

# Discourse of Psychoanalytic Insight and the Sufferings of Immigrants in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*

C.G. Karthikadevi<sup>1</sup>, & C. Jothi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar, Department of English, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankovil, Srivilliputtur, India & Assistant Professor of English, Vyasa Arts and Science Women's College, Subramaniapuram, Vasudevanallur, Tamil Nadu, India.

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of English, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankovil, Srivilliputtur, India.

Correspondence: C.G. Karthikadevi, Research Scholar, Department of English, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankovil, Srivilliputtur, India.

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## Abstract

South Asian novelist Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the most famous diasporic writers. She is also a great short-story writer, poet, and essayist. Her books have been translated into 29 languages including Hebrew, Dutch and Japanese. Her themes are relevant to South Asian Diasporic experience, History, Myth, Magic Realism and Cultural Diversity, Women Immigrants etc. Her works largely set in India and United States. There may be a galaxy of women writers. Most of her works give the insight and lively experience to the readers. Her poetic language in the text is far more appreciable. The reader may fall in love with the way of her expression and her beautiful poetic way of writing. She explores all her immigrant experiences through her writing. She gives life to her stories and fiction in such an excellent manner. She expresses her own pain and suffering especially through her women characters. Many autobiographical incidents are employed by her. So that she is distinguished from all other immigrant writers. Most of her works deal with the images of Bengali customs and habits. This paper is an attempt to deal with the psychoanalytic perspectives of the characters in *Mistress of Spices* and the predominant role of culture which focuses traumatic and sufferings of immigrants.

**Keywords:** psychoanalytic, id, ego, super-ego, culture, immigrants, mental trauma, identity, pain and suffering

## 1. Introduction

Psychoanalysis is referred as a set of theories which is employed by the famous Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. In later days, it is developed by so many psychoanalysts such as Carl Jung, Jacques Lacan, Alfred Adler, Salman Akhtar, Nicolas Abraham, John Bowlby, Ruth Mack Brunswick, Erik Erikson etc. Psychoanalysis has its origin in the work and theories of Freud. 'Psychoanalysis is a method of analysing and treating emotional disorders'. It is a method of analysing psychic phenomena and treating mental and emotional disorders. It emphasizes unconscious mental processes and it is also considered as 'depth psychology'. According to Freud, it is a framework which conflicts among the three structures of the personality are repressed and leads to the arousal of anxiety. The base or stem of psychoanalysis is the belief that everyone possesses unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires, repressed thoughts and memories. Even though there are so many studies conducted in the theme, no such study has reported the psychoanalytic point of view of the novel *The Mistress of Spices* (1997). But the present study deals with psychoanalytic perspectives as well as role of culture in the life of immigrants. The aim of the study mainly focuses on the protagonist Tilo and her psychic changes when she is happened to meet her lover. This study is a good example and it satirises the societal issues such as the real condition of many human beings, how they are caught and trapped in the external illusionary earthly paradise, how it affects their study, job and losing them internally because of the trap of the external world. The present study is associated with the theory of Sigmund Freud's *The Ego and The Id* (1923). The characters are analysed and how they are trapped in the alien land because of the culture is portrayed clearly in this study. The Psychoanalytic theory states that behaviour plays a predominant role and it is influenced by unconscious frame work. It is composed of the three elements-id, ego and super-ego. The id plays a vital role to seek immediate gratification for biological or instinctual needs. It is considered as a source of

psychic energy. The id obeys the pleasure principle. The id is an unconscious part but the ego is a conscious part of the human personality. The ego is associated with the reality principle. The super-ego is considered as social and personal norms. It is served as an ethical constraint on behaviour. It determines what is wrong or right at a given time in given situation. On the whole, id seeks pleasure, the ego verifies reality and the super-ego strives for perfection. The basic concept is employed in the present study. Culture also plays a crucial role in the novel. Because of the cultural conflicts and clashes, how the characters are experiencing the dilemmatic and dichotomic situation in their life. There are five sections included in the present study. The first section, which is the introductory section deals with the basic concept of the theory and the aim and objectives of the study as well. The second section, Literature review designs about the studies which are relevant to the theme of psychoanalysis. It reveals how the various studies have been conducted and what kind of the theory they have followed to spotlight their articles. The third section elaborately brings out the concept of the role of psychoanalytic and the role of culture to determine the personality of the character and how it is parallel with the novel *The Mistress of Spices*. The fourth section sums up the discussion, that is the similarities and dissimilarities of the novel and it also deals with the comparative study of the issues in some other novels. The fifth section, conclusion investigates the scope and message of the study and also it carries out the suggestions for further researches in the same field.

