From Migration through Transnationalism to Cosmopolitanism – A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*

By
S. Priyadharsini
(14PEN014)

A thesis submitted to Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore – 641 043 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in English

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Signature of the
Head of the Department

Signature of the
Supervisor

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Chapter 1

Introduction

As the river flowing east and west
Merge in the sea and become one with it,
Forgetting they were never ever separate rivers,
So do all creatures lose their separateness
When they merge at last into pure Being.

(Violatti 1-3)

Why not can one assimilate two worlds? What is wrong in accustoming a 'new' home? Who can stick to one corner, if an opportunity welcomes from another corner? When can one see the 'world citizenship'? Where can one stay permanently? How can a 'single world' be even made? Today, these are the common questions can one hear from this cosmopolitan world. The hybrid population celebrates a cosmopolitan life crossing the boundaries of their culture, community and country. This paves a way for the cultural fusion and introduces the concept of "East meets West, there can be world citizens" (Neera 140).The competitive world demands a cosmopolitan life that makes one think 'Home' is no more a permanent 'Home.' It also makes one explore the world by gaining experience, knowledge, different cultures and languages and be a 'world citizen.'

The world did not undergo cosmopolitanism in the early centuries due to the lack of cosmopolitan views. According to Pauline Kleingeld and Eric Brown, the periods of Plato and Aristotle were "uncosmoplitan," or "anti-cosmopolitan" because a man identified himself as a citizen of a particular polis or city. So, people who lived during these periods were helping to defend their city from attacks, struggling for the institutions of justice, and contributing to the common good of their city. This

scenario slowly began to see the changes, when many humanists emphasized on the unity of all religions; notably, a theologian, Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus had drawn on some ancient cosmopolitanism by advocating the ideal of world-wide peace and emphasizing on human unity by arguing sociable nature and harmony in human life.

Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law Theory might be another initiative for a cosmopolitan view; this theory states that all humans share certain fundamental characteristics and it suggests unification of humans as a whole community. But the natural law theorists assumed that all the people share fundamental striving for self-preservation and this striving did not amount to the fundamental bond of humans' universal community. These theorists also believed that in addition to self-preservation, nature implanted all humans to have similar thoughts and fellow-feeling that could form the world community. In the book *De jure belli ac pacis,* (*On the Law of War and Peace*) Hugo Grotius had drawn these implications and established the international human laws, "great society of states" that is bound by a "law of nations" that holds "between all states."(17)

The Eighteenth century's Enlightenment period had paved the way for a cosmopolitan life as it covered many factors like rise in capitalism, worldwide trade and its reflections through theoretical aspects, voyages around the world, anthropological discoveries, Hellenistic philosophy and the notion towards human rights and philosophical focus on human reason. Many intellects thought to have their membership in transnational *Respublica Literaria* (Republic of Letters) community than their membership with a particular political state. The Republic of Letters community had formed in the late Seventeenth century with a group of scholars and literary figures from various countries with respect to different languages and

cultures. This made people to think of a cosmopolitan perspective above their state and nation. The French and American revolutions also created a strong impulse on cosmopolitanism. In 1789, the Human Right Declaration contributed to an increased cosmopolitan thinking and reinforced it too.

In the eighteenth century, the term "cosmopolitanism" was often used to state the attitude of someone, who was open-minded and impartial to the philosophical theory. A cosmopolitan was a person who led an urban life, who was fond of travelling, who cherished international contacts, felt at home everywhere and did not have a prejudice against the cultures and religions. So, the dictionaries and encyclopaedias started to describe the word "cosmopolitan" as "the person at ease in any part of the world." The literary figures, Montesquieu, Diderot, Voltaire, Hume, Addison and Jefferson called themselves 'cosmopolitans' without any philosophical interest as such. In 1753, Fougeret de Monbron identified himself as a cosmopolitan by drafting his travels all over Europe as an autobiography, *Le Cosmopolite ou le Citoyen du Monde.* (*The Cosmopolitan or Citizen of the World*) He believed that he did not belong to anywhere and declared "All the countries are same to me and [I am] changing my place of residence according to my whim" (130). Some critics opposed the cosmopolitan views, for instance, Rousseau's *The Social Contract* had complained "cosmopolitans boast that they love everyone to have the right to love no one" (158) and in a critical poem "Der Kosmopolit," Johann Georg Schlosser declared his opposition to cosmopolitanism, "It is better to be proud of one's nation than to have none" (63).

