⁴⁸

The importance of culture in human life can never be denied. Given the role of culture in human life, the concept of cultural rights is emerging in international law as well. Former United Nations (UN) Secretary General Boutros-Ghali is of the opinion that:

“By the right of an individual to culture, it is to be understood that every man has the right of access to knowledge, to the arts and literature of all peoples, to take part in scientific advancement and to enjoy its benefits, to make his contribution towards the enrichment of cultural life.”⁴⁹

Along with the concept of culture, its purpose is to be evaluated, because an arrangement is built on the basis of need, so the way to understand the concept of culture must be understood through its objectives. The objectivity of a social class is indicative of its specialty, the society without purpose continues to decline. The superiority of any human group is judged by its culture. Therefore, to determine the objectivity of Indian society it was appropriate to classify the objectives of its culture; hence there has been a continuous effort to determine the objectives of culture in Indian society. In 1951, at a meeting in Mumbai, some points were considered, which determined what purpose cultural freedom served.

- “Culture has both an individual and a social content. Individual culture is an attitude to life on the part of a human being who seeks awareness of himself and of the world. Social culture results from the integration of the culture of the members of a community and of the social relationship emerging in the geographical environment and historical tradition which

define the community. Neither individual nor social culture can be complete unless it rests on the underlying unity of mankind.

- Culture can only flourish, find its best expression, and be secure in a free society. A society is free in which the integrity of the individual is recognized and respected as a primary ethical value, with all the guarantees of social justice, including equality of opportunity which this principal implies. All spiritual pursuits and attainments arising from culture are rooted in this fundamental principle.
- While culture has a universal basis, its expression is as particular and varied as the communities themselves. This variety is inherent in the creative genius of peoples and enriches the content of human experience on which universal culture is based.
- The best expression of a free culture presupposes an attempt to widen, deepen and perfect the individual's awareness of himself and of the world. In modern times civilization has been mostly governed by an undue emphasis on externalities and a tendency towards standardization of human life.”⁵⁰

Culture cannot be limited to only the basic necessities of bread, cloth, house and life. It determines the future of thoughts, grit, behaviour, social fabric and beliefs etc. Cultural concept is the result of conflict, after a huge struggle, a culture acquires a particular form, for which it has to contend with various favorable and unfavorable ideologies and cultures. Michelle Lebanon has justified conflict of culture:

“Culture is an essential part of conflict and conflict resolution. Cultures are like underground rivers that run through our lives and relationships, giving us messages that shape our perceptions, attributions, judgments, and ideas of self and other. Though cultures are powerful, they are often unconscious, influencing conflict and attempts to resolve conflict in imperceptible ways. Cultures are more than language, dress, and food customs. Cultural groups may share race, ethnicity, or nationality, but they also arise from cleavages of generation, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, ability and disability,

political and religious affiliation, language, and gender- to name only a few.”⁵¹

Culture is an environment in which a person becomes a social being, and earns his/her ability to adapt to the natural environment. Culture has the ability to differentiate between an individual, a group and a society. Culture is a situation created by a social group in a single complex for facilities and arrangements. It is a compound that can be formed by any group, both small and large. Human existence and rich system of cultural elements are related to traditional aspects. In *The concept of cultural and traditional archetype*, David Doina has written about the definition and concept of culture as:

“The concept of tradition in general, in Latin means transmission, concept that in time become a wider, and includes: cultural values, historical past, that is vivid in the collective memory. The concept of tradition in particular, can be described as psycho-social dynamic phenomenon that ensures participation in a specific system of material and spiritual values, which have a relative stability. Tradition as continuity, for us Romanians, cultural continuity is an almost natural phenomenon: “just as natural and undisguised and the continuation, today, of a thing you stopped doing yesterday evening.”⁵²

The work of culture is to create a sense of humanity within human beings and separating them from the category of animals. Culture is the only element on the basis of which the difference between man and animal is established. If man did not have a culture, then there would be no difference between animals and humans. Culture is considered as an invaluable heritage which is continuously transferred through symbols in the same speed. These symbols continue to move from one generation to the next in the form of accumulated knowledge and values; the concept of culture develops in this way.

Many beliefs are established in relation to culture, through which all known and unknown aspects of culture are clear. Such aspects are carefully laid and the foundation of writing and literature, which propose a struggle and future. As a result of it, culture gets an anthropological approach and paves the way for understanding the nuances of the actual

concept of culture. Incompleteness can be provided through culture. Therefore, culture is free from both internal and external contradictions. Which works to make a person mature with the right guidance.

Culture is an idea that binds together the positive accumulated knowledge of cognitive and behavioural knowledge in a formula among a particular group of people. It is not possible that a person has his own culture like his personal property. When a person belonging to a particular culture goes among people of another culture, in such situation they become representatives of their culture. Hence, culture is a collective symbol which is synonymous with the identity of that particular group. There is also a side that as much as the contribution of that primitive generation is to the creation and preservation of a culture known as the people living in the past, as much as the generation who carried that culture in contemporary times. No class or generation is privileged over culture. Social, geographical, economic, communal, linguistic, regional and national etc. can be made the basis for classifying culture. Culture is indeed timeless.

3.2 Society and Cultural Values

Society and culture have an important place in human life. It is normal human tendency to be alert and conscious towards their society and culture. Man adjusts in society and culture, looks at certain values. Accordingly, it has social and cultural sets of boundaries. There is also a definite sense of social and cultural values in India. Around which values of Indian culture are seen. Society is studied according to sociological rules. India is also called land of multicultural society.

“Multicultural means a combination of many cultures. The word is a synthesis of two words, ‘multi’ meaning several and ‘culture’ meaning tradition. Cross-cultural confrontation has received a strong stimulus since the evolving of the modernist movement in the beginning of the twentieth century. The postcolonial literature deals with multiculturalism as its main subject.”⁵³

The life and literature of Chitra Banerjee and Bharati Mukherjee reflect Indian society and culture. It also shows diverse aspects of Indian society and culture. Their novels have given equal place to both good and evil aspect of Indian society. The family is considered the criteria of Indian society. The beauty of Indian society and culture is embedded in the family structure. They highlight the concept of culture and tradition in modern life.

“In every age a tussle between tradition and modernity goes on. What is currently prevalent at a particular period is considered modern; what has gone by and is a part of the past become tradition. Champions of modernity criticize. Traditional suppresses modernity. Tradition or modernity alone is inadequate as a living philosophy of life. In all stages of human development, both tradition and modernity have played a significant role. Tradition alone would bind people in chains whereas modernity makes them hollow. Therefore, a combination of the two is necessary for a society.”⁵⁴

In Indian society, the family structure is tied in such a way that the life style of each member of the family is automatically governed by head of the family. The family bonding is clearly seen in the novel *The Tiger's Daughter*. The story starts from Hari Lal's daughter's marriage in village

“In the year 1879 by the English calendar, on a Monday in Sravan, the month of heaviest rains, Hari Lal Banerjee of Pachapsara was standing under a wedding canopy on the roof of his house, once a happy rajah's palace.

Hari Lal stood by the parapet, head unprotected by the red and yellow canopy, legs slightly apart under a fine white *dhoti*, as he watched tenants and workers gather in the covered courtyard below to celebrate the wedding of his children.”⁵⁵

In village, Hari Lal's daughter's marriage is happens. Hari Lal thinks about her daughter and celebrates her wedding rituals. In next days, he is worried about her ancestral houses, because of heavy rainfall. As a father he is worried about his daughter and his ancestral house, because both are his responsibility.

“It's a happy night,” they said, “It's an auspicious night.” They did not expect their lives to be spoiled by astrological errors or fatal paradoxes. A loud

sentimentality preyed on these guests. They talked about the stability of Hindu marriages; they came back again and again to the bounty of the Bengali soil and to the orderliness of their little villages. They told their servants to bring out more lights, the *shantai*-players to play with more feeling, and their wives to serve them more vegetable chops and shrimp cutlets. They twirled their gold-headed canes and gossiped and behaved like perfect wedding guests.”⁵⁶

Nobody has seen such type of wedding even before. Guests talk about the strength of Hindu marriages. On that night Hari Lal is very sad. Village people lived around kerosene lamps and in wedding they seem to see light first time. After some time Hari Lal was died.

“The Banerjee family lost its hold on Pachapara. The Banerjee was replaced by the Jute Mill Roy Chowdhurys, and that too produced good and virile men. But the Roy Chowdhury thought it prudent to lock the gates of their estate and to replace each brick pried loose by violence.”⁵⁷

After the death of Hari Lal, his family loses their hold on Pachapara. The Banerjee’s factory is replaced by Jute Mill Roy Chowdhurys. After that Hari Lal’s daughter, left Pachapara with her husband. Santana’s husband sold the moldy Banerjee house, which he inherited by his marriage and moved to Calcutta. There he is expanding the tobacco factory, which he had received as his dowry. On that time he will send his daughter, Tara Banerjee out of India for her college studies.

When Tara Banerjee landed in Bombay, after seven years, there she realized that she forgot her Bengali culture and this is the reason to know much more about her culture and for rerooting herself she visits to India. She thinks “For years she had dreamed of this return to India. She had believed that all hesitations, all shadowy fears of the time abroad would be erased quite magically if she could just return home to Calcutta.”⁵⁸

“Tara’s mother, Arati, was a saintly woman. At least, she was given to religious dreams. Her religious dreams were not holy enough to turn her hair white overnight. But they were adequately religious.”⁵⁹ Tara’s mother is a very kind and virtuous woman. All the

day she is doing *Pooja Path*. She spends most of her time in god's prayer. "As a saintly woman, Tara's mother spent a great deal of time in the prayer room."⁶⁰

Tara's mother is a spiritual kind of lady; she follows all her cultural rules. She takes three times bath in a day. "The saintly mother also spent an unreasonable amount of time in the bathroom next to dressing room. Taking three baths a day was a principle with her."⁶¹ Taking three-time baths in a day is her principle, because she does not like to touch the god from dirty hands.

When Tara's mother sits in her prayer, she does not want any kind of disturbance during her worship. When Tara thought to leave *Pooja* room then her mother said "Don't leave," her mother said, swiveling slightly on her tiny carpet but not breaking the rhythm of her Sanskrit prayers."⁶² She doesn't want to pay attention to any kind of sound during her prayers.

Cultural values are part of society, in which all values, ethos, culture, tradition and ethics are present. In *Desirable Daughters*, the story starts by describing the society as:

"The narrows, raised trail stretches ten miles from Mishtigunj town to the jungle's edge. In a palanquin borne by four servants sit a rich man's three daughters, the youngest dressed in her bridal sari, her little hands painted with red lac dye, her hair oiled and set. Her arms are heavy with dowry gold; bangles ring tiny arms from wrist to shoulder. Childish voices chant a song, hands clap, gold bracelets tinkle."⁶³

This shows society and culture to which these three daughters belong. The story starts from Mishtigunj, and it describes one bridal girl. She wears sari, her hands are painted by dye, and she wears jewellery like bangles, ring, and bracelets. The rich man's three daughters are sitting in *palki* reveals, the social environment of that time.

It also describes wedding rituals for bride like as "The bride-to-be whispers the "Tush Tusli Brata," a hymn to the sacredness of marriage, a petition for a kind and generous husband."⁶⁴ She is doing *Vrath* before her wedding so that she gets good husband and good married life. Indian society has some superstitions that if unmarried girl or boy

doing *Vrath* before their wedding they will achieve a better life partner. So, Tara Lata story begins with a family wedding on the coldest and darkest night in Bengali culture.

“December/January—in a district of the Bengal presidency that lies east of Calcutta—now Kolkata—and south of Dacca—now Dhaka—as the English year of 1879 is about to shed its final two digits, although, the Hindu year of 1285 still has for four months to run and the Muslim year of 1297 has barely begun.”⁶⁵

The story revolves around by the same time and society, in which the author discusses about the Hindu and Muslim years. In that time many religious events and festivals were associated to Bengal Presidency included Bangladesh, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa. In those years, Bengal was the seat of British power, Calcutta its capital, its cultural and economical center. So, it was the social background of that time, to which Tara and her sisters belong.

Value is, when people give importance to someone or something. Tara lives in America, but still she is connected with her sisters and parents. She said “I talk with Parvati in Bombay and about once a month with my parents in Rishikesh, a holy town on the banks of a holy river in Uttar Pradesh state, where they now live.”⁶⁶ She calls them in every weekend, only to know that they are safe and also tell them that she and Rabi are safe and healthy.

Tara loves her parents as well as sisters too; she said “I love my sisters. It’s the purest love I’ve ever known. Hate is the last thing I could feel for them; it’s the only emotion that never entered our little sisterhood. If I don’t have them to talk to and believe in, I have nothing.”⁶⁷ This shows the relationship between two sisters. She said that the relation between us is very pure. They are three sisters, who live separately in different place, even in different countries. But they love and miss each other.

Every relation is precious in human life. Tara talks about, how relationship is important in her life. She said:

“In India every word relating to family carries a special meaning. My oldest sister is Parvati-di. I’ll always just be Tara. Children are taught to call every family friend “aunties” and “uncle,” or, in our language, mashi and mesho

for the mother's side, pishi and pishe-mashai or kaki and kaku for the father's side. It's how family-based culture sees the world, outward from the protective weave of relatedness, suspicious of anything that can't be fitted inside it. Closed friends, or the vaguely connected from the same desh, the same remote village."⁶⁸

She describes every word which is associated with family has a special meaning. She starts with her didi and after that she explains, when someone comes outside in home and children start calling them uncle or aunties. She also distinguished the relation on the basics of her father mother sides. She said in our language like Mashi and Mesho for the mother's side, Pishi and Pishe-mashai or Kaki and Kaku for the father's side.

Life gets a lot of material comforts in the mirror of modernity, but on one stage, relationships get shattered. A person who tries to become complacent gets autism in a sympathetic way. Due to which collectiveness of his life is destroyed. Human beings need family and relationships to reach such a halt. Family is an important part of Indian society and culture. Similarly, in the *Desirable Daughters* novel, Rabi also has the same wish that she also gets a family. He says: "you ask what I what? I want what everyone has. I want to belong. I want a mother, a family. Aunties, Cousins."⁶⁹ Everybody wants to know their roots, about their relatives and from where their ancestors belong.

Relationship of Tara and Rabi is a good example of son and mother relation. "Indian mothers don't; we don't have violent feelings except against ourselves, and never against our children, at least not against our sons."⁷⁰ This is the actual feeling of Indian mother, who is very protective, caring, and defensive about her son. Parent always tries to keep their child in a good environment; they don't want their child rise in unhealthy environment. They always try to give best life to their children.

Younger members in the family respect older members and are also afraid of doing any wrong in front of older members of the family. Family members try to keep their children away from wrong habits like smoking, intoxication, drinking and bad behavior. Families take care of their children with responsibility; children with the same responsibility also avoid doing any wrong activity in front of their families. In the *Desirable Daughters*, Tara says: "I savour his misstep. No middle-class Bengali man would smoke in front of

his elders. Even Parvati's husband in his chain-smoking days didn't dare light up in front of our parents."⁷¹ Parvati's husband too has not have dared to smoke in front of his elders, because he knows his values, which his parents teach him.

Human identity and values are associated with the family. Every person has special attachment to their birth place, because belongingness plays an important feeling for particular person's life. Same case in Tara Lata's father, mother. She gives information about her parents' roots, she said:

"Both of my parents were born in Calcutta, but their parents still pained for the eternal greenery of East Bengal. My mother's family hailed from Dhaka, my father from a provincial town called Faridpur, both of which I had not seen until my impulsive visit a year ago. In the way of provincial gentry, my father's father was the bright boy with prospects, my grandmother the comely town girl from an established family. Her dowry enabled my grandfather to complete his education and move to Calcutta."⁷²

Human identity is given a great importance in Indian society and culture. People like to stay connected with their birthplace as well as the birthplace of their parents and all the ancestors. Being over dependent can be considered as sacrosanct in the Western society and culture.

But the quality of Indian society is that every member of the family depends on each other. The real objective of the family is the feelings of dependence on each other. Isolation, loneliness, and loss of consciousness from human life can certainly be overcome by family dependence. Through this, the question of the identity of the person can also be solved. In India, ancestors are given great importance. In the *Desirable Daughters*, Tara says:

"Bengali Culture trains one to claim the father's birthplace, sight unseen, as his or her desh, her home. Although she has never seen it, my mother's desh in Dhaka, by way of Mishtigunj, the village even few East Bengalis have ever seen. When I speak of this to my American Friends – the iron-clad identifiers of region, language, caste, and sub caste- they call me

“overdetermined” and of course they are right. When I tell them, they should be thankful for their identity crises and feelings of alienation, I of Course am right. When everyone knows your business and every name declares your identity, where no landscape fails to contain a plethora of human figures, even a damaged consciousness, even loneliness, becomes privileged commodities.”⁷³

She talks about her parents’ roots, from where her father and mother belong and they get married. After some years they are shifted to Calcutta. It is not easy to detach with their roots, but she said they are thankful for their identity crises and feeling of isolation. She also agrees with this, when everybody knows from where you belong. This shows how concept of belongingness is changed.

As a member of the family, a person gets many things from the family, even his identity and his name are also obtained by the family. In family mother is most important person, who is the connector of family. She is the only person who thinks about her family, children, husband, and house. She plays an important role in Indian culture. The mother sacrifices for her children, taking all their grief and pain, and tries to give them a happy life in their zone. In the *Jasmine*, Jasmine says:

“My mother was a sniper. She wanted to spare me the pain of a dowry less bride. My mother wanted a happy life for me. I survived the sniping. My grandmother may have named me Jyoti, Light, but in surviving I was already June, a fighter and adapter.”⁷⁴

This shows how Indian mother thinks about her daughter’s life. Her mother is always supporting to her, either in the matters of marriage or education.

This story was started from under the banyan tree in the village of Hasanpur, an astrologer, who tells her fortune of widowhood and exile. She describes her living situation. She said:

“I hated that river bend. The water pooled there, sludgy brown, and was choked with hyacinths and feces from that buffaloes that village boys washed upstream. Women were scouring brass pots with ashes. Dhobis

were whomping cloths clean on stone slabs. Housewives squabbled while lowering their pails into a drying well. My older sisters, show, happy girls with butter-smooth arms, were still bathing on the steps that led down to the river.”⁷⁵

This is Indian village society in which village girls go to forest for wood to cook their food, village boy bathes his buffaloes in river, women wash their utensils by ashes, dhobis wash their clothes. So, these are the activities, which happen on the sea shore. But another side when she moves to America there, she saw quite opposite society. In America, the way of dressing, eating, living is completely different from India. Even weekly nights are divided in different ways like:

“They’d have night golf with illuminated fairways. Wednesday nights would be Ladies’ Nights, Thursday night Stags Only, Friday nights for Couples. They’re copying some kind of golf-course franchise that works out West. The plan is to convert the barn into a clubhouse with a restaurant and what he calls sports facilities. I’m not sure what they’ll do with the pig house and its built-in reservoir of nightsoil.”⁷⁶

This novel also has two kinds of societies, one is Indian another is American. Jyoti is the leading lady, who travels from one society to another. Her American friends plan to open a modern clubhouse. The characters Jyoti and Bud, both represent their cultures. When Jyoti starts living in America with Bud, they start sharing their cultural thoughts. She said:

“In our three and a half year together, I have given Bud a new trilogy to contemplate: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. And he has lent me his: Musial, Brock, and Gibson. Bud’s father grew up in southern Iowa, and Gene’s father came from Davenport. Ottumwa got Cardinal broadcasts, and Davenport got the Cubs. Baseball loyalties are passed from father to sons.”⁷⁷

They both are from different culture, and they spend three and a half year together and gradually they share their cultural thoughts with each other. In this way the two different

culture and religious thoughts come together. Bud belongs from Christian community and Jasmine belongs from Hindu (Punjabi) community. They share their cultural and religious values with each other.

When Jyoti and Prakash get married, Jyoti becomes Jyoti Prakash Vijn. After girl's marriage she is known by her husband's name. But gradually these values are changed by the time this is why her husband wants her to call him by his first name. But she is from village and this is the culture of Indian society in which wives do not call her husband by name. Jyoti does the same and said:

“In Hasanpur wives used only pronouns to address their husbands. The first months, eager and obedient as I was, I still had a hard time calling him Prakash. I'd caught to get his attention, or start with “Are you listening?” Every time I coughed he'd say, “Do I hear a crow trying human speech?” Prakash. I had to practice and practice so I could say the name without gagging and blushing in front of his friends. He liked to show me off. His friends were like him: disrupters and rebuilders, idealists.”⁷⁸

This is the Indian culture; in which woman doesn't have liberty to speak her husband's name. But her husband doesn't like this; he wants to be called him by his first name. She starts practicing to call him by name. People lived in a same country and society. But they distinguished themselves on the basis of rural and urban society. Jyoti said:

“One of Pitaji's Amritsar cousins. The cousin, a large dogmatic woman said that big-city men prefer us village girls because we are brought up to be caring and have no minds of our own. Village girls are like cattle; whichever way you lead them, that is the way they will go.”⁷⁹

It shows, how city people think about village people. They actually consider themselves very advanced and modern and this is why they compare girls with cattle and they also consider that they don't have mind also. But that differentiation of village or city life is totally wrong, because village and city both are part of our society. Only the dissimilarity is the life style of people, but it does not mean that village people are fools, without mind.

Jyoti lives in that society, where women do not have right to get education. Everybody is against with girl's education. Even Jyoti's family members are against her education. She said "Dida, Pitaji's mother, was the only in the family to make a fuss about my staying on in school."⁸⁰ Her father said "Masterji, you are here to tell me that there is a lotus blooming in the middle of all this filth, no?"⁸¹ Her father thinks in patriarchal way. But after that her Masterji convincing her father and said "An educator's duty, sir, is not to burn the flower with the dung."⁸² This shows how her father thinks about her daughter's education. He is not in favour of her study, because they think girls are made for household works, marriage, and increase man's generation.

Family structure is given great importance in Indian society and culture, because the concept of family is widespread in India. The family is an extension of the family beyond just the mother and father. Parents' brothers and sisters also have a role in the family. Such relatives of the family take care of the children like parents. Along with this, all members also play a role for the enlightenment of the children of the family. In the *Sister of My Heart*, Sudha shares her life experience:

"On holiday she plaits jasmine into our hair. But most of all Pishi is our Fount of information, the one who tells us the stories our mothers will not, the secret, delicious, forbidden tales of our past."⁸³

It is the culture of Indian society that a different address is made for each relationship. Like a western society, it is not pertinent to call everyone uncle and aunt. Different relationships are formed from different sides of mother and father. Relationships occur in Indian society like chacha-chachi, mama-mami, mosa-mosi, bua-fufa, dada-dadi, nana-nani etc. In the *Desirable Daughters*, get this about relationship:

"Children are taught to call every family friend "auntie" and "uncle" or, in our language, mashi and mesho for the mother's side, pishi and pishe-mashi or kaki and kaku for the father's side. It's how a family-based culture sees the world, outward from the protective weave of relatedness, suspicious of anything that can't be fitted inside it."⁸⁴

In Indian society there are different methods of marriages based on region, caste, and religion etc. Since unity in diversity is the hallmark of Indian society and culture, some similarity is also seen between the different methods of marriage. According to Indian culture, mehndi is placed in the hands of the bride and groom at the time of marriage. Beautiful painting is also seen in hand drawn with mehndi. According to Indian culture, the introduction of henna at the time of marriage is described in the *Desirable Daughters*:

“This is called mehndi,” she said in her softest tone. “Do you know the history of mehndi? It’s very ancient. We were doing mehndi when Europeans were painting their faces blue. Do you know that all of these lines have a special meaning? Here, let me show you. I think it’s fascinating that you girls have discovered a contemporary American use for an ancient Indian tradition.”⁸⁵

It is a very ancient tradition of Indian culture. Regarding the culture of applying mehndi, the question asked by American girls is remarkable:

“I’m a journalist with India Television,” I heard her say to the young American girls. “can I ask you what exactly attracts you to mehndi?” They giggled some more, muttering “it’s cool,” and “everyone’s getting it done.”⁸⁶

Those who follow Indian society and culture can be easily identified in the crowd of thousands. The biggest reason for this is the most differentiation of Indian costumes and jewelry. A wide variety of costumes and jewelry are worn throughout India, spanning from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Kurta and dhoti are the cultural costumes of India. Kurta and dhoti are worn at various auspicious events. The example of this feature of Indian culture is found in the *Desirable Daughters*:

“According to Parvati, our father in his mountain retirement was fast becoming one of them. Mr. Bose was dressed in the traditional homes put cotton Kurta and dhoti, but spoke in a rotund Calcutta courtliness that I hadn’t heard outside of the theater.”⁸⁷

Relationship is a small part of society, because relations are part of family and family is associated with society. In case of Tara, she carries dual identity. In beginning of this novel, she lives in India as a typical Indian girl. But after shifting to America, she gives divorce to her husband and lives with her boyfriend Andy. Here we have contrast between two societies, Indian and American and Tara is in between of it, she is an Indian girl. But gradually she adopts American culture and their modern life and according to that life, she has an affair with white man. In America, she lives with him and her son Rabi. This shows how values are changes, according to time.

“In Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s fiction, she raises the basic issues of immigrant sensibility. While the first-generation immigrant feels proud of their cultural past, the second generation expresses its aberration and deviations. In the process of self-realization, the former do not like to violate the culture dignity of their past while the later neither demand it nor demonstrate it, living as they do in the American plenitude of cultural availability.”⁸⁸

In the Indian society and culture, this cosmic and otherworldly world is conceptualized. Life in this world is controlled by another world. The life and death of every living being is controlled by a supernatural power. It is also believed that the soul of a human being leaves his body after he dies. The body dies and the soul enters another body and receives human birth again. Therefore, the soul is immortal. The concept of heaven and hell is also found in India based on human actions. This fact is confirmed in the novel *Sister of my Heart*:

“I trust Pishi. I know she must have a reason for her silence. And yet I am strangely pulled to that day twelve years ago, day of my father’s end, day of my beginning, when perhaps our spirits crossed in mid-air, his rising to heaven, mine descending to earth.”⁸⁹

Like various cultural activities and costumes, Indian foods are also appreciated worldwide. There is not so much variation in food in any country of the world as is seen in Indian society. Various food dishes practiced in India since ancient times are still prepared with the same methods and resources as they would have been made hundreds

of years ago. The taste of Indian cuisine is famous for its consistency. There is a culture of eating pickles, chataney, salad, papad, curd, whey, jaggery etc. in India.