## 2. Literature Review

There are many studies conducted in the theme of psychoanalysis. The study of Sistani, Hashim, Hamdan reveals the Psychoanalytical tensions and conflicts of characters' interactions in Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden*. It elucidates some of the psychoanalytical reflections of Jack, the narrator and his siblings concentrate on the mother-child theory and interactions between them. It also traces the psychoanalytical origins of the psychic anxieties and tensions in the stage of childhood. (Sistani, Hashim and Hamdan, 2017) This study also expresses the various themes of autoerotic anxieties, maternal deprivation and incest.

The study of McRae reveals that a psychoanalytic intervention is the psychoanalytic conceptions of unconsciousness to present sexsomnia as dispositional to the defendant. The author also uses the Freudian concepts of eros and death instinct. This study asserts that sexsomnia is acting on repressed sadistic desires. Sexsomnia is like sleepwalking, it is a common form of parasomnia (Hariharasudan & Pandeewari, 2020). It occurs during the transition out of deep sleep. The study also asserts that sexsomnia is not motivated by either consent to sex or reciprocal sexual relations. While psychoanalysing the sexsomnia, the mental disorders are the basic ingredients of the human condition (McRae 2019).

The study of Fraiberg, Adelson and Shapiro reveal a psychoanalytic approach to the problems of impaired infant-mother relationships. The study focuses on the ghosts in the nursery. The key to the ghost story appears to lie in the fate of affects in childhood. Childhood pain becomes a powerful deterrent against repetition in parenting, while repression and isolation of painful affect provide the psychological requirements for identification with the betrayers and the aggressors (Fraiberg, Adelson and Shapiro 1974).

The study of Gallop aptly suggests that psychoanalytic knowledge is applied to literature. Lacan also emphasizes that literary studies are the foundation for psychoanalysis. The study focuses on the transference aspect of psychoanalysis and interpretive relation. It is an attempt to apply Lacan to reading literature. It also questions the illusions structuring the authority of the psychoanalytic critic (Hariharasudan, 2020). While applying psychoanalysis in literature, the literary critic is endowed with the same illusory power at least in the relation or level of interpretation. Psychoanalytic criticism is considered as a resistance to the uncanny effects of literature. It is not only an attempt to suppress the letter but also under the humanistic guise of the humanities. The author suggests that a Lacanian reading of literature needs to analyse something like transference at play between reader and text. But it would have to be very careful to attend the specificity of that something (Gallop, 1984).

The study of Heidarizadeh reveals that how trauma has occupied the significant role in literature and psychoanalysis. The author has examined her understanding of creativity in dream, fantasy and also the art of protagonists of the novels of Margaret Atwood. She uses the viewpoint of Sigmund Freud. Psychoanalysis trauma engages serious long term negative consequences. The traumatic memories affect the mind of the characters and they are in perplexed state of mind, they feel insecurity (Hariharasudan & Gnanamony, 2017). The author also mentions the reasons for the psychoanalysis trauma are sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence. Trauma involves the emotions and feelings. Different kinds of people react in a different manner for the similar events. The study gives importance to the two major approaches: Feminism and Psychoanalysis in the novels of Margaret Atwood. Female characters and their psyche level are emphasized in this study. (Heidarizadeh, 2015).

The study of Aras explains not only the personality and individual differences but also the significant role of

literature in psychology and psychology in literature. The study discusses literature in terms of its interdisciplinary structure, psychology, man and existence, personality and complex notions, unfathomable personalities and ambiguous motives have been associated with characters in literary genres. The author also used the term Bovarism which is explained by means of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. The study focus on both literature and psychology play a vital role in dealing with human beings and their reactions, miseries, desires and their individualistic and societal concerns by means of different concepts, methods and approaches. Literature helps the individual to know and question their identities by raising consciousness and awareness. (Aras, 2015)

The study of Welles and Warren reveals that psychoanalytical criticism deals with the characters who serve as the symbols of the world. The study also refers that psychological approach expresses the author's perceptions, dreams, conscious or unconscious mind. The differences between the personality of the author and the author in the text are also taken into consideration. The themes represented by the author might be the signs of their own personality traits. The writers mostly use their own autobiographical elements in order to turn their maladies into their thematic material. Readers may identify themselves and associate themselves with the characters may be regarded as real people as well. People are modelling their lives upon the patterns of fictional heroes and heroines. The study analyses the characters and their attitude towards the psychological treatment. Each character represents a unique personality and individual differences. Psychology enriches the power of creation and production process. Psychology is considered as only the preparatory stage to the act of creation and psychological truth is considered as an artistic value only if it enhances coherence and complexity which refers to the quality of an art (Welles and Warren, 1963).