Some cosmopolitan defenders like Christophe Martin Wieland understood cosmopolitanism as a Stoic tradition, as implying on universal human community and regarded as inimical to patriotism. But others like Immanuel Kant developed a

distinctively new cosmopolitan moral theory. Kant thought that all rational beings are members in a single moral community where citizens share the characteristics of freedom, equality, independence and common laws, however, grounded in reason. The Utilitarian cosmopolitans like Jeremy Bentham defended by pointing common and equal utility of all nations. Some characteristics universally shared among humans, such as the experience of pleasure or pain, a moral sense or the aesthetic imagination which could be grounded in human reason of Moral cosmopolitanism. Moral cosmopolitans considered all humans as brothers, who should aim for the fundamental equality of rank among all.

In an article *Cosmopolitanism*, Pauline Kleingeld and Eric Brown pointed out the moral cosmopolitans who insisted that all the "human beings have a duty to aid fellow humans in need, regardless of their citizenship status." The international societies like International Red Cross, Red Crescent Societies and Famine Relief Organizations were created based on cosmopolitan views, in order to decrease human suffering regardless of nationality. The cosmopolitan principles motivated people to oppose slavery and defend emancipation of women. Some cosmopolitan authors did not understand the literal interpretation of cosmopolitan theories and their shortcomings were argued against cosmopolitanism and world citizenship.

Gerard Delanty classifies cosmopolitanism as Classical Cosmopolitanism and Post Universalist Contemporary Global Cosmopolitanism. He thinks that the Classical cosmopolitanism is Eurocentric; while describing the birth of the cosmopolitanism, he says that the classical cosmopolitanism originated from the Cynics and the Stoics of ancient Greece through the Roman Empire, Christianity of St. Paul and the Enlightenment of Kant, which ended up in modernity and universality. Delanty clarifies the historical context of cosmopolitanism and says that it is not Greek or

European invention but it is from the Hellenistic period. In *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory* (2009), he traces the origin of cosmopolitanism to be from Rome as "the Roman Empire was based on a principle of universal rule that had no territorial limits" (23). Delanty also mentions "Cosmopolitanism is today one of the most important ways of making sense of the contemporary world" (26). It is the dominant process of the contemporary global reach as well.

As such, migration stands as the backbone of a cosmopolitan world, which makes "individuals without an anchor, without horizon, colourless, stateless, rootless" (Fanon 176). Most of the people never restrict themselves in a country; they break the man-made borders of a nation and move on for their comfort and betterment of life. These people form the diasporic communities which turn the world to be cosmopolitan. In "Shuttling between Identities: Destiny of Diasporic Community," Dayashanker Mishra comments on the diasporic community as "the community of displaced, it undermines the role of the nation state and accepts deterritorialization as value" (172). The diaspora currently forces the globalisation that forms the cosmopolitan world.

The migration of Indians began before the colonial period. Gauri Shankar Jha describes about Indian Diaspora in his book *Dimensions of Diasporic English Fiction* as follows:

> Buddhist *bhikkus* travelling to remote corners of Central and Eastern India, contact between kingdoms of Coromandel Coast and islands of South East Asia, contacts of the places of Bengal with the Sailendra Kings of Indonesia, the expeditions of the South Indian Cholas, evidence of Hindu and Buddhist religion, mythology and culture in the

> South East Asia (Thailand and Bali), trade with East Africa and permanent settlement in the colonies of Indian merchants at Memphis and Egypt in 500 BC. (9)

