

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine and Angelika Fremd's The Glass Inferno, I would like to compare both the novels. There are some similarities and differences between the two novels.

Both Jasmine and Inge are portrayed as women immigrants who suffer from identity crisis that is caused by their condition as newcomers in new surroundings. As newcomers, both of them are confronted by new cultural backgrounds that lead to cultural clashes between their old culture and the new culture. However, the number of cultural clashes, which are one of the causes of the identity crisis, is not the same because they have different backgrounds and they live in different locations.

Jasmine is a woman of Indian descent who migrates from India to America. As an immigrant from India, she goes through cultural changes, from Eastern culture to Western culture, and has a bigger challenge in adapting to American culture and mingling with Americans since her appearance is also different from that of the majority of American citizens. Coming from a country

which is rich in culture, Jasmine experiences a hard time in adapting to the American culture. During the process of acculturation, she experiences an identity crisis.

Inge is a woman of German descent who migrates from Germany to Australia. She migrates when she is a child and has been living in Australia ever since. Coming from also a Western country, she does not experience such a big cultural clash as Jasmine does. Her similar appearance to that of the majority of Australian citizens makes it easier for her to adapt to Australian culture and mingling with Australian citizens. However, Inge also has the problem of being a German immigrant among Australians. Being of German descent, she is prejudiced as a member of a cruel race. Therefore, she is ashamed of her own race, which makes her want to leave her own roots, and which eventually leads to an identity crisis.

Both Jasmine and Inge are also portrayed as women who deal with an identity crisis caused by their attempt to leave their traumatic experiences and gain a new life. Since identity is constructed also by the unconscious mind, which is the repository of repressed feelings often from childhood, traumatic experiences can bring a crisis into the process of forming an identity as an adult. Both Jasmine and Inge have traumatic childhood experiences that influence their ability to form their identity. However, the experiences are not the same.

Jasmine's childhood traumatic experience is a prophecy by an astrologer who says that she will be a widow and an exile. The prophecy traumatizes her because astrology is treated like a religion in India but she does not want to end up being a widow and an exile. All of her life she is followed by the fear of the

realization of the prophecy and unconsciously, it affects her in constructing her identity as an adult.

Inge's childhood traumatic experience is having a dysfunctional family and a broken home where she is sexually abused by her stepfather and ignored by her own mother. Being sexually abused by her stepfather and ignored by her mother make her lose motherly and fatherly figures as a child. Inge feels unloved as a child and therefore, unconsciously, she grows up to be a woman who is thirsty for love and it affects her in her attempt to construct her identity as an adult.

Although Jasmine and Inge's traumatic experiences are not the same, the effects are more likely to be the same. The effects are that both of them experience identity changes that are constructed and shaped by men. Jasmine is afraid of being a widow; therefore she clings to a man who can be her spouse and does not mind being changed because of her great fear. Inge's unconscious thirst for love makes her depend on men who can give her love in forming her identity. As long as she is well-loved, she believes that whatever identity the man gives her it is her true identity. Both of them are portrayed as being financially and mentally dependent on men since they rely on men in their attempt to gain a new life and identity.

Their moment of revelation, when they finally gain their true identity, is triggered by the same thing: unhappiness. Both of them are finally portrayed as women who have overcome their identity crisis when they are trapped in one identity that is given by others but which they are not content with. However, their decision is not the same.

Jasmine gains her true identity by choosing one identity from several identities she has been given by men that she thinks fit her. Even though in the end

she takes her identity from one of the identity created by her lovers, it is considered her true identity because she has added an element of choice into this identity. She recognizes herself what she wants and who she is, and thinks that Jase, the identity created by Taylor, is the most suitable identity for her. She has combined the parts how I see myself and how others see me, which according to the theory is the important requirement in forming an identity.

Inge gains her true identity by creating a new identity that is completely constructed without any man's interference. She decides to be an independent woman both financially and mentally and be free from dependence on men in defining her identity. Even though in forming her identity it can be limited by others, Inge focuses more on visualizing her own self and constructing her identity in the way she sees herself.