

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake and Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine, I would like to draw some conclusion. Both Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake and Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine deal with the problem that most immigrants face. It is the feeling of being caught in two different worlds or different cultures. However, the characters in these two novels face the problem differently because basically they have different characteristics.

In the beginning of Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake, Ashima is portrayed as a person who embraces Bengali culture very much. She shows her loyalty to her culture from the way she acts, for example, she does not call her husband by name, she wears traditional clothes and she does not eat beef as it is forbidden in Hinduism. She finds the difficulty to accept the reality of American ways of life because she is shocked by the new situation in the United States and she does not prepare herself to enter the new world.

The anxiety of being alone as an immigrant makes Ashima become a pessimistic person. There are many fears that haunted her to stop living in the United

States. She fears that there will be no one to help her if she finds trouble and she fears raising her children in the country that has different ways of life from India. However, as a woman who should obey her husband, finally Ashima accepts the situation although it is hard for her to get through all these.

As the time goes by, Ashima can learn to open her mind to America. It happens because she has spent so many years in the United States. It is shown when she becomes tougher and more independent to do all the things because she gets accustomed to this way of life for many years. She meets Americans and befriends with them. She is influenced by her children who get American education. However, her welcoming American ways of life does not mean that she forgets her old culture, even she tries to mix it. For example, she and her family always celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving without doing the religious way because she is still a Hindu.

Her decision to live both in India and the United States, it shows that she has changed. Now, she feels that she is Indian *and* American which means that she is successful in harmonizing both American and Indian cultures.

Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine tells about Jasmine, a rebellious and western-minded woman from Hasnapur, a small village in India. From the beginning of the story, Jasmine is portrayed as a girl who has a strong will to leave her culture. She does not believe in what an astrologer said about her future. It is an uncommon thing because she lives in the society which still believes in superstition.

From her young age, she is known as an expert in English. She also befriends with her teacher who is very keen on American things. Then, she decides to marry

Prakash, a modern Indian man who influences her about living in the United States, a land which promises her the freedom she wants.

Based on her characteristics, I conclude that it will be easier for Jasmine to accept the new situations in the United States, even the worst. Although once she gives up and does not want to continue living in the United States, she remembers about her promise to Prakash to burn her husband's suit in Tampah, the place in the United States that they were going to live. She also accustoms herself to wearing t-shirt and jeans rather than wearing sari as Indian women do. She feels that t-shirt and jeans can hide her widowhood which refers to her past. It means that Jasmine does not want to deal with her past as a village woman from India anymore.

However, she cannot deny the fact that she is an Indian and not an American at all. It is shown when she feels more comfortable being surrounded by Asian-descend doctors than Americans. In my opinion, she feels like that because when she is among Asians, she feels that everyone accepts her existence. Besides, being an illegal immigrant, she cannot get the protection from the United States Government. It means that she is still considered not as a part of America at all.

Moreover, she knows that she cannot make Americans stop considering her as an Indian because of her physical appearance that is different. In the end, she shows her change from an ambitious woman who has a big desire to be a part of America to a woman who realizes that she is still a woman immigrant who now lives in a foreign country as a fully Indian.

After analyzing the portrayal of characters in the two novels, I would like to discuss the similarities and differences among them. Both of the novels tell about the

lives of Indian-immigrants in the United States. Both characters are women. However, they are facing different situation. While Ashima becomes an immigrant because she should follow her husband with the legal document and later she becomes an American citizen, Jasmine comes to the United States with illegal document by herself and she never becomes an American citizen because she never gets the green card until the end of the story.

Both Ashima and Jasmine build their families in the United States. While Ashima is legally married to Ashoke and becomes a housewife to raise her children, Jasmine lives together without marriage with Bud Ripplemeyer and Taylor Hayes. She also adopts a son from Vietnam.

Both Ashima and Jasmine should fight to survive in the United State; however, the troubles that Jasmine faces are different from Ashima's. While Jasmine should face the problems from outside herself such as sexual abuse, some racial treatments and the problems from being an illegal immigrant, Ashima faces the problem from inside herself. It happens when Ashima finds it is hard to get accustomed to her new ways of life.

The reason why Jasmine gets some bad and different treatments is because Jasmine is an illegal immigrant which makes her live among harsh and uneducated people from middle lower economic condition. First, she meets Half-Face who is the captain of the ship that brings Jasmine and other illegal immigrants. Then, she meets other illegal immigrant and Americans who treat her badly because she is different from them and their society. After that, when she lives with Bud Ripplemeyer, she

lives among corn farmers who consider her as an intelligence alien and it is quite extraordinary for them.

Ashima's life is different from Jasmine's. Since her husband comes to America to study, both of them live in a better area than Jasmine. They live in the area in which the people are educated and are in a better economic condition. She befriends with American librarians who treat her well and never judge her although she is different from them.

In my opinion, while Ashima is successful in harmonizing her life both in the United States and India, Jasmine cannot do the same thing. The difference between these two women is while Ashima still shows her identity as an Indian and she does not try to act as an American, she mixes some American ways of life with Indian culture, Jasmine wants to be fully American and tries to hide her Indian identity. No matter how hard she tries to be an American, when she enters the American society people still considered her as an Indian woman. Becoming a part of America is not as easy as she thinks. Perhaps she learns and tries to adopt the American ways of life; however, it is not enough to make the American consider her as one of them.

I find both of these novels are very good to read because it tells about the struggle of people from the third world to survive in the super power country like the United States.