

ISSN: 0976-8165

# *The Criterion*

An International Journal in English

Bi-monthly Refereed and Indexed Open Access eJournal

*5th Year of Open Access*

Vol. 5, Issue-6 December 2014

Editor-In-Chief- Dr. Vishwanath Bite

Managing Editor- Mrs. Madhuri Bite



About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>

## The Representation of Woman in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Doors*, *Affair*, and *Meeting Mrinal*

**Dr. Gunjan Agarwal**

Associate Professor

(Department of Humanities & Mathematics)

Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Ambala,

Haryana, India

&

**Gunjan Kapil**

Research Scholar

(Department of Humanities & Mathematics)

Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Ambala,

Haryana, India

### Abstract:

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a prolific author, an enthusiastic poet, a vigorous novelist, is notably a vibrant activist working on the advisory board of “Maitri” in San Francisco Bay Area, and “Daya” in Houston, both are the organizations that help battered and exploited women especially of South Asian or South Asian American descent. She has served on the board of “Pratham”, an organization that helps educate underprivileged children in India, for many years and is presently on their emeritus board. Divakaruni's writings focus on the familial, social, and national pressures faced by women and immigrants, as well as close friendships, strong emotional and spiritual bonds among sisters, intense nurturing and psychologically codependent relationships between mothers and children are also recurring themes. The present research work consists of some of these intricate relations in order to present the multifarious image of the female characters. In these stories of Divakaruni, women can be seen growing smaller everyday trapped in a myth of the wife and the mother until they paved their own path of freedom and anticipation.

**Keywords:** Marriage, Stifling Situations, Confinement, Struggle, Hope, Freedom etc.

### INTRODUCTION

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an extremely enthusiastic figure in Indo-American literary realm, who has projected a panorama of the vivid life of Indians in America emphatically. As Alexander Flora generally states that the “Novelists use a combination in varying proportions of what they have experienced what they have discovered and what they have imagined” (Flora 12), so has Divakaruni gained increasing visibility, not only in quantity but also in craft. “She gives a laser-like insight and skilled use of story, plot, and lyrical description to give readers a many-layered look at her characters and their respective worlds, which are filled with fear, hope, and discovery” (Bredemus). Her themes primarily include the Indian experience, contemporary America, women, immigration, history, myth, joys and the challenges of survival in a multi-cultural world. Presently Divakaruni teaches in the nationally ranked Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston where she is the Betty and Gene McDavid Professor of Creative Writing, and writes for both the adults and children. In an interview with *Thoughtfulindia*, Divakaruni states that her success lies only in touching the hearts of the readers and asserts that,

“On some level to say as long as the books are reaching reader and touching their hearts that’s the real success everything else is finance” (“Divakaruni”).

In several stories such as “The Bats”, “The Maid Servant’s Story”, “Doors”, “Affair”, “The Ultrasound”, and “Meeting Mrinal”, the Indian male characters, who often play a hegemonic role in a patriarchal society, are shown to be responsible for constricting, entrapping, cheating, brutalizing, and failing to understand women. In spite of the book’s title *Arranged Marriage* and the central role of marriage in the stories, the representation of relationships between women are more noteworthy than that of the men, which is often presented in generalized, even stereotypical, terms. Through these relationships, women discover a sense of self and begin to exercise their ability to choose. In *Arranged Marriage* the stories reflect her continuing concern with the situation of Indian Immigrants in the United States, particularly Indian women torn between the values of the old world (India) and those of the new (America). The concern of this study has been the presentation of the women’s gleaming and positive attitudes towards those adverse situations which they encounter in both India and America. As in her interview with Patricia Gras, Divakaruni confesses that, “*Arranged Marriage* is actually a collection of stories in some of which the men and women are in arranged marriages and in some of which they are contemplating entering and in some of which they’ve decided not to and in some of which they are leaving” (Gras).