The British colonization was another reason in turning the world to be one of the cosmopolitan. Having begun in the seventeenth century, the colonization rapidly spread through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and as a process it uprooted people from their homeland to sever the British Empire in different parts of the world. It is during this colonial era, Indians were sent to tea plantations as slaves and labourers. They also migrated as soldiers, where every family sent its eldest son to serve as a soldier for the British Empire. This led to labour shortage in plantations, so the British Empire imported more labourers for tea, sugarcane and rubber plantations in Surinam, Mauritius, Fiji and Malaysia. In his book Jha also mentions about the colonial migration:

> During European colonialism, it was the first quarter of nineteenth century that demanded for a labour force . . . the opposition to slavery and eventual abolition intensified . . . three distinct patterns evolved: 'indentured' labour emigration, 'kangani' and 'maisty' labour emigration and 'passage' or 'free' emigration. (9)

The multi-cultural world has rooted after the colonisation and it has drawn intimacies between the colonisers and the colonised. Fanon's *A Dying Colonialism* explains the unpredictable changes from the unsettled old centuries of colonised societies. The anti-colonial thoughts have brought the task of imagining a new future in a new society with old habits that has paved way for political renovation and transformation of culture. Fanon mentions the anti-colonial thoughts in the Algerian society "that give rise . . . to new attitudes, to new modes of action, to new ways"

(64). He sees this period as colonial modernity that has provided new heights for science and technology, which changed the world. The coloniser domination has the effects even today as Fanon observes, "The challenging of the very principle of foreign domination brings about essential mutations in the consciousness of the colonised, in the manner in which he perceives the coloniser, in his human status in the world" (69). This has made the colonised people follow the coloniser in ways of education, etiquette and career that made them migrate for a betterment of life in the foreign countries.

Leela Gandhi describes the term 'hybridity', as the colonial encounter has "bridged by a 'third space' of communication, negotiation and by implication, translation. It is in this intermediate zone or 'place of hybridity,' where anti-colonial politics first begins to articulate its agenda" (131). Similarly, Mary Louise Pratt argues the transcultural dynamics of colonisation and its effect in the postcolonial period, "Colonial encounter requires a novel form of cross-communication between speakers of different ideological/cultural languages. This need for interaction within radically asymmetrical conditions of power invariably produces an estrangement of familiar meanings and a mutual 'creolisation' of identities" (6).

Postcolonial era is seen as an enlightened period, as in *Culture and Imperialism,* Edward Said calls it as an enlightened "Postnationalism" and predicts that "there is the possibility of a more generous and pluralistic vision of the world" (277).The colonial era has paved a way for the natives to work and equally get educated like Westerners and this results in the migration of natives to the western countries. Postnationalism severs as an intermediate to bridge this gap between the Westerner and the native through profession and education. It has contributed mutual transformation of coloniser and colonised as Harish Trivedi mentions in *Colonial*

Transaction: English Literature and India, "It may be useful to look at the whole phenomenon as a transaction . . . as an interactive, dialogic, two-way process rather than a simple active-passive one; as a process involving complex negotiation and exchange" (15). The gentler perusal of the colonial past has made inter-civilisation against the slavery and oppression, as Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* ends with a postcolonial future, remarking, "The human condition plans for mankind and collaboration between men in those tasks which increases the sum total of humanity are new problems, which demand true inventions." (252)

Postcolonial migration immediately began after the Second World War that a paved way for professionals and labourers migration. It was after Indian independence that people migrated to developed countries for purposes of career, education and betterment of life. Professionals moved to developed countries like USA, Canada and Australia, labourers migrated to Britain, Germany and Holland to reconstruct destroyed areas, which were affected during the Second World War. The labourers were highly paid due to their hard work in construction. This huge payment attracted many Indians, who migrated as labourers to receive high salaries. Jha writes:

> Indian Diaspora in post – colonial period is also a significant phase in which three distinct patterns can be identified: the emigration of Anglo – Indian to Australia and England, the emigration of professionals and semi – professionals to industrially advanced countries (like USA, England and Canada), and the emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia. (9-10)

During 1960s, for example, there was a migration of doctors from the United Kingdom to the United States in a large scale. The vacuum in the United Kingdom's health sector was partly filled by the migration of Asian doctors, particularly Indians.