### 3. Methodology

The methodology section deals with the theory of famous psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. He has written so many works in the field of psychology. The section attempts to substantiate the text *The Mistress of Spices* with the book of Sigmund Freud's *The Ego and the Id* (1923). Many studies have been undertaken in the book of *The Mistress of Spices*. But no such study has expressed and analysed in the point of view of Sigmund Freud. His dealing with the Id, Ego and Super Ego concept is very apt to justify the text of the author Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. She occupies a distinct place in her literary journey of writing. She states in an Interview: "The force behind her writing is the desire to put women in the centre of stories, to have their voices be the voices of interpretation, their eyes the ones that we see through. There just hasn't been enough of that in the world, if you look back at literary history". The novel *The Mistress of Spices* is unique in its own mixture of prose and poetry. This novel is a combination of myth and romance. It explains about the story of magic in spices. It revolves around an Indian immigrant woman named Tilo. She is trained as mistress of spices and running spice shop. Tilo is very conscious of who is she and what she is doing. "I am a Mistress of Spices, I can work the others too, Mineral, metal, earth and sand and stone. I learned them all on the island. But the spices are my love. I know their origins, and what their colours signify and their smells" (Divakaruni, 1997). Freud states that "Being conscious is in the first place a purely descriptive term, resting on perception of the most immediate and certain character" (Freud, 1923).

Tilo gives spices to cure the problems of the immigrant customers. Tilo knows the origins of spices and the colours and smells. Each and every spice obeys the command of Tilo. She gives spices to Indo-American people for not only the purpose of cooking but also for the purpose of curing the sickness or maladies of the immigrants. She has to obey some rules, only then she is eligible to cure the problems of immigrants. C.G. Jung is a swiss psychiatrist and well-known psychoanalyst (Priyadharshini, Mohan, Hariharasudan & Sangeetha, 2021). He was the founder of the analytical and self-psychology. He aptly says that "Know all the theories, master all the techniques. But as you touch a human soul be just another human soul" (Jung, 1928). This has been proved in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*. Really she touches most of the hearts and souls of the immigrants. She gets an opportunity to meet an American in her store. She falls in love with him. She knows very well that her magical power will destroy if she falls in love.

The main character Tilo suffers a lot because of her immigration in US. Tilo's first mother taught some rules to her to follow. They are: One should not use the spices for their own purpose, One should not go out of the store for any reason, One must not touch any human being and not to use mirror, One should never love anyone in their life except the spices and One should not express more love or less concern towards customers. They have to do their duty in a dedicated manner. Most of the South Asian immigrants come to meet Tilo with their own problems and she diagnoses all their problems on seeing their faces and seeing their hands. She has cured all their problems by giving the exact spices at proper timing. Immigrants such as Lalita, Haroun, Jagit, Geeta and her grandfather, Kwesi need the help of Tilo to solve their problems in their life. Tilo has repressed her own desires and she has buried all her likes and dislikes. She has lived a life of a prophet and saint by repressing her thoughts and desires. Freud has expressed the similar concept of repression "We obtain our concept of the unconscious from the theory of repression.

The repressed is the prototype of the unconscious for us” (Freud, 1923). Similarly the character Tilo suffers because of her repressed feelings. She is not allowed to see her own image in the mirror “She is never to look on her reflection again . . . Anger whose other name is regret surged like wildfire through me. Yet who could I blame. The old one has warned us a hundred times” (Divakaruni, 1997).

Every chapter in this book is the story of spices such as turmeric, cinnamon, fennel, peppercorn, asafoetida, fenugreek, ginger, kalojire, neem, red chilli, lotus root, makaradwaj, sesame etc. The spices are very helpful in a number of ways to heal, cure and restore their happiness. Turmeric is used for the hope for love and luck, Chilli is used for the purpose of cleansing evil, Fennel is used to cool tempers, Ginger is used for giving courage and strength. Lotus root is used for the purpose of love. Black cumin is used for the purpose of protecting against evil. Black peppercorn is used for people to tell all their secrets. Almond and saffron are used to sweeten words and thoughts. Fenugreek is used to render the body sweet and strengthen mind. Asafoetida is used for the purpose of preventing people to fall in love. Kalojire is used to reduce pain and suffering in the life of immigrants. Even though she is good in dealing others problems, she has a trap in the name of love. She couldn't come out of her love. “Ah my American, waiting part in dread and part in desire I said to myself . . . Standing outside in stillness, did he feel me too? Pillar of ice frozen on the other side of the door, and inside me all the old voices clamouring, don't answer” (Divakaruni, 1997). There is a conflict between her id and ego. Freud states that in a beautiful manner, “The defusion of love into aggressiveness has not been affected by the work of the ego, but is the result of a regression which has come about in the id (Freud, 1923).

