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Co-existing Realities: Revisiting India in Chitra Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*

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Abstract: India, since eons has remained a cradle of spiritual wisdom and cultural heritage that has played a pivotal role in the growth and development of the world literature. The amalgamation of two opposite cultures and value systems amidst the cultural skirmishes of India and America form the most significant thematic concerns of Indian –English novelists. The coexistence between both the cultures at social, cultural and political levels has been evaluated from different lenses. For the coexistence of varied cultures and subcultures in order to build-up a healthy human society, it is imperative to have a certain sense of cooperation, tolerance and mutual respect prevalent in the society—a society in which various cultural groups assimilate and overlap in varied ways but at the same time keep their distinctive cultural traits intact. Chitra Divakaruni depicts the multicultural, political, psychological and religious concerns of her country. She looks at the issues, challenges and effects of multiculturalism in her works and reveals a society that is inhabited by civilized men, assertive women and an intelligent culture. Divakaruni in her novels attempts to create a delicious alchemy that blends the East and the West in a positive way and creates a negotiable synergy of the two cultures. The paper aims to depict the coexistence of multicultural values of India and America highlighted in *The Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. *The Mistress of Spices* is deeply rooted in Indian ethos. Divakaruni strives to weave her ‘social observations’ with the element of myth, magic and ancient culture alongside contemporary culture. Chitra is an expressive interpreter of the immigrant experience as she captures them caught between worlds and unravels the mysteries of love and identity.

Keywords: Coexistence, Immigrant experience, Indian ethos, Multiculturalism, Myth

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