The Postcolonial era saw many migrations, even more, in the recent times, migration of skilled and semi-skilled manpower especially from Kerala to the oil-rich countries of the United Arab Emirates. After a gap, this trend has picked up more strength which has made more Indians to migrate and hold the citizenship of another country for their profession and education.

The need for financial assistance and better opportunities compel more Indians to migrate. But they settle in abroad and ultimately turn into citizens of the host country. Similarly, they again migrate to some other country and become a citizen of that country for much better finance prospects and chances to improve their personal life. Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory* clearly portrays this condition as "A growing body of academic work on globalisation insists that in the face of the economic and electronic homogenisation of the globe, national boundaries are redundant or – at least – no longer sustainable in the contemporary world." (125)

The citizenship concept is changing since the latter half of the twentieth century due to migration. It makes people forget the borders of a nation, because of the constant transnational flow and relocation of people along with culture, capital and futuristic ideas. Noah Pickus, in his article "True Faith and Allegiance: Immigration and American Civic Nationalism" points out, "when migrants settle down in one place, they take on a new, singular political identity. However, a world interconnected by rapid means of transportation and instant communication ensures that links between countries remain continuous through the migrant population." This has created multicultural global, as in Robin Cohen's *Global Diaspora: An Introduction,* "The elements of a particular culture can be drawn from a global array, but they will mix and match differently in each setting" (174). Besides, the people do not necessarily have their connection with a single country or state due to the large

migration with new diasporic identities. Robin Cohen also points out the challenge in national identities:

> The world as being organized vertically by nation-states and regions, but horizontally by an overlapping, permeable, multiple system of interaction – communities not of place but of interest, shared opinions and beliefs, tastes, ethnicities and religions (where these are transnational), cuisine, the consumption of medicine (Western and complementary), lifestyle, fashion and music. (174)

In the metropolitan world, a threat to ethnicity spreads among the people. In *The Postcolonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues* (1990), Gayatri Spivak and Rey Chow oppugn "Once again for the pure Other of the West." (8) The culture and ethnicity are contaminated between the West and the native world. The native world is no longer unalloyed, because it is adapted according to the West and formed a new world which has both the western and the native under the term "third-world natives' modernity" (Gandhi127). But in the world of globalisation, as Edward Said writes, "The world is too small and interdependent to let these passively happen" (20).

There is always a question about the identity of a person because most of the people think that they lose their native identity in the migration process. But in *The Propriety of Liberty: Persons, Passions and Judgement in Modern Political Thought* (2010), Duncan Kelly declares identity as a "self-reflective and self-conscious projection . . . because when I know who I am, I also know who I am not, or, how I am different from the other" (40). So, the real identity is remaining true to one's own self and how one exposes himself to others. The individual identities may fade within the group identities of a nation but Robin Cohen optimistically suggests that identity is "possible to recognize minority rights such as those pertaining to language,

organization of domestic and family relations, practice of religion and maintenance of communal customs without threat to the overall national unity"(176).

Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* introduces a new concept of "Un-homeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiation," (9) which is seen in the 'diasporic-cosmopolitan' society. In migration, there is always a mobility of people along with culture and a thought that, in turn, makes the world to become cosmopolitan. James Clifford's essay, "Travelling cultures" gives a rethinking of colonialism as a way for cultures to travel. Though colonisers have returned, migration carries the culture and spreads across the world. Indeed Pratt's "Transculturation and Autoethnography" argues that the travel is instrumental for multicultural society; the diaspora and hybridity form the adulteration of people and culture. In "Dual Citizenship in a Transnational World," Kavita A. Sharma states about the multicultural life of migrants who play a role of dual citizens in the cosmopolitan world, "Diasporas or immigrant communities often want to have their cake and eat it too. They want to have the opportunities available in the country of citizenship and also maintain a continuing relationship with their country of origin and other co-ethnics round the world." (104)

The migration has thus, indirectly turned the people to be cosmopolitan. In order to survive in an alien land, the immigrants create an ambience of their own communities and ghettos. They also try hard to feed their children with the culture and customs to their homeland, but the element of double identity starts to root in the immigrants which make them belong 'Nowhere.' This moulds them to get accustomed to the society wherever they live and they accept themselves as cosmopolitans. Most of these immigrants see migration as the way for their personal progress and development due to the opportunities available in developed countries.