The main protagonist Tilo lives in two cultures. She finds dilemma between her heritage and her new alien land. She has come to America like an arrow. Her life is not fine as wine in America. Throughout this novel, Tilo suffers because of her hybrid identity. Her identity keeps on changing in this novel. An astrologer named her as ‘Nayantara’ which means the star of the eye. Then Pirates named her as ‘Bhagyavati’ which means bringing luck. She suggests her name to her first mother as ‘Tilo’ which means life giver and restorer of health and hope. Finally she changes her name as ‘Maya’ which means illusion. Thus she suffers because of her quest for identity. In this novel, most part of the story is mentioned in the name of ‘Tilo’. “This name, do you know what it means? It is a question I expected. I have the answer ready . . . I will be Tilottama, the essence of til, life-giver, restorer of health and hope” (Divakaruni, 1997). The main character suffers a lot because of her quest for identity. Consciously or Unconsciously, she seeks her own identity. Freud rightly says that “Seeking refuge from the unconscious in what is scarcely noticed or unnoticed is after only a derivative of the preconceived belief which regards the identity of the psychical and the conscious as settled once and for all (Freud, 1923).

Lalita is the wife of Ahuja. He is a chauvinistic pot-bellied man. She shares the pangs of unhappy wedding with him. She doesn't want to hurt her parents. So neither she leaves her husband nor blames her parents. She is displaced from Kanpur to Oakland. She faces racial segregation, vagrant, trauma, assimilation and cultural identity. She comes to the store every week after pay day. She also thinks about the days which she spent in Kanpur. She suffers from nostalgic feeling. In Kanpur she has gone to sewing school. She has her own machine to stitch. Most of the ladies ask her to stitch in Kanpur. Tilo asked her ‘why don't you work in this country’. Even though she is interested in working, she is not allowed to work anywhere by her husband. “He refuses that his woman should work. Aren't I man enough man enough man enough. The words shattering like dishes swept from the dinner table” (Divakaruni, 1997). Not only Tilo, but also many of the characters in the novel experience the pain and sufferings. It is imprinted in their unconscious mind as an indelible one. Freud suggests that “In the same way that tensions arising from physical needs can remain unconscious, so also can pain- a thing intermediate between external and internal perception, which behaves like an internal perception even when its source is in the external world” (Freud, 1923).

Lalita leads a wonderful life like a flying bird without any restrictions. She lives independently and happily. She accepts her marriage life because of her community. “Because in our community it is a shame if grown girls sit in the house not married and I did not want to shame them” (Divakaruni, 1997). She meets him only before three days of her marriage. He looks entirely different from the photos. The photo is taken many years back. She feels depressed and irritated when she sees him directly. She can't call off her wedding. She also thinks that if she stops the wedding, that will bring shame to her family and also his father's money will be wasted. They don't have open minded conversation with each other. She does not allow him to touch. She also thinks to get away from her family life (Pandeewari, Hariharasudan & Nawaz, 2021). Later she decides that it is better to live with him as an honourable wife than as a deserted wife. She can't share her depressed feelings to anyone even to her parents “Silence and tears, Silence and tears, all the way to America” (Divakaruni, 1997). Lalita's expectation is shattered into pieces. She cannot tolerate the instinctual defusion in her life. Freud states that “Every such identification is in the nature of a desexualisation or even of sublimation. It now seems as though when a transformation of this kind takes place, an instinctual defusion occurs at the same time” (Freud 1923).

Ahuja spoils Lalita's independent married life. He restricts her more in all the ways. She can't decide and live her life according to her wishes and desires. He has put so many rules to her to obey as a wife. She is not allowed to go out. She should not talk over the phone for a long time to anyone. She should be accountable for every penny that she is spending. He calls her every twenty minutes not out of love but out of suspicious nature. He reads all the letters before she sends mail to anyone (Pandeewari, Hariharasudan & Kot, 2021). But Lalita is not such a lady. She expects a child, because her child may bring a new and flourishing life to her again which she loses in the name of marriage. "Child-longing, deepest desire, deeper than for wealth or lover or even death. It weighs down the air of the store" (Divakaruni, 1997). Psychologically she gets affected and suppressed all her desires. Freud expresses that "In order to be able to help in this way it has had itself to become filled with libido; it thus itself becomes the representative of Eros and henceforward desires to live and to be loved" (Freud, 1923). As an immigrant, Lalita suffers a lot in this alienated land of America. So Tilo tries to cure the problems of Lalita. Tilo gives her fennel to solve the problems of Lalita.

Ahuja asks Lalita to consult an Indian lady doctor. As she is a sterile or barren lady, she can't get a child. But the doctor accuses only Ahuja. The doctor declares that the problem is only with her husband. When she tells the matter to her husband, he angrily behaves and treats her in a cruel manner. "But when I told him this, his face turned dark as the monsoon sky. The veins in his forehead were like blue knots. What are you saying, he said, I'm not a man? You want to look for someone better?" (Divakaruni, 1997). He slapped her two, three times. She is so terrified. She remembers the words of Mataji. "No man, husband or not, has the right to force me to his bed" (Divakaruni, 1997). Lalita feels fed up in her married life. Thus the immigrant Lalita suffers cruelly in the clutches of her husband. Her super ego restrains her to go out of her married life. The reality principle, her ego accepts all the happenings in her life and moving with an expectation of a change. Similarly the psycho analytic condition is analysed through the words of Freud. He comments that "Thus the super-ego is always closed to the id and can act as its representative vis-à-vis the ego. It reaches deep down into the id and for that reason is farther from consciousness than the ego is" (Freud, 1923).