The present research work discusses three stories i.e. “Doors”, “Meeting Mrinal”, and “Affair” of this collection entitled *Arranged Marriage* which has been appreciated by *Library Journal* as, young and old, male and female, east and west, modern and traditional, all elements blend in this exquisite collection . . . Sensitive, elegant and beautifully descriptive. Most important in this presentation is the emergence of the theme of empowerment which makes it place when all the heroines of the stories stand for their social and economic growth leaving their futile relationships, except in “Doors”, where the objective has been the projection of the transformed personality of the protagonist.

Marriage, in South Asia, is seen as a relationship between families that can take into account individual preferences but ultimately the duty to family outweighs individual desires. South Asians view marriage as an essential institution and the defining marker (regardless of career or profession) of a woman’s social status. This cultural and social pressure applies to first-immigrants as well as second- or third-generation Indian-American women. For many immigrant Indian women, regardless of class, arranged introductions and arranged marriages are the primary means through which men and women meet and marry and the adherence to Indian family values and cultural norms is often expressed through marriage. In “Doors”, Preeti, an Indian girl who has been in the United States since the age of twelve, is warned against marrying Deepak, who is “straight out of India” where “men have a set of prehistoric values” (AM 184) according to Preeti’s mother. Here the thought can also be quoted that, “marriage is holy because it establishes the kind of relation between male and female which let men raise above their bodies, to become something more than untruly, reflexive bearers of desire. Love “is the same in man as in the animal,” he claimed, “so long as it remains unchastened by marriage” (Livingston n.p.).

And sure enough, even after a good start, Deepak proves the mother’s warnings “true” by falling into such Indian ways as inviting an old friend from India to live in their house, enjoying Indian snacks and movies, and neglecting the value of a privacy and closed doors as much as his Americanized wife. Her mother warns Preeti as:

It’ll never work, I tell you, she had declared gloomily, as she placed a neatly

folded pile of shimmery *dupattas* in the suitcase Preeti would be taking back to Berkeley with her after the wedding. . . . What do you really know about how Indian men think? About what they expect from their women? Making a joke of everything, thinking the world will always let you have your own way. I wish I had trained you better, like my mother did me, . . . (AM 183)

As Kathleen Glenister Roberts and Ronald C. Arnett's book entitled *Communication Ethics: Between Cosmopolitan and Provinciality*, depicts that, "The arranged marriage structure is embedded in an ideology of familial obligation. Thus, the arranged marriage is "an alliance between two families rather than a mere union of two individuals, including parents, in-laws, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other kin" (35). Deepak's friends from India advise her and warn him too for the Westernized values of Preeti, which were not matching with those of Deepak's, and quip, "*Yaar*, are you sure you're doing the right thing?, . . . It's no wonder we call them ABCDs- American-Born-Confused-Desis, . . . " (AM 185). And a love match between an Indian and an American does not work because of the mismatched values in which the American values are the privileged and overwhelming norm in the Indian-American heroine's life. "I guess I'm just a private person. It's not like I'm shutting you out. I've just always done it this way. Maybe it has something to do with being an only child" (AM 189). The present story has also been observed as presenting the notions of individualism and collectivism or the Western and Eastern ideology through the characters of Preeti and Deepak accordingly and in this process the doors become the symbol of their approaches, as the author writes that, "Deepak liked to leave them open, and Preeti liked them closed" (AM 188). Hofstede defines Individualism as, "Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family" (51).

According to Hofstede individualistic societies emphasize "I" consciousness, autonomy, emotional independence, individual initiative, right to privacy, autonomy, pleasure seeking, financial security, need for specific friendship and Universalism. He further defines that, "Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede 51). Collectivistic societies, on the other hand, stress "we" consciousness, collective identity, emotional dependence, group solidarity, sharing duties and obligations, need for stable and predetermined friendship, group decision. It can be said that Divakaruni's narratives cater easily to a mainstream feminist audience interested in learning about yet patronizing 'oppressed' non-Western women. Although she does not specifically refer to literature, Chandra Talpade Mohanty names such a problem explicitly:

By contrasting the representation of women in the third world with [. . .] Western feminisms' self-presentation in the same context, we see how western feminists alone become the true 'subjects' of this counter history. Third world women, on the other hand, never rise above the debilitating generality of their 'object' status. (39)