The women of the house are skilled in making it. The women of the house also make pickles, chutneys etc. The method of making pickles is also ancient and traditional. The process of making pickles is mentioned in the *Sister of My Heart*, Sudha said:

“I find her on the terrace setting out trayfuls of salted mangoes for drying. Pishi is an excellent pickle maker and knows it... In three days’ time, when the mango slices are crisped thin by the sun, she will mix in spiced mustard oil and chili powder and seal them in squat jars for us to enjoy through the year.”⁹⁰

Divakaruni makes a detailed mention of Indian food dishes and spices. The style of serving food in Indian culture is unique in the world. An example of serving food can be seen in the *The Mistress of Spices*: “They are serving their men *biriyani* fragrant with ghee, cool bowls of *raita*, *patra* seasoned with fenugreek. And for dessert, dripping with gold honey, *gulab-jamuns* the colour of dark roses.”⁹¹

The Mistress of Spices is based on magical power of spices. Tilo was born in village and her parents named her Nayan Tara, star of Eye. She takes birth in the society, in which people consider girl child is bad luck for family. But gradually her villagers had known about her magical powers and then they start worshiping her as a *Devi*. But after some days “merchant sailors carried tales of her powers across the harnessed seas to every land. That is how the pirates learned of me.”⁹² When pirates know about her magical powers, one day they came to kidnapping her but she is escaped and raised by first mother with the traditional sect of spices. This was the society in which Tilo was born.

Tilo’s name is given by her first mother, she lived in the island. She is the only one who gives her name as Tilottama, which means (spice of nourishment). The first mother is the lady, who teaches her the knowledge of spices and she becomes *The Mistress of Spices*. But Tilo’s life starts from Oakland, the city of California. In America, she runs her spices shop. There she helps her customers to buy the spices. Tilo’s life journey starts from India and ends in America. Her life journey is a mixture of two cultures. She faces two

kinds of societies in her life. Many of her customers are Indians but she also helps the American people too.

Every spice has played a significant role in human life. Every person has a special spice. Like Sesame, Turmeric, Cinnamon, Fenugreek, Asafetida, Fennel, Ginger, Peppercorn, Kala Jire, Neem and Red Chili. These all are Indian spices, which are very important for Indian food. These are the essence and aesthetic of Indian dishes, because without this Indian food is incomplete. These all are the specific culture of India. Tilo explains that every spice has a special flavors and day. She said “Each spice has a day special to it. For turmeric it is Sunday”⁹³ Fenugreek spice for Tuesday and Red Chilli spice for Thursday. She also describes the benefit of spices:

“Turmeric which is also named *halud*, meaning yellow, colour of daybreak and conch-shell sound. Turmeric the preserver, keeping safe in a land of heat and hunger. Turmeric the auspicious spice, placed on the heads of new-borns for luck, sprinkled over coconuts at *puja*, rubbed into the borders of wedding saris.”⁹⁴

Tilo describes how turmeric is important in Indian human life. She said it is a kind of medicine and it is a sign of good luck, people used in *puja-path* and when some marriage takes place in Indian society the Bride and groom’s relative put turmeric on their body. It is a kind of wedding ritual in which bride and groom both are putting turmeric on their body.

“Bring it to your face. Rub it on cheek, forehead, chin. Don’t be hesitant. For a thousand years before history began, bride – and those who long to be brides- have done the same. It will erase blemishes and wrinkles, suck away age and fat. For days afterward, your skin will give off a pale golden glow.”⁹⁵

She illustrates the uses of turmeric in Indian culture. She says that bride rubs *haldi* on her face, which removes their crinkle, wrinkle, and makes the face glow. In India before wedding bride and grooms both put *haldi* on their face.

In India, married woman puts red kumkum on their foreheads. Tilo compare Red Chilli with Red Kumkum “Here’s kumkum powdered as the heart of a hibiscus flower to put on our foreheads for married luck.”⁹⁶ Married woman put red kumkum on her foreheads. It gives identity to woman, that she is married.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni focuses on the life of Indian people, who live in America. Like Ahuja’s wife Lalita and Geeta. They come in Tilo’s shop, Lalita is frustrated with her husband and Geeta wants to marry with a white man. They live in America and gradually they adopt their American culture and that is the reason Lalita separated with her husband and Geeta falls in love with American man. They are influenced by American society this is why they take their own decision to live their life in their own way.

Divakaruni portrays four religious’ characters like Haroun, Jagjit, Ravan, Geeta and Lalita. They all are from different culture and religion. Tilo’s talk about Haroun “By the time Haroun comes today, as every Tuesday he does on his way to evening worship at the Masjid.”⁹⁷ In America too, he remembers his culture. In every Tuesday he goes to Masjid for worshipping. People go everywhere in the world, but they are still connected with their cultural values.

The character Geeta belongs to Sikh family. They live in America, and Geeta grew up in America. She is unaware about her Punjabi culture. “Geeta who is India and America all mixed together into a new melody, be forgiving of an old man who holds on to his past with all the strength in his failing hands.”⁹⁸ The character Geeta is a mixture of two cultures, because she grew up in America. So, her life was more influenced by the culture of America.

Indian values are very much different as compared to other countries, in the aspects of culture, tradition, values, caste, and community. Indian society has their proper rules which people are bound to follow it. On the basic of these, people live their life. “When Geeta’s grandfather came to her shop with newly indignant tales. He said:

“That girl, this Sunday she cut her hair short-short so that even her neck is showing I am telling her, Geeta, what did you do, and your hair is the

essence of your womanhood. Do you know what she is replying to? She was laughing and pushing all those messy ends back from her face, saying, oh Grandpa, I needed a new look.”⁹⁹

This shows the impact of dual society. They both are member in same family, but they observe things differently. When she cuts her hair short, her grandfather said that her hair was spirit of her womanhood. Her grandfather is typical Punjabi man, who follows all the cultural rules, rituals, and rites. He expects from others to follow the same. But Geeta grew up in modern society in America and she doesn't believe in such things and this is why she marries by going against her family values and culture.

Festivals have a special place in Indian society. Many festivals are celebrated all over India. Different reasons and stories are believed to be behind celebrating each festival. The reasons and purpose of celebrating the festival vary, so do the festivals differently. Some festivals are dedicated to the nation in which Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti etc. are prominent. Diwali, Holi, Raksha Bandhan, Eid, Onam, Durga Pooja etc. are celebrated on the basis of society and sect. Different regions, castes, religions etc. also have their own separate festivals. The festival of Shivaratri is also celebrated in India since ancient times. In which Lord Shiva is worshiped. The festival of Shivaratri is mentioned in *The Palace of Illusions*:

“On this particular night each year, the royal family would go in a procession- the man in front, the women behind- to a Shiva temple and offer their prayers. We didn't go far-the temple was situated within the palace grounds.”¹⁰⁰

Most of the nomenclature in Indian society and culture is also associated with mythological references. Linking the name to a divine story it is considered auspicious to keep. It is said that a person's personality can be understood by name, the name is given based on one's qualities and based on one's habits. Many times, a name is also named after a warrior or great person. This fact of Indian society and culture is confirmed in *The Palace of Illusions*:

“He said to your brother, *I named you Dhristadyumna*. He said to you, *I name you Draupdi*. And then we had the best feast this Kingdom has ever seen...’ My attention veered to the meaning of the name our father chose. Dhristadyumna, Destroyer of Enemies, Draupadi, Daughter of Drupad.”¹⁰¹

Here Drupad gives his son name as Dhristadyumna, which means destroyer of enemies and after his father throne he becomes a king of Panchaal. In this novel, names play an important role and all characters work according to their name.

Mythology and beliefs are given a lot of space in Indian society and culture. Myths like Bhoot - Phantom, Soul - God and Creator - Destroyer are popular in public. According to good and bad, they have also been accepted in favour and opposition of humanity. It is also believed that only evil spirits and negative powers are responsible for any ill effects on human life. To avoid its effects, it is necessary to do *Pooja* and other measures. Such measures are given priority in Indian society and culture. The dialogue between the two sisters Anju and Sudha can be witnessed in the *Sister of My Heart*:

“The old tales say this also: In the wake of the Bidhata Purush come the demons, for that is the world’s nature, good and evil mingled. That is way they leave an oil lamp burning. That is why they place the sacred tulsi leaf under the baby’s pillow for protection. In richer households, like the one my mother grew up in, she has told us, they hire a Brahmin to sit in the corridor and recite auspicious prayers all night.”¹⁰²

Man has also confirmed size and type of his unknown saviour and destructive power. The nature of a supernatural demon or deity is not denied as a formless, but also the form of the Bidhata Purush who is felt in the mind, has been formed. Along with the appearance of the male creator, the stage of the interview with him has been imagined. When the Bidhata Purush is assimilated, the eyes of the common creature will be dazzled and there will be a feeling of vibrancy in the brain. Anju says to Sudha in *Sister of My Heart*:

“The Bidhata Purush is tall and has a long spun-silk bread like the astrologer my mother visits each month to find out what the planets have in store for her. He is dressed in a robe made of the finest white cotton, his

fingers drip light, and his feet do not touch the ground as he glides toward us. When he bends over our cradle, his face is so blinding-bright I cannot tell his expression. With the first finger of his right hand he marks our foreheads. It is a tingly feeling, as when Pishi rubs tiger-balm on our temples.”¹⁰³

Bidhata Purush is a kind of astrologer, who writes fortune of every person. The Bidhata Purush is a god who apparently visits each Indian baby in that night after they are born. He comes and writes their fortune on their forehead. It is also believed that the Bidhata Purush also writes the date of a person's death on their forehead at birth. This is the myth, which is popular in their society. Some Indians seem to believe that people's entire life depends on what the Bidhata Purush writes on their forehead. Pishi recognized Bidhata Purush with allowing her to be a mother to her nieces, because she is a widow and she doesn't have their own child.

3.3 The Select Novels: Social and Culture Issues

The selected novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Bharati Mukherjee depict social and cultural issues. On many levels, social issues are linked to cultural aspects. On the basis of this, social and cultural issues are seen on the same ground. In Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Bharati Mukherjee's selected novels, the problems of women and the difference between ancient society and modern society is highlighted. In India, since ancient times, a woman is considered to be a goddess; on the other hand, a woman is also exploited at different levels in society. In the Indian society, women are seen to be associated with the honor of the family. It is believed in Indian society that dignity of family is only in the hands of women at home. The family's honour is based on the character of the daughters. The daughter's character has an influence on the fame and popularity of the family. This dimension of Indian society is interviewed in the *Sister of My Heart*: “Good daughters are bright lamps, lighting their mother's name; wicked daughters are firebrands, scorching the family's fame.”¹⁰⁴ People think that family reputation depends on their child.

Family reputation really depends on family children; either it's a girl or boy. In *The Tiger's Daughter*, Tara Banerjee's father sends her America for her college study. But there she married to a white man, which is against their culture, community, and society. She knows that after marrying with white man she became Christian. But after knowing all these things, she gets married and becomes Tara Banerjee Cartwright.

Her mother is against her marriage. She also thinks that "After all Tara had willfully abandoned her caste by marrying a foreigner. Perhaps her mother was offended that she, no longer a real Brahmin."¹⁰⁵ She breaks all the rules of her culture, because she lives in America. That culture of America affects her and this is the main reason she is married with white man. Her mother is a part of that society. Every Indian parent wants from their child to be married to their choice. The same thing Tara's mother wants from Tara too.

Tara's mother Arati doesn't like or believe on Europeans. She said "All white men were Europeans and she trusted them only when they were in their proper place."¹⁰⁶ Her mother does not trust on white man. Her mother is not happy with her marriage. Tara also realized herself as unwelcome American.

When Tara lands in India, her first stepping on the land of India at Bombay fills her disappointment. She knows that her wedding with David is not accepted by her society. It seems that alien land has become more of a home to her. She repents to have come to India without her husband and she is unable to keep him off her mind. "Perhaps I was stupid to come without him, she thought, even with him rewriting his novel during the vacation. Perhaps I was too impulsive, confusing my fear of New York with homesickness. Or perhaps I was going mad."¹⁰⁷

Tara's Bombay relatives cannot accept a woman who is not accompanied by her husband, David. According to Indian tradition, a man should lead the woman, he plays a protective role. Travelling alone, living alone and moving alone are part of unfamiliarity in many parts of India. In Indian society, one should marry in his own caste, if anyone marries from another caste, they will be treated as an outcast or a sinner. But the protagonist Tara violates these rules and marries a foreign man who is a Jew. "In India she felt she was not married to a person but to a foreigner and this foreignness was a burden. It was hard for her to talk about marriage responsibilities in Camaca Street, her friends were curious only

about the adjustments she has made.”¹⁰⁸ She goes against their culture. She forgets her caste, religion and society. The most important cause aggravating her discomfort and unease is her marriage which hangs on her heart as a burden.

Social and cultural issues are mainly related to condition of women in society. All rules, rituals, customs, cultures are made for woman not for man. It always creates a problem for women, in the *Desirable Daughters*; Bharati Mukherjee focuses on the problem of dowry, which parents give their daughter as a gift on their wedding. This is the gift for daughter to spend their life in a comfortable manner. But people use this thing in a different way. Now they have started demands for dowry, which is wrong. When Tara’s husband died on her wedding day, “Surendranath Lahiri, spoke “You will arrange posthaste for the dowry cash and the dowry gifts to be brought on board, Jai Krishna babu. What you do with your wretched girl, the killer of my son, I make your business.”¹⁰⁹ The ritual of dowry is coming from generation to generation. But now adays this becomes business like groom’s father demanding for dowry to Jai Krishna and gradually it becomes social issues.

Indian great epics *The Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are based on women suffering and because of women, the Great Wars are taken place. When Tara Lata’s husband died on her wedding day, her father-in-law starts cursing to her and society thinks that because of Tara Lata’s bad fate her husband died. Even she doesn’t do anything, but after that people say that she is the only one, who’s responsible for his death.

Before marriage Tara Lata does *Vrath and Pooja* to have better husband. She talks about “Tush Tusli Brata,” a hymn to the sacredness of marriage, a petition for a kind and generous husband;

“What do I hope for in worshipping you?
That my father’s wisdom be endless,
My mother’s kindness bottomless.
May my husband be as powerful as a kind of gods.
May my future son-in-law light up the royal court.
Bestow on me a brother who is learned and intellectual,

A son as handsome as the best-looking courtier,
And a daughter who is beauteous.
Let my hair-part glow red with vermilion powder, as a wife' should.
On my wrists and arms, let bangles glitter and jangle.
Load down my cloth-rack with the finest saris,
Fill my kitchen with scoured-shiny utensils,
Reward my wifely virtue with a rice-filled granary.
These are the boons that this young virgin begs of thee."¹¹⁰

In her worship, she prays for her father, mother and future family members like her husband, daughter, son, son-in-law. Wishing herself for good house, wealthy and happy life, kitchen filled with shine utensils. She is always devoted herself toward her house and family members. She is the only one, who takes care for her family. Even before her wedding, she starts praying like this. But after marriage she is totally devoted towards her family, actually in real sense she makes home. If woman is not present in family, family cannot become complete family. She is the only one who runs their house in a proper manner.

All *Vrath and Pooja Path* are only made for woman, because only Tara is does all rituals before marriage. Her future husband does not do any kind of *Vrath and Pooja Path* for his future wife. This is the biasness in society, the rules of society are only made for women. People always compare boy and girl, always want boy, because they think that boy is the only one who is competent to increase their generation and this is the reason they always compare girl with boy.

There is the same case with Sudha's daughter in *Sister of My Heart*. Sudha's mother-in-law wants baby boy. She tells Anju on phone call, "they want to kill my baby. My mother-in-law wants me to have an abortion."¹¹¹ This is the black spot in Indian society; because every life has right to live either it is girl or boy. But some people think that, having a boy is a thing of pride. Same case wither mother-in-law, she also wants to abort her baby girl, just because she is a girl. It creates a very shameful condition, when one woman is stands to kill the other women. She tells to Anju:

“when the test showed that it was a girl, Sudha’s voice is a hollow echo, “my mother-in-law said the eldest child of the Sanyal family has to be male—that’s how it’s been in the last five generations. She said it’ not fitting, it’ll bring the family shame and ill luck.”¹¹²

Her mother-in-law thinks that elder child is boy, because being a boy he is better to run his family and increase his generation. But if first child is girl, her birth would have to bear with shame and bad luck for family. Even her mother-in-law believes in abortion too. But the most important question arises how one woman can think like this to another woman and still this gender discrimination happens in Indian society. This is the big social issue in society, by which innocent girls have to suffer a lot.

The same case with *Jasmine*, she was born in a hut in Hasanpur, Jalandhar District, Punjab, India. She is the fifth daughter of the nine children. She said:

“I was born the year the harvest was so good that even my father, the reluctant tiller of thirty acres, had grain to hoard for drought. If I had been a boy, my birth in a bountiful year would have marked me as lucky, a child with a special destiny to fulfill. But daughter were curses. A daughter had to be married off before she could entre heaven, and dowries beggared families for generations. Gods with infinite memories visited girl children on women who needed to be punished for sins committed in other incarnations.”¹¹³

The same condition of Tilo, when she was born, her parents named her Nayan Tara, “Star of the Eye, but my parents’ faces were heavy with fallen hope at another girlchild, and this one coloured like mud. Wrap her in old cloth, lay her face down on the floor. What does she bring to the family except a dowry debt.”¹¹⁴ Birth of a girl child, people consider it as a bad luck. When Tilo is born her father will not feel happy. She cannot bring anything from which family feel proud on her. But her father considers her another burden in his family. This is the social evil in Indian society.

Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni both the novelists highlighted the issue of girl child as a burden in Indian society. For example, *Jasmine* is the main

protagonist of the novel *Jasmine*. She faces curse being as woman, in *Sister of My Heart*, when Sudha becomes pregnant and her mother-in law knows that she is having a daughter in her womb. Same condition of Tilo, when she was born and even Draupadi too, as woman faces lot of problems in her life. It is a very serious social issue, which continuous from ancient time.

The Palace of Illusions is based on story of the *Mahabharata*, in which tutor comes for only Dhir not for Droupadi, because she is a girl, tutor was not ready to teach her. He said “Perhaps it is best if she no longer joins us during your studies”¹¹⁵ Even she is more intelligent as compare with Dhir, but his tutor was not interested to teach Droupdi. On that time women did not have right for study. But after that Droupdi tries:

“Dhir’s tutor “was always trying to discourage me from attending Dhir’s less—and he wasn’t the only one. At first, no matter how much I begged, King Drupad had balked at the thought of me studying with my brother. A girl being taught what a boy was supposed to learn? Such a thing had never been heard of in the royal family of Panchaal! Only when Krishna insisted that the prophecy at my birth required me to get an education beyond what women were usually given, and that it was the king’s duty to provide this to me, did he agree with reluctance. Even Dhairya Ma, my accomplice in so many other areas of my life, regarded the lesson with misgiving. She complained that they were making me too hardheaded and argumentative, too manlike in my speech. Dhir, too sometime wondered if I wasn’t learning the wrong things, ideas that would only confuse me as I took up a woman’s life with its prescribed, restrictive laws. But I hungered to know about the amazing, mysterious world that extended past what I could imagine, the world of the senses and of that which lay beyond them. And so, I refused to give up the lessons, no matter who disapproved.”¹¹⁶

Most of the people are against girl’s education and how Draupadi begged from her father for study. But when her father is ready for her study, then her tutor is not interested to teach her. This shows how things were complicated in earlier time. Gender discrimination is done from earlier time in Indian society.

Draupadi suffers a lot in her life. In matter of marriage too, she gets married with five men's who try give her a new identity and convert her from Draupadi to Panchaali.

“Marriage all five of you!” my father sputtered. “How can you, prince of a noble house, suggest such a heinous act?”

In the throne room, the air throbbed with tension. My father and Dhir sat on golden thrones. The five Pandavas sat across from them on silver seats, to remind them that they were honored guests but less powerful.”¹¹⁷

Pandavas come to marry with Draupadi. Yudhisthir demands that “If we can't agree,” he continued calmly, “that Panchaali should marry all five of us, then we brother must take our leave, returning your daughter to your care.”¹¹⁸ When her father and brother listen this, they are shocked:

“King Droupad stiffened, and my brother's hand fisted around the hilt of his sword. To be sent back to her father's house was the worst disgrace a woman could face. When she was a woman of a noble house, such an insult could lead to a blood feud between the families. Was Yudhisthir oblivious of the danger in which his words had thrust the Pandavas?”¹¹⁹

Yudhisthir demands that all five brothers should marry to Draupadi. When her father and brother listen this, they are shocked, because doing girl's marriage with five men is unacceptable. But if some married girl comes back to their father's house and starts living there, it is also a matter of shame. But in that society, things were really bad at that time. Man is the head of the family and he is the only one who runs his family, because he is the ruling party. Society gives all rights to man, that is why man always subjugates woman.

In many of families girls do not go to school, because family does not in favour of girl's education. They think that she is born for households' works. But they send their boy in school, because he is a boy, they feel very proud on him. He is the only one who holds their generation and takes care, their legacy are also denied education in the name of dignity and dignity of home. In the *Jasmine*, Jasmine's grandmother resists her schooling. In jasmine's words “Dida, Pitaji's mother, was the only one in the family to make a fuss

about my staying on in school.”¹²⁰ Her Dida is very orthodox lady, she also believes in patriarchal rules of society. She is against girl’s education. When Jyoti’s masterji talks with Jyoti’s father for her study, nobody is in favour of her education, when her Masterji convinces her father. Her Masterji said:

“In hot weather countries Mother Nature is too fecund. That is why it is important that modern ladies go for secondary-school education and find themselves positions. They are not shackling themselves to wifedom and maternity first chance. Surely you know, sir, that in our modern society many bright ladies are finding positions?” “Position?” Pitaji demanded. “What do you mean, precisely? A lady working for stranger men? Money changing hands?”¹²¹

Her Masterji describes to her father, how women and men work together. He explains him, how education is important for girls. In modern society education is necessary for woman. He also clarifies that many women achieve good positions in society. Her father said:

“I am reasonable man,” “We are modern people. We let the girl decide.”¹²²

He calls her and holds her hands and asks:

“Masterji wants you to go to more school?” His father asking her “Her Masterji “wants you to learn more English and also shorthand. You are wanting position of steno in the State Bank?”¹²³

And she agrees with it and said:

“I want to be a doctor and set up my own clinic in a big town.” Like the mustached doctor in the bazaar clinic, I wanted to scrape off characters, fit plastic legs on stumps, work miracles.”¹²⁴

But when she said that she wanted to become a doctor like that mustached doctor, her father reacted: “The girl is mad! I’ll write in the back of the dictionary: The girl is mad!”¹²⁵ When she confesses her future dream to her father her father said that his daughter has become mad. Why? because she is a girl and she doesn’t have right to

become successful woman. This is the thinking of her father this is why he is over reacted. This is the patriarchal society, in which Jyoti is suffering for her education. She lives in a village and father and family is also part of that society. Her father is totally against with her education. Jyoti said that she wanted to become a doctor:

“Dida caught on for the first time. She said in Punjabi, “Blame the mother.

Insanity has to come from somewhere. Its’s the mother who is mad.”¹²⁶

And all the day and night, Jyoti and her mother listen the sound “The girl is mad. Her mother is mad. The whole country is mad. Kali Yuga has already come.”¹²⁷ When Jyoti stands for her future education, her Dida starts blaming her mother. The whole day her Dida repeated the girl is mad, her mother is mad, the whole country is mad and everybody is mad.

Even violence against women is justified in the name of preserving culture and tradition. A man commits violence towards a woman, as well as other women in the family. Even if a man does not assault his wife, other women still condemn the man. Jasmine’s grandmother is an example of such ethos. According to jasmine's grandmother- “Some women think they own the world because their husband is too lazy to beat them,”¹²⁸ Her Dida is also a woman and still she thinks bad for others women.

In Indian society and culture, husband-wife relationship is birth-to-birth. A woman is dependent on her husband. There is also a belief in the culture that no matter what the husband is, the woman should live with him. Ahuja’s wife Lalita in *The Mistress of Spices* lives with her husband in America, but she suffers from domestic violence.

Her husband thinks that her wife is not able to bear a child. But in the end of the novel, she writes a letter to Tilo, in that she tells:

“I didn’t find an Indian doctor, but the American lady said everything was fine with me. It could will be your husband, she said may be us sperm count is low. Have him come in for a checkup. Tell him not to worry. Plenty of things can be done nowadays easy.

But When I told him this, his face turned dark as the monsoon sky. The veins in his foreheads were like blue knot. What are you saying he said, I'm not a man? You want to look for something better? He started shaking me so hard I could hear the bones in my neck make snapping sounds.”¹²⁹

When she tells him that doctor say like this that her husband will not accept the reality and he will start beating her. He doesn't want to accept the truth, because it hurts his inner man.

Lalita is a lady, who lived in America and there she follows her Indian culture. In America too, she follows all rituals, as a wife, as a housewife, as a household lady. Taking care of her husband and house, she is doing everything for her family as a typical Indian wife and that is the reason, she also tolerates her violence too, because in India parents teach their girls, that after marriage your real house is your in-laws' house. But if husband used to beat his wife like this, so why she lives with him in that house. This is the thing, which she learns by American society. She lives in America that is the reason she leaves him. She said to Tilo

“You know that magazine you give me? In the back were notices. One said, If you are a battered woman, call this number for help. I looked at it for a long time. One minute I would think Why not. Next minute I would think Chee Chee, what sharam to tell strangers your husband is beating you. Finally I threw the magazine in the pile of old papers he takes to the dump for money end of every month.

I decided to try one more time. Put the past behind. How much choice did I have. I told him, Why not I go see the doctor and see what is wrong, why I am not becoming a mother.”¹³⁰

She thinks many times before separation and she gives many chances to her husband to improve. But her husband's violence is rising day by day.

“My head was feeling dizzy, I was so nervous he'd come back early. When I found it I started crying. I could hardly talk when I phoned.

The woman on the line was very kind. She was Indian like me, she understood a lot without my telling. She said I was right to call, they would help me if I was sure of what I wanted to do.

