

‘SISTERHOOD’ IN CHITRA BANERJEE’S ‘SISTERS OF MY HEART’

Hyacinth Pink

*Professor, Department of English, Science and Humanities, Kumaraguru College of Technology, Chinnavedampatti,
Sarvanampatti, Coimbatore -641049, Tamil Nadu, India*

ABSTRACT

“A sister is a gift to the heart, a friend to the spirit, a golden thread to the meaning of life.”

Isadora James

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a post colonialist giant of Indian literature noticed that unlike the male heroes, the women never had any important women friends. This theme eventually became the core point to Divakaruni writing. Most analyses and portrayals of women’s relationships, even by women, have in fact tended to emphasize not female bonding, but female antagonism, not ‘Sisterhood’ but women as women’s worst enemy. On the contrary, women have so much to offer one another but our history is one of mutual inhibition. It is one of the inexorable tragedies of human nature.

Thus the objective of her fiction was to disprove this myth, to destroy the stereotypes. Divakaruni hopes to dissolve boundaries between women of different backgrounds, communities, ages, and even different worlds. Friendship, is an integral part of man’s maturing; for a woman, however, or so fiction usually implies, the real business of a woman’s life is not to develop herself, but to serve the man and by implication the relationships with other women must be relegated to the sidelines as she grows up. That ‘female bonding’ has become a central issue in women’s fiction; today therefore Androgyny is no longer the feminist goal. What is celebrated, instead, is female difference, women’s community, and Sisterhood.

In Sisters of My Heart Divakaruni develops themes relates to the abolishment of female feticide and subtle dowry transactions, intimidating mothers-in-laws, abusive fathers-in-law, caring yet insensitive husbands become some of characteristics of much her writing in India on and by women. (300 words)

KEYWORDS: *Sisterhood, Stereotypes, Women’s Community, Womanhood, Feminism*

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