The individualistic choice of Preeti- her inability to adapt and obsession with privacy, lead to frustration and alienate her husband, as it has been depicted that:

Preeti would shut the study door before settling down with her Ph.D. dissertation. When in the garden, she would make sure that the gate was securely fastened as she weeded. If there had been a door to the kitchen, she would have closed it as she cooked. Deepak was puzzled by all this door shutting. And he was more than ready to accept the unique needs of this exotic creature- Indian and yet not Indian-

who had by some mysterious fortune become his wife. (AM 188-89)

As in collectivistic cultures, people “behave according to the social norms which are often designed to maintain social harmony among the members of the in-group” and “they meet the expectations of the in-group members, help each other, share scarce resources, tolerate each other’s view, and minimize conflict” (Kim 5). Roberts & Arnett also assert that “marriage is an ideal, a duty, and a social responsibility that seeks to foster mutual support between the individual and the collective. Interdependence is an important value taught early in life that promotes integration with and emotional investment in the family. Arrange marriage is a central means of maintaining the integrity of the immediate and extended family” (35). Finally Preeti realizes the importance of being integrated with the family which becomes more important than shutting the doors. She craves for the love of her husband as, “A part of her cried out to go to him, to apologize and offer to have Raj back. To fashion her curves to his warm body and let his lips- so familiar, so re-assuring- soothe her into sleep” (AM 201). “And when the door finally clicked shut, she did not know whether it was in the guest room or deep inside her own being” (AM 202). Thus it can be said that the transformation of Preeti towards Deepak realizes the goal of this study which is the representation of the women characters, unlike other heroines of several novels and stories Divakaruni’s heroine does not choose to live apart rather the “Doors” of the westernized notions are shut behind by her to unlock the door of bliss and happiness which lies in her living with her husband, Deepak.

Levi-Strauss in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1949) analyses kinship systems and says that, “primitive societies were held together by a system of gift-exchange that formed the primary mode of communication among human groups. Underlying this exchange system was the universal taboo on incest which imposed the necessity of exogamous intercourse. The primary form of exchange was that of women in marriage” (Levi-Strauss 192). As Lewin puts it, “the incest taboo and the exchange of women are the content of the original social contract” (Lewin 98). In other words, human society, which is patriarchal, is predicated upon the use of women as objects for exchange. And it is this kinship system which determines the patriarchal ideology that is reproduced via the unconscious in each generation of humans. “The controlled exchange of women that defines human culture is reproduced in the patriarchal ideology of every form of society” (Mitchell 413). “The patriarchal law speaks to and through each person in his unconscious; the reproduction of the ideology . . . is . . . assured in the acquisition of the law by each individual” (Mitchell 413).

“Gender asymmetry is a universal fact of life. In many societies around the world, women are discriminated against by law and by custom, rendering them among the vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups” (Ngassa & Stiftung 8). In “Affair”, Abha, an Indian housewife in Northern California, spends most of her time cooking and housekeeping. She suffers from what her husband Ashok describes as her “prudish Indian upbringing” (AM 234) and cannot enjoy life as Ashok and her friend Meena seems to do. “Gender differences, are based on the social construction of biological sex distinctions, are one of the great ‘fault lines’ of societies- those marks of difference among categories of persons that govern the allocation of power, authority, and resources” (Papanek 163).

The cultural conceptions of male and female as two complementary yet mutually exclusive categories into which all human beings are placed constitute within each culture a gender system, that correlates sex to cultural contents according to social values and hierarchies. Although the meanings vary with each concept, a sex gender system is always intimately interconnected with political and



economic factors in each society. In this light, the cultural construction of sex into gender and the asymmetry that characterizes all gender systems cross-culturally (though each in its particular ways) are understood as systematically linked to the organization of social inequality. (De Lauretis 5)