I packed a bag, took my passport, some wedding jewellery that was in the house, whatever money I could find. I didn't want to touch anything of his, but I knew I'd have to survive."¹³¹

Through one magazine, she finds one helpline for those women who battered and she called there. She does a lot to improve relations in their married life and this is the reason, she leaves her house. In America, Lalita learns lot of things for living alone and because of American society; she becomes capable to live alone with respect, dignity, and freedom that she cannot find with her husband. But last moment, she tries to improve their wedding life, because woman is the only one who doesn't want to become separated from her husband. Therefore, living in agreement under adverse circumstances has become habit of women. She does not even think of separating from her husband as:

The concept of divorce is constitutional. There is no provision for separation from husband in the Indian social system. Therefore, while accepting divorce as rare in India, in the *Desirable Daughters* Tara says:

"The last five years haven't been easy for him," I said. *For me. For me.*
"His father and I divorced, which is rare enough among Indians." I was brave I Stood up for myself and my Son. "If we're unhappy, we're expected to suck it up for the kid's Sake or our reputations."¹³²

A woman expects happiness and pleasure in her life. In Indian society and culture, a woman walks side by side with her husband. When a woman does not get a life according to her expectations, she does not turn away from life, nor does she sit down with satisfaction after accepting the dullness of life. She evaluates the inner side of her mind and tries to keep the whole family happy by exploring even the smallest possibility of happiness. The woman does not waste even a few moments of happiness, she seeks anything from anywhere. When Tilo, the character of *The Mistress of Spices*, does not get the spices as expected in her spice wardrobe, then she says:

“I pace the inner room, running my hand along the shelves that hold the spices are silent and I have only the turmoil of my woman mind to fall back on.”¹³³

In Indian society and culture, marriage is not just a relationship between a young man and a woman, but marriage is regarded by linking it with social and cultural documents. Therefore, only arranged marriages are given social recognition. The example of this vision of Indian ethos is seen in the *Sister of My Heart*:

“Fortunately, my father is not without honor. When after changing many boats and rains they finally reach Calcutta, he takes her to the kali temple. There a priest mumbles a few mantras and impatiently gestures at them to exchange garlands. Then he tucks into his waistband the coins my father gave him and turns to the next couple, for Kalighat is popular with lovers who have eloped. And thus, my parents are married.”¹³⁴

Therefore, love proves very expensive. “*I’ll love you, Dhir, until the great Brahman draws the universe back into Himself as a spider does its web.* I didn’t know then how sorely that love would be tested, or how much it would cost both of us.”¹³⁵

In our culture, love between an unmarried boy and a girl is considered unethical. Speaking of love in front of family members is also considered to be condemnable. The following example of *The Mistress of Spices* can be seen in this context:

“When she interrupts me and says, the words rushing out altogether, I guess this is as good a time as any to let you know that I’ve already found someone I love.

“Chee Chee, no shame at all, making talk of love in front of her parents, in front of me, her grandfather.”¹³⁶

In Indian society and culture, there is an unannounced rule in the society for unmarried girls and married women. Family and society have certain standards for a girl, most girls live within the limits of these standards. A married woman also has some special responsibilities towards the husband and family, which a woman tries to follow even in

adverse conditions. In the Indian ethos, just like a widow woman, special types of beliefs and boundaries are seen. The social system has an important role in building these beliefs and boundaries. When a woman's husband dies, she is called a widow. A widow woman must wear especially white sari for the performance of a colorless life. Dressing, grooming, and dressing is considered a great sin in her life. The widow's hair is also cut, and she cannot wear bracelets and bangles in her hands for life. This means that the life of a widowed woman becomes colorless. For example, the following sentence of *Sister of My Heart* can be seen:

“There’s Pishi, our widow aunt who threw herself heart-first into her younger brother’s household when she lost her husband at the age of eighteen. Dressed in austere white, her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style.”¹³⁷

Earlier, in India, after the death of the husband of the woman, she becomes also sati with her husband. But after the constitutional provisions, Sati has ceased in present India, but even after the death of a woman's husband, even today a woman must be socially and mentally sati. A widow must bear the brunt of being a widow at various stages of her life. The participation of widow in social and family functions is terminated. Being a widow, a woman also must sit at the back for food. A widow is considered unholy and inauspicious. Seeing the status of her aunt in *Sister of My Heart*, she says: “I hate Pishi when she puts on her patient smile and sits in the back of the hall on feast days, not participating, because widows mustn’t.”¹³⁸

After the end of social and cultural participation, social intervention should cease from the life of the widow. But in this stage, social intervention is increased rather than reduced. Everyone keeps an eye on what the widow woman eats, what she wears, what she does, where she goes, etc. Also, the people of the society try to decide in her life what the widow should do and what not. “She was a widow, and for herself she bought only half kilos of potatoes and onions (as a widow she should not have eaten onions)”¹³⁹

After social boycott, a widowed woman is left with no path other than devotion to God. In that she tries to find happiness. For this the widow woman has to engage in Bhajan and Kirtans. “Kirtans are one of the few pleasures Pishi considers suitable for widows and

thus allows herself.”¹⁴⁰ Due to the difference of economic level in the society, only the basic activities of the child's life change. There is a huge difference between the childhood of a driver's child and the child of the owner of that driver which is visible from the very beginning of his life. The first difference for the owner's child is that his father's status is that of becoming a boss and the driver's child's father has to become only a servant. Therefore, both of them cannot have the same level in life. In *Sister of My Heart*, when Sudha thinks about how her driver will have children, she is able to create only the pictures that she has seen in her life in her memory.

It can be concluded that the terms culture and tradition have very similar meanings and most of the critics believe that both the terms refer to the same thing. Culture and tradition are the ways of life of entire community in society. This includes dress, manner, language, religion, rites, rituals, and norms. In this chapter culture and tradition, both the terms are explained. The word culture means sect, belief, faith and worship. But in general belief, culture and tradition are acknowledged as one. The concept of culture in Western scholars is different from Indians. Due to the diversity of ideas, the definition of culture also shows diversity in different periods. Early critics attempt to keep civilization and culture in the same category, while culture began to be defined as independent after the twentieth century. At the same time, many scholars see culture is mixed with tradition. But in mid-twentieth century, critics identify this diverse magnitude to define culture. Critics such as David Bidney, A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn undertook a reinterpretation of the definitions of culture by reviewing the definitions of culture and tradition. In this background, Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni highlighted the issue of culture and values through their respective works in Indian society.

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Chapter - 4

MYTHS AND LEGENDS

4.1 The Concept of Myths and Legends

4.2 Representation of Myths and Legends

4.3 Influence: Myths and Legends

Chapter - 4

Myths and Legends

4.1 The Concept of Myths and Legends

Every culture has its myths and legends. Both Myths and Legends are related with historical events. It is based on narrative forms. There are number of narrative genres in literature, which are related in different ways of myths. Examples are folktales, sagas, fables, fairy tales, etiologic tales, epics, legends. Myths are traditional stories that are created within cultures in order to offer explanation. Myths initially began with religious origins; these stories narrate in order to offer logical explanations to people of a culture in order to explain ordinary or extraterrestrial events. A myth is a story based on tradition, ancient and legend which has a profound symbolic meaning. The main essence is the great power of the meaning of these stories, which are related to religious nature or tradition. The mythical stories were developed and gradually these became part of society. Myths are traditional and ancient stories, which are usually regarding for human history. Legends are also kind of stories which are popularly regarded to be about historical figures.

“In India, myths have traditionally been seen to be more important and have more explanatory power than history, something that was also part and parcel of the twentieth-century Gandhian view, which Ashis Nandy explains as follows: “because they faithfully contain history, because they are contemporary and, unlike history, are amenable to intervention, myths are the essence of a culture, history being at best superfluous and at worst misleading.” Therefore, Indians were traditionally preoccupied with myths, philosophy and literary and religious writing rather than history, with the result that, as T.N. Dhar points out, despite developing flourishing traditions of “several indigenous forms of art, literature,

theories of aesthetics, and various complex and highly-refined philosophical systems, missed out on developing a well-formulated Indian theory and practice of history.”¹

Human beings have believed in these myths and by the time it becomes a major part of human lives. Some people believe that there have been a key which influence human with their religion, culture and tradition. Myths and legends both are the synonyms of each other. There are many types of myths like ancient myth and modern myth. Myths and legends help us to understand historical background of society. Ancient myths and legends have helped historians to understand the past. It also shows us the importance of creativity and imagination of ancient societies.

“Myth is all about communication; it is a special kind of communication that establishes a relationship between the macrocosm (universe), mesocosm (society), and microcosm (humans). Communication is established through three avenues:

1. Narratives
2. Symbols
3. Rituals

Narratives, symbols, and rituals that express myth may be seen as the vocabulary of a religion; they construct the communal belief that binds a people.”²

Myth is a kind of narrative story or tale which explains how the world came to be in its present form. The study of Myth is called Mythology. Mythology is a collection of these myths and tales. A myth is a story of tales it is usually deep-rooted in faith or folk beliefs of the time. These stories are usually supernatural in nature. Myths generally involve gods, goddesses, heroes, and humans, in various settings which fulfill supernatural feats. These mythical stories elaborated the accounts of historical events, a way to defend a ritual and teach social behavior, ethics, and morals. Myths are basically attempting to explain formation, divinity, spirituality, and religion, to explore the meaning of birth, existence and death and record the adventures of heroes.

The word ‘myth’ has generally come to identify a kind of narrative story, which comes from human ancestors. The story of myth is untrue, similarly in legends too. It is also a kind of story, but people believed on that. The word *myth* comes from Ancient Greek word *mýthos*, which means narrative, speech, myth, fiction and plot. Myth means story or word. Mythology is the study of myth. The term myth has come to refer a certain kind of stories that share characteristics and make variety of different form of oral narratives, such as legends and folktales. Myths are symbolic tales which are based on past, may be connected to rituals, belief systems and may serve to direct social action and values.

Definitions of Myth

According to Cambridge Dictionary, is:

“An ancient story or set of stories, especially explaining the early history of a group of people or about natural events and facts.”³

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, is:

“A usually traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon creation *myths*.”⁴

According to Longman Dictionary, is:

“An ancient story, especially one invented in order to explain natural or historical events.”⁵

According to Collin’s Dictionary, is:

“A myth is a well-known story which was made up in the past to explain natural events or to justify religious beliefs or social customs.”⁶

According to Oxford Learners Dictionary, is:

“A story from ancient times, especially one that was told to explain natural events or to describe the early history of a people; this type of story”⁷

Plato defines Myth:

“There are in Plato identifiable traditional myths, such as the story of Gyges, the myth of Phaethon or that of the Amazons. Sometimes he modifies them, to a greater or lesser extent, while other times he combines them—this is the case, for instance, of the Noble Lie, which is a combination of the Cadmeian myth of autochthony and the Hesiodic myth of ages. There are also in Plato myths that are his own, such as the myth of Er or the myth of Atlantis. Many of the myths Plato invented feature characters and motifs taken from traditional mythology, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish his own mythological motifs from the traditional ones. The majority of the myths he invents preface or follow a philosophical argument: the *Gorgias* myth, the myth of the androgyne, the *Phaedo* myth, the myth of Er, the myth of the winged soul, the myth of Theuth, the cosmological myth of the *Statesman*, the Atlantis myth, the *Laws* myth.”⁸

According to Macleaver, myths include:

“the most penetrating philosophies of life, the most profound intimations of religion...” Since myth is usually understood as a fictitious story or belief, Macleaver has used this term differently, far from normal use. A.K.C. Ottaway in” his book ‘EDUCATION AND SOCIETY has rightly observed by saying “A myth suggests a popular idea which is not in fact true and one hesitates to apply this term indiscriminately to the philosophies and religions of mankind.”⁹

According to great scholar, Finnish folklorist Lauri Honko offers a widely cited definition:

“Myth, a story of the gods, a religious account of the beginning of the world, the creation, fundamental events, the exemplary deeds of the gods as a result of which the world, nature and culture were created together with all parts thereof and given their order, which still obtains. A myth

expresses and confirms society's religious values and norms, it provides a pattern of behavior to be imitated, testifies to the efficacy of ritual with its practical ends and establishes the sanctity of cult.”¹⁰

According to Ronald Barthes:

“He can tell us about the myth of the goodness of wine, or the way wine is signified as an essence it doesn’t really have. Wine may, in fact, for contingent reasons of sense-experience, be good. But a semiotic can’t tell us this.”¹¹

The Christian theologian M. Conrad Hyers wrote that:

“Myth today has come to have negative connotations which are the complete opposite of its meaning in a religious context... In a religious context, however, myths are storied vehicles of supreme truth, the most basic and important truths of all. By them people regulate and interpret their lives and find worth and purpose in their existence. Myths put one in touch with sacred realities, the fundamental sources of being, power, and truth. They are seen not only as being the opposite of error but also as being clearly distinguishable from stories told for entertainment and from the workaday, domestic, practical language of a people. They provide answers to the mysteries of being and becoming, mysteries which, as mysteries, are hidden, yet mysteries which are revealed through story and ritual. Myths deal not only with truth but with ultimate truth.”¹²

R.M. Macleiver in his book:

“THE WEB OF GOVERNMENT” has used the term ‘MYTH’ where the term ‘value’ is used. According to him, myths are “value impregnated beliefs and notions that men hold, that they live by or live for.” He says that every society is held together by a myth-system and “all social relations are myth born and myth-sustained.”¹³

There are extraordinary stories of myths and legends. These stories are existed in the minds of ancestors, and this is not confirmed that these stories are true or untrue. It is true that most of those ancient myths and legends stories appear to be untrue products of various imaginations, These stories are based on past incidence, which are coming out in the form of narrative. Many narrative stories are famous in India like *Mahabharat*, *Ramayan*, *Vikram Betal*, *Chandrakanta*, *Aliflilla* and *Panchtantra*. In every cultural story are based on myths and legends, because every culture has their own myth.

“Myth, a story of the gods, a religious account of the beginning of the world, the creation, fundamental events, the exemplary deeds of the gods as a result of which the world, nature and culture were created together with all the parts thereof and given their order, which still obtains. A myth expresses and confirms society’s religious values and norms, it provides patterns of behaviour to be imitated, testifies to the efficacy of ritual with its practical ends and establishes the sanctity of cult. The true milieu of myth is to be found in religious rites and ceremonial.”¹⁴

The Greek word used in English which is adopted from others European Language. The story of myth is based on belief, religious rites, ritual, or a natural phenomenon. These all stories are in the form of narrative and gradually it becomes a part of literature. These all stories are mythical stories, because every people listen these stories from their ancestors and regularly the chain is continued from generation to next generation. This proves that our modern society has two contradictory attitudes toward our past.

Legends are focused around a cultural hero rather than supernatural gods and goddesses. Mythical characters are like *Vishnu*, *Kali*, *Ram Sita*, *Krishna Radha*, *Shiv Gauri*, *Ganesh*, *Draupdi*, *Kauravas* and *Pandvas*. These all are imaginary characters and while the tale may be largely exaggerated, it is usually based on some historical facts and now it is considered as historical and cultural part of society.

Today’s modern scholars have studied the theories of Myth in different angles. These scholars have twelve types of approaches and these distinguished in four subgroups—namely historical, psychological, sociological and structural perspectives. But only the two main facts, which are accepted by the majority of today’s scholars. The first thing is that these theories are overlapped and complement each other. The second thing is that

these myths are multidimensional in nature. There are twelve types of myth approaches in modern context.

- “1. Myth as source of cognitive categories.
2. Myth as form of symbolic expression.
3. Myth as projection of the subconscious.
4. Myth as an integration factor in man’s adaptation to life.
5. Myth as world view.
6. Myth as charter of behaviour.
7. Myth as legitimization of social institutions.
8. Myth as mirror of culture, social structure, etc.
9. Myth as result of historical situation.
10. Myth as religious communication.
11. Myth as religious genre.
12. Myth as medium for structure.”¹⁵

A legend is a semi-true story, which has been passed on from person-to-person and has important meaning and symbolism of the culture in which it originates. A legend generally includes an element of reality, truth and facts which are based on historic facts and incidence. But it has legendary qualities, it usually involves heroic characters. These characters are related with spiritual beliefs of the culture in which they originate.

A legend is supposed to have some basis on historical fact and tends to state a real people or events. Gradually it developed the help of common people. Legend is a semi-true story which has passed from one generation to another and it also has important symbolism and meaning for the tradition in which it originated. A legend usually includes an element of truth, fact and reality which is based on historic facts but with mythical ad legendrical qualities. Furthermore, legends usually involve heroic characters or spiritual beliefs of the culture in which they arise. A legend can be defined as a traditional historical tale, which is based on common events and incidence.

“Legends I understand traditions, whether oral or written, which relate the fortunes of real people in the past, or which describe events, most necessary

human, that are said to have occurred at real places. Such legends contain a mixture of truth and falsehood, for were they wholly true, they would not be legends but histories. The proportion of truth and falsehood naturally varies in different legends; generally, perhaps, falsehood predominates, at least in the details, and the element of the marvelous or the miraculous often, though not always, enters largely into them.”¹⁶

Legend comes from the Latin word *legere*, which means ‘to read.’ The Latin word was originally imperfect to written stories, but in English, legend lost that limitation. This is the form of narrative, which is transferred from one person to another or it’s a kind of stories that people tell each other. The Old French noun legend derives from the Medieval Latin *legenda*. In its early English-language usage, the word indicated a narrative of an event or incidence. The word legendary was originally a noun means a collection or corpus of legends. Narrative dealing with a happening or events which was happening in that time. Legend is a thing which develops in between the people in society. This story is passed down generation to generation.

The word *legend* also refers to a person with an inspiring story, success and achievement. The word *legend* comes from the Old French word “legend” which comes from the Latin word “legenda” which means “story” or “the things to be read.” This was the first use in English language during 15th century.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, Legend is:

“A story coming down from the past especially: one popularly regarded as historical although not verifiable.”¹⁷

According to Cambridge Dictionary, is:

“A very old story or set of stories from ancient times, or the stories, not always true, that people tell about a famous event or person.”¹⁸

According to Collin’s Dictionary, is”

“A legend is a story that people talk about, concerning people, places, or events that exist or are famous at the present time.”¹⁹

According to Macmillan Dictionary, is:

“An old story about famous people and events in the past. Legends are not usually true.”²⁰

According to Oxford Learners Dictionary, is:

“A story from ancient times about people and events, that may or may not be true; this type of story.”²¹

According to J. A. Cuddon, is:

“a story or narrative that lies somewhere between myth and historical fact and which, as a rule, is about a particular figure or person.” Traditionally, a legend is a narrative that focuses on a historically or geographically specific figure, and describes his exploits. Similar to a myth, a legend can provide an etymological narrative, often filling in historical gaps.”²²

The function of a legend in literature is to present the story of human activities in such a way that they are considered by the audience to be true. These human activities and actions are presented as if they have occurred within human history. Legend has to include events that are not outside the area of possibility, but it may include wonders and miracles. Change has certainly occurred in legends more than time, giving them newness, strength, and a realistic taste. Most Indian myths and legends have been derived from two of Indian great epic, Mahabharata, and Ramayana, as well as in ancient Hindu texts, like Vedas and Puranas. The rhythmic stories in these books excite, motivate, and scare readers at the same time.

A legend is a traditional story which is based on historical account of events and action of people from ancient times. It is used to teach later generations about loyalty and other virtues needed in times of war. It tells the story of real hero, who is strong and prepared with great powers and their struggles with life, fate, domination, and powerful enemies. An example of a legend is the story of Ramayana, Mahabharata and Purans which was based on a real prince of early India.

The myths and legends are very much similar with each other, because both are based on past events and history. While legends are made of common stories, myth stories are working on natural phenomenon. Legend combines a real event and real person, as character and their life. Myth describes about people and gods' story. Myths are the set-in ancient times, even in pre-historic times. But legends are stories about people and their activities, action, and deeds. Many myths and legends contain morals, values, ethics and truths about bravery, goodness, cowardice, and evil.

4.2 Representation of Myths and Legends

Myth is associated with something being false or deceptive. In the study of religion, in contrast, myths are seen as narratives, which are based on truths and existence of Gods. Myth explains the concept of life after death and life after birth.

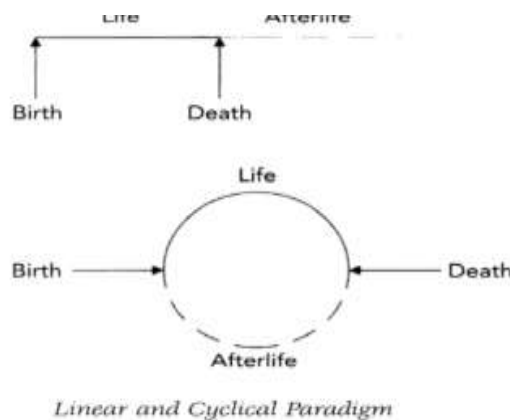


Figure No. 3: Life Cycle of birth and death (Devdutt Pattanaik, *Indian Mythology: Tales, Symbols, and Rituals from the Heart of the Subcontinent*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2003, p. 35.)

This is the contrast between life and death or after life. It symbolizes to understand between right and wrong and talks about of salvation or damnation. Myths are commonly thought to make past events and actions, which really present. Myth and legends are sources of spiritual power. The function, origin, and rightful of rituals are commonly

restricted in myths. Various scholars have wanted to establish broad patterns and types of myths and legends. Legends are stories which are based on ancient people who had lived on earth in historical time, it also portrays the ideas about courage, daring, brave and good heroes. The difference between myth and legend can be difficult to identify.

“Mythology is considered to be the root of magic realism. The word was first used in the eighteen century. Myth is a sacred narrative explaining about the existence of the world and humankind and how it came to be in the present form. The main characters in myths are usually Gods or supernatural beings. Myths are closely linked to religion. The true stories in a particular culture are considered as myths and the false ones as fables. Legends and folk tales are also related to myth. Folk tales are considered to be untrue. Legends are set in a more recent time and the characters in legends are humans whereas in myths the characters are superhuman.”²³

A myth is a traditional story, which explains the beliefs and ideas of human beings. The main characters in myths are usually gods or mystical heroes. The stories are set in the detached past. The people told these stories and they believed that these were true and gradually they are transferred from generation to generation. A legend is a traditional story about the past. The legend's main characters are usually heroes or kings. For example, the well-known legends include the tales of Indian great epics *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Beowulf from the Norse lands*, *Odysseus from Ancient Greece*, and *King Arthur from Old England*.

These genres play an important role in English Literature. From early literature, writers focus on mythical stories, folk tales, fairy tales and legends. These stories are related from people's life and their society. Every part and activities which was happened in society, that all are incorporated under the umbrella of literature. Most of the writers show myth and legend in their works. Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, discuss about myth and legends in their respective novels.

In Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter*, she talks about the spiritual powers like as Shiva, Kali, Vishnu and Saraswathi. Most of the Bengali cultured people have their faith on goddess Kali. Same case with Tara Banerjee and her family. When Tara goes to

America for her studies and there, she missed her family and Indian life style. “She prayed to Kali for strength so she would not break down before these polite Americans. And Kali, who was a mother nursing her infant, serene, black, exquisite and Kali, who was a mother devouring her infant, furious, black, and exquisite.”²⁴ In America too, she prays to Kali that gives her strength. In Indian mythology, goddess Kali is very powerful lady. She has various names like Durga, Bhavani, Jagdamba, Ambika, Chandi, Chaturbhuja, Kaushika, Shakti, Parwati, Savitri and Gauri. These are the names of Maha Kali, which represents feminine power.

In ancient time like goddess “Saraswati is associated with knowledge, Lakshmi with wealth, Durga with shakti, power.”²⁵ These all are the form of female power, but reason of worshipping is different. Durga is a very powerful woman. She defeats many demons like *Chand*, *Mund*, *Shumbh*, *Nishumbh*, *Mahishasur* and *Raktbij*. When Tara was studying in America, her mother writes a letter to Tara, she said:

“Write me more about your studies. I’m sure Goddess Saraswati will make you famous and a doctorate soon. I’ve told your grandmother (paternal) that I may not have sons like her, but my one daughter is equal to ten sons. I shall pray to Saraswati for success in your exams. On Saraswati Pujah day remember to wear something yellow, she has always looked after you before.”²⁶

Saraswati is the goddess of music and knowledge. Her mother gives her blessing and says goddess Saraswati will bless you for your exam. She said to Tara on Saraswati Puja were some yellow clothes, because on the special day of *Vasant Panchami* people worship Devi Saraswati, to achieve knowledge and understand things properly.

Tara’s mother is very spiritual kind of lady. She spends most of her time in worshipping. She is very much influenced by her religious. She believed on lord Shiva and Shakti. But one day she has seen a religious dream of Kali:

“Her religious dreams were not holy enough to turn her hair white overnight (as had happened to her grandmother once in *Panchaapara*), but they were adequately religious. She could tell, for instance, thought, Kali

or Mother Durga, which pregnant relative would be blessed with a male child, which niece or nephew would pass the final matriculation examination, or which out-of-town acquaintance would suddenly arrive unannounced for a month's visit."²⁷

She is very much influenced by Indian culture and traditional stories and that is the reason she spends lot of her time in worshipping. "Taking three baths a day was principle with her."²⁸ Tara's mother takes three times baths in a day, because all the time she is worshipping. She is fully attached with god and that is the reason, she sees Vishnu and Kali in her dreams. They are legendary characters in Indian history.

In *Jasmine*, character Jasmine belongs to Hasanpur Village. The story starts from fortune teller "Lifetime ago, under a banyan tree in the village of Hasanpur, an astrologer cupped his ears—his satellite dish to the stars—and foretold my widowhood and exile."²⁹ But she refused and said: "Not" I shouted. You're a crazy old man. You don't know what my future holds!"³⁰ This is the myth in society that astrologer is a person, who tells future of people. It is not clear that whatever he said is true. But he tells Jasmine's future life which is true. It is not important that whatever astrologer said is true. But people blindly believe on him. Jasmine does not believe on her fortune. But in America, Jasmine realizes her fate and with same case of Vimla, her village friend.

"The villagers say when a clay pitcher breaks, you see that the air inside is the same as the outside. Vimla set herself on fire because she had broken her pitcher (her husband was dead); she saw that there were no insides and outsides. We are just shells of the same Absolute."³¹

There is a myth of broken pitcher, her husband died. Here Vimla thinks that there is no reason to live alone. Clay pitcher breaks and all the water is coming out of it. People start saying that she had broken her pitcher and that is the reason she burns herself into the fire.

Bharati Mukherjee talks about various types of myths in *Jasmine*, like as broken pitcher and the third eye of Shiva. Besides the broken pitcher, the second significant archetypal image which is taken from Indian mythology is Shiva's third eye through which Shiva

looks out into invisible worlds of past, present and future. He has power to look invisible things. Jasmine said “In the stories that our mother recited, the holiest sages developed an extra eye right in the middle of their foreheads. Through that eye they peered out into invisible worlds.”³²

Later on, the sages developed this third eye in the middle of their foreheads and with that eye they became “tridev”, that is they could look back to the past, present and future. Jasmine gets a star-shaped wound which becomes her third eye which gives her a wide and true perspective on her life. With this third eye she learns to look into the future, as a medium between two cultures, with pain and hope. When she gets on her final journey in America she is “greedy with wants and reckless with hope.”³³

In Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s *The Mistress of Spices*, Tilo’s magical powers are related to myth, magic, mystery, culture. These are the major themes presented in her works. She efficiently brings these themes through her characters in the novel. Chitra Banerjee projects, dream as a technique of magical elements in her novels. She restores beyond Indian myth, belief, tradition, and culture. Through the mythological references in her novels it is evident that she has knowledge in myth and magical powers.