Haroun is an immigrant in US. He runs shikaras for tourists in Srinagar. He emigrates from Kashmir. Then he escapes to America. Tilo fully believes only on spices. She could sense his past already. He asks Tilo to read his palm. He hopes that he can be successful in this new land. He likes to visit Tilo's shop on every Tuesday. Tilo is considered as the architect of the immigrant dream. She helps a lot for all the immigrants. He has done so many jobs. But he is unfit for anything. Initially he works under Kapadia memsaab. Then he quits the job as he is treated cruelly like an animal. Later on he gets job offer from Mujibar from his uncle's village near by pahalgam. Mujibar is the owner of a couple of taxis. Already he is looking for a driver. As Haroun is a Kashmirian, he considers him as a special person. He asks Tilo to glance at his cab. But she says that she should not come out of the store. Even though she wishes to go out of the store, her super-ego controls her. Freud aptly says, "In all these situations the super-ego displays its independence of the conscious ego and its intimate relations with the unconscious id" (Freud, 1997).

One day rebels break out in their place. In order to escape from the rebellions Haroun asks his father to leave the place and settle in the safest place. But his grandfather is not interested to leave the inherited place. Whatever happens, his grandfather is bold enough to face the problems. "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"" (Divakaruni, 1997). His grandfather has the fear of the external world. Freud observes that "In the same way that tensions arising from physical needs can remain unconscious, so also can pain- a thing intermediate between external and internal perception, which behaves like an internal perception even when its source is in the external world" (Freud, 1923). Haroun is attacked by some robbers at night and he returns to his home like a wounded person. He is about to die. Fortunately he is taken utmost care by his neighbours. He returns to normal health. Tilo gives him lotus root as she believes that it will cure the problem of his love and he can lead a happy married life with Hameeda who is a widow. He faces so many struggles and obstacles in his life as an immigrant. He genuinely takes care of her. He advises her to be careful when she faces new customer at late night. "Ladyjaan, you must be more careful who you let in the store after dark. All kinds of bad people are roaming around this neighbourhood—" (Divakaruni, 1997). Tilo feels anxiety of his words. Freud states the condition of anxiety as "We know that the fear of death makes its appearance under two conditions (which, moreover are entirely analogous to situations in which other kinds of anxiety develop), namely, as a reaction to an external danger and as an internal process, as for instance in melancholia" (Freud, 1923).

Jagjit goes to the store with his mother like an innocent young boy. His name 'Jagjit' means world conqueror He is a Sikh boy. He totally changes his appearance and behaviour according to the pattern of Americans. "Jagjit sullen in T-shirt and baggy Girbaud jeans and untied laces, the uniform of young America, speaking its staccato rhythms already" (Divakaruni, 1997). Jagjit changes himself like a real American. He is also considered as a shy and timid

child. He has undergone many traumas in his school life. He is physically harassed for wearing a green turban and his long uncut hair. Freud's opinion about the mental life changes and scale of values is "What has belonged to the lowest part of the mental life of each of us is changed, through the formation of the ideal, into what is highest in the human mind by our scale of values" (Freud, 1923). The first generation parents advise their children strictly to follow Indian culture and identity. But they behave quite contrary to the expectation of their parents. They get addicted to the new culture. He is abused in school because he does not know how to speak in English. He knows only Punjabi. He has learned his first English word 'Idiot'. He learns his second English word 'Asshole'. He is not belonging to the land of Whites, so he is treated harshly in school. He gets scoldings from his school. "Talk English, son of a bitch. Speak up nigger wetback asshole" (Divakaruni, 1997). Tilo gives him cinnamon to gain strength and to make many new friends. So he gets as many friends as possible. Tilo tries to make him as a confident person and encourages him to become a bold person. She gives him the spice turmeric to overcome all the problems that he is facing as an immigrant. The author represents the image of India and Indian culture through the character Tilo.

Mohan is also an immigrant who behaves contrarily to Jagjit. He experiences violence in America. Mohan and his wife Veena feel themselves isolated from other minority communities. He suffers because of racial discrimination. He is severely attacked by two young white people. Veena cries a lot on seeing this brutality. The ruffians scold and spit him "Sonofabitch Indian, should stayed in your own god-damn country (Divakaruni, 1997). Tilo mourns "O Mohan broken in body broken in mind by America (Divakaruni, 1997)". Freud tells that, "In suffering under the attacks of the super-ego or perhaps even succumbing to them, the ego is meeting with a fate like that of the Protista which are destroyed by the products of decomposition that they themselves have created" (Freud, 1923). Tilo feels painful while hearing the story of Mohan. He is broken and betrayed by American because of injustice. Then he returns to India as a broken hearted fellow. Most of the immigrants feel isolated because of racial discrimination and violence. As an immigrant, Tilo could observe the pain of her fellow immigrants as her own pain and suffering.