Besides a complex marriage theme, Divakaruni celebrates the friendship of woman in this story and reflects her thoughts through the characters of Abha and Meena as, “I was the one who held her and tried to calm her when, after her miscarriage last year, the doctor said that something was wrong with her uterus and she might never be able to have a baby. . . . That was another bond that held us close, the unspoken sorrow of being childless (AM 240). “You could look really pretty, Abha,” she laments periodically, “but you don’t even try” (AM 237). “I see feminism as a positive influence, opening the benefits of American Individualism to women, but in a way that promote both women’s autonomy and new forms of connection. . . . Although their alternatives were sometimes painful and always limited by social forces beyond their control, they were glad to have choices, and, except in a few cases, they do not regret them” (Trimberger 257). Only when Meena gets out of her lifeless arranged marriage with the mismatched Srikant, Abha realizes that her own marriage with Ashok is an arrangement that does not really work for either one of them. “Still suffering from your prudish Indian upbringing, Abha?” (AM 234).

The acceptance of Srikant that, “I guess I’m more of a penguin, waddling along my everyday path. I knew it the first time I saw her, at the bride-viewing. I should never have my parents arrange our marriage- but she was so pretty, so *alive*. I thought some of it might rub off on me” (AM 261) expresses his anguish over this social institution of marriage and the incapability of himself as a husband. In this context Sinha and Verma (1987) also reflect that individualistic cultures “foster contractual relationships which are based on the principles of exchange” and that “people calculate profit and loss before engaging in a behavior” (124). Emotional ties play a minor role in such relationships. On the other side Abha also examines the validity of her relationship when she asks, “Ashok,” I persisted, “do you love me?” I held my breath and waited in the tense silence. “It’s a bit late to ask that, don’t you think? (AM 264)

All the systems of exchange that organize patriarchal societies and all the modalities of productive work that are recognized, valued, and rewarded in these societies are men’s business. The production of women, signs, and commodities is always referred back to men. . . , and they always pass from one man to another. The work force is thus always assumed to be masculine, and ‘products’ are objects to be used, objects of transaction among men alone (Irigaray 171).

Irigaray thus proposes that the exchange of women among men, an exchange should be understood more fundamentally as the institution of the reign of *hom(m)osexualite*. By this, she means a social order whose laws are the “exclusive valorization of men’s needs and desires, of exchange among men” (Irigaray 171). More specifically, Irigaray defines *hom(m)osexualite* as a social order in which the value of symbolic and imaginary production is superimposed on and even substituted on for the value of nature and corporeal (re)production. Women’s bodies, as commodities exchanged by men, are also subjected to this superimposition and substitution of value. As a result, Irigaray concludes, “in this new matrix of History, in which man begets man as man in his own likeness, wives, daughters, and sisters have value only in that they serve as the possibility of, and potential of, and potential benefit in, relations among men” (Irigaray 172). Irigaray finds that women’s sexual identity is determined by their utilization as exchange objects. “Abha, the man I was talking about works in my office. He’s American. His name is Charles. We’re going to get married as soon as my divorce comes through” (AM 268). Mitchell also

argues that, “the systematic exchange of women is definitional of human society” (372). Meena “But he understands me, all of me, even the bad parts. With him I can be myself, like I never could before this”. Juliet Mitchell writes that:

The universal and primordial law (of society) is that which regulates marriage relationships and its pivotal expression is the prohibition of incest. This prohibition forces one family to give up one of its members to another family; the rules of marriage within ‘primitive’ societies function as a means of exchange and as an unconsciously acknowledged system of communication. The act of exchange holds a society together: the rules of kinship . . . are the society. (Mitchell 370)