In this novel Divakaruni mainly focuses on magic realism which helps to develop the ideas of realism and through imagination which are expressed in magic, myth, and religion. According to Wendy Faris describes magical realism as:

“giv[ing] voice in the thematic domain to indigenous or ancient myths, legends, and cultural practices, and in the domain of narrative technique to the literary traditions that express them with the use of non-realistic events and images, it can be seen as a kind of narrative primitivism.”³⁴

Magical Realism is explicitly revealed when Tilo, *The mistress of spices*, speaks about her physique as an oxymoron of young lady in old woman’s form. Even her own customers don’t know about her youth and her ability of having magical power. “They do not know, of course. That I am not old, that this seeming body I took on in Shampathi’s fire when I vowed to become a Mistress is not mine.”³⁵ The island in which Tilo meets the first mother, who gives her the knowledge of spices, there is Shampathi’s fire in the

island. If any girl crosses that fire, she becomes Mistress and Tilo is the only one, who crosses that fire and becomes Mistress of Spices. Her beauty is on her original beauty; her beauty is given by Shampathi's fire. All the incidence, events and activities are based on imagination. Like the Shampathi's fire, serpents, island, and power of spices all are coming under magic realism.

“Imagination plays a very important role in the novel in creating parallel worlds, like the magic island of the Mistress of Spices, or the order of the Conch Bearers. Divakaruni has attributed magical powers to natural objects such as spices, conches, and mirrors. These spices are portrayed as spirits speaking to Tilo about how to treat her customers, punishing her when she goes against their wishes.”³⁶

Most of the people believe on their luck. All people have desire for secured future and better present. But most of the people want problem less life. They depend on their luck and fate and to make their better luck they do lots of things. When Haroun comes to her shop and said to Tilo “You make me a magical pocket and next time I come I'll put it in the car for luck.”³⁷ Same case with Haroun, he also wants to know about her future life and his fate. Tilo knows all about her life but she will not tell him.

Tilo had predicted an accident of Haroun in her vision. Thus, the prediction of his future through vision and the real event and incident in future is another special feature of magic realism. As Tilo predicted the incident and she decided to help him. She took the spice while is blue and black and glistening like the forces Sundarban where it was first found. She was helping him from Kalojire.

“Kalo jire, I think, just before the vision comes upon me again, blood and shattered bone and a thin cry like a red thread strangling the nigh. I must get kalo jire, spice of the dark planet Ketu, protector against the evil eye. Spice that is blue-black and glistening like the forest Sunderban where it was first found. Kalo jire shaped like a teardrop, smelling raw and wild like tigers, to cover over what fate has written for Haroun.”³⁸

Chitra Banerjee not only uses magical realism in her work but she is also fond of using myths and legends. When Tilo mentioned about the magical spice, Kalojire it was referred with Hindu mythology as 'Ketu is one of the nine planets in astrology. According to Tilo, the specialty of Kalo jire is to protect against the evil eyes.

“Rahu, Ketu is also an imaginary planet or a node that is positioned opposite Rahu. The constellations governed by him are Ashwin, Magha and Mool. An interesting story has already been described above while discussing about Rahu. The North node is called Rahu and South node is known as Ketu. It is believed to represent the tail of demon.”³⁹

Rahu and Ketu are famous for giving sudden results. They both are the parts of the same demon. Rahu has special enmity with Sun and Ketu with Moon. “Profession-wise, magicians, medical parishioners, astrologer and doctors are ruled by ketu. Both Rahu and Ketu, the imaginary nodes, are the mysterious forces and shown karmic and spiritual influences in the birth chart.”⁴⁰ These are the myths, on which people believe for their fate. She talks about the chillies. She said:

“The chilli grows in the very centre of the island, in the core of sleeping volcano. Until we reach the third level of apprenticeship. We are not allowed to approach it.

Chilli, spice of red Thursday, which is the day of reckoning. Day which invites us to pick up the sack of our existence and shake it inside out. Day of suicide, day of murder.”⁴¹

These are imaginary things, like chilli is grown in centre of island. Normally chillis are grown in normal places. But these chilli are having magical qualities. It grows in center of island in core of sleeping volcano. The mythological things and character, like Agni is God of fire and the place Lanka had played its etymological significance role in the novel.

“Agni is the Hindu god of fire. He is regarded as the friend and protector of humanity, in particular, he safeguards the home. Various forms of fire are associated with Agni and include the sun, lightning, comets, sacrificial fire,

domestic fires, the fire of the funeral pyre, and the digestive fire which is within all humans. Agni was especially important in the Vedic period (1500-500 BCE), and the Vedas contain more hymns to him than to any other deity. He is still considered today omnipresent though not directly worshipped. Agni knows the thoughts of all people and is a witness to all important actions, hence the use of fire in many important Hindu ceremonies such as marriages. He is also referred to in sacred texts such as the *Mahabharata* as the 'Oblation-devourer' and the 'Purifier'. With flaming hair and riding a goat, he is easily identified in Hindu art.”⁴²

Agni is the Hindu god, who is friend and protector of humanity. Same Tilo is doing with her customers. She always tries to helping her. She uses her magical powers for their customer's welfare, desire, happiness and needs. “Chilli sang and spoke in the voice of a hawk circling sun lightened hills where nothing grows. ‘I Lanka was born of Agni, God of fire. I dripped from his fingertips to bring taste to this bland earth.’”⁴³ She said that she was born from Agni. Her powers are given by Agni, the god of fire. She does the same. She serves for humanity and its happiness.

Tilo also talks about Ravana, who is the king of Lanka. The person with whom she is fallen in love, his name is also Ravana. She talks about Ravana, “Whose name the ten headed Ravana took for his enchanted kingdom. City of a million jewels turned the last to ash. Through more than once I have been tempted.”⁴⁴ When Jagjit came to her shop, without his telling she is aware about his problem. She gives him

“Cinnamon friend maker cinnamon dalchini warm –brown a skin, to find your someone who will take you by the hand, who will run with you and laugh with you and say See this is the America, it's not so bad.

And for the others with the peddle-hard eyes, cinnamon destroyer of enemies to give you strength, strength which grows in your legs and arms and mostly mouth till one say you shout no loud enough to make them, shocked stop.”⁴⁵

She helped Jagjit and because he is Sardar, his friends teas him and this is why he doesn't have any friend. But without saying Jagjit, she is aware about his problem. She gives him

cinnamon which would help him in making friends. She said cinnamon is destroyer of enemies which give strength in legs, arms and mouth and from the various spices, she resolves other problems.

Chitra Banerjee also shows glimpses of myths and legends in *Sister of My Heart*, in beginning of this novel, she describes myth of Bhidhata Purush “THEY SAY in the old tales that the first night after a child is born, the Bhidhata Purush comes down to earth himself to decide what its fortune is to be. That is why they bathe babies in sandal-wood water and wrap them in soft red malmal, color of luck.”⁴⁶ Bhidhata Purush is a kind of God. When child is born on that night, he came into the earth to decide their fortune. This is the myth in human society. The myth of Bhidhata Purush comes from ancient times. In book of Sudha Majjumdar, she describes the myth of Bhidhata Purush.

“The sixth day was devoted to the goddess of children, Mother Shasthi. Before the open door of the accouchement chamber, the priest performed a simple ritual of worship and prayer asking that the blessings of Mother Shasthi be bestowed on the child. Then a new slate and a piece of chalk were placed beside the infant. This was for Bidhata Purush, the god of fate, who it is said visits the child in secret this night and writes the fate of the child across his forehead in invisible yet indelible letters. His destiny would be determined by his Karma, the act of his previous life.”⁴⁷

This is an ancient belief, that he came on earth to decide children’s fortune. But Sudha talks about demons and evils. She said “I am not so sure. Perhaps they do not have the huge teeth, the curved blood-dripping claws and bulging red eyes of our *Children’s Ramayan Picture Book*, but I have a feeling they exist.”⁴⁸

Myths, mythology, and folk tales are very much part of Indian culture. Divakaruni divided *Sister of My Heart* into two books. One is- The Princess in the Palace of Snakes and another book is The Queen of Swords. This part has been referred to snakes and Rani of Jhansi. This thing added narrative meaning in this novel.

The novel presented the way in which young girl is raised with listening the stories of Demons, ghost, Savitri, Sita, Maa Durga and Lord Shiva. When Sudha’s mother-in-law

wants her to abort a baby girl but Sudha declines to abort her unborn girl child and after that she came to her mother's house. But when she received divorce letter, she said "O Goddess Durga! What will people say?" she cries. "A pregnant woman without sindur on her forehead! What shameful names will they call your child?"⁴⁹ In that situation Pishi is the only person, who come to rescue her by supporting her, enables Sudha to challenge her culture, tradition and society. Pishi said:

"Why should she care anymore what people say? What good has it done her? What good has it done any of us, a whole life time of being afraid of what society might think? I spit on this society which says it's fine to kill a baby girl in her mother's womb, but wrong for the mother to run away to save her child."⁵⁰

In the Ramayan, Sita is the character, who is very much suffered by the society and because of society, she moved to Jungle during her pregnancy. But that was ancient time and woman did not speak their own favor. Sita silently left Ayodhya. But in case of Sudha, she is a modern woman and she is able to take her decision. She also depends on her husband, but when it comes to her child. She takes her own decision and becomes separated from her husband.

Most of the people believe on their fortune and luck. In this novel, Chita Banerjee has also focused on the important role of stars for good fortune which is associated with good fate in Indian tradition. Anju observes her Nalini aunt is taking interest in all astrological matters, Anju sarcastically commenting on her and said "Our stars must be really well aligned this month, Aunt Nalini keeps saying. First Sudha's marriage is all set, then I get a proposal, and now someone wants to buy the bookstore."⁵¹ Thus, Anju does not believe on some kind of fortune, luck and fate and this is the reason, she critically comments on her.

Pishi has her own mythical beliefs. Her belief reflects the ironic challenge which inbuilt within the Hindu society and situation. She was one of the persons, who had followed caste rules and social taboos. One day Pishi looks unhappy, because there's going to be a big kirtan in neighbor temple, and she cannot go. She is strictly doing the simple tasks as handling mangoes to be pickled. Here Sudha comments:

“Drying mangoes is an important job, not something she can trust to a maidservant, for everyone knows that if the slices are touched by a woman who hasn't bathed, or has lain with a man that day, or is menstruating, they will turn furry with fungus.”⁵²

The Palace of Illusions is a reimagining story of the Mahabharat, the world-famous Indian epic. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni tries to rewrite this story as Draupadi's points of view. *The Palace of Illusions* takes us back to ancient time that is half history, half myth, and magical. Which are narrated by Panchaali, the wife of the legendary Pandavas brothers who are the heroes in the Mahabharat, this story gives a new interpretation of this ancient tale. The whole story is based on myths and legends, because this is the story of great epic Mahabharat as Draupadi's prospects. Her Dhai Maa tells her the story of Draupadi's birth. According to Mahabharat, Draupadi was born from fire with her brother, whose name is Dhristadyumna. Her Dhai Maa tells that:

“We'd been praying for thirty days, from sum-up to sundown. All of us: your father, the hundred priests he'd invited to Kampilya to perform the fire ceremony, headed by that shifty-eyed pair, Yaja and Upayaja, the queens, the ministers, and of course the servants. We'd been fasting, too—not that we were given a choice—just one meal, each evening, of flattened rice soaked in milk. King Drupad wouldn't eat even that. He only drank water carried up from the holy Ganga, so that the gods would feel obligated to answer his prayers.”⁵³

Her father wants a son this is the reason, he organized the fire ceremony and all the priests, queen, minister, and servants participated in that ceremony. King Drupad takes only one-time meal in a day. He pleased with his sacrifice; the fire god gave him the son. “And the voice comes again. They said, Behold, we give you the girl, a gift beyond what you asked for. Take good care of her, for she will change the course of history.”⁵⁴ With her brother, god of fire gives the girl and said that he gave him that girl as a gift. Take good care of her, because she would change the history.

This story is based on myth, from the birth of Draupadi and many more mythical characters like Drona, Drupad, Dhristadyumn, Krishna, Arjun, all Pandavas and

Kauravas. The story of *The Palace of Illusions* gives a new approach to understand and interpret the events of Mahabharata. By making Panchali the protagonist Divakaruni gives Panchali's own thoughts on her own life. Draupadi hears the story of her birth often by Dhairya as it made her feel special.

Divakaruni's novel begins with the story of Draupadi's birth and the novel progresses along the position of her life. Though the novel narrates the same incidents and events as in the epic, the narrative has presented the aspect of Draupadi's life. Divakaruni declares Draupadi's individuality by giving many examples throughout the novel. Her father Drupad starts naming them. "He said to your brother, I name you Dhristadyumna. He said to you, I name you Draupadi."⁵⁵ Drupad only wants a son, for rising their future generation. He wants a son. Draupadi said:

"My attention veered to the meaning of the names our father chose. Dhristadyumna, Destroyer of Enemies. Draupadi, Daughter of Drupad. Granted, he hadn't been expecting me, but couldn't my father have come up with something a little less egoistic? Something more suited to a girl who was supposed to change history?...I needed a more heroic name."⁵⁶

The story of Panchali is the story of the declaration of female will. The opening chapters present Draupadi's passion with her origin and introduce her as a disobedient character as well as her fight for a female identity. When the tutor was teaching Dhristadyumna and Draupadi had interrupted the tutor had said about the "women who are the path to ruin".⁵⁷ Draupadi says "I resented the tutor's declaration that women were the root of the entire world's trouble."⁵⁸ In her own house Draupadi's voice of protest, eagerness to learn Nyaya Shastra, taking part in all activities and even her right to choose her better- half were strongly different. Women's self identity doesn't matter at that time.

Draupadi said "I remembered what'd read long ago in a book, never imagining that quaint law could ever have any power over me. The wife is the property of the husband, no less so than a cow or a slave."⁵⁹ This is the helpless situation of woman and there is no one who takes a stand for her. In ancient time man considered her wife as a property, they treated her as cow or slave.

In the *Desirable Daughters*, Tara is the protagonist and narrator of the story. She tells the history of her family. The past of this story plays an important role in creating the present. The story begins with the wedding of Tara Lata, who becomes;

“The Tree Bride”. “The bride is named Tara Lata, a name we almost share. The name of the father is Jai Krishna Gangooly. Tara Lata is five years old and headed deep into the forest to marry a tree.”⁶⁰

This is the story of her ancestral namesake, Tara Lata, who becomes Tree Bride of Mishtigunj. In first chapter of the novel, she retells the historical incident of her family. This introduction part shows important events of past and also serves the reason to explore some traditional aspects of Indian tradition.

“The novel begins in a small village in Bangladesh in 1879 with the mythic tale of Tara Lata who is the namesake of Tara Bishwapriya. Tara Lata is her great grand who becomes the Tree Bide at the age of five, when her bridegroom dies of snake bite on the wedding day. The weird ritual-marriage of Tara to a tree is performed so that Tara Lata can wear vermilion and retain the marks of a married woman.”⁶¹

The story begins from the village Mishtigunj town in Bangladesh. Jai Krishna Gangooly’s daughter’s marriage happened. Here some mythical elements are shown by rituals and rites “The prewedding religious rites have been meticulously performed, and the prewedding stree-achar, married women’s rituals, boisterously observed. To protect the husband-to-be from poison of snakebite, married women relative and Brahmin women neighbors have propitiated Goddess Manasha with prescribed offerings.”⁶²

Before wedding all married women worship Goddess Manasha to protect their husband from poison of snakebite. These rituals show values, traditions and culture of her family and society. Manasha Devi is a goddess of snakes, worshipped mainly in Bengal and other parts of northeastern India. People worship her only for prevention and cure of snakebite and also for richness and wealth. Manasha is the sister of Vasuki, mother of Astika, and wife of sage Jaratkaru. She is also known as the destroyer of poison. She is the daughter of Shiva and Parvati. In some scriptures, the sage Kashyapa is considered to be her father, not Shiva. Manasha is represented as being kind to her devotees, but harsh to people who

refused to worship her. She is also known as Nagalakshmi. This is the history of Goddess Manasha, who is the destroyer of poison. Groom's father said to Jai Krishan you have no respect for Hindu tradition:

“Some rite must have been omitted. He heard a reference to Manasha, the goddess who causes or prevents snakebite. “The goddess must not have been sufficient appeased,” someone accused. “You Westernized types think you are stronger than our Hindu deities!”⁶³

He thinks that because of Jai Krishna's daughter her son is died. Tara Lata is thus, headed towards her destiny. Before she gets married her groom dies on his way due to snake bite. The groom's father becomes greedy and he wants Jaikrishna Gangooly to give the dowry. Jaikrishna Gangooly instead of bulking down to the demands of the groom's father, he refuses to give dowry and daughter. A Sanskrit scholar and a Brahmin, he decides to solemnize his daughter to a tree as bride so that she can overcome the curse of widowhood. It is assumed that she is combined with God, and now she is eternally fated to be a married woman who was leading a life of purity, spirituality and lifelong virginity. Tara Lata, the Tree-Bride becomes a family legend: After the night of her marriage, Tara Lata returned to Mishtigunj and, at least by legend. She never left her father's house and in that house, the world came to her. She lived there seventy years and gradually changed her world.

4.3 Influence: Myths and Legends

Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni focus on various themes like as nostalgia, homesickness, alienation, isolation, identity crisis, cultural clashes including myth and legends too. Most of their novels are based on Diasporic condition and the characters are always trying to be rerooted with their culture, tradition, and their land. Their characters are very much influenced by Indian mythology. Their all characters are learning to their ancestors about mythical stories and legends and both the writers talk about myths and legends in their novels.

“The magical elements are explained like normal occurrences. One is made to understand magical element and reality in the same stream of thought. A host of Indian diasporic writers like Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and others make use of this technique in their works. Divakaruni a modern writer, effectively makes use of magical realism and talks about the life of Indian immigrants in America. The writer constructs a virtual world called the island of spices in *The Mistress of Spices* where the protagonist, Tilo ttama is trained as a Mistress of Spices. With her magical powers, Tilo helps the Indian Americans to overcome their problems. Thus, the timeless island of spices and contemporary America are created effectively by the writer.”⁶⁴

In *The Mistress of Spices*, the protagonist Tilo’s life is very difficult. Her life is based on magical powers of spices and through the spices she helps to others. This story is based on myth and magical powers. Tilo has special powers by which she knows future of people. But when pirates aware about her magical powers, they attacked on her family and kidnap her. She becomes queen of pirates. There she enjoys her queen life with pirates. Whatever she experienced in ship; she starts sharing her mythological experience. She said:

“The sea serpent who sleeps all day in caves of coral, who ascend to the surface only when Dhruva, star of the north, pours its vial of milk-light over the ocean. Their skin like molten mother-of pearl, their tongues a ripple of polished silver. Who are the seldom seen by the mortal eye.”⁶⁵

She explains when typhoon comes into a sea and she is in trouble. She said the serpent, which lives under the deep of sea, saved her life from typhoon. She elaborates, when the light of a star falls on the ocean, which looks like milky light. Snakes were Tilo’s friends. She was saved from the pirates by the snakes of an island. The snakes talk Tilo and Tilo too replies to it. This is one of the features in magical realism. As Tilo has a power of predict the future.

Same case is of Tara Banerjee’s mother Arathi in *The Tiger’s Daughter*. She has seen another dream of Vishnu “She had dreamed of Vishnu buried deep in the ground, crying

to her for help, and her father's workmen, digging according to her instructions, had disinterred two Vishnu statues."⁶⁶

When Tara starts living in America. She feels loneliness, because her room partner is also behaving rudely. She is a fifteen years old girl; her father sends her to America for studies. But there she feels homesickness and nostalgic and this is why:

"She prayed to Kali for strength so she would not break down before these polite Americans. And Kali, who was a mother nursing her infant, serene, black, exquisite and Kali, who was a mother devouring her infant, furious, black, and exquisite, who sat under silk saris in a suitcase at Vassar, smiled out at her mischievously."⁶⁷

Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni mostly focus on Indian Immigrants' experiences, Indian culture and tradition, myth, legends, folk tales and culture of nation.

"Maya Manju Sharma refers to this aspect of her creativity personality. In her fiction Mukherjee handles Western themes and setting as well as characters who are westernized or biculture. Yet she is focused to admit that the very structure of her imagination is essentially Hindu and essentially moral."⁶⁸

But Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's works are mainly based on ancient stories like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, mythical stories, princess, and snakes.

"She tries to keep her readers in touch with the culture of India. Myth heroes, epics, legends are represented from Indian traditions: Bidhata Purush,' 'Demons', and goddess Kali in *Sister of My Heart*, Goddess Durga in *Neela: A Victory Song* and many more mythical characters like Lord Krishna, Vishnu, Sage Narad, Sage Vyasa in *The Palace of Illusions*."⁶⁹

Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* deals with a young Indian widow's successful attempt to reform her destiny and attain happiness. Indian sensibility patent itself in Indian myths and legends. The three important archetypal images are portrayed by Bharati Mukherjee one is broken pitcher and another is the image of Kali, the goddess of destruction and the third eye. When she moved to America there she faced lot of problems "She is brutally

raped the day she arrives in the United States and finds herself utterly out of favor in all white environs.”⁷⁰

Later in the story, Jasmine kills Half-Face, who has raped her. Bharati Mukherjee combines two archetypal images of Kali and the broken pitcher. After Half-Face (Ship Caption) has raped her; she wants to kill herself but sudden sense of mission that stopped her. She feels that:

“my mission was not yet over? I didn’t feel the passionate embrace of Lord Yama that could turn a kerosene flame into a lover’s caress. I could not let my personal dishonor disrupt my mission. There would be plenty of time to die...I extended my tongue and sliced it. Hot blood dripped immediately in the sink.”⁷¹

Bharati Mukherjee takes Jasmine character in common people. Her character is very simple, calm, and progressive. She does not even believe on some kind of fate and luck. Her life is revolves around her village Hasanpur in Punjab. But the person who raped her, she killed him. That time she was only seventeen and how boldly she takes her revenge, with that person who destroyed her identity. Jasmine fights in this situation as goddess Kali, Chandi. She tackles that situation bravely and takes her revenge as like Kali killed her enemy. Jasmine said “For the first time in my life I understood what evil was about. It was about not being human. Half-Face was from an underworld of evil.”⁷²

Bharati Mukherjee portrayed Jasmine character as Kali, who takes her revenge. Here when Kali is angry, nobody can stop her. In that anger she kills anyone. In ancient time goddess Kali is the only powerful lady, who kills anyone. Same situation of Jasmine, she said:

“Blood had congealed on my hands, my chin, my breasts. What a monstrous thing, what an infinitesimal thing, is the taking of a human life; for the second time in three months, I was in a room with a slain man, my body bloodied. I was walking death. Death incarnate.”⁷³

She has been reborn by killing not herself but that white man Half-Face. She starts her journey into America. She regards herself a symbolic sati-goddess. “She had burned

herself in a trash-can-funeral pyre behind a boarded-up motel in Florida.”⁷⁴ Thus, her burning of Prakash’s suit is highly symbolic in the context that she commits sati-the pitcher is broken, there is no difference between the inside and the outside and her soul, as it were, finds a new environment and society and from America her quest for a new identity has begun.

Bharati Mukherjee highlights the issue of *Sati Pratha* in her novel *Jasmine*. *Sati Pratha* is an ancient Hindu custom in India. In this custom the widow was burnt with ashes on her dead husband’s pyre. In this custom the woman intentionally decides to end her life with her husband after his death. But in most of the cases in which the women were forced to commit Sati, because they don’t want to die.

The first woman who is known as Sati was the companion of Lord Shiva. She burnt herself in fire to protest against her father who did not give her husband respect. While burning herself she prayed to reborn as the new wife of Shiva, whose name is Parvati. This is the mythical story about Lord Shankar and Parvati.

Another mythical story of women is Savitri, who becomes Sati. When Savitri’s husband Satyavan died, the Lord of death, Yama arrived to take her husband’s soul. Savitri begged from Yama to restore her soul and take her life, which he could not do. So Savitri followed Lord Yama. But on the way Yama noticed that Savitri was losing strength but was still following him and her dead husband, Yama offered to Savitri a boon, except her husband’s life. But finally, Lord Yama had restored Satyavan’s life and so Savitri gained her husband back.

These are the great women in Hindu mythology who were extremely devoted to their husbands. Sati or suttee was a historical practice which is developed by the society. This is the myth and legends, from which people know about these rituals and customs. Same condition of women, Bharati Mukherjee’s portrays in *Jasmine*. She calls it broken Pitcher as:

“Jasmine than stabs Half –Face to death and in this act finds the strength to continue living instead of committing “Sati” over the burned clothing of her husband (her original intent in coming to America). C. Sengupta delineates quite

emphatically,” and as she does it, she becomes Kali personified, the deity of avenging fury- death incarnate and the killing becomes so easy.”⁷⁵

This is the ancient custom, that after a death of woman’s husband. She will also die with her husband and people call them Sathi. This is the custom which is made by society and without asking her, that she wants to die or not. They compel to sit her on the pyre with her husband. Same condition is shown of Jasmine and her village friend Vimla. They both are widow, but they don’t die with their husbands. Thus, when she killed Half-Face, she feels a new strength.

When Tilo reached on the island, the First mother gives her a new name Tilottama which means the essence of Til. Most of the people use Til in their food. But the concept of Til is very different in this story. Her life is given by Agni, he made her for serving others and she is doing the same.

“Til is the sesame seed, under the sway of planet Venus, gold-brown as though just touched by flame. The flower of which is so small and straight and pointed that mothers pray for their girl children to have noses shaped like it. Til which ground into paste with sandal wood with cure disease of heart and liver, til which fried in its own oil restores luster when one has lost interest in life. I will be Tilottama, the essence of til, life giver, restorer of health and hope.”⁷⁶

When First mother asks Tilo, the meaning of her name Tilottama. She answered Til is the sesame seeds. When people lost their interest in life, Til works as a nourishment to give a new essence, new feeling towards health and it raises a new hope in life.

Her First mother tells her the ancient meaning of her name. “It is certainly not confidence you lack, girl. To take on the name of the most beautiful apsara of Rain-god Indra’s court. Tilottama most elegant of dancers, crest-jewel among women.”⁷⁷ First mother gives the historical background of her name. She said Tilottama is the most graceful dancer in Indra court. But she warns her “Remember: when Brahma made Tilottama to be chief dancer in Indra’s court, he warned her never to give her love to man – only to the dance.”⁷⁸ The Brahma made her the chief of all dancers in Indra’s court. He also warns Tilottama (dancer) to give her love only for dance not a man. Same thing First mother

tells Tilo that you become now *The Mistress of Spices*, so that's your responsibility to devote herself towards only magical spices and use spices' powers only to fulfill others desire and needs, do not use for her own desire.

This story describes the curing power of magical spices. The protagonist uses spices like turmeric, fenugreek, cinnamon, Asafoetida, Ginger, Kalo Jire, Neem, Red Chilli and other spices. At the beginning of the novel, she describes yellow powder turmeric. In *Ayurveda* turmeric is used as antibiotic it defends the humans from bacterial infection. Turmeric is used in the cooking for some color. But the actual reason it has medicinal quality. Tilo said turmeric have the quality of enhance people's beauty it will erase the wrinkles too.