Cultural clash comes under the episode of Geeta and her grandfather in this novel. Geeta's grandfather comes to America by the compulsion of his son Ramu. He mostly loves to live only in India. As Geeta is a third generation immigrant she completely lives in American culture. But her grandfather is a first generation immigrant. So there will be lot of clashes and conflicts between Geeta and her grandfather. When she starts to work, her appearance and behaviour changed a lot. This kind of behaviour is disliked by her grandfather. "Oh Grandpa I needed a new look. Or 'That Geeta, how much make-up she is using all the time'. Uff, in my days only the English women and prostitutes are doing that. Good Indian girls are not ashamed of the face God is giving them" (Divakaruni, 1997). Unconsciously Geeta starts to behave herself in the Americanized manner because of the influence of the culture. She has forgotten the Indian culture. Freud's opinion about the culture is that "What is now holding sway in the super-ego is, as it were, a pure culture of the death instinct, and in fact it often enough succeeds in driving the ego into death" (Freud, 1923).

Geeta's grandfather hates whenever she reaches her home late at night with her boy friends in the car. Her grandfather reports all her activity to her father Ramu and her mother Sheela. Grandfather and his son argue with each other. "If a young girl should work late-late in the office with other men and come home only after dark and sometimes in their car too? *Chee chee*, back in Jamshedpur they would have smeared dung on our faces for that. And who would ever marry her" (Divakaruni, 1997). But Ramu's reply is quite shock to her grandfather. "*Baba* don't worry they're only friends. My girl knows better than to get involved with some foreigner. 'But *dada*, this is America after all, and even in India women are now working, no, even in Jamshedpur'" (Divakaruni, 1997). There are differences between the first generation immigrant and second generation immigrant in the alien land. They are conscious of their identity. They seek refuge in the alien land. In the words of Freud, "Thus, seeking refuge from the unconscious in what is scarcely noticed or unnoticed is after only a derivative of the preconceived belief which regards the identity of the psychical and the conscious as settled once and for all" (Freud, 1923).

Geeta's parents give her full freedom to lead an independent life. Geeta takes advancement of her parents' love. When her parents talk about her marriage, Geeta reveals about her love with an American man named Juan Condero. Her parents advise her to do arranged marriage. Arranged marriage is far better than love marriage. There arise cultural clashes between Indian culture of her grandfather and with the American culture of Geeta. Finally she comes out of her house and stays with her friend. Her grandfather seeks the help of Tilo. Tilo asks her to stop the poison eating at her heart. Tilo mixes many spices such as 'ginger' to become courageous fellow, 'fenugreek' to heal wounds in her mind and body and 'amchur' to take right decision. The spices which are given by Tilo play a crucial role in the life of Geeta. It helps Geeta to reunite with her family. The love which she showers on her boyfriend turned as a hatred one. The hate which she has shown in her family turned as a love. Freud genuinely states that transformation of her mind set as "In human relationships hate is frequently a forerunner of love, but also that in a number of circumstances hate changes into love and love into hate" (Freud, 1923). Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has

designed each and every chapter with the name of the spices. That much importance is given to the spices. The origin of the spices and their spiritual qualities refer to the Indian culture and tradition in a valuable manner. That is why Tilo uses those spices as the remedy of the problems which are faced by the expatriate community people.

Finally Tilo falls in love with a lonely American Raven. He also falls in love with her. He also saves her from the earthquake. The spices turn against her. Tilo accepts the new name 'Maya' which means illusion, spell, enchantment etc. Tilo starts sacrificing the love of spices and falls deeply in love with Raven. She gets addicted to his smile. "His laughter is a golden fountain from which I drink thirstily" (Divakaruni, 1997). She gets addicted to his smile. In her brain, the id part involves her to fall in love. She gives importance to the id principle. So the ego part proceeds the reality of making love. "Then take me with you Raven. Love me. And inside my heart I add, O don't waste time" (Divakaruni, 1997). Freud expresses that, "The id sends part of this libido out into erotic object-cathexes, whereupon the ego, now grown stronger, tries to get hold of this object-libido and to force itself on the id as a love-object" (Freud, 1923).

Tilo starts breaking the rules and warning which is given by the old woman in the spice Island. She gives more importance to her physical pleasures. She is forbidden to see the mirror. Later on she breaks that rule also. She starts admiring herself in the mirror. She starts giving importance to the id- principle which focuses only on pleasure. Freud observes that "The super-ego is, however, not simply a residue of the earliest object-choices of the id; it also represents an energetic reaction-formation against those choices" (Freud, 1923). There is a clash between her id and superego. "Mirror what will you reveal of myself. I am dazzled by the face looking back at me, young and ageless at once, the fantasy of fantasies come to life, spice power at its fullest a goddess-face free of mortal blemish distant as an Ajanta painting" (Divakaruni, 1997).

