

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPICES IN SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL LIFE OF THE PROTAGONIST IN THE NOVEL THE MISTRESS OF  
SPICES BY CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Literature is said to mirror the society and the culture prevailing in the society. Ours is a heterogeneous society with varied cultures. Different foods are representatives of different cultures in India. Spices play an important role in adding value to the food, along with taste spices possess medicinal values as well. A classic work of magic realism, *The Mistress of Spices*, a novel by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, narrates the story of Tilo, a young woman from another time who has a gift for the mystical art of spices. Divakaruni has characterized the lifeless spices as living characters in the novel. The diasporic writer has given a metaphorical representation of different myths, magic, and history related to the spices. The Spices in the novel encompass the space of both subject and object, being and non-being. They unify the performance of the protagonist Tilo in a quintessential aspect. This paper evaluates the significance of spices in the socio-cultural perspective of the novel and in the psychological life of the protagonist.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Characterization of Indian Spices, Elationship of Protagonist with Spices as Mistress of Spices, Perspectives, Psychology*