

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Out of three literary genres, I decide to analyse novel because it is informative. I can gain a lot of information about the author's ideas and the issues presented in a particular novel. Novel is described as "a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying character and presenting an organized series of events and setting. Every novel is an account of life; every novel involves conflict, characters, actions, setting, plot and themes" (Shaw 257). Novel is the medium the author uses to share his/her experiences or things that happen in their society.

One of the authors who deals with the society is Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, an Indian author. All of her works focus on the roles of women, mostly Indian women, living in India or America. She conveys their struggle to adjust themselves to the new ways of life when they have to confront the culture and traditions that strongly tie them. Some of her works receive awards such as from Francisco San Chronicle, The Vine of Desire (Best Books of 2002), Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter (Best American Short Stories, 1999), The Master of Spices (The Best Paperbacks of 1998, Los Angeles Times), Arranged Married (American

Book Award, 1996 and PEN Oakland/Josephine Miles Award, 1996).(Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni)

I choose to analyse Divakaruni's Sister of My Heart in this thesis. Sister of My Heart is an expansion of and variation of one of her stories The Ultrasound. I choose this novel because this novel focuses on the limitation that the Indian women have in their life because of their gender and social background. Through this novel, Divakaruni emphasizes on how Indian women deal with their problems because of their gender, social background, and the treatment of the society.

Furthermore, through this novel, Divakaruni portrays two different female major characters. The first one, Shuda is a woman who comes from a lower caste. She is simply lucky because of her beauty. She is portrayed as someone who holds the tradition and in the end has to suffer from of it. The second one, Anju, is portrayed as a rebellious woman. She comes from a higher caste and is known to be someone who speaks her mind openly although she has to bear the consequences of her being rebellious. Through the way Divakaruni portrays them, the reader can see that there are pressures toward Indian women despite their position.

As Robert has mentioned, a character is a “verbal representation of a human being as presented to us by authors through the depiction of actions, conversations, descriptions, reactions, inner thought and reflections, and also thorough the author's own interpretative commentary” (66). Therefore, I would like to analyse the portrayal of female major characters, Shuda and Anju, because

their characteristics are very unique and interesting as they both portray two types of Indian women, who suffer from the society and the oppression of the tradition.

Statements of the Problem are:

1. How are the female major characters portrayed in the novel?
2. What is the purposes of the author in portraying the female major characters in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, this study is conducted:

1. To show how the female major characters are portrayed in the novel.
2. To show the purpose of the author in portraying the female major characters in the novel.

Method of Research

The method of research I use in writing this thesis is library research. I begin by reading Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Sister of My Heart as the primary text. Furthermore, I gather some resources and references taken from books and the internet to support my analysis. Finally, I draw some conclusion of what has been discussed.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four chapters preceded by Abstract, Acknowledgement, and Table of Content. Chapter One is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Methods of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Analysis of the Portrayal of Female Major Characters in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Sister of My Heart. Chapter Three is the Conclusion, followed by the Bibliography and the Appendices, which consist of the Synopsis of Sister of My Heart and the Biography of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.