So, one always tries to understand his needs for the present life and adapt to the 'new' world.

The first generation immigrants are, initially not accustomed to the foreign land and they have less belief in cosmopolitanism due to the memories of the homeland. But the second and the following generations start believing in cosmopolitanism owing to their responsive to this alien environment which makes them be the citizens of the world. The adaptation of immigrants always arouses the question as to what make them get accustomed to a foreign land. But the answer is simple, it is a man's natural tendency to follow the dominant culture than the weaker one; in the immigrants' case, they adopt the dominant customs and culture of their foreign land. Though they try to preserve their native culture, the dominance of foreign culture makes them be in a 'sandwich of two or more cultures.'

In diasporic communities, there are Plural societies and Sojourners too. Some people have the same or similar social and cultural backgrounds, but they do not mingle with each other and become what is popularly known as Plural Societies. Sojourners are immigrants who do not mingle with the host society and they have a separate identity in a foreign land. Though people live in Plural Societies or as Sojourners, they get accustomed to the foreign air in their day-to-day lives. The migration thus, makes the people to be cosmopolitans. This is clearly evident in "A Discourse on Diaspora and Strange Alienation," where Sravani Biswas points out that "the appearance of transnationlism and globalization created a peculiar form of dispersion which challenged the relation of the center and the periphery, of home and abroad, and created such a conceptual fluidity, that one had to forget all pervious forms of structure" (103).

The emerging transnationalism and globalization are multicultural cosmopolitanism which has become a faith of the people with less national and religious identity that forms just a humane society. In his article *Community Organizing, Migration and the New Cosmopolitanism* (2013), Professor Vincent D. Rougeau, Dean of the Boston College Law School, has given his views about "Global Migration." He has argued for the possibility of "New Cosmopolitanism" which has rooted in all human beings as a faith and culture. This possibility or acceptance of "New Cosmopolitanism" is seen among the writers of the Indian diaspora. Most of the Indian diasporic writings are strong supporters of alienation, homelessness, expatriate and acculturation which form the base for new cosmopolitanism.

In the field of postcolonial studies, the diasporic writing portrays the inner self of human who turns as a cosmopolitan. The theoreticians like Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Arjun Appadurai have valorised the superiority of 'in-betweeness;' the same thought has been influenced some writers like Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee and V.S. Naipaul. In diasporic writing, most of the Indian diasporic writers concentrate on homelessness in a foreign land. But in an article "Some Reflections on the Indian Diaspora," Bikhu Parekh points out that the Indian diaspora is not rootless; rather "the diasporic Indian is like the banyan tree…he spreads out his roots in several soils, drawing nourishment from one when the rest dry up. Far from being homeless, he has several homes, and that is the only way he has increasingly come to feel at home in the world" (106). These words narrate the current scenario of the Indian diaspora. The 'diaspora' may still refer to the Jewish condition of homelessness and their restoration of the home, but the cosmopolitan world forgets the meaning of the term 'diaspora' and considers it as migration; because most of the people move out of their country by their own choice.

Salman Rushdie uses the metaphor "translated men" to refer to migrant writers. He observes in *Imaginary Homelands*:

> Translation comes, etymologically, from the Latin for 'bearing across.' Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that something can also be gained. (17)

The "translated men" and women both are losing and gaining in being "borne across," but they keep their roots strongly in their native land and flourish in the foreign land. The migrants turn to be a translated literary text, which can sometimes keep the originality but most of the times it creates a mixture of the original and foreign. This depicts the "borne across" (Rushdie 16) people as the citizen of the world.