This novel has special mythology like each spice has its special day. For turmeric it is Sunday, Chilli it is Thursday and Fenugreek is spice of Tuesday. It is also used for sprinkle on the head of new born and over coconuts at puja too. When she holds the spices in her hands, the spices speak to her. "I am turmeric who rose out of the ocean of milk when the Devas and Asuras churned for the treasures of the universe. I am turmeric who came after the poison and before the nectar and thus lie in between."⁷⁹ She believes that turmeric, it protects from sorrows and gives hope for rebirth and that is the reason she gave turmeric to Ahuja's wife for her marital sufferings for some hope.

Fenugreek is a Tuesday's spice. In *Ayurveda* fenugreek is medicine used to take care of hormonal disorder, asthma and to maintain a healthy metabolism. "Fenugreek methi, speckled seed first sown by Shabari, oldest women in the world."⁸⁰ Tilo also described fenugreek's taste as "Put in water and it will bloom free. Bite the swollen kernels between teeth and taste its bitter sweetness. Taste of water weeds in a wild place, the cry of grey geese."⁸¹ She asked to fenugreeks favor to help when Ratna came to her burning from poison. She feels disgraced by her husband. So Tilo gave the spice to make them happier. But in this novel Chitra Banerjee gives historical prospects of these spices, which is really effective in real life too.

Tilo meets the lonely American (Raven) who frequently visits in her shop on every Friday. She feels very close to him, she wants to give some spice to him. But she is very confused and thinks again and again which spice is good for him. She remembers the old

one told us “For each person there is one special spice.”⁸² She starts searching the spice for lonely American. First, she finds “Asafoetida, hing, which is the antidote to love.”⁸³ But Tilo will not give him Asafoetida. She remembers another medicinal leaf. She said:

“For all of them in the evening I burn tulsi, basil which is the plant of humility, curber of ego. The sweet smoke of Basil whose taste I know on my own tongue, for many times the Old One has burned it for me too. Basil sacred to Sri Ram, which slakes the craving for power, which turns the thoughts inwards, away from worldliness.”⁸⁴

She is worried about every customer like Geeta, Jagjit, Haroun, Ratna, Lalita (Ahuja’s wife). She gives turmeric to Lalita and she wants to know whether turmeric works or not. But after few days she came to the shop without any delight and happiness, because she lost the turmeric, she doesn’t use the spice. But Tilo give her “Fennel, which is the spice for Wednesday, the day of averages, of middle-aged people.”⁸⁵ It gives the fresh smell and refreshment. Tilo advised her to “Take a pinch of it, raw and whole, after every meal to freshen the breath and aid digestion and give you mental strength for what must be done.”⁸⁶ Fennel after every meal, she regularly gives fennel to her husband also because Fennel calms the temper of mind. There is a myth about “Fennel which the sage Vashistha ate after he swallows the demon Illwal so he would not come back to life again.”⁸⁷ Ancient people believe that Fennel is an equalizer which can take the power from one and give it to another when two people eat it at the same time. So, Tilo just wants to help her and through the Fennel spice, she tries to solve her problem. She thought Lalita got strength to protect herself and her marital life.

People who visited spice store gets into trouble. Like Jagjit, Lalita, Hauron, Geeta and other people faced problems because of Tilo’s magic failed as she broke the rules of Mistress. Lalita wrote a letter to Tilo about her problems. She said, “I will pound almond and chyavanprash for mental strength and physical and set it outside the door for the wind to carry to the women-house where you wait.”⁸⁸ Because she suffers a lot and for strength, she required more spices.

Chitra Banerjee used myth to expand the benefit of the spices. Each spice has the medicinal quality but people unaware of it. In this novel, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

gives awareness to the people about medicinal qualities of spices. Myth plays an important role in this novel by which it became interesting. In this novel, Indian history creates a myth on every spice to easily convey the medicinal qualities of the spices in human and society. When they include some magical elements, myth, and legends in that matter it easily reaches the peoples' mind. So, Chitra Banerjee uses the myth as a tool to explore the qualities of the spices in her novel.

Anju always refuses to believe story of demons or fairy tales which Pishi tells them. "The old tales say this also: In the wake of the Bidhata Purush come the demons, for that is the world's nature, good and evil mingled."⁸⁹ But Anju does not believe in this story, she said what nonsense there are no demons. In between of Bidhata Purush story Pishi said, "Sudha you are so lucky. 'Pishi shakes her head in regret 'may be Bidhata Purush doesn't come for girl-babies.'"⁹⁰ Chitra Banerjee discusses about myth of Bidhata Purush. But except Anju her family members believe on this myth. She is the only one who does not consider myth as part of her life.

Bidhata Purush blesses only the sons of any family and dejects the girl babies. Likewise, Sudha's Mother-in-Law wants a boy. She takes Sudha to visit the temple of Goddess shashthi for a male inheritor. Myths and legends are also product of a male-dominated culture, play an important role to create the ideas on which woman is base of her life. Sudha narrates this story to Anju:

"Once there was a princess," begins Sudha, "who lived in an underwater palace filled with snakes. No one knows who her parents were, or how she came to be in this place. The snakes were beautiful—green and yellow and gold and gentle. They fed her and played with her and sang her to sleep."⁹¹

She reinterprets myth, and the princess instead of waiting for the prince to save her. The above similarity of the myth is to show, how Anju loves Sudha, as Sudha is a princess and Anju represents herself as snake, to always protect Sudha. Through this myth, Divakaruni wants to show the bond of sisterhood between Sudha and Anju.

In the second book, 'The Queen of Swords' Sudha talks Anju, but the story has now taken a different shape. In *Sister of My Heart* the myth of the princess is relapsed by

Divakaruni. Sudha is very much inspired by Rani of Jhansi. When Sudha separates from her husband and she starts thinking about her daughter's future. She said:

“Bless me that I might be like the Rani of Jhansi, the Queen of Swords”, I say. “Bless me that I have the courage to go into battle when necessary, no matter how bleak the situation. Bless me that I may be able to fight for myself and my child, no matter where I am.”⁹²

She prays god, to bless with lot of strength and courage like Rani of Jhansi. She wants to fight like Rani of Jhansi.

In *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi talks about the skin colour. She said “Krishan and I got along so well was that we were both severely dark-skinned.”⁹³ Society considers such types of peoples are unfortunate. This shows the mentality of society, because society has forced the people to believe such types of myth that create discrimination in society.

When Draupadi talks about the colour complex, she mainly focused on girls colour complex and this is the reason she is worried about herself too but when she compares herself with Krishna, she observes his complexion was even darker than mine and she understands that colour complex is not drawback. She said:

“I heard the stories about how he'd charmed his way into the hearts of the women of his home town of Vrindavan—all 16,000 of them! And then there was the affair of Princess Rukmini, one of the great beauties of our time. She'd send him a most indecorous love letter asking him to marry her (to which he'd promptly and chivalrously responded by carrying her off in his chariot). He had other wives, too—over a hundred, at last count.”⁹⁴

The Lord Krishna is a mythical character in Indian epic. Draupadi talks about his darkness and said that she heard about his love affairs to many girls and also the relation with Rukmini. She sends him love letter in which she asked him to marry her. She knows that he is already married, but after that she proposed him. Many people believe that Lord Krishna has 16,000 Gopiya, who loved him. But this is the mythical story, how much is

true or false nobody has cleared this. Dhai Maa tells more stories about Krishna. She said:

“How he’d been born in a dungeon where his uncle Kamsa had imprisoned his parents with the intention of killing him at birth. How, in spite of the many prison guards, he’d been miraculously spirited away to safety in the Gokul. How, in infancy, he killed a demoness who tried to poison him with her breast milk. How he lifted up Mount Govardhan to shelter his people from a deluge that would have drowned them.”⁹⁵

Dhai Maa describes the world is divided into three parts Upper, Middle and Down. This is the only assumption of human ancestors. Dhai Maa starts describing the form of the world. She said:

“Above are the heavens, abode of Indra and the gods who sit around his throne. There in the center of the seven worlds peopled by celestial beings, lies the milky ocean on which Vishnu sleeps, waking only when the earth grows overburdened with unrighteousness. Below it stretches our earth, which would tumble into the great void if it were not supported upon the hoods of sesha, the thousand headed serpent. Further below is the underworld, where the demons, who hate the light of the sun, have their kingdom.”⁹⁶

In the *Desirable Daughters*, Tara’s middle sister Parvati said that when we three were kid. Our grandmother told us the stories of God, Goddess, and demons. In Indian society, when someone has suffers from chickenpox. People call that disease Shitala Mata. This is the myth in Indian society and most of the people believe in this story. Her grandmother tells her story of Shitla Mata:

“When we were little, our maternal grandmother used to tell us the story of the village deity, Shitala, the goddess of smallpox and malaria. In a dream, Goddess Shitala visited a king named Virata, the brave, just, rich, honest, and benevolent ruler of a prosperous kingdom also named Virata. In King Virata’s dream, the goddess demanded that he worship her and

make offerings of goats and rams to her. In return, she grant him a long life free of disease. The king refused the goddess. So Shitala loosed an epidemic and destroyed the kingdom, turning it into one big cremation ground.”⁹⁷

Her grandmother tells story of Shitala Mata, she said that Goddess Shitala comes in king’s dream. She demands him if he offers goats and rams to her then she grants him life free disease. But he refused to do this. So, the Goddess Shitala becomes very anger and destroys his whole kingdom. This is all about the story of Goddess Shitala. Parvati said:

“Our grandmother had been a great believer in gods and goddess talking to mortal through dreams, cautioning them not to go too uppity. She grew up before vaccination against smallpox became routine. That’s why she could comfort herself with myth.”⁹⁸

Tara compares herself with Padma didi and said:

“According to her, I had become “American,” meaning self engrossed. She had chosen to echo our mother and our aunts—things are never perfect in marriage, a woman must be prepared to accept less than perfection in this lifetime—and a model herself on Sita, Savitri, and Behula, the virtuous wives of Hindu myths.”⁹⁹

She compares herself and her Padma didi with Sita, Savitri and Behula, these are the mythical characters and they are fully devoted towards their husband.

Myths and legends play an important role in every culture. Every religion has its own myths and legends. Most of myths and legends are based on historical events and facts. A myth is a kind of story which is based on ancient traditions and legends which has intense symbolic meaning and it also has a heroic figure in the story. Myths are traditional and historical based stories, which are usually related to human life. Legends are also kind of stories which are regarded to historical figures. Basically, myth is the story which based on half truth and half false. Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in their select novels presented various Myths and legends to develop the story and plot. These are also very helpful in the better understanding of psychology of the leading characters.

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Chapter - 5

HUMAN VALUES

5.1 The Concept of Human Values

5.2 Delineation of Human Values

5.3 Portrayal of Characters and Characterization

Chapter - 5

Human Values

5.1 The Concept of Human Values

To understand the Human values first of all it is very essential to understand the term ‘value’. Values are the basic essential beliefs that guide and inspire to the people. This is useful to determine what is important for human beings. Values describe the personal qualities of human that embody and guide in the manner of human beings through which people establish interaction with the world around them. Values are the things which people carry on a personal level. It depends on person to person; the difference is how they behave with other persons.

Personal values are personal beliefs, ideas, thoughts about right and wrong. Value must have morals, ethics, helpful and kind in nature. People learn value from their culture, environment and society. There are many types of values which are accepted by religions, cultures and societies which reflect what is important in each context. The religion is the main source which decides what is considers being good and bad.

“Value, in general, could be classified broadly under five headings: personal, social, moral, spiritual and behavioral.

1. Personal Values
2. Social Values
3. Moral Values
4. Spiritual Values
5. Behavioral Values.”¹

These are the basic human values which people must have to follow in their life. Values are the principles, assurance and internal beliefs that people adopt and follow in their

daily behavior and activities. Human values are the combination of moral, ethical and spiritual values. These all values are built on the principles of human values.

It is a kind of human quality, which is applied to human activities manners and their behaviour. The word 'value' is derived from the Latin word 'valeo' which originally means strength and also health. In French, the term 'valeur' means excellence. The word Value is a mixture of three concepts such as Quality, Idea and Supernation. Values can be defined as the principles that guide people's lives and learn them how to behave with other people.

Values are the main essence of human personality; it gives good and bad effect to human personality. Many people judge good or bad people by their kind or cruel behavior and manner. It is pointed out that value is the significance of something which is considered being important or beneficial in human life. Human values have been employed in so individually different ways in human discourse. It is difficult to define values, for they are as broad in nature as in human life. Many dictionaries state that value is that which gives a useful, worthy, or estimable. It is necessary in human life.

Human values are the qualities that guide people to take their decision either good or bad. The responsibility of human value is to help to the others, honest with others and their works, giving respect to others, courage, liberty and equality, empathy, care for others. These are the human values which people learn from their family members, environment and their society. These human values give the effect of bonding, comforting, encouraging and supportive. Before understanding the human value, first understand the value. Most of the critics have defined the term value in different manners. Most of the scholars relate value with ancient Ved, Puran and Dharam. According to a great scholar and the author of a religious book Satyarth Prakash, Swami Dayanand Saraswati the term:

“Value’ indicates the regard for a thing, situation, or attitude which for some reason is esteemed or prized by the value-holder. The appropriate values which prepare the mind for Vedanta are certain universal ethical attitudes. In Sanskriti an ethical value can be defined as dharma. Dharma is a standard for norm of conduct derived from the way in which I wish others to view or treat me. The

‘dharmic’ mandates for behavior and attitude, though commonly found in religious scriptures, in fact, trace their source to pragmatic commonsense ethic which religious ethic confirm. In other words, my norm for what is ‘proper’ behavior or a ‘good’ attitude is based on the way I wish others to treat or view me. What I expect or want from others becomes my standard for Dharama, right behavior; what I do not want others to do is Adharma, wrong behavior. He talks about good behavior, attitude and norms

I want others to speak truth to me.

I do not want others to lie to me.

Truth-speaking is *dharma* for me.

Non-truth-speaking is *adharma* for me.

Scriptures confirm truth-speaking as good behavior.

Scriptures condemn non-truth-speaking as bad behavior.”²

Swami Dayanand Saraswati describes value according to Dharma and he also explains the difference between Dharma and Adharma. He said that he expects from people to behave properly, speak truth and speaking truth is Dharma, which shows good behaviour but speak lie comes under bad behavior.

Value makes characters, actions and behavior of anyone good or bad. In concept of human value, it has two aspects either good or bad. It also depends on human perception because human values differ from person to person. Value is considered of two possible forms: The first thing of value is such as honesty, truth, courage, beauty, loyalty and compassion. The second thing is what people think about truth, courage and loyalty. Every person has their own perception either its good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable in society. But the values may change from time to time and culture-to-culture. The values are taken from surrounding environment, from self, family, culture and society. This has bound all from the ideal, supreme dimension of human existence and experience.

Values may be regarded as positive and negative. Anything that has positive value is considered as to be good, and anything that has negative value is considered as to be bad.

Human values have been a central concept in the social life since their beginning. Human values play an essential role in the society. It is believed that spiritual books of all religions contain the values of good life. The importance of values is frequently mentioned in relation to the international and national problems. Thus, values are considered to be an important element to develop a culture.

Values generally include the definition of human values which are love, kindness, virtues, brotherhood, respect for others, faith, truth, honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, non-violence, gratitude, tolerance, a sense of responsibility, cooperation, self-reliance. These are the specialty of kind human towards other human including plants and animals too. Value has been supposed to be the experience of joy and pleasure. Many writers have given the definitions of value.

According to Rokeach:

“Value is an enduring belief, a specific mode of conduct or an end state of existence, along a continuum of relative importance.”³

In spite of the definitions quoted so far, one more definition still remains and it is of the eminent sociologist Prof. R. K. Mukerjee, who defines ‘value’ as follows —

“Values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning or socialization and aspirations.”⁴

According to Shaver:

“Values are standards and principles of judging worth. They are criteria by which we judge things - people, objects, actions, ideas and situations - to be good, worthwhile, desirable or on the other hand, worthless, despicable, undesirable or somewhere in between these two extremes.”⁵

Value is a thing which guides through social norms and beliefs which are regarded as the important aspects of particular culture, then, the different aspects of culture are also valued by the people. Values are defined as something which is pleasing and admirable

of respect for their own sake. Human values are defined as those values which assist human to live in harmony with the world.

Human values are beliefs that have an inherent value. Values have their own important characteristic of self-concept and serves as supervisory principles for person. It is innate in human language, but the thing is how people use these values in their life. The value of idea starts with positive or negative aspect.

“According to Rokeach, values are type of belief that is “centrally located within one’s total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave”. Values may be classified as prescriptive or proscriptive beliefs rather than as a descriptive or evaluative belief.”⁶

Human values are the features that guide people to understand moral and ethical values. Human beings are connected with many positive sources which teach them positivity thing like morality, kindness, virtues, spirituality and mysticism. But it depends on particular person, how much they take it. Every human has their own freedom to doing on their own choice. The reason human has choice either good or bad. It is totally depends upon them. In one hand some people are kind towards other people and the other hand some people are behaving very rude. This shows the quality of two different people, because some people believe in moral or virtuous things and some believe in negative things like lying, untruth, unfaith, disrespect, and dishonesty.

Every human being tries to maintain the highest human values to create relations with peace. Human understands values according to various stages of life or age because these values are changed according to time and situation. There are several universal human values such as truth, honesty, respect, peace, love and non- violence and faith which are directly associated with physical activities and emotional psyche of human personality. There is a need and importance to support these values for a better future and welfare of human society. These are some human values which are described below.

Honesty: Honesty is a fundamental human value which aims to adopt an honest approach. The path of honesty is tough but not impossible. One needs to have fortitude to gather benefit from it. Now a day’s most of the people seem to be choosing short-cut

methods derived for their greed and lust for which they become dishonest and unfair. But at the same time most of the people have the characteristic of honesty. Today's suffering and desolation of families and society are mainly due to dishonesty and because of these people tend to opt for wrong paths, which ultimately become a cause of sufferings.

“Honesty is a discipline that enriches a person with purity whereas dishonesty is the outcome of polluted minds. So it is always better to choose purity over pollution and making living worthy. There is no other virtue that can replace this great human virtue. Honesty teaches a person to respect self and be genuine to others.”⁷

Love: Love is a basic of all human values. The presence of love in human life, the love which they have for their families, with god, friends and for themselves, is very important source of energy to lead a smooth life. People cultivate Love for God, and then they would find it easy to reach Adhere to Satya and Dharma and they would experience Shanti.

“Love is not only one of the most frequently talked about issues today, it is also one of the most essential issues. Actually, love is the rose in our belief, a realm of the heart that never withers. Above all else, just as God wove the universe like lace on the loom of love, the most magical and charming music in the bosom of existence is always love. The strongest relationship among individuals that forms family, society, and nation is love. Universal love shows itself throughout the cosmos in the fact that each particle helps and supports every other particle.”⁸

Respect: Respect is a feeling of deep regard for someone or something. Respect has great importance in human life. The feeling of respect emerges from human elders. From human childhood their parents start to teach them, how to behave with others and give respect to parents, teachers, elders, family and cultural traditions. These are the Indian values, which people learn from their elders. These values play an important role in human life. If someone doesn't have these values in their life, they are considered as mannerless people. Many people come to believe that, at some level, all people are worthy of respect.

“There is someone ambiguity, when ‘respect for person’ is spoken of as a moral principle, as to whether it is one of our basic principles, on a par, say, with principles dealing with truth-telling or promise-keeping or whether it is the basic moral principle. If the first interpretation is adopted, then to respect persons as ends will be one of the many specific requirements of the moral life.”⁹

The value of self-respect may be something they can take for granted. People may discover how it is important when human self-respect is threatened. People have to struggle to maintain and develop their self-respect in defensive environment.

Beauty: Beauty is something which relates with outer and inner sides both. But in present time most of the people believe in outer beauty. This is also considered as a value, it depends on a particular person and their perception. In poem *Endymion* by John Keats, he said “A thing of beauty is a joy forever.”¹⁰ That means a beautiful object, which is natural or artificial, makes a person happy for a long time. It is always a source of happiness, enjoyment and pleasure for a person or a group of people in society.

One more poem of John Keats in which he describes the beauty is *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. In this Ode, he talks about the beauty of ancient Urn he said, “Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty.”¹¹ The speaker admires about the outer beauty of Urn. He believes that the urn’s beauty is truth and the thing which passes for truth in the urn’s complex world which holds truth in human life. Beauty is truth because it does not exist beyond the thoughtless state of nature. It is made by human and their perception.

But in modern time the sense of real beauty has been spoiled by human society. The way of thinking about something that is beautiful which people judge on a purely physical response. But the true meaning of beauty is to balance and harmony with nature. Many critics consider that beauty is not a human value and they said beauty is a subjective experience. The importance of this human value is clear when people consider things that bring meaning into their life, such as family and friends. These things become beautiful in a greater sense.

Trust: Basically truth is a form of reality. There are various ways to understand the trust. It plays an important role in human life. Even all relation is made up on the basic of trust.

If a person doesn't believe on the other person that means their relation is not true relation and that is the reason people like to make relation with trustful person. This is the reality of life on the basic of truth people make their relations and without trust the world simply would not function.

Satya is considered as an Indian value. A person who is honest and speaks the truth is a virtuous man and even speaking truth is dangerous for him. About this kind of man people say to be one of a very strong character. There are many mythical stories in Hindu tradition. One of the stories is the story of King Harishchandra. He was willing to give up everything for the sake of truth and keeping his word. His full name is Satyavadi Harishchandra which means truthness in his character. Harishchandra is a truthful King in ancient time he had ruled over the city of Ayodhya. He was a very good king who takes care of everyone in his kingdom. He was famous for his honest nature and fair. He was married to Queen Chandramatī. This great value has been elaborated in great Indian epic Mahabharata in which most of the characters are talking about the truth and lie. They said speaking truth is a good thing, but speaking truth is that which promotes the welfare of others. Truth is a thing which promotes the welfare of other living beings.

सत्यस्य वचनं श्रेयः सत्यादिपि हितंवदेत् ।

यद्भूतहितमत्यन्तं एतत् सत्यम् मतं मम ॥

satyasya vachanam shreyah satyadipi hitamvadet |

yad bhutahitamatyantam etat satyam matam mama ||

—Mahabharata 12.329.13

Telling truth is recommended, but more than that, tell those things which are in interest of all. According to Narada, truth is that which beneficial to [all] beings.”¹²

Sharmishtha says to Yayati, “If some bears false observer to save another man's life, describe that witness a fake person would be incorrect. Where the witness utters a lie down to save only his life and not that of another person whose life also depends on his statement, but then the lying witness will get destroyed by his falsehood.”¹³

Bheeshma said, “If lying under promise frees you from detention by evil captors. As much as possible, do not let wealth pass into the hands of evil people because wealth gifted to them will recoil and cause harm to the giver himself.”¹⁴

Truth is defined as speech that is free from harm and falsehood. This is also related with the facts. But, it is not enough that our purpose is good when person speaks the truth. In addition to good intention, people should also make sure that they ascertain their facts.

The values that show differences in cultures, there is a case of values which are worldwide and accepted in all cultures. Respect, truth, benevolence, kindness, patience, peace tolerance, democracy, etc these all are values. There are other factors which affect human values and life of an individual in society. In the process of learning value, family and society play an important role in particular life. Families are the first resource of information so people should be careful about their behaviors and attitudes, because their children see them as a role model in life. These are the universal human values throughout globe. It is universal values which are accepted by the societies and without these human values human society will not continue for a long time.

5.2 Delineation of Human Values

Human values are a set of different principles, dependable measures and behaviors of people. All the laws and its guidelines are usually shaped by a general idea of human. Children’s parents transfer their inherent values to their off springs on continuing basis that begins immediately after birth. Mother and father both inspire their child by their personal beliefs and values, which effect directly and indirectly to their child. Children also learn values through their family, religious, teachers, friends, leaders, and society. Human values are transferred from one generation to the next.

Human values refer to those values which are the center of being human. The values which are considered basic inherent values in human’s life include truth, love, peace, honesty, loyalty etc. They bring out the primary goodness of human and their society. These values are merged in nature and cut across individual’s culture, social and religious

conceits. Many Indian writers like as Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's works mainly focus on Indian values include human values. There are many themes in their works like as identity crises, isolation, cultural clashes, alienation, values, ethos and morals in that one more theme is human values. These morals principles and values are clearly seen in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*. Through the character of Tilo, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni tries to show basic characteristics of values, principles and ethos.

Tilo has Indian values, ethics, morals and beliefs in her life. The first mother teaches her that you are the Mistress of Spices that is your responsibility to know what they want in their life. Haroun said:

“O but Ahmad told how you helped him get a green card, no no don't shake your head, and Najib Mokhtar who was about to be fired and on third day after he came to you and you give him special tea to boil and drink, subhanallah, his boss got transfer all the way to Cleveland and Najib was put in his place.”¹⁵

He has a great trust on Tilo's magical spices. When Ahmad, Haroun's friend told him, how she helps to get green card and that is why he comes to her shop with some expectation and trust. Tilo, who always supports and helps to their customers. He starts telling his past incidence but she said:

“I did not want to hear more. I sensed his past already in the lines rising ridged and dark as thunder from his palms.

From under the counter I took a box of chandan, powder of the sandalwood tree that relieves the pain of remembering. I sprinkled its skin fragrance onto Haroun's hands, careful not to touch. Over the lines of his life. ‘Rub it in.’”¹⁶

Gradually, he remembers his past experiences of his native land, Srinagar. But Tilo doesn't want to listen, this is why she took chandan powder and sprinkled onto Haroun's hands. Tilo said rub it, because by rubbing that powder on hand it will be helpful to

relieving his past sufferings. She just tries to help in reliving his pain and he doesn't remember his bad memories again and again in his life.

Helping others is a kind of human value, because these values human learn from their parents, family, and their society. The process of sharing problem with someone is also a kind of value. One day Haroun comes to her shop with good news. He said "from tomorrow I am driving a cab black and yellow like sunflowers."¹⁷ He is very happy and just coming to say thank you. But Tilo is not happy because she already sensed his future and his accident by his black yellow taxi. But she cannot tell him. She promises him to make him the magical packet that protects him from evil eyes. Here Tilo prepares a packet of Kalo jire to protect him.

"Kalo jire, I think just before the vision comes upon me again, blood and shattered bone and a thin cry like a red thread strangling the night. I must get kalo jire, spice of the dark planet Ketu, protector against the evil eye. Spice that is blueblack and glistening like the forest Sundarban where it was first found. Kalo jire shaped like a teardrop, smelling raw and wild like tigers, to cover over what fate has written for Haroun."¹⁸

She gives him protection in form of Kalo jire. She compares Kalo jire spice with dark planet Ketu, who is the protector against evil eye. Kalo jire fights against negative energy. Tilo tells about mistress, she said "for a Mistress of Spices must feel the other's pain."¹⁹ This is the mistress duty to realize others pain and consider others pain as her own pain. She does the same with every customer.