“If an Indian woman challenges the expectations of marriage (through divorce, being unmarried, alternative sexuality, or marrying outside of the Indian community), she is often depicted by some members of the community as too westernized, betraying the family, or even deviant” (Zhao & Park 564). And Meena also makes it evident when she says that, “*Selfish, they’ll call me. Immoral. A bad woman.* I have to keep telling myself I’m not that. It’s not wrong to want to be happy, is it? To want more out of life than fulfilling duties you took on before you knew what they truly meant? No, I said, . . . It’s not wrong. This way you both get another chance” (AM 270). Only through Meena’s decision to start a new life with her co-worker turned lover Charles, does Abha come to know that she herself has to start a new life, freeing herself and Ashok from the ties of a futile marriage. “Had I ever really been myself? I didn’t think so. All my energy had been taken up in being a good daughter. A good friend. And of course a good wife. What are you going to do about your own life, Abha?” (AM 270). Women’s biological and social reality has created several distinct roles for her in society: that of wife, mother, daughter, homemaker, worker, citizen, etc. these multiple roles of woman make several diverse demands on her time. The work of hers in the family by virtue of her being the mother, wife, daughter, daughter-in-law and home maker takes up a lot of her time, yet this contribution of hers is not recognized in the economy. Abha’s words that, “*I feel your resentment growing around me, thick and red and suffocating. Like mine is suffocating you. We’re spiraling toward hate. And hopelessness. That’s not what I want the rest of my life. Or yours*”, (AM 271) clearly reveals the process of her thought which make her to deviate from the path of married life. In Pauline Johnson’s book *Feminism as Radical Humanism*, she also argues strongly against the dominant anti-humanist mode amongst feminists:

The central claim raised in (this) book is that feminism is a humanism. The anti-humanist’s attempt to establish that modern humanism is hostile to the principle of diversity and difference- that it insists on measuring women and men according to the same standards and treating them in the same way’ - is an assessment which fails to recognize humanism’s universalising claims as the underside of its own commitment to the idea of the unique difference of each personality. Each time a feminist theory raises, once called upon to account for its own motivations, a principled commitment to the idea of the autonomy, the unique and rightful diversity of feminine selves, it speaks in the language of humanist values. (134)

Thus an empowered image of the protagonist has been viewed in this story if the meaning of empowerment is understood as “individualistic and it implies a little more than feeling good or powerful” (Verghese 32), as Abha thinks that, “I’ll go to that Mughal restaurant. Offer to cook for free for a few days. Surely when the owner saw how good I was he’d give me the job. . . . I closed my eyes and tried to see my new life- not as I wanted but it would really be.

. . .” (AM 271). Thus Abha leaving her “beautiful and calm kitchen” and “the pity in the eyes of the Indian women when they hear” (AM 271). “The gossip in India. . . . Family dishonor” (AM 271), moves towards her ultimate object i.e. to live with freedom. “*The old rules are not always right. Not here, not even in India*” (AM 270)

*It is better this way, each of us freeing the other before it's too late. . . . So we can start learning, once more, to live.* And Srikant- no, I won't think about him now. There'll be time enough for that later on, when I've begun to pull the unraveled edges of my existence into a new design, one I cannot guess at yet” (AM 271-72).

And it would not be exaggeration to depict that “women and men do not enjoy equal status in terms of the possession and enjoyment of power anywhere on the globe. There is seen a marked difference both in degree and nature of power exercised by women and men” (Verghese 21). Divakaruni's feminism causes her to speak against Indian men in various ways in these short stories. As one of her first memories is that of her grandfather telling her the stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata, ancient Indian epics, when a naive heart noticed that “unlike the male heroes, the main relationships [the] women had were with the opposite sex- with their husbands, sons, lovers, or opponents. They never had any important women friends” (“Divakaruni”).

The reflection of the patriarchal ideology can also be perceived in “Meeting Mrinal”, where Asha, a divorced wife, carries around the shame of her husband's abandonment of her. “Never truly loved by her husband, Asha is desperate to cling to her marriage and later to the appearance of being married, to maintain the façade of a perfect life, until the realization dawns on her that she has to face the imperfections of life, including the fact of her failed marriage” (Kuortti & Tajeshwar 88). Both Abha (“Affair”) and Asha (“Meeting Mrinal”) are oblivious of their own true needs for half of their lives, until they can liberate themselves from their allegedly worn-out Indian values. Asha and Mrinal have been portrayed as best friends since their childhood and when Mrinal advises Asha about getting married to Mahesh, “Is this what you really want, Asha? It's a big decision. You don't even know him- you've only met him once” (AM 280). But Asha replies arguing, “What's all this westernized nonsense about *only meeting him once*? . . . . Your mother got married this way, and so did mine. And they're perfectly happy” (AM 280). Asha realizes the reality of her marriage life much later when “Mahesh's hand had brushed my throat, sending a shiver through me- I was wondering whether I'd been too hasty, whether I'd made the wrong decision. Whether Mrinal had won again after all” (AM 281).