Raven tells her that he is willing to escape with her to enjoy earthly paradise. He understands the sorrow in her voice. He loves to touch her hand. "In our paradise you won't need it. You won't need anything except me. He gives my hand a squeeze" (Divakaruni, 1997). She is ready to face anything for the love of Raven. She tells him about their love. "Our love would never have lasted, for it was based upon fantasy, yours and mine, of what it is to be Indian. To be American, But where I am going – life or death, I do not know which – I will carry its brief aching sweetness. Forever" (Divakaruni, 1997). Similarly Freud supports the concept that "This accounts for the likeness of the condition that follows complete sexual satisfaction to dying, and for the fact that death coincides with the act of copulation in some of the lower animals" (Freud, 1923). She is willing to break all vows and shackles in order to achieve her own desires and earthly pleasures. She is extreme to go to the level of dying for him. Tilo undergoes all sorts of pain to adapt the new culture in America. She has the quest for identity. Because of her hybridity, she feels alienation and homelessness in the host country. Thus most of the characters in this novel struggle for their rootlessness. There is always cultural clash between their physical as well as mental state. This study clearly points out that how the characters are torn and affected by the clash of culture and the dilemma of their id, ego and superego psychic conflicts and issues of immigrants in the alien land.

#### 4. Discussion

There are so many studies that concentrate on psychoanalytic in literature. In this section, those studies are correlated and evaluated with Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* in the perspectives of psychoanalytic. The study of Liang, Yamin analyses the id, ego and super-ego in the main character Elizabeth in many aspects-her pursuit for love, her prejudice towards Mr. Darcy and the changes in her attitudes towards Wickham. The Id, Ego and Super-Ego described by using the novel *Pride and Prejudice* (Yamin 2011). Similarly in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*, how she has undergone the traumatic and sudden change of her Mind-set is revealed.

The study of Diyan Puspa Wahyuni and et. all analyses the personality of the main character Joe Goldenberg in Caroline Kepnes' *You and Hidden Bodies*. The main character in this novel is analysed by applying Freud's psychological approach of id, ego and super-ego. The main character Joe's id is described through the impulsiveness of his actions. Joe's ego is portrayed through maintaining a positive self-image in front of a woman he likes. Joe's super-ego is depicted through his awareness of having a good moral by doing righteous actions (Hariharasudan, 2020). The main character's actions and behaviours tend to learn his instinct and basic urges of human beings to bring pleasures and avoid the painful feelings in order to protect the individual. The psychic status of id, ego and super-ego is depicted clearly by the actions and thoughts of the main character (Wahyuni et. all. 2021). Similarly the novel *The Mistress of Spices* portrays that the main character Tilo is tempted and she is willing to experience the love for Raven. She obeys her pleasure principle that is id. At the same time she could hear the voice of Makaradwaj, a spice and her Old mother's warning in her mind not to love anyone or else the spices will turn against her. Likewise her super-ego restrains her to be moralistic.

The study of Kicki Herdayanti explains about the psychological conflict of the main character reflected in *Lady Bird*  
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movie. It describes the personality of the main character. This film tells the life story of a teenager who had very strong ambitions. This study concludes the psychological conflict between id, ego and super-ego. The main character is controlled by her id and she fulfils all her wishes and desire without realizing as it is an unconscious one (Herdayanti 2021). But in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*, most of the characters suffer a lot because of the immigration. Their suppressed feelings come to the surface level of ego. They accept it as a challenge and keep on moving their life by getting some solution and spices from the main character Tilo.

The study of Agus Hadi Puspito shows that ego defense mechanism of the main character in *Fight Club*. The study focuses on defense mechanism, the ego which are experienced by the main character. He is very brave and easier to accept the reality. The ego defense mechanism is an unconscious psychological process that helps a person to overcome anxiety in a stressful internal and external environment. The mechanism finds its origin in Freud's structural theory of mind which divides the human mind into three parts: id, ego and super ego (Puspito, 2020). Similarly in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*, Haroun and his grandfather are afraid to face the external world in the foreign country. They get anxiety and fear for the rebellions. They seek defense mechanism in the alien land.

The study of Michael Hutauruk reveals the idea of id, ego and superego in the novel of *Assassin's Creed Forsaken* by Oliver Bowden. The story expresses the journey of the main character Haytham Kenway. He writes his own experiences in his journal. The personality traits of the main character is analysed in this study. The main character's personality is shaped by id, ego and superego. The id is described as two parts, the loneliness and identification experience of the main character. The ego is also described as two parts, repression and suspense experience of the main character. The super-ego is described from how the main character encounters his lover and his son. The writer concludes the study by which personality is playing the role of dominant in the life of the main character (Hutauruk, 2019). While comparing this study to the novel *The Mistress of Spices*, Tilo's life is dominant by the id. She doesn't pay her attention towards the warning of her super-ego which will lead her in noble and honourable manner.