When Jagjit comes to her shop with his mother, she describes his personality. He is ten and a half years old and tall as bamboo. Just looking Jagjit she has seen his past incidence. "Jagjit with his thin frightened wrists who has trouble in school because he knows only Punjabi still. Jagjit whom the teachers have put in the last row next to the drooling boy with milk-blue eyes. Jagjit who has learned his first English word. Idiot. Idiot. Idiot."²⁰ Jagjit is a Punjabi boy and in his school everybody discriminates with him even teachers too on account of it.

“In the playground they try to pull it off his head, green turban the colour of a parrot’s breast. They dangle the cloth from their fingertips and laugh at his long, uncut hair. And push him down.”²¹ In school his friends makes fun of his green turban, his long hair and on his religion. Jagjit feels very afraid with everyone. In school’s playground they pull his green turban. But Tilo helps him to solve his problem. She gives him the Cinnamon spice.

“Cinnamon friend-maker, cinnamon *dalchini* warm-brown as skin, to find you someone who will take you by the hand, who will run with you and laugh with you and say See this is America, it’s not so bad.

And for the others with the pebble-hard eyes, cinnamon destroyer of enemies to give you strength, strength which grows in your legs and arms and mostly mouth till one day you shout no loud enough to make them, shocked stop.”²²

She helps him by giving Cinnamon (*dalchini*). She said Cinnamon is friend maker which helps to find someone who will run, laugh and always stay with you. It is also a destroyer of enemies. It is also gives the strength to your legs and mouth. She gives this spice to Jagjit to make his life enjoyable. Tilo gives Fennel spice to Ahuja’s wife Lalita. She said:

“Fennel, I tell, Ahuja’s wife who is plucking at her dupatta with restless fingers, ‘is a wondrous spice. Take a pinch of it, raw and whole, after every meal to freshen the breath and aid digestion and give you mental strength for what must be done.’”²³

Tilo said “Trust me. Do what I tell you. Every day, after every meal, some for you and some for him, and when you have finished it all, come back and tell if it hasn’t helped. And here, read this. It’ll keep your mind off your troubles.”²⁴

Geeta’s grandfather is very much worried about her future and marriage. He wants that Geeta should marry with her parent’s choice but gradually she adopts American culture which is against her family. When her parents talk about her marriage, “She says, no disrespect, Gramps, it just isn’t for me. And while we’re on the subject, arranged marriages aren’t for me either. When I marry I’ll choose my own husband.”²⁵ She decides

to do love marriage but when her parents ask about the boy. “Then she says, his name is Juan, Juan Cordero. Hai bhagaban, I say. She is marrying a white man.”²⁶ She gives him some spice to eat. She gives him a powder of almond and kesar to boil in milk and drink.

“The whole family must drink it at bedtime,’ I say, to sweeten your words and thoughts, to remember the love buried under the anger. And you dada who made much of this tangle, take special care what you say. No more talk of going back to India. When bitterness boil up in your mouth, wanting out, swallow it down with a spoon of this draksha syrup.”²⁷

This novel focuses on the social responsibility and shows Tilo’s as a person of high moral order. She is always ready to help everyone. Even this becomes her duty, because she is a mistress. The rule of mistress is to resolve their custom problems. She ignores her desires and serves herself for the others. This is the characteristic of virtuous and noble person. This is not the only responsibility of Tilo but all those human beings who live in this society to help others. In this novel, Tilo is a person who resolves others problems by taking them as her own problem.

Same values Chitra Banerjee illustrates in *Sister of My Heart*. She discusses these values in Indian family. This novel is based on the relation between two cousin sisters. In India, relationship plays an important role in particular human life. Humans have relation from the birth of their life. Every human is bound with many relations like mother, father, sister, brother, uncle, aunt and many more relations. But only in India, people give first priority to their family not to others. Every Indian knows the importance of relations; this is the thing which people learn from their elders, religion, family and society.

Divakaruni’s portrayal of Pishi’s character as a very loyal and true towards her duty, because she is a widow, she follows all the rituals, rites and boundation which are made by the society for a Hindu widow. She lives in her brother’s house, because after the death of her husband Anju’s father takes her with him. Sudha tells “When she lost her husband at the age of eighteen. Dressed in austere white, her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style.”²⁸ She follows all the rules and restrictions which society has forced widow women to follow as:

“Pishi looks unhappy. There’s going to be a big kirtan in the neighbourhood temple this afternoon, singers and dholak players who have come all the way from Nabadwip, and all the women she knows are going. Kirtan are one of the few pleasures Pishi considers suitable for widows and thus allows herself. But drying mango is an important job, not something she can trust to a maidservant.”²⁹

Pishi knows all the duties of her widowhood. She wants to go kirtan because Indian culture teaches that if a woman becomes widow. She has to spend most of her time in worshiping, bhajan and kirtan that is the reason she takes part in kirtan. But because of drying mango she can't go.

After marriage Sudha becomes a traditional house wife in some small town and Anju shifted to America with her husband. Sudha is a house wife, who takes care of her family and house. But when she becomes pregnant her mother-in-law takes over the household's works and treats her as good mother-in-law. When Sudha said:

“You should let me do some of it, Ma,” I say something feeling guilty. “I feel useless—and bored. My dear!” Her eyes take on a dewy softness, as they often do nowadays. “What are you talking about! You’re doing the most useful thing of all. And as for bored, why don’t you ask Ramesh’s brothers to run to Biren’s shop and pick up a new video movies for you.”³⁰

Sudha’s mother-in-law takes over a lot of her household duties and because of this Sudha feels guilty. But when she said this to her mother-in-law, her mother said that you were doing the most important work of all things and why did you feel bored better she should watch some good movies so that she will not get bored. Her mother-in-law is so happy, as she wants a baby boy. She cares her every time.

Sudha said “My mother says I should be down on my knees, forehead to the floor, giving thanks that my in-laws are so caring.”³¹ In Sudha’s in-law’s house, she could never feel this type of caring before. But suddenly her mother-in-law started caring her very much because of her unborn child. How innocently Sudha thinks about her in-laws and she feels very thankful to her in-laws for their care and concern.

When Anju knows about Sudha's divorce, she starts planning to take Sudha to America. She starts extra work during her pregnancy so as to buy a ticket for Sudha but her husband is not in favour to do extra work. When Sunil says not to do more work it's bad for their baby. Anju replies "Sudha's my sister, the person I love most in the world. You yourself told me how hard life would be for her in India, now that she's now married any more. How can I just leave her there to suffer?"³²

This shows strong bond between two sisters. When Anju listens the news of Sudha's divorce, that her in-laws want a baby boy, she becomes concerned about Sudha and she decides to take Sudha to America. In this story, most of the people are against to their relation bond. Even Anju's mother, Sunil and their neighbor too thinks so. But Anju's love for Sudha never becomes less. In India, people gives more time to their family because to them family is their first priority. They know that family is the only thing which connects family members with each other. In this novel, they are cousin sisters but love each other as real sisters. This is because oneness of family which is very important in every human life.

These human values people learn from their parents and it will be transferred from one generation to the other one. Human values show their background from where they belong. It depends on particular person, how they use in their life. Values have their historical background. In *The Palace of Illusions* Chitra Banerjee retells story of the Mahabharata in Draupadi's points of view and basically the story is based on the life of Draupadi.

The Palace of Illusions shows many relations like sister, brother, father and husband. Here Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni portrays brother, sister relation between Draupadi and Dhristadyumna. Draupadi shares her memorable time with her brother. She said:

"My years in my father's house would have been unbearable had I not had my brother. I never forget the feel of his hand clutching mine, his refusal to abandon me. Perhaps he and I would have been close even otherwise; segregated as we were in the palace wing our father had set aside for us—whether from caring or fear I was never sure. But that first loyalty made us inseparable. We shared our fears of the future with each other, shielded each

other with fierce protectiveness from a world that regarded us as not quite normal, and comforted each other in our loneliness.”³³

When they live together, they first time realize that both are loyal with each other and now they will not get separated. She said:

“We never spoke of what each one meant to the other—Dhri was uncomfortable with effusiveness. But sometimes I wrote him letters in my head, looping the words into extravagant metaphors. I’ll love you, Dhri, until the great Brahman draws the universe back into Himself as a spider does its web.”³⁴

This shows how much they love each other but they never show it openly. She said, “Dhai Ma loved gossips, laughter, comfort, good food and drink, and, in her own way, power. Her weakness was her inability to say no to me.”³⁵ This shows the true relationship between Dhai Ma and Draupadi. She talks about her brother’s character Dhristadyumna. She said:

“Dhri was the noblest of all the people I knew. He had a sincere love of virtue but, sadly, almost no sense of humor. He was overly protective of me. His weakness was that he believes completely in his destiny and had resigned himself to fulfilling it.”³⁶

She describes Dhristadyumna’s character; she said that Dhri was very kind, loyal with his work and noble person. He likes to do virtuous things. But his weakness was that he believes in his fate and destiny. The story starts like this;

“Once a boy came running in from play and asked, Mother, what is milk? My friends say it is creamy and white and has the sweetest taste, second only to nectar of the gods. Please, mother, I want milk to drink.

The mother, who was too poor to buy milk, mixed some flour in water, added jaggery, and gave it to the boy.

The boy drank it and danced in joy, saying, Now I, too, know what milk tastes like!

And the mother, who through all the years of her hardship had never shed a tear, wept on his trust and her deception.”³⁷

They beautifully tell a story of child and mother. In this story, a small boy doesn't know the taste of milk. Some of his friends tell him that it is creamy and white liquid. But her mother is not able to buy milk, so, she mixed some flour and jaggery in to water and gave him. He drinks it and starts dancing with joy and says that he knows the taste of milk. But his mother feels very guilty, because the boy has faith on his mother. He knows that my mother loves me very much and she gives me milk in anyhow and when her mother gives him milk, he drinks it and feels very happy. This is because he has never seen milk in his life. This shows that how children are innocent.

They believe on their parents and everything which they have in their life are just because of his family. Every relation is based on truth, loyalty and love if any relation is not having these qualities. That relation is false relation. There are many short stories in the *Mahabharata*. She tells another story of the son of Brahmin and the son of king.

Once in blameless time, the son of a Brahmin and the son of king they were sent to the ashram of a great sage for study. They lived many years and spent time together and became best friends, and when the time comes for each to return to home, they both wept. After that they become best friend and in friendship, they make their good memories.

“The prince said to his schoolmate, Drona, I will never forget you. Come to me when I become king of Panchaal, and all I have will be yours as well.

The Brahmin embraced the prince and said, Dear Drupad, your friendship means more to me than all the riches in the treasury of the gods. I will hold your words in my heart forever.”³⁸

In ancient time there was no school for education. So, people go to the Gurukul and Ashrams for their studies. Ashram is the place which is open for all. When they both start living together, they become best friends and when they left ashram, they started weeping. They are very much attached to each other. This is the good quality of human, when two unknown persons start talking with each other and gradually they are heartily attached.

There are many characters in *Jasmine*. Some characters are good and some are bad. But most of the characters are helpful like Jasmine's Masterji and Professor Devinder Vadhera. Jasmine's Masterji is very kind and helpful person. Without any reason he goes to Jasmine's house and there he talks to her father for her study. But when he asks to Jasmine for study and she said yes I want to study. Jasmine's "Dida caught on for the first time. She said in Punjabi, "Blame the mother. Insanity has to come from somewhere. It's the mother who is mad."³⁹

Every mother wants that her daughter should live her life freely. Jasmine said "My mother was a sniper. She wanted to spare me the pain of dowryless bride. My mother wanted a happy life for me."⁴⁰ Every mother wants that her daughter should live freely. But it's not possible in male dominated society because the head of the family is male. He is the only one who takes their house decision. But women don't have right to even suggest anything.

The character of Masterji is very progressive character. He is the only person who motivates Jasmine for her future study. He is an Indian but he loves American things. "Masterji loved things American. He had a nephew in California. He read us his letters."⁴¹ He tells about his nephew lives in America that is the reason he knows much about America. When Masterji went to Jasmine's house for requesting her father for her study.

"Masterji kept his eyes on the little girl working the buffalo dung. "An educator's duty, sir, is not to burn the flower with the dung. In this country"— Pitaji laughed— "we are having too many humans and not enough buffaloes."⁴²

Jasmine's Masterji went to her house to convince her father but her father did not agree for her education. Professor Devinder Vadhera also plays an important role in Jasmine's life. He was a teacher of Jasmine's husband Prakash. Professor Vadhera is a very helpful and kind man. Prakash said to Jasmine that "he went on to list two technical institutes which, for a fee, made it easy for international students to get their visas and which also negotiated a very generous exchange of Jullundhar college credits."⁴³

Professor Vadhera lives in America and there he wants his two best students to help him in America. Jasmine said “After he’d finished reading. “I was his best student. The rest were dunderheads. Dunderheads! You see how the mediocre are smart enough to get away? Only we, the best ones, let ourselves be hemmed in by bloodsuckers and dunderheads.”⁴⁴

Without Human values people cannot survive. There are two types of values either good or bad. People live in the society and remain loyal with others, behave good, supportive and kind with others. Everybody loves their family, nation and friends. In India every word relating to family carries a special meaning. In *Desirable Daughters*, when Tara remembers these relations in America. She says:

“My oldest sister, Padma, is my Didi, or Padma-didi, and my middle sister is Parvati-di. I’ll always just be Tara. Children are taught to call every family friend “aunties” and “uncle,” or, in our language, mashai and mesho for the mother’s side, pishi and pishe mashai or kaki and kaku for the father’s side. It’s how a family-based culture sees the world, outward from the protective weave of relatedness, suspicious of anything that can’t be fitted inside it.”⁴⁵

Relations are the main priority of human. The family is the first school of child in which they grow up and learn all the manners and behaviour. Parents want that their wards should become good persons.

Tara talks about Padma didi and Parvati di and herself as Tara. She said there are two sides relative here Mashai and Mesho from mother’s side and Pishi and Pishe mashai or Kaku and Kaki from father’s side. This family structure is very important in human life. These things Tara tells to her son Rabi, who is completely unaware about Indian culture.

Life gets a lot of material comforts in the mirror of modernity, but on one stage, relationships get shattered. A person who tries to become complacent gets autism in a sympathetic way. Human beings need family and relationships in their life. This is the specialty of human values and these things they want in their life because without family we are nothing.

In *Desirable Daughters*, Rabi also has the same wish that he should have a family. He says: “you ask what I want? I want what everyone has. I want to belong. I want a mother, a family. Aunties. Cousins.”⁴⁶ Rabi lives in America but still somehow he has rooted to Indian cultural values. This shows his cultural affection and love towards his family.

People try to stay connected with their birthplace as well as the birthplace of their parents and because of this affection Tara goes back to India with her son. Same case of Haroun in *The Mistress of Spices* when terrorist attack happens on his native town in Srinagar he suggests her grandfather to leave this land. Every person wants to attach with their roots because they love that place and this is the reason Haroun’s grandfather refused to leave his land and in *Desirable Daughters* Tara comes back India to get remain associated with her land and her son. Every family member depends on each other and this is the reason Haroun’s grandfather doesn’t leave his native land and Tara comes back to India with her son to reconnect with her native land.

In *The Tiger’s Daughter*, after seven years Tara Banerjee comes back India to erase her shadowy fears of time in America. But after seeing the condition of India like on railway station many beggars are sitting. She leaves India before seven years and when she comes back India, she thinks is that society which she leaves before seven years has changes slightly:

“For years she had dreamed of this return to India. She had believed that all hesitations, all shadowy fears of the time abroad would be erased quite magically if she could just return home to Calcutta. But so far the return had brought only wounds. First the corrosive hours on Marine Drive, then the deformed beggars in the railway station, and now the inexorable train ride steadily undid what strength she had held in reserve. She was an embittered woman, she now through, old and cynical at twenty-two and quick to take offense.”⁴⁷

In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee shows clash between Tara’s values. When she comes back India, she feels very lonely in her own land. She cannot join properly with her family, relatives and friends. This is because of detachment to her values, culture and

society. She was thought that she returned to the same society as she had left. But when she came back India, the society had changed completely which is unexpected for her.

Every people have their human values. But in India people have more values. Tara's mother is saintly lady all the time she remembers god. She spent most of her time in worshipping. People learn respect, love, truth and kindness from their family, culture and society. In the process of learning values culture plays an important role and this is the reason Indian people are very much attached with their culture.

"Tara's mother, Arati, was a saintly woman. At least, she was given to religious dreams. Tara's mother spent a great deal of time in the prayer room."⁴⁸ Tara Banerjee also belongs to the same family. But she has no interest in worshipping and this is the difference between two generations. On one hand, Tara's mother, Arati spent most of her time in worshipping but on the other hand, Tara herself who belongs to the same family she doesn't like these cultural activities. The aim of Tara's return to India is to reconnect herself and to know more about her cultural things. But when she realized that the society is not that which I left and she cannot adjust in this society. At the end of the novel, she decides to go back to America.

5.3 Portrayal of Characters and Characterization

In *Desirable Daughters*, Tara Chatterjee is the main protagonist. She has two sisters; Padma is the elder one and Parvati, the middle one. All three sisters are different from each other. It is true that Tara is a kind and generous lady. Her two sisters did love marriage but she did marriage according to her father's choice. She said:

"Sister three are we... as like as blossoms on a tree. But we are not. My oldest sister, Padma was born eighty years after that marriage ceremony in the Shoondar Bon. My second sister, Parvati, was born on same date, three years later and I came along with the same birthday three year after that. Yes, we did our calculation and privately celebrated the same October night as our collective inception day."⁴⁹

Her sisters are married with their own choice. She had completed her education from University of Calcutta. After completing her education, Tara as a modern woman also calls her husband by name as:

She said “I of course, as a good Hindu wife-to-be, could not utter ant of his names to his face. But we’re progressive people, after crossing the dark water to California I called him Bishu, then Bish.”⁵⁰ Indian woman doesn’t call her husband by his name which people call it value. Woman does not speak her husband by his name. This shows how much respect women gives to their husband. About her sister’s marriage, she said:

“My sisters were both married by then. Padma had already established herself in New York and Parvati’s husband was waiting for his Green Card. The “boy” (they are always “boys” when fathers choose them for their daughters).⁵¹

Marriage is a responsibility of parents. Every father wants that his daughter and son’s marriage by their own choice. But in modern time people do marriage of their own choice.

The female protagonists Tara, Padma and Parvati are sisters but totally different to each other. In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee highlights conventional Indian society. These daughters symbolize the honour of the family. Their parents expect them to keep harmony with the norms, customs and rules of the society. The narrator Tara chooses the option of divorce and lives a free life because she knows that she lives in the traditional Indian society and experiences the problems which are faced by Indian women. She has chosen the path of freedom. Tara tells ancient story of her family; here Tara Lata sacrificed her life for the society but Tara to choose her own path which is full of freedom. Tara defies tradition to find a new identity, new life for herself, instead of sacrificing her life for society. Every person wants to live freely, but because of society people sacrifice their own desire and needs. But Tara Chatterjee takes her decision which is beneficial to her.

The real goal of the family is the feeling of dependence on each other. Isolation, loneliness and loss of consciousness from human life can certainly be overcome by

family dependence. Tara in *The Tiger's Daughter* went to America for her study. There she got married to a white man, whose name was David Cartwright.

After her marriage she wants to come back India for rerooting herself and to know more about her native land's culture. But when she landed in Bombay airport there she finds all relatives who come to receive her at airport. But she had forgotten her relatives "She had not remembered the Bombay relatives' nickname for her. No one had called her Tultul in years; her parents called her Tara moni when they wanted to show special affection."⁵² She forgets her relatives name and even her nick name too and because of detachment towards her land she forgets her relatives name and culture.

Tara and her mother Arati belong to the same culture but David belongs to different community and culture. He is from America and he is Christian, whose name is David Cartwright. He also has his own values that he learns from his family, society and religion.

Through the character of Tara, Bharati Mukherjee describes values, love and affection to her native land and family and because of the seven years of detachment she forgets her values and culture. Because of detachment she gets married to an American white man David. Doing marriage out of culture is not accepted by the society, culture and family, that is the reason her mother doesn't accept her marriage "Perhaps her mother was offended that she, no longer a real Brahmin, was constantly in and out of this sacred room, dipping like a crow. She thought her mother had every right to be wary of aliens and outcasts."⁵³ When Tara comes back to India then she realizes that doing marriage out of caste is not accepted by society and family members.

The Tiger's Daughter depicts struggles of Tara Banerjee in western society. The novel reflects Mukherjee's own story of marrying with Canadian man. Tara marries an American Jew, whose name is David Cartwright. She has to face the disapproval of her parents and society who expects her to live as per their values and culture. But she visits India for first time after marriage without her husband. Her relatives react with shock and doubt Tara's visit to India without her husband, because they want to see both of them together. After coming here, she understood that she had to come with her husband. Her relatives want to see with whom she got married. But her parents do not agree with her

decision and because of her marriage decision her mother may seem to stop loving a daughter when the daughter has defied tradition.

In *Jasmine*, Bharati Mukherjee focuses on character of Jasmine. She describes character of Jasmine. People call her by different names. Gradually, her name is changed according to time and situation. This shows woman identity is not permanent. How people think that she is a woman so do whatever you want. Mukherjee mainly focuses on the issue of woman identity and the transformation of self-identity.

Jasmine's Journey was started from small village Hasanpur in Punjab. She is very simple village girl but she also wants to study like Draupadi wants to study. This is the long period of time. The Mahabharata to Jasmine, huge difference is found between both the stories. But still problem is same. Jasmine wants to study but her father is also not in favour of girl's education. He thinks that she is a girl and being a girl she doesn't have right to study. In the Mahabharata's time, women faced same problem and now in modern time too they suffer with same problem.

Draupadi requested her father for study but he refused her as in that time women did not have right to study. Draupadi suffers from the same problem. She does not have right to study. Actually, Drupad wants a boy who can develop his generation. Same case of Jasmine, she said when:

“I was born the year the harvest was so good that even my father, the reluctant tiller of thirty acres, had grain to hoard for drought. If I had been a boy, my birth in a bountiful year would have marked me as lucky, a child with special destiny to fulfill. But daughter were curses. A daughter had to be married off before she could enter heaven, and dowries beggared families for generations.”⁵⁴

Jasmine's father does the same as Draupadi's father does. There is a long-time gap between Draupadi and Jasmine's as their stories are completely different to each other. But their problems are same. Being women they suffer all the time. Either issues of education, self-identity, and discrimination. They both suffer with the same problems.

From ancient time to modern time, problems never changed. Women have all the rights in modern time but some people will not accept these rules, like Jasmine's father.

This novel depicts the challenges faced by Jasmine like as her education, discrimination between a girl and boy, identity crises. She moves away from her conservative Indian past. She adjusts in the western world and evolves in a new life. According to time and situations her name changes like *Jyoti*, *Jasmine*, *Jazzy*, *Jase*, *Jane*, *Jasmine*. This shows development of Jasmine's character. These changing names highlight different levels of her journey and situation.

The life of Draupadi and Jasmine are very much similar to each other. Both the characters struggle and fight for the same problem. In this novel, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni portrays every character from Draupadi's point of view. It is the story of Mahabharata in which Draupadi is the central character. She points out all the characters according to her perception. Chitra Banerjee mostly focuses on the women characters. She focuses on the main issues of woman rights, like as women education, discrimination, women suffering and identity clash. Draupadi is the character who fights against these problems. She is the daughter of Drupad who was the king of Panchaal. Drupad wants a boy who can enhance his generation. Most of the people prefer male child in their families and they believe that he will be successor to continue their family legacy. A female child is considered as burden, she is the one who takes away everything from the family. Parents think that they have to work a lot to earn money for getting their daughters marriage.

People wish to have a boy which is unfair and full of discrimination. When people are blessed with a male child, they perform many rites, sacrifices, rituals and even they are fasting for days together.

Same thing king Drupad does, Draupadi's father, he was extremely happy on the birth of a boy, whom he called Dhristadhyumna, which means the destroyer of enemies. Drupad wants a boy; he had not expected female child from the same fire. A mystifying agency came "They said, Behold we give you this girl, a gift beyond what you asked for. Take good care of her, for she will change the course of history."⁵⁵ Draupadi doesn't like the name which her father has given. About this, she feels something more suited to a girl who was supposed to change history. She said "My attention veered to the meaning of the

name our father chose. Dhristadyumna, Destroyer of Enemies, Draupadi, Daughter of Drupad.”⁵⁶ She is not satisfied with her name.

Chitra Banerjee portrays Draupadi’s character in a free manner. In ancient time women do not have right to speak. But here Draupadi is not satisfied about her name and asks question that how my father gave me this name while she deserves a better name than that. She is the most suffered character in the story of Mahabharata. She does also fight for her education, because from ancient time women don’t have right for education. Draupadi said:

“How much I begged, king Drupad has balked at the thought of me studying with my brother. A girl being taught what a boy was supposed to learn? Such a thing had never been heard of in the royal family of Panchaali! Only when Krishna insisted that the prophecy at my birth required me to get an education beyond what women were usually given, and that it was the king’s duty to provide this to me.”⁵⁷

Jasmine’s father thinks that boy must have to study because he runs his state. But when she begged her father for study, he refused. But when Krishna reminded him, that prophecy at her birth for her better care and education, Krishna said that this is the king’s duty to provide her all facility which she wants. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Chitra Banerjee has beautifully portrayed character of Lord Krishna.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s novel *Sister of My Heart* provides a lesson in which she describes relation between two sisters Anju and Sudha. They are cousin sisters but behave as real sisters who lived in the same house but bond between them is so strong. Their mothers teach them how to behave with everyone. “Aunt Nalini for constantly telling Sudha and me about how good girls should behave.”⁵⁸ This is the childhood learning. When gradually child is grown up, their parents teach them to do good things give respect to others, speaks truth, not to tell lies and not to do bad things. These all things child learns from their family. Same Nalini tells to Sudha and Anju about how to behave with others.

Anju and Sudha both are very much loving with each other. They both are single parent's child they don't have father, actually their father had gone on a hunt but never returned. Sudha loved her father but Anju hated her father. She thinks that her father is a careless person he killed himself and she didn't like her father. Anju said "I don't have a father. None of it would have happened if he hadn't been so careless and got himself killed. But never Sudha. I could never hate Sudha because she is my other half, the sister of my heart."⁵⁹ This shows how much Sudha is important for Anju.