Since Mahesh left, I hardly cook anymore, specially Indian food. I've decided that too much of my life has already been wasted mincing and simmering and grinding spices. I'm taking classes instead at the local college, not something fluffy like Quiltmaking or Fulfillment Through Transpersonal Communication but Library Science, which will (I hope) eventually get me a full-time job at the Sunny vale Public Library where I now work afternoons. (AM 275)

“Ashoo! Mrinal said reproachfully. Then she added, “And you write so well, too. Professor Sharma always says how you have the makings of a novelist” (AM 281). “We don't talk that much since his father moved to San Francisco, to his new life in an apartment overlooking the Bay, where he lives with Jessica, his red-haired ex-secretary” (AM 276).

I've cut myself off from most of the friends of our married days. At first I tried attending a few affairs, . . . But I'd be the only woman in the room without a



husband, and the other wives, even those too well bred to whisper, would look at me with pity, as though at something maimed, an animal with a limb chopped off. Behind the pity would be a flicker of gratitude that it hadn't happened to them, or a gleam of suspicion because now I was unattached and therefore dangerous. (AM 276)

They are seen as the victims of the Indian custom of arranged marriage until their changing lives in America free them from their exhausted marriages and they can wake up to the so-called blessings of westernization. The very predicament of Abha's failed marriage bears his son who feels smothered by her mother's pretence of being happy with her husband before her friend, Mrinal, which was a false reality and this illusory attitude of her mother made him to shout out his agony finally, "Why couldn't you just tell her the fucking truth- that he got tired of you and left you for another woman" (AM 283). But when Mrinal confesses to the emptiness of her own life, "I was going to pretend everything was fine", . . . "I wanted you to admire me, envy me. That old competition thing. But when I heard you talking about your husband and your son"- her voice faltered on the word- "when I saw the love shining in your face, I couldn't keep it up" (AM 295). Abha also realizes the need to confess the futility of her own life and feels, "I wanted to weep like that too, to confess. But it was as though I were trapped deep inside something, . . . (AM 295). When the friends separate from each other, Mrinal wishes her to, "Take care of those two wonderful guys that God has given you" (AM 295). Later Abha feels offended by this confession of Mrinal and cries, "I am crying for Mrinal in her spacious bed in her luxury apartment, lying alone for the rest of her life, and for myself, who will probably do the same. . . . "What would I live on, now that I knew perfection was only a mirage?" (AM 296). The conclusion of this story, where Abha and her son sit in the kitchen toasting with pista milk to their "precious, imperfect lives" (AM 300), makes explicit an important psychological moment that many of the other characters experience- the woman's lives are imperfect, but their victory lies in living. "Women were considered as a weaker sex. . . . She is protected by the father in her childhood, by the husband in her adulthood and by the son in her old age" (Sahay 4). Divakaruni 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 [be] prejudiced when they meet them in real life" (Lewis 135).

## CONCLUSION

"In *Arranged Marriage*, Divakaruni beautifully tells stories about immigrant brides who are 'both liberated and trapped by cultural changes' and who are struggling to carve out an identity of their own" (Holt 1). When Divakaruni's female characters in any of these stories stand up for themselves, America is given a definite role in their awakening. America itself is seen not only as the country that holds many opportunities, but also as a mythical "promised land" (AM 293), in most of the stories of *Arranged Marriage*, the United States of America stands for freedom, enlightenment, and promises of fairytale fulfillment. Divakaruni's western critics repeatedly reiterate the notion of America being the rejuvenator of her Indian female characters and endorse the binaries the writer creates between India and America. But in "Meeting Mrinal" both the old colonial centre and the new centre of the so-called first world make up the landscape of this "promised land" (AM 293). For these stories in *Arranged Marriage*, San Diego Union Tribune writes about this collection that, "Magically affecting . . . her intricate tapestry of old and new worlds shines with a rare luminosity" (AM 310).