The study of Dina Amelia and Jepri Daud describes the theory of psychoanalysis and it is applied to unravel the unconscious psyche of the fictional character in the novel *Tokyo Zodiac Murders* by Sojishimada. In this novel Tokiko is the villain and she is experiencing abusive treatment from her father, stepmother and step sisters. Her trauma makes her to take the decision to murder. Tokiko's unconscious psyche is revealed by using the tripartite of psychoanalysis. Her id is triggered by her shocking experiences that she receives from her family. She is very strong until her death. Her ego paves way to survive and well-planned revenge towards her family. Her super-ego reminds her responsibility. Tokiko's tripartite builds her to feed her desire rather than to follow her super-ego wishes. She is faithful and she accepts the consequences of her actions (Amelia, 2020). The study exposes the similar condition in the novel *The Mistress of Spices*. Tilo is faithful to her spices initially like her family members. When she gets attracted by Raven the spices turn against her and he is saving her from the earthquake.

Through the discussion section, it is easy to understand how the psychic level is varying from person to person. The similarities and dissimilarities of the characters are compared through the present study. The readers can understand that in the life of human beings, how one should give importance to the super-ego. But most of the characters cannot come up in their life as they are giving importance to the id principle. As ego is the conscious state of mind, the more one is adhering and familiarising himself in the moralistic approach, he can overcome the external world easily. Thereby one can overcome the pain and sufferings in their life. The character Tilo is not succeeded in her life. So the spices turned against her. She cannot cure the problems of the immigrants at the end of the novel. She comes out of the shop as she is fallen in love with Raven. Her id plays a vital role.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study focuses on the psychoanalytic perspectives of the characters in the novel *Mistress of Spices*. The text is analysed in terms of theories, methodologies, ideologies and approaches of the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's artistic characters especially the protagonist Tilo's mental trauma and her sufferings of assimilating into other culture portrayed vividly by associating the theory of Freud. Not only the sufferings and mental agony of Tilo mentioned here but also the difficulties, attachment of the other minor characters' psychic level is analysed in the present study. The natural tendencies of the characters how they respond to their situations, expectation versus reality, and the uncomfortable situation in the alien land affect their conscious and unconscious state of mind. The sudden change of the protagonist plays a significant role in mental trauma. It is a severe shock to the audience as well as the readers. The novel also explains about displacement, alienation, racial discrimination, cultural diversity issues and nostalgia. When the characters settle in different location in alien land, they start to realize the blessings of India and its neighbourhood. They feel alienated in the new land. Knowingly or unknowingly they are affected by the unconscious level. The immigrants feel proud while meeting their fellow immigrant in the alien land. They could share

a lot about their nostalgic memories and their native land. Their self-schema is revealed during their unforgettable meeting. Tilo's position is irreplaceable one in the novel. She occupies such a wonderful role in the novel. Even though the novel is a milestone in the life of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, the character Tilo is the essence and valuable one to reach that milestone in the life of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. Undoubtedly the novel is genuinely a milestone in the life of the author as well as in the life of immigrants as it reveals their pain of external situation and indescribable internal sufferings to the world. There may be many novels express about the mental trauma and alienation and immigration. But none can be replaceable to the poetic language of Chitra Banerjee's *Mistress of spices*. So it is considered as a genuine milestone in South Asian Diaspora.

Each and every citizen of India comes to know the difficulty of migration especially during the pandemic days of CORONA (COVID 19). The world suffers a lot because of migration in many more countries. Each member in the family waits for their family members who leave their native land and settle in the foreign land. When the government stops air services they miss their family a lot. Many people lose their jobs, many people suffer from starvation, many people lose education etc. It is all a severe shock and unacceptable and unbearable one which leads the whole world to stun. If they get affected by the virus no one is there to take care of them like their own family members. Most of them are buried in that land itself by losing their identity. At the last moment also they cannot see their faces. They live with them with their lovable nostalgic feeling. It is all undeniable mental traumas for the immigrants. Even though the research is carried out extensively and covered all the aspects of psychoanalytic and diasporic point of view of *Mistress of Spices*, it has its own limitation. The study focuses only on Sigmund Freud's *The Ego and the Id* and *The Mistress of Spices* in a parallel manner. The limitation of the present study give scope and recommend for the auxiliary studies that the future research can be carried out in other psychoanalyst authors. The comparison of the novel book and film version of *The Mistress of Spices* can be chosen for further analysis. The poetic language of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in the novel *Mistress of Spices* can be concentrated by the researchers. In various aspects, 'Diaspora is a boon in the alien land' can be chosen as a valuable research. Spiritual feminism theme can be focussed by the future generation. Even though there are number of studies carried out in this text, yet there are a lot of aspects to be dealt and to be dug out in the precious novel *The Mistress of Spices* by the blossoming researchers.

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