Sudha and Anju both are born on same day and the same day their father died. But both have different perception. Sudha likes the stories of ghost, fairy tales and demons. But Anju is totally opposite, she said, "What nonsense," Anju says. "There are no demons."⁶⁰ She doesn't believe in these imaginary stories. The reason is she doesn't want to know about her father's story of death but another side Sudha is very curious about her father's story. This is the difference between both the characters.

In the novel, *The Mistress of Spices*, the main character is Tilo who is not an ordinary girl. She has a special power through which she helps to others. She has magical powers by birth. She opens her shop in Oakland, California. Chitra Banerjee beautifully shows the quality of human values through the character of Tilo. In this novel, Tilo's behaviour is very kind and helpful to other people. Basically the power which she has is used only to fulfill people's desires and solve their problems. Whosoever comes in her shop and through the power of spices she always tries to help them.

She is very honest and loyal with her customers. She has a special power to catch glimpses of her customer's life by seeing them. When Ahuja's wife Lalita comes to her shop, without her telling Tilo is aware about her pain by which she suffers. She tries to divert Lalita's mind and said;

"One time I found her leaning over the showcase where I keep fabrics,
looking at the pallu of a sari embroidered with zari thread.

I took it out. 'Here,' I said, draping it over her shoulder. 'That mango colour
looks so nice on you'⁶¹

This is the Tilo's way to communicate Lalita's and tries to share her pain. Tilo tries to come out with Lalita's problem. She indirectly asks her about her past life and Lalita starts sharing her experience with her. She said "Child-longing, deepest desire, deeper than for wealth or lover or even death. It weight down the air of the store, purple like before a strome. It gives off the smell of thunder Scorches."⁶² When Tilo learns her magical powers her first mother teaches her to helping everyone and to solve other problems and fulfill their desires. Tilo said:

"O Lalita who is not yet Lalita, I have the balm to lay over your burning.
But how unless you ready yourself, hold yourself open to the storm?
How unless you ask? Meanwhile I give you turmeric.

A handful of turmeric wrapped in old newspaper with the words of healing
whispered into it, slipped into your grocery sack when you are not
looking. The string tied into the triple flower knor, and inside, satin-
soft turmeric the same colour as the bruise seeping onto your cheek
from under the darkness edge of your glasses."⁶³

Tilo gives her turmeric powder to fill her wounds. Tilo always tries to help her customers. Indian customers are Haroun, Lalita, Geeta, Jagjit, Ravan and Bougainvillea girl. These are those customers, who have problems in their life and Tilo solves their problems by magical power of spices. She considers her customers as her responsibility.

The aim of Tilo's life is to serve others, because she is a mistress and this is the duty of her to take care of others and she solves other's problem as her own problem. "When you begin to weave your own desires into your vision,' the Old One told us, 'the true seeing is taken from you. You grow confused, and the spices no longer obey you.'"⁶⁴ This is the rule of one mistress. She does not use the spices for own sake because it is against mistress rules. She uses spices only for others welfare and their betterment.

Here one character is Daksha. Tilo describes Daksha's character, she came to her shop with her white nurse uniform which is clean and shiny even her shoes too. She is always in tension, because she has a family. She lives with her husband, child, and in-laws where she does not manage her house and workplace at the same time.

“Daksha works in the U.S. as a nurse and is a dutiful wife and mother. Through the character of Daksha, Divakaruni portrays the life of working women in the U.S. Daksha’s life is different from that of Lalita. Lalita is not allowed financial independence through she is capable of working. Here is another woman character who has to work for the family, take care of her husband, children and in-laws too. Daksha feels it quite hard-hitting to carry the burden of the family as both a career woman and homemaker.”⁶⁵

Daksha plays role of head of her family. She is a working woman, who works in the U.S. as nurse. She is focuses on his job as well as her family too. She is the only one who supports to run her family financially and emotionally as well. She gives equal time to her job and family. She takes care of her family, but sometimes she feels burden of her job and family that becomes her cause of irritation. But when she shares her experience with Tilo and when she is aware about her problem. She said “Daksha here is seed of black pepper to be boiled whole and drink to loosen your throat so you can learns to say No, that word is so hard for Indian women. No Hear me now.”⁶⁶ She gives her black pepper and tells her to drunk it from which she learns to say no. She also remembers her values; she said that it is difficult for Indian women to say no to someone. But it is Daksha’s choice.

Tilo is always ready to help people, who came to her shop and who did not come to her shop, because her first mother teaches her to help every person who wants help. Tilo is shown as a very helpful, kind, gentle, virtuous, loyal and true in nature and because of these qualities she becomes Mistress. She also has some special powers like to see the future and past and from this she saves many people’s future. In this novel, every character has their own problem in their life. Daksha is not only one who suffers there are other characters like Haroun, Jagjit, Ravan, Geeta and Lalita. Chitra Banerjee gave Tilo different names like Tilottama, Nayan Tara, Bhagyavati, Sarpa Kanya and finally she becomes Maya which means illusion, enchantment, and the power that keeps this imperfect world going day after day. Character of Tilo is really a mystical character which starts from Tilottama and ends with Maya (Illusion).

Values are the basic quality of human beings and this chapter tries to focus on human values. So, basically every person has one's own values which they learn from their elders and society. It depends on people how much they learn from these values. This chapter explains different types of values like as spiritual, social, personal and religious values. Personal values are personal beliefs include thoughts, idea about right and wrong. Human values must have ethics, morals, loyalty, truth and kindness in nature. People learn values from their culture, environment and society.

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Chapter - 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 A Critical Analysis of Core Chapters

6.2 Original Contribution

6.3 Relevance to Contemporary Literature

Chapter - 6

Conclusion

6.1 A Critical Analysis of Core Chapters

This work is broadly divided into five chapters. The first chapter is entitled as *Introduction*. It is further divided into three sub-chapters namely, *A Critical Analysis of Indian Writing in English*, *Indian English Diasporic Novels: A Background Study* and *The Select Novelists and their Contribution*.

The first sub-chapter is *A Critical Analysis of Indian Writing in English* discusses about growth of English Language in India before Independence. It tells about how English Language introduces India. So, the first time English Language came to India by traders. In 1600, the East India Company starts trading and from these traders English language comes. Gradually, it starts growing and becomes part of English literature. Before freedom writers wrote in their own languages like as Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, and Urdu these all are dialectical languages which were very popular in that time. But nobody could write anything in English Language. When English language comes to India it becomes part of these languages and many writers translated their works into English language. Like Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra, Aurobindo Ghosh, Nirad C. Chaudhari, Sarojini Naidu and Toru Dutt all these Indian writers translated their works in English. Gradually, Indian writing becomes an important part of English literature

The second sub-chapter is *Indian English Diasporic Novels: A Background Study* defines the term Diaspora. Actually, Diaspora is a group of people who leave their homeland to settle in other land and in foreign land they write about their native land and they are called as Diasporic writers. But Diasporic literature is very popular these days and now many people have left their native lands and settled in foreign lands. Many of the writers have written on Diaspora and became Diasporic writer. There are many Diaspora writers

like as V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Chitra Banerjee, Shashi Tharoor, Vikram Seth and Rohinton Mistry.

The third sub-chapter *The Select Novelists and their Contribution* has a detailed discussion about major works of the select writers and their contribution in Indian English literature. The selected novelists are Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and they are famous for their Diasporic writings.

Bharati Mukherjee wrote Novels, Short stories, and Non-fiction. Most of her works are based on Diasporic sensibility. Her characters left India and settled in foreign lands and there they feel loneliness, isolation, dislocation, and homesickness. So, through her works she tries to share her own experiences with the readers. Bharati Mukherjee wrote Novels, Poetry and Anthologies. Her works are based on Indian myth, magic, culture and tradition. Most of her stories are based on female centric characters. The readers like her myth, magic, and legendary characters.

The second chapter of this research study is entitled as *Indian Ethos*. The chapter is further divided into three sub-chapters, *The Concept of Ethos and Values*, *Exploring Ethos and Ethnographic Dualities*.

The first sub-chapter is *The Concept of Ethos and Values*. This sub-chapter delineates concept of Ethos and Values according to different dictionaries and different critics. This sub-chapter discusses about the word Ethos and Values from where it originated and meanings of these words. It explains Ethos as a set of beliefs, ideas and relationship which is associated with particular group of people. Value is a kind of principles and ideals which helps to take judgment between good and bad. This is a thing which every people have in their life in form of good or bad.

The second sub-chapter is *Exploring Ethos*. This sub-chapter discusses about ethos in selected novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. Both the writers deal with ethos in different ways. Bharati Mukherjee's characters are settled in foreign lands and they missed their culture, society and they need family. But at the end of the novel either they accept new culture or they come back to their country. Chitra Banerjee's characters are very much attached to their culture, tradition, and values. Either her characters belong

to modern society or ancient society but they respect their values, principles, ethics, and morals.

The third sub-chapter is *Ethnographic Dualities*. This sub-chapter discusses about the meaning of ethnographic dualities. Ethnography is a scientific study of culture of society in which peoples live. The duality means a situation in which two opposite ideas and feelings exist at the same time. This sub-chapter analyses the ethnographic duality in characters' life. The characters moved to America but they did not forget their culture. They missed their culture in foreign lands and because of the attachment of their native land and culture, they lived in cultural duality.

Bharati Mukherjee's characters lived in foreign lands; they missed their culture but they have to follow the foreign culture too. So, they start accepting both the cultures. Divakaruni's highlights the impact of western culture on Indian people. Her characters also deal with the problem of dual state of culture.

The third chapter of this research study is entitled as *Culture and Tradition*. The chapter is further divided into three sub-chapters, *The Concept of Culture and Tradition*, *Society and Cultural Values* and *The Select Novels: Social and Cultural Issues*.

The first sub-chapter is *The Concept of Culture and Tradition*. This sub-chapter first explains concept of Indian culture and tradition. This sub chapter discusses about the word culture that includes customs, manners of people, norms, dress, language, religion, rituals, and systems of belief. On the other hand, Tradition is a collection of all habits and practices, laws, legends, and stories that belong to the community of individuals, and continues to move from one generation to another. Culture is a term which explores particular religious values, beliefs or ideas whereas tradition reflects the human ways of behaviour.

The second sub-chapter is *Society and Cultural Values*. This sub-chapter discusses society and cultural values in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. This sub-chapter focuses on the social and cultural background of their novels. Bharati Mukherjee's highlights society and cultural values in her characters' life. Most of her characters are from Bengal. But they shifted to foreign lands and when they returned,

they found that Bengal society is totally changed. They do not accept that everything is changed according to time even values are changed according to time and condition. Divakaruni's novel focuses on Indian society and cultural values in India. Her characters are basically Indian they live in foreign lands and still they remember their cultural norms and values. They do all rituals and rites of their native culture.

The third sub-chapter is *The Select Novels: Social and Cultural Issues*. This sub-chapter explores the social and cultural issues in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. This sub-chapter discusses the social and cultural issue in their novels. Bharati Mukherjee discusses about social and cultural issues in her characters' life. Her characters fight against tradition and conservative norms, rituals, and customs of the society. In her novels, she highlights issues of discrimination with girls, education for girls and self-identity. Same issues Chitra Banerjee focuses in her novels. Her characters also face similar problems in their life. Her characters also deal with gender discrimination, domestic violence and rituals which are only meant for women to follow in the male dominated society.

The fourth chapter of the research study is entitled as *Myths and Legends*. This chapter is further divided into three sub-chapters, *The Concept of Myths and Legends*, *Representation of Myths and Legends* and *Influence: Myths and Legends*.

The first sub-chapter is *The Concept of Myths and Legends*. This sub-chapter discusses about the concept of myths and legends. This sub-chapter explains that myths and legends are related in historical points of view. Myths are traditional stories which are created within the culture. Myth is a mix-up of half-truth and half false or some kind of imagination. On the other hand, legends are kind of semi truth stories. It has an important meaning and symbolism. The story is taken from historical facts and incidence. It has legendary qualities and because of this the story has heroic characters and this is the essence of the story.

The second sub-chapter is *Representation of Myths and Legends*. This sub-chapter explores the myth and legends in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. Bharati Mukherjee highlights the myths and legends in her characters' life. But many myths only made for women not for men. Divakaruni explores myths and legends

in her characters' life in a very modern way. Most of her characters live with mythical beliefs. People out traditional mind set take it as their responsibility to accept those myths and legends either they exist or not.

The third sub-chapter is *Influence: Myths and Legends*. This sub-chapter explores the influence of myths and legends in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. This sub-chapter explores how much it affects their characters' life. Bharati Mukherjee's characters shifted to foreign lands but they believed on myths because their roots are linked with those myths. Chitra Banerjee characters are mythical characters. Her characters' life revolves around myths and legends. People start living with those myths and think, this is their fortune. So, the impact of myths and legends is very great on their characters. All characters are from modern society but they still believe in traditional stories and ancient heroes.

The Fifth chapter of this research study entitled as *Human Values*. The chapter is further divided into three sub-chapters, *The Concept of Human Values*, *Delineation of Human Values* and *Portrayal of Characters and Characterization*.

The first sub-chapter is *The Concept of Human Values*. This sub-chapter discusses about the concept of human values. This sub-chapter explores how these human values exist in human life and from where people learn these values. This sub-chapter discusses about types of human values like as personal values, social values, cultural values, moral values, loyalty, and ethical values.

The second sub-chapter is *Delineation of Human Values*. This sub-chapter explores the delineation of human values in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. Bharati Mukherjee highlights these human values in her characters' life. Most of her characters settled in foreign lands but they missed their culture, they lean all their values from their culture and society. Chitra Banerjee's characters always support and help others and they are very much attached to each other.

The third sub-chapter is *Portrayal of Characters and Characterization*. This sub-chapter discusses about the portrayal of characters and characterization in the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee. Bharati Mukherjee's characters are very much

similar to each other. They all are settled in foreign lands. Most of her characters are basically from Bengal. All her stories are based on female centric characters and because of their cultural attachment they came back to their native lands. Her characters are very loyal, simple and struggler. Divakaruni's characters are very brave they fight against falsehood; they do not accept the evil things exist in society. Her characters belong to modern society and they fight against the violence. The good qualities of her characters are that they fight for their identity and stand to speak for their own self.

6.2 Original Contribution

This study mainly focuses on the ethos in the novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The Characters of both the writers are very much similar to each other. They all suffer with the similar problems; these writers are diasporic writers and this is the reason their themes are very much similar to each other. Bharati Mukherjee's novels are based on her personal life. In her selected novels, she portrays her characters in a very similar manner. The main characters of novels are Tara Chatterjee, Tara Banerjee, and Jasmine.

Bharati Mukherjee mainly deals with the diasporic characteristics like self-identity, identity clashes, cultural clashes, loneliness, homesickness, dual identity, alienation, nostalgia, and dislocation. In *The Tiger's Daughter* for continuing Tara's study her father sent her to America. There she studied but gradually she forgot her culture and adopted American culture and there she married with Christian boy whose name was David Cartwright. After marriage when she returns to Indian, she dislikes her own society in which she is grownup, in end of the story she goes back to America. Here most of the story's incidences are taken from Bharati Mukherjee's personal life.

Bharati Mukherjee considers herself as an American writer not an Indian one. Most of her novels' protagonists shifted to America and there they lived like strangers with dual identity. They neither belong to India nor to America. All her protagonists suffer from same problem as they live in dual life. Bharati Mukherjee is known as a migrant writer. With the speed of being an expatriate, she has boasted in America. Whatever she feels

and experiences in America. The same her characters feel like the character of Tara, at the end of the novel she goes back to America because she can't adjust in India and when she realizes the changed situation of India. She decides to leave India, which shows she lost her interest towards her native country. In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee shows life of Indian people, their struggle and suffering and when Tara lives in that environment, she feels very uneasy because she does not get adjusted in Indian society and she starts comparing India and America's living style and situation. Finally, she finds that American life is better than Indian life. As compared to India, American life is so relaxed, without any struggle and suffering. Bharati Mukherjee thinks the same and this is the reason she leaves India.

But in her second novel *Jasmine*, Bharati Mukherjee transforms her character Jyoti, to Jasmine, Jane, Jase, Jazzy. In this, she talks about one Indian village girl's life journey from India to America. This is a story of village girl Jyoti who lives in Hasnapur, Punjab. In the beginning of this novel, Bharati Mukherjee talks about Hindu mythological beliefs in astrology. People think that astrologer has supernatural power to see past, present and future. The astrologer predicts Jasmine's future as a widower living in exile. But gradually the story is developed when an astrologer's prediction becomes true.

This story focuses on the journey from India to America in which Jyoti was the sufferer. Bharati Mukherjee tries to portray a bold character. Jyoti goes against her father's desire for her study, she alone faces the pain of her husband's death and decides to move to America all alone. In the journey to America too, she faces lots of problems like she was raped by ship's captain.

The character of Jyoti is a very simple and innocent being Indian village girl. Her cousins, who live in Chandigarh, consider village girls as cow and buffalos, because their life style is modern and they live in city. But Jyoti is a village girl and still she thinks like a modern girl who wants to study, always speaks English, and wants to do good job. This shows how ambitious she is.

Bharati Mukherjee's portrayal of Jyoti's is in a progressive form. In beginning of this novel, Jyoti is shown as a typical Indian girl, who knows nothing about city life. After marriage her husband changed her name and started calling her Jasmine and because of

her husband Prakash she learns modern ways of thinking as she does not seem in favor of calling husband by his first name. But this is against Indian cultural rules; calling husband by his name is bad thing in Indian culture.

When she moved to America, she was raped by ship captain. But she never gives up to be in that situation. She continues fighting for her identity and finally she murdered him. Bharati Mukherjee very beautifully portrayed character of Jyoti who is very innocent girl but in that situation, she becomes like goddess Kali, who will never forget her enemies and same thing Jyoti does, she fights for her identity and takes revenge from her enemy. Gradually, the character of Jyoti transforms and becomes Jasmine. In America, Jasmine lives with those people they started calling by different name like Jase, Jane and Jazzy there nobody know her original name Jyoti. Gradually, she adopts American society. In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee shows how one character survives and becomes capable to save her identity in such difficult situations.

In her third novel *Desirable Daughters*, she talks about story of three sisters. They live in the same family but they all are very different from each other. In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee mainly focuses on the life and desires of these three sisters. Padma expresses her desire to become actor and performer and she is even offered a major role of Satyajit Ray's film but her father does not permit her to take career in acting. Parvati symbolizes traditional life of an Indian woman with a western orientation.

Bharati Mukherjee depicts different kinds of characters in her novels. Like for example these Chatterjee sisters, they are the branches of the same tree but every branch has its own length, size, and direction. Same case with these three sisters they are the part of same family and their parents give them similar rites. But like a branch of tree, they move to their own direction of choice. Most of her novels are based on female centric characters. Her women protagonists deal with the problems of alienation, loneliness, and loss of their Indian Values.

Chitra Banerjee highlights the present, past and future of Indian culture in her novels. She covers ancient manuscripts like as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana retelling stories in a modern perspective. She mainly focuses on theme of Indian myth, culture, and tradition. In most of her novels she talks about different type of myths. In *The Palace of*

Illusions, she retells the story of Mahabharata in Draupadi's point of view. This novel is based on the life of Draupadi, the mythical character of Indian epic Mahabharata. The original Mahabharata story is based on the war between Kauravs and Pandavas which was happened because of Draupadi. In Vedic time, women don't have right to speak but Chitra Banerjee gives new perspective through this novel. Draupadi asks questions about her identity, gender discrimination and relations. She doesn't change the story but instead she presents a new interpretation of this story. This is also a kind of comparison between the epic Mahabharata and *The Palace of Illusions*.

Draupadi raises a question about her marriage; no woman has five husbands in ancient time which is also against the rule of society. In that times women did not have right to speak and take stand for her and this is the reason that in the Mahabharata Draupadi does not say anything. Chitra Banerjee recreates Draupadi's character in a modern way. This novel deals with the feelings of Draupadi, she fights for her identity, she raises question on her birth and the system of patriarchy and its treatment for women. Even she is not satisfied with her name. So, these types of questions she raises in this novel.

Chitra Banerjee shows how Draupadi evolves to be a stronger woman in her life and she becomes an inspiration for other women. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni breaks all barriers of woman which are forced to by the society. Draupadi continued questioning on the system of patriarchy. Draupadi's father was very happy at the birth of boy, whom he names as Dhristadhyumna which means the destroyer of enemies and girl's name is Draupadi which means queen of Drupad's kingdom. But she is not satisfied with her name she feels something more suited to a girl who changes the history.

Chitre Banerjee in her second novel, *The Mistress of Spices* talks about the elements of myths and magic. Most of her works are based on myths and magic which is inspired by Indian culture and tradition. This story is based on myth and magic and the protagonist of this novel Tilo, Chitra Banerjee has portrayed her character in a modern way. Tilo believes in myths and magic. The character of Tilo is a kind of social worker, who is helping others, thinks for their betterment and solving their life problems. Through the spices she tries to help her customers. This story is full of myth and magic; she solves her costumer's problems by the magical power of spices, which do not happen in real life.

This story is an imaginary story which is full of myths and magic but the stories of her customers are very realistic. Her customers come to her shop and tell their problems to her and she offers them suggestions. Her customers are Indians and American both but she helps them equally. In this novel, on one hand, Chitra Banerjee talks about myths and magic but on another hand, she gives a realistic touch to the story. The customers of Tilo are very much attached with her and this is the reason they tell everything which often happened and would perhaps be happening in their lives.

Most of Tilo's customers are Indian like Lalita, Geeta, Daksha, Hameeda, Haroun and Ravan. These characters are detached with their native land. Divakaruni talks about female characters who suffer in their life. For example, the character of Lalita is very simple household wife but her husband tortures her and one day she decides to take help from some NGO, which runs for helpless women. Somewhere the story of Lalita is taken from Divakaruni's organization MAITRI. It is a kind of NGO for South Asian Women especially those who are the victims of domestic violence.

This novel is a combination of myths and reality. Here myth is about island of spices which does not exist and in reality it is about the lives of women in American society. In this novel, Chitra Banerjee perhaps wants to create an ideal place for women in which they can live free from patriarchy. Her aim is to write this novel for a society where people live can with calmness, togetherness and they may understand each other well. That is the reason, she portrayed Tilo's who serves mankind and always try to fulfill other requirements, without thinking about her own desires.

Her third novel is *Sister of My Heart* in which she talks about life of two cousin sisters but they love each other more than real sisters. Anju and Sudha are the central characters of this story. This is a journey of two sisters from their childhood to teenager and wifehood. In this novel, Chita Banerjee talks about the myth of Bidhata Purush. Actually, Bidhata Purush is a kind of God of fate, people said that he visits the children in secret in night and writes the fate on their forehead. He comes on earth and decides born child's destiny which is determined by his Karma of his previous life. Chitra Banerjee is very much interested to discuss the Indian myths this is the reason that in all her novels she talks about myths.

In this novel, Bidhata Purush is a general myth because everybody knows about this myth and every people believe on that. If someone seems to be in trouble so they think that all happen due to in their fate. Like for example Anju and Sudha's Pishi (Buya) became widow. Here Pishi thinks that it is all about fate, she understands that her life is meant for sorrow, goodness, beauty, and devotion which are written by Bidhata Purush. Through this myth and story Chitra Banerjee focuses on the suffering of women in Indian society. She highlights the issue of women suffering. But here question arises why these rituals and rites are made only for women, why not for men. In this novel, Chitra Banerjee takes all female characters and they all are sufferers in their lives. She highlights the life of Pishi (Buya) and Sudha. In Chitra Banerjee's writings there is a contrast of Indian myths and miserable condition of women in Indian society.

The research study has found that the select novels of Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee reflect the essence of Indian English Writing through their characters, plots, stories, themes and setting. The culture, tradition and beliefs influence these novelists to explore more about Indian Ethos. They also represent a comparative picture of tradition and contemporary Indian society. Their novels highlight that if the characters move away from their inherent culture and moral values than they will have to encounter various problems and finally have to become victim of cultural conflicts and identity crisis. The select novels very beautifully address issues of rootlessness, generation gap, loneliness, home sickness and alienation. Some of the characters from the select novels leave their native lands and try to adjust in a new country, new culture and new society but there they find it very hard to accommodate in that new environment. It is their existence pursuit and quest of identity that make them to reconnect with age old culture tradition and values of their native land. It is also found that both the novelists also raised issues related to women predicament, gender discrimination, family relationship, urbanization, spiritual and religious ideologies, generation gap and so on so forth. These issues are quite relevant at present time. The select novels are quite successful in portraying the life like condition of Indian youths. Both the novelists wrote very boldly and projected the issues of the modern society in a very realistic manner. Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee also discussed multiculturalism and colonialism through their select novels. They express their faith and beliefs in India's great culture tradition and civilization.

They also try to draw out similarities and dissimilarities between Indian and Western culture and tradition. They are quite bold to talk about global issues like as intolerance, domestic violence, identity crises and above all emotion and spiritual emptiness. Being Diasporic novelists, they also highlight problems of immigrants specially women who suffered mentally and physically as well.

6.3 Relevance to Contemporary Literature

Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee both are Diasporic writers. In their novels they highlight the present society, family structure and relationship between family members, culture, tradition, myths and values in human life, their beliefs, principles, and behaviour. In modern society, there are many changes which have been taking place at different level and people face lots of problems and challenges and they prepare themselves to fight against these challenges. The stories of human struggle and their life- challenges have been highlighted in Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's selected novels.

Both the writers portray societies in which people enjoy their culture, tradition, myths, legends, and human values. On one hand, they talk about Indian culture, tradition, moral values, human values, myths, and legends which their characters follow in their life. But on other hand, they talk about social and cultural issues like myths for women, discrimination, girls' education, domestic violence as the dark spot-on society. Both the writers talk about two sides of society, good and bad.

Chitra Banerjee especially writes on social problems in her selected novels. She is famous for her representation of myths and mythical characters. Her stories are very realistic in nature. In some stories she uses combination of myth and magic. Her characters are very simple as she has taken them from ordinary life. Through her characters she tries to show that how people suffer in their life. Every character of her novels is attractive and has specific qualities, they are very kind, they help each other and they have strong bond between family members. She highlights issue of widowhood,

abortion, discrimination, divorce, and domestic violence in her novels. All characters are modern but they believe in their culture, tradition, values, and myths.

Divakaruni portrays myth in the form of Bidhata Purush, imaginary and magical island, and the mythical characters like *Draupadi and Sita*. In her novel, Bidhata Purush is a kind of god, who comes on earth in the night of birth of children, he is the God who writes fortune on the forehead of children and people believe on this myth. The woman who becomes widow, she accepts her widowhood. She thinks that widowhood is her fortune which is written by Bidhata Purush and she accepts and lives with that myth. Chitra Banerjee portrays character of a widow in a very realistic manner. But her widowhood becomes curse for her as in India there are different rituals and rites for widows. Divakaruni's widow character is very serious; she does all formality prescribed for widow. She wears white clothes with short hair, not smiling much, only selected food to eat, spends much time in Bhajan Kirtan. So, these are the ritual and rites for widow, which are forced by society and culture.