“Divakaruni seems to say that if the Indian woman is to be relevant in the United States, she must ground her struggles in the heart of whiteness, rather than graft on cultural components which make no sense in the New World. They should reinvent their personality, which takes “The best of the both together” in order “to raise hell globally” (Gavani).

### Works Cited:

- Alexander, Flora. *Contemporary Women Novelist*. London: Edward Arnold, 1989. Web. 12 Jul. 2014.
- Bredemus, James Thomas. “Voices from the Gaps”. Minneapolis, 1999. University of Minnesota. Web. 15 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/artistpages/divakaruniChitra.php>>.
- De Lauretis, Teresa. *Technologies of Gender: Essay on Theory, Film, and Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University press, 1987. Web. 23 Sep. 2014.
- Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. *Arranged Marriage*. London: The Random House Group Ltd., 1995. Print. Referred to as *AM*
- Gavani, G.B. *Quest for Identity in Sister of My Heart and The Vine of Desire*. 2011. *Internet Archive*. Web. 21 Sep. 2014. <<http://gavani-gavani.blogspot.in/2011/12/quest-for-identity-in-sister-of-my.html>>.
- Gras, Patricia. Interview by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. *The Connection Special*. HoustonPBS. UHT, Texas. 29 Mar. 2011. Television.
- Hofstede, G. *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. CA: Sage Publications, 1980. Web. 2 Nov 2014.
- Holt, Patricia. “Women feel tug of two cultures.” *San Francisco Chronicle* (1 Aug 1995): E5.
- Johnson, Pauline. *Feminism as Radical Humanism*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1994. Web. 21 Oct. 2014.
- Kim, Uichol. *Individualism and Collectivism: A Psychological, Cultural and Ecological Analysis*. Denmark: Copenhagen S. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 1995. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies NIAS Report Ser. 21.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969. Web. 3 Oct. 2014.
- Lewin, Ellen. *Feminist Anthropology: A Reader*. USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006. Web. 3 Nov. 2014.
- Lewis, Bradley. *Narrative Psychiatry: How Stories Can Shape Clinical Practice*. Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956. Web. 21 Sep. 2014.
- Livingston, James. *Pragmatism, Feminism and Democracy: Rethinking the Politics of American History*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2001. Web. 31 Oct. 2014.
- Mitchell, Juliet. *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: A Radical Reassessment of Freudian Psychoanalysis*. New York: Perseus Books Group, 2000. Web. 3 Nov. 2014.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004. Web. 23 Oct. 2014.
- Ngassa, Vera Nkwate, and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Cameroon), eds. *Gender Approach to court actions.*” (1998): 8. *Editions Saagraph*. Online Library. Web. 23 Oct. 2014.
- Roberts, Kathleen Glenister, & Ronald C. Arnett, eds. *Communication Ethics: Between Cosmopolitanism and Provinciality*. New York: Lang Publishing, Inc., 2008. Web. 26 Jul 2014.
- Sahay, Sushama. *Women and Empowerment: Approaches and Strategies*. New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, 1998. Web. 31 Jul. 2014.

Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. "Talking to Chitra Banerjee." *thoughtfulindia.com*. Thoughtfulindia, May 9 2012. Web. 30 Aug. 2014. <<http://thoughtfulindia.com/2012/05/an-interview-with-chitra-banerjee-divakaruni-silence-is-a-music-of-its-own/>>.

Trimberger, E. Kay. *The New Single Woman*. Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2005. Web. 3 Nov. 2014.

Varghese, Jaimon. *Women Empowerment Through Literacy Campaign: Role of Social Work*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 2012. Web. 4 Nov. 2014.

Zhao, Xiaojian, and Edward J.W. Park, eds. *Asian Americans: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History*. ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2013. Web. 14 Nov. 2014 <<https://www.randomhouse.com/boldtype/0199/divakaruni/essay.html>>.