The meaning of Divakaruni's writing is to show that sometimes these culture, tradition and myths become problem in human life. One more myth which she portrays in her novel is discrimination between girls and boys. Even in ancient time, if a person wants a baby boy. So, they start worshipping to God and also do "Yagya". Actually, they want their first baby to be a boy, they think that only baby boy would run their generation. So, the discrimination between genders has been from ancient time. But in modern time, this discrimination is little bit changed. Now, girl's in-laws want first baby as boy, here also same mentality works. Her in-laws also want a boy because he is the only one who runs their family generation. Even her mother-in-law wants boy not a girl, while she herself is a woman. When she came to know that her daughter-in-law had a girl in her belly, she said to abort her. Chitra Banerjee is trying to show the dark side of society. This problem has been from ancient time, in that time also people do the same thing with girls and in modern time too they are treating the same with girls. Chitra Banerjee highlights culture, myth, magic, tradition as well as other issues of society.

Bharati Mukherjee also highlights self-identity, cultural identity, tradition, ethics, morals, and values. Most of her novels are based on immigrant's sensibility. Her characters are

settled in America but they miss their culture and most of the time they remember their culture, tradition, and values. Most of her stories are based on her own experiences and through her characters she shares her experiences with her readers. She is Diasporic writer, so, she shares her experiences as an immigrant. She also faces lots of problems, when she leaves India. But gradually she accepts American society. The same story, Bharati Mukherjee portrays in one of her novels. Her characters are all immigrants, who were shifted from India to America and all the characters faced the same problems and challenges. In foreign land, they really missed their culture, because they felt alone in foreign land and this is the reason they decided to come back to their native land.

Some characters of Bharati Mukherjee do not come back; they accepted foreign culture with their native culture and they started living with dual identity, one is Indian, another is American. Basically, they are Indian, but they are settled in America so they have to follow their rules and culture also. Some of her characters do not accept their culture and they came back to India. Her some characters are come back to India to reconnect themselves, or to know much more about their culture. So basically, the reason of their returning back to native land is their love for culture, myths, tradition, native identity, values, and ethos. These all things play an important role in an individual's life.

Her characters are full of emotions, loyal, innocent, and kind in nature. She portrays very simple and shy characters in her novels. Most of her characters belong to Indian villages. Bharati Mukherjee portrays very realistic picture of Indian village and the typical villagers. She also highlights problems which girls really face in villages. Her characters suffer from discrimination and it is mostly seen in village, because most of the village people are illiterate. So, they also want a boy, because they know that girl is born with dowry and responsibility and this is the reason, they also want a boy not a girl. But here is one more thing that is girl's education. Village people think like this, if girl is born, they think she is born only for doing households works. Not for going outside for her study and job. This is male dominated society in which women survive without any right to speak or educate. By this problem one of Bharati Mukherjee's characters face lots of problem in her life, because she wants to study more but she doesn't have right to speak before her father. So, this is the condition of women in Indian society. On One side

people worship Goddess and people compare woman's strength with Goddess Kali but on the other hand they disrespect her.

Bharati Mukherjee depicts values, ethos, culture, ethics, and myths. She also highlights social and cultural issues in her novels. All her characters suffered from same problems. All her characters are modern but because of their family past they are still connected with their roots and also believed on their family myth, which has been continue from their past generations.

Bharati Mukherjee's and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writings are very much similar to each other and most of their themes are very common. They both wrote on Indian culture, tradition, myths, social and cultural issues. These themes are very common between them. All their characters are settled in foreign lands but they deeply rooted with their native lands. They both highlight common issues in society like girl's birth and education, discrimination, self-identity, widowhood, divorce, and domestic violence. In the modern time, concept of culture, tradition, values, and principles have now been changed. The leading characters of Bharati Mukherjee's and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni are gradually attracted towards modern life and society but they lost their values and principles in return.

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ANNEXURES



Zeal and Enthusiasm of Women Protagonists for Establishing Social Identity in the Select Novels of Bharati Mukherjee

□ Maitre Mohan Bain*
Dr. Naveen K Mehta**

ABSTRACT

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the major novelists of Indian Diaspora who has achieved renowned position in English Literature and she has given a new direction to Indian Writing in English. She explains her personal experiences as a woman immigrant. Through her writings, she represents feelings of Indian women and feelings of immigrants. Quest for the self-identity is the main concern of her female protagonists. She highlights the conditions of Asian immigrants in North America and Canada as they search their identity in an alien land. Bharati Mukherjee herself has experienced the agony of nostalgia and solitude that are expressed in her writings. This paper focuses on the two novels of Bharati Mukherjee as *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971) and *Jasmine* (1989) in which she successfully portrayed female characters who raised their voice in the male dominated society against women exploitation and isolation.

Keywords : Women, Identity, Society, Rights, Empowerment, Exploitation Diaspora.

Introduction

The term Diaspora is used to put forward to Jewish dispersal situations that occupy the experiences of outcast workers, refugees, exiles, immigrants and cultural communities. The Diaspora writers have enriched the English literature with their notable assistance and their works deal with the problems of exiles, immigrants and refugees. The term Diaspora comes from an ancient Greek word meaning "to scatter about". 'Diaspora consists of and is conditioned by specific historical moments, and as the etymology of the term itself suggests, are scattered and regrouped into a new dialogism with metropolitan centers or other such sites, into 'new points of becoming.'¹ And that's exactly what the people of a diaspora do they scatter from their homeland to another place where they spreading their culture. Indian fiction writers have been widely recognized by their works of writing.

People of Diaspora consciously choose to migrate to alien country of their choice severing their roots from their native community as well as from their native state

with the hope to live a happy life there. Diasporic writers document the experiences of such people perhaps to make the sensitive and insightful readers rethink the issues of race, nationalism and national culture in international perspective.²

Dictionary Definitions

According to Cambridge Dictionary (1995) "Diaspora is a group of people who spread from one original country to other countries".

According to Merriam Webster (1828) "Diaspora is the movement, migration, or scattering of a people away from an established or ancestral homeland".

According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary (1948) "Diaspora is the movement of the Jewish people away from their own country to live and work in other countries".

Indian English Diaspora: An Introduction

Indian Diaspora is one of the sources to spread the sense of Indian tradition and culture all over the world. Their diasporic identity is related to multiculturalism and transnationalism. The idea of Diaspora is so diverse that

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there are various different approaches to describe diasporic phenomena.

'Indian Diasporic Literature in English problematizes concept of nation, religion, identity, gender, marginalization, assimilation and acculturation in exploring the experiences of diasporic life. It focuses on experiences of women within families and arena of paid work to bring out the realities and meaning of women's lives. Evident in the works of diaspora writers is the greater ability of the females to adapt, to assimilate and acculturate in a new environment. While as the male sensibility looks back with nostalgia at the culture left behind, women welcome the newfound freedom in the new environment which is free from the constraints and restraints of phallogocentric taboos prevalent back home.'³ In this way Indian novels reflect typical Indian feminine sensibility, identity crises, and cultural clashes.

The writers of Indian Diaspora are Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, Rohinton Mistry, Aravind Adiga, Kiran Desai, and Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Jhumpa Lahiri. The Indian diasporic fiction which emerged out of several social and cultural backgrounds has achieved an important place in the present day. All diasporic writers' works are based on social, political, economic, cultural issues which are part of our society.

Bharati Mukherjee: As an Indian English Diaspora Novelist

'Bharati Mukherjee has been regarded as one of the most promising novelists. Born in 1940 in an extraordinary intelligent upper-class Hindu Brahmin family, Mukherjee was given ample academic opportunities. After receiving excellent schooling, she went to England with her family as her father got a job there. This gave her opportunities to perfect English language skills. Her fourteen-year stay in Canada was one of the hardest in her life as she experienced discrimination and was treated as a member of the "visible minority". She sees Canada as hostile to its immigrants and on that opposes the concept of cultural assimilation. In 1980 she moves to the USA, became a permanent resident and has held various posts in colleges and universities. She uses her varied experiences of life

into "new immigrant" literature.'⁴ Some of her notable works are *The Desirable Daughters*, *Jasmine*, *Wife*, *The Tree Bride*, and *The Tiger's Daughter*, etc. She deals with the contemporary women's struggle, cross-cultural crisis these are the main issues in her novels.

Bharati Mukherjee discusses experiences of migration and lifestyle of Indians in foreign land. For diasporic writers, one of the most important themes of their writings is the nostalgia for native land and sense of rootlessness. In a diasporic condition, immigrants suffer between the two societies. One is native society and another is host society and then they experienced the feelings of nostalgia. It results into individual frustration. 'The contemporary literature which deals with emotional problems clearly reflects the pathetic condition of the modern man. Getting uprooted from the native cultural traditions and values, the loss of indigenous language, men position as a mere outcast or an unaccommodated alien, together with multiple injuries and lacerations of the psyche, all account for the theme of identity atrophy.'⁵

Portrayal of Character of Jasmine: A Symbol of Women Empowerment

Self-Empowerment of Jasmine the title character's identity along with her name changes again and again from 'Jyoti Vidh—Jasmine—Jase—Jane and even Kali are the various names adopted by the protagonist of Bharati Mukherjee's third novel *Jasmine*. A simple peasant girl from Hasanpur in rural Punjab, Jyoti becomes Jasmine when she marries Prakash, a modern city man who believes in trashing traditions and declares impatiently: "There is no room in modern India for feudalism." Jyoti thinks of Prakash as Prof. Higgins who can break "the Jyoti I'd been in Hasanpur and make a new kind of city woman. To break off the past, he gave me a new name; Jasmine..... Jyoti, Jasmine: I shuttled between identities."⁶

The novel *Jasmine* is based on the character of Jyoti. Bharati Mukherjee portrays character of Jyoti who suffers a lot by society. But after the death of her husband, she moves to Florida. There she faces many problems like 'As soon as she enters she has been raped by Half Face, the Captain of the Ship in a hotel and she murders him to avenge her dishonor. She decides to

struggle for her survival forgetting her personal dishonor in order to fulfill her mission.⁷ She is a traditional Indian woman but when comes to respect she do anything like she killed a man who raped her. And by killing him she takes her revenge and that is called an Indian Women. They do anything for their self-respect. She Says 'To break off the past, he gave me a new name: Jasmine. He said, "You are small and sweet and heady, my Jasmine. You'll quicken the whole world with your perfume." Jyoti, Jasmine: I shuttled between identities.⁸ She finds herself between the dual identities (Jyoti and Jasmine). She is confused within tradition and modernity. Because she is partial involve in both. Bharati Mukherjee tries to focus on the immigrant problems which they are facing in foreign land.

Tara: Emergence of a New Woman

In the "The Tiger's Daughter" she highlighted the issue of Displacement, cultural alienation, rootlessness, cultural clash, woman identity. Tara Banerjee is the protagonist of this novel. Tara's displacement is happening in her native country where she returns after seven years. In the context of this novel, displacement is a big change in once life because it is a relationship between self and place. 'Tara Banerjee, a Bengali Brahmin of Calcutta and daughter of an industrialist known as Bengal Tiger, schooled at Poughkeepsie, New York and married to an American named David, who is a writer. After her marriage Tara becomes Tara Banerjee Cartwright and makes a trip home to India after being there for seven years. When the twenty-two-year-old Tara visits India, the alien western culture which has almost become a second self to her is constantly in clash with the culture to her native soil.

The clash is deeply felt in the psyche of Tara who finds it difficult to adjust with her friends and relatives in India; and some time with the traditions of her own family. The greatest irony of her return is that she feels loneliness in her native land and her new self is no doubt responsible for this disruption of her pleasure but the deteriorating social changes, and her new perspective towards the poverty and dirtiness in India.⁹ Actually she makes her identity in a foreign land. That is the reason she could not adjust to her native land when she saw the

realistic picture of Indian society. 'She depressed and disgusted with the deteriorating situation of India and her new personality finds herself difficult to adjust with the situation and finally wishes to go back to the USA to her husband, but she becomes a victim of violence, her mind is preoccupied with her husband David in America.'¹⁰ That is the reason she decided to go back to America.

'Tara thought, In India she felt she was not married to a person but to a foreigner, and this foreignness was a burden. It was hard for her to talk about marriage responsibilities in Camac Street; her friends were curious only about the adjustment she had made.'¹¹ Indian tradition has proper criteria of marriage and all Indians are bound to follow the rules. If someone breaks these rules, our society will not accept. The same situation was with Tara Banerjee too.

Concluding Remarks

Bharati Mukherjee highlights the concept of identity, nostalgia for a lost home, destruction of the self, adjustment, disappointment of expatriation, cultural transformation, dislocation, and negotiation in her most of the novels. She examines feelings of isolation, rootlessness and alienation. The works of Bharati Mukherjee focus on thematic analysis with special attention on cultural transplant that leads to an identity crisis. She defines women's identity within the parameters of their social structure. Mukherjee tries to study the phenomenon of immigration, the status of new immigrants and the feelings of rootlessness and alienation as experienced by her leading women characters in *The Tiger's Daughter* and *Jasmine*.

Bharati Mukherjee covers all the aspect of social problems which are present in our society. Through her protagonist she describes the situation of Indian immigrant women in her novels. Bharati Mukherjee's novels deal with the problems of female suppression but on the other side she gives a new identity to the women of modern times. This paper tries to highlight how Bharati Mukherjee portrays the character of Jasmine and Tara Banerjee as the new woman who adopts the new lifestyle in an alien country. They make their identity in new groups that are shaped by the culture and tradition of their adopted countries but also influenced by their homeland.

Like that they carry a dual identity in society.

Bharati Mukherjee mainly pays attention to the feminine problems in her writings, especially on those women who are suffering from personal identity, misbalanced psyche, cultural shocks and conflicts of traditional values in the foreign land. She portrays the Indian immigrant sensibilities and their experiences in her novels. 'Bharati Mukherjee's novels, we get a graphical pattern of a female immigrant's self-satisfaction in proportion to the approach she adopts to deal with the dilemma of being out-rooted but still connected. Significantly, it is the revised or modified forms of these concepts that define their typical existence.'¹² as an immigrant, Bharati Mukherjee herself faced many challenges like identity crisis, cultural clash, and these personal experiences are the main issues of her portrayal of women protagonists in her novels. Her female protagonists suffer the problems of immigration but with that they have the ambition to make their identity and establish herself in a foreign land.

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ELEMENTS OF INDIAN ETHOS IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *THE MISTRESS OF SPICES* AND *SISTER OF MY HEART*

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Abstract

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has characterized the power of Spices, Cousin-sister relationships, Myth and Gender issues in her novels, “The Mistress of Spices” and “Sister of My Heart”. Divakaruni’s novels are a mixture of Indian and American society in which Indian born women were fighting between old and new values. Her protagonists moved to America and they adopt foreign culture but not fully involved in it. They always remember their roots. She tries to explore tradition, culture, morals, ethics, values, myth in her novels. In both the novels, Chitra Banerjee depicts the contrast of two cultures, and she also highlights the issue of Indinness, Cross culture conflicts, Women identity, Cultural and Social values. In “The Mistress of Spices” and “Sister of My Heart she described an immigrant woman’s journey from native land to a foreign land and there she established herself with their tradition, culture, customs and values. The protagonists of these novels are Tilo and Sudha or Anju. They all are born in India but they shifted to America and they did not forget their ethos. In foreign land, they are continued to practice their tradition and values in their daily life. It also evaluates the importance of Indian Ethos in the Socio-Cultural perspective in the life of the protagonist. This paper focuses on Indian Ethos in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s novels.

Keywords: Culture, Indian Ethos, Society, Tradition, Values

Introduction

Ethos is the spirit of a culture. The sentiment that informs beliefs, ideas, customs, or practices of a group or society that dominant assumptions of people or period. It is believed that the word Ethos was first used by Aristotle. He has outlined three essential elements for a persuasive speech for the speaker, one of which is the ethos. Aristotle has used the word Ethos as:

“Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word, there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker (ethos), the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind (pathos), the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself (logos). Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible.”¹

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary:

“Ethos means ‘custom’ or ‘character’ in Greek. As originally used by Aristotle, it referred to a man’s character or personality, especially in its balance between passion and caution. Today ethos is used to refer to the practices or values that distinguish one person, organization, or society from others. So we often hear of the ethos of rugged individualism and self-sufficiency on the American frontier in the 19th century, and a critic might complain about, for example, the ethos of violence in the inner cities or the ethos of permissiveness in the suburbs.”²

According to Cambridge Dictionary Ethos is “The set of beliefs, ideas, etc. about the social behavior and relationships of a person or group.”³

Chitra Banerjee as A Diasporic Novelist

Indian-American novelist Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's most of the novels deal with the experience of immigrants to the United States and self establishment in a foreign land. People migrate to foreign lands with the expectations of independence and satisfaction, which clashes with the traditional values of their homelands. She portrays women characters in the multicultural challenges of both cultures in her novels. Some of her novels are—"The Mistress of Spices"(1997), "Sister of My Heart"(1999), "The Vine of Desire"(2002), "Queen of Dreams"(2002), "The Palace of Illusions"(2008), "One Amazing Thing"(2010) and "Oleander Girl"(2014). These novels are based in India and America. It focuses on the experiences of Asian immigrants. The supernatural elements and imaginary worlds are very important in her novels. 'The Mistress of Spices,' Divakaruni's first novel, the character Tilo has magical powers and many other immigrants whom she helps them through the powers of spices. 'Sister of My Heart' is the second novel by Divakaruni. It is an absorbing tale of the bond between two cousins, Anju and Sudha who consider each other as the sister of their hearts. This novel portrays two beautiful and passionate protagonists.

She is a perfect interpreter of the cultural diversity of India. Her novels reflect Indian culture, especially the Bengali cultural traditions of India. The Bengali ethnicity has been visited and revisited to emphasize how the immigrants keep their native culture alive in a foreign country. She has projected Indian culture and tradition in a realistic manner. Adjusting to new countries are the issue of acculturation and adaptation. She depicts the struggle of women in a foreign land. Being an immigrant writer, her stories depict the experiences of Indian immigrants. She inserts many folktales in her stories and novels. K.S. Dhanam argues: "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 religion...she also contrasts the lives and perceptions of the first generation immigrants with 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 an identity beyond anthropology, beyond sociology and beyond academia."⁴

Indian Ethos in "The Mistress of Spices"

"The Mistress of Spices" is a story that revealed the eternal struggle of a human mind. Tilo is the protagonist of this novel who fulfills others' desires from the magical power of spices. Tilo, an Indian lady, runs a departmental store in San Francisco. Her customers think that she has magical powers through which she solves their problems. The fact is that Tilo's magic lies in the knowledge of spices.

Tilo's always helping their customers like teenager boy Jagjit, a taxi driver Haroun, an elderly man worried about his granddaughter Geeta, Tilo slowly gets attached to them and their lives. But above all, a man comes in her life, Ravan, an American. And Tilo falls in love with him, which against their rules. Because of this, her power over the spices starts reducing. Instead of helping the people, spices are now annoying their problems. Tilo breaks some rules, but after that, she was trying to help Haroun and Geeta. But the first mother comes to warn her that she must return to the island for punishment. Then she breaks the final rule. She uses the spices to become a young and beautiful woman to spend one night with Ravan.

In the male dominated society, it is a very common thing that women are not allowed to work outside. It is reflected in the story when Ahuja's wife comes into Tilo's shop. Tilo asked, "Why don't you work in this country. I'm sure many ladies here too need stitching. Wouldn't you like— She answered all day at home is so lonely, the silence like quicksand sucking at her wrists and ankles. Tears she cannot stop, disobedient tears like spilled pomegranate seeds, and Ahuja shouting when he returns home to her swollen eyes. He refuses that this woman should work. Aren't I man enough

man enough man enough. The words shattering like dishes swept from the dinner table”.⁵ Her husband doesn’t permit her to work and earn.

Indians pay too much attention and regard to their values and traditions. They go to any place in the world but they would not forget their values. One of Tilo’s customers Haroun, came to shop and said, ‘Lady please to kindly read my palm. She said, ‘I can’t read the future, and she tells him that the old one did not teach this to the mistress, but when she looks his hand. He remembers his past how his father and grandfather die. He starts telling his past story, “One day the fighting started, and tourists stopped coming. Rebels rode down from mountain passes with machine guns and eyes like black holes in their face, yes, into the streets of Srinagar, the name which is meaning auspicious city. I am telling father Abbajan we must leave now but grandfather said, “*Toba toba*, where will we go, this is the land of our ancestors”⁶. Indians are deeply attached to their roots. That is the reason Haroun’s grandfather does not leave his native land. Still, he fought and died.

Indian values are very much different as compare to other countries, in the aspects of culture, tradition, values, caste, and community. Indian society has their proper rules which people bound to follow it. On the basis of these, people live their life. “When Geeta’s grandfather came to her shop with newly indignant tales. He said, “That girl, that Sunday she cut her hair short-short so that even her neck is showing I am telling her, Geeta, what did you do, and your hair is the essence of your womanhood. Do you know what she is replying to? She was laughing and pushing all those messy ends back from her face, saying, oh Grandpa, I needed a new look”⁷. This was ethos when her grandfather said your hair is proof of your woman’s identity. Because in India, women have long hair and men have short hair. This is Indian ethos in which men and women both have different rules. When Geeta’s father buys a new car for her. Her grandfather said to Geeta’s father, “what nonsense is this; she was using your old car just fine, this money you should save for her dowry.”⁸ He suggests him don’t invest money on these nonsense things. Because in India, when parents marry their girl child, they give their daughter and also give some money and things for their better life. These are the customs of India. That is the reason Geeta’s grandfather worried about her dowry. But when her father talks about her marriage. She refused and said, “arrange marriages aren’t for me either. When I marry, I’ll choose my own husband”.⁹ She said to everyone that “I’ve already found someone I love. ‘Chee chee, no shame at all, making talk of love in front of her parents, in front of me, her grandfather”¹⁰.

In India people are greatly attached to their values, morals and ethics. People don’t speak in front of elders in any matter. Especially when elders talk about marriage. “She says, His name is Juan, Juan Cordero. Hai Bhagban, I say, she is marrying a white man”.¹¹ This is against their culture because they are Indian and that guy is American. The people must have to follow the rules of society. In this society, every culture has its customs, rites, tradition, and myth. The concept of marriage is also an integral part of Indian customs. It also has some criteria like marriage is done in the same caste or community. And this is against Indian rules because she loved the white man. Her family members are not in favor of her because they know that Indian society will not accept this marriage.

Indian Ethos in “Sister of My Heart”

This is the story of two cousins, Anju and Sudha who live in the same house. One woman shifted to California, and the other stays behind in India. Sudha is beautiful and Anju is not. Both the girls were born on the same day and their fathers died on the same day. That is why Sudha and Anju have been sisters of the heart. The bond between them is so strong that seems nothing can break it. When Sudha knows about their past family secret, that connection between them is somehow in danger. When both are pushed into arranged marriages, their lives take opposite turns. One travels to America, and one remains in India. Each discovers a shocking secret that changes their relationship forever. This novel is a combination of India and America. The story revolves around Sudha and Anju. They are living with their Pishi (Father’s sister) she treated them as their childrens “Abha Pishi, one of our third mothers”.¹² It is because their Pishi is a widow woman and she is living with

them. She is taking care of both the children as their own child. That is why they give her position as their mother and say 'our third mother.'

"There's Pishi, our widow aunt who threw herself heart-first into her younger brother's household when she lost her husband at the age of eighteen. Dressed in austere white, her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style".¹³ In India when woman husband dead. After the death of their husband, she wears white cloths. This is the identity of a widow woman in our traditional and orthodox society.

One day Pishi looks very sad because there is some kirtan in the neighborhood temple. She wants to go but she has some work at home. "There's to be a big kirtan in the neighborhood temple this afternoon, singers and dholak players who have come all the way from Nabadwip and all the women she knows are going. Kirtan is one of the few pleasures Pishi considers suitable for widows and thus allows herself."¹⁴ In Indian culture after the death of a woman husband, she spends her time in *pooja-path, bhajan, kirtan* all that.

India is a land of values in which people have different types of values. Like when Anju's father going on adventure her Pishi says, "He did pranam to me before he left, touching my feet for blessing, and asked me to keep a lamp lit in front of the gods in pooja room".¹⁵ When her brother leaves the house, he touches his sister's feet, and this shows their values. Because touching feet is a kind of giving respect to elders. This shows that in Indian culture, people give respect to others especially to their elder ones.

Concluding Remarks

Indian society is a mixture of various culture, tradition and customs. In the novel "The Mistress of Spices," Tilo fulfills others' desire through the power of spices. Through the spices, she tries to show inherent elements of Indian Ethos. In this novel, she reflects virtues of honesty, truthfulness, kindness, compassion, and liberated soul but when she drifted herself from such values, she felt annoyed and turned into a person who is deeply captured in the gross elements of life and became victim of obsession.

"Sister of My Heart" shows suffering of the woman in the society at large. This novel highlights the joint family relation and sisterhood which helps the members' in their 'moral' and 'spiritual' development. The strong bonding between two cousin sisters enable them to share their feelings and emotions with better understanding and empathy. They started to accept their strengths and weakness as well. Anju was very much aware about the pitiable condition of Sudha and therefore she approached to her and rendered her support. She was instrumental in offering a better world for Sudha and her to be born baby. Sudha was surrounded by certain age old traditions and customs (social evil) of India in which giving birth to a baby girl is not considered a sign of happiness rather it is taken unceremoniously. Anju being a modern and open minded lady broke all such conservative notions of the traditional society and even crossed all the obstacles by encouraging Sudha to leave such unbearable and filthy environment and join her family.

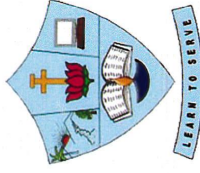
Being a married lady and living along with in-laws, it was really very difficult for Sudha to articulate her voice and explore her identity. But Anju's discussions and support, transformed her completely and made her a strong woman of her own will and desire. She showed tremendous courage not to abort and filed papers of divorce. She recognized herself and as per the great Indian culture and values, she displayed that woman is nowhere weak and unequal to their counterpart male. She epitomizes Indian concept of women as symbol of *Shakti*. Moreover, the title of the novel shows value of relationship, both the sisters love each other with equal passion and devotion. Chitra Banerjee novels reflect many aspects of the diaspora and the experiences of immigrant women in the host countries. The immigrants who face cultural difficulties in foreign land and at the same time stick to their own cultural beliefs, customs in a foreign country. She has associated with Bengali culture, Hindu Myths, ethical values and traditional system.

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The Tiger Daughter in the Two Day International
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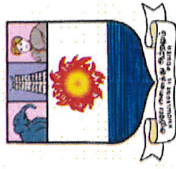
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