Uma Parameswaran uses another metaphor of "Trishanku" to represent the condition of migrants and she fascinates to write poems under the title *Trishanku,* which portrays experiences of migrants. In "Contextual Diasporic Locations in Deepa Mehta's *Fire* and Srinivas Krishna's *Masala,*" Uma states, "Members of a diaspora live in a liminal world, a Trishanku existence, as I call it in my poetry" (292). A contemporary critic Sura P. Rath asserts in the same vein, in an article "Home(s) Abroad: Diasporic Identities in Third Space:"

> I will propose that Trishanku, the character from the Indian epic Ramayana who went 'embodied' to heaven but had to settle at a place midway between the earth and the paradise, serves as a metaphor for the modern expatriate/immigrant inhabiting the contested global-local space. (8)

This situation remarks 'neither here nor there,' which many diasporic writers opine. For instance, Meera, the protagonist of Leena Dhingra's *Amritvela,* states about her

condition "I feel suspended between two cultures, then this, where I belong, the halfway mark" (1). Shanthini Pillai in her "Indo-Malaysians: Suspended Identities or citizens of New Selfdom," speaks about their "Suspended identity, halted midway between the motherland and the adopted land" (255). But the migrants make themselves belong to both the native and the foreign countries. It is a human nature to get accustomed to the place or atmosphere where he lives. Therefore, it is not a big deal to be a cosmopolitan who can lead a successful life in this globalized world.

The Trishanku metaphor is used by most of the migrant writers, but the cosmopolitan world changes this condition among the migrants. In a foreign land, many migrants lead a successful life which is seen with admiration and jealousy in both the motherland and as well the host land as well. In "Migrant Voices in Literature in English," Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla mention the successfulness of migrants:

> Their enormous success in politics (consider Ujjal Dosanjh in Canada and Bobby Jindal in the USA), business (Swaraj Paul, Lakshmi Mittal and others), science, technology, especially information technology (a host of software engineers in Silicon valley) and literature and theory (Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Satya P. Mohanty) have become worth emulating even in the countries of their adoption. (5)

A successful life in a foreign land or even in one's own motherland is possible only through adopting the situations or conditions of that place. So, the migrants automatically get accustomed to the alien land where they live, which forms the cosmopolitan world.

The diasporic writers like Homi Bhabha and others formulate hybridity in their works. For instance, in *Gunter Grass: On Writings and Politics,* Rushdie valorises "Hybridity, impurity and intermingling," (12) Leela Gandhi in her *Postcolonial Theory* states "the migrant novel explicit in its commitment to hybridity" and John Thieme similarly, in his "Doesn't Anybody Live Here Any More? Recent Developments in Postcolonial Studies," having Rushdie, Timothy Mo, Kazuo Ishiguro, Jamaica Kincaid, Ben Okri, Michael Ondaatje Rohinton Mistry and Bharati Mukherjee in his mind, calls migrant writers as "extra-territorials (I am tempted to say extra-terrestrials) who focus on issues of hybridity and migrancy"(5).

Today, in the cosmopolitan world, the concept of hybridity is seen as 'newness' with contaminated native and foreign cultures. In *Gunter Grass: On Writings and Politics*, Rushdie also considers "hybridization" as a source of "newness" (210). Though this "newness" is a half-breed, it is understood that when two unequal ones meet, the imbalance creates something new which makes one to forget the hybridity. So, the Indians are described with the terms "bicultural, bifocal or multicultural and multifocal" (5) in *Migrant Voices in Literature in English.* This is the concept of cosmopolitanism that makes people discard their hybridity and celebrate the "newness."

The Indian is seen as an outsider in the host land and the same is the case for a westerner in India, but the Indians being outsider, they live all over the world. Makarand Paranjape writes in the "Introduction" of *In Diaspora*:

> People of Indian origin now reside in over seventy countries, across all the countries of the world, from Surinam to Singapore, from Canada to Australia. Its members come from several regions of India; they

> profess about a dozen religions and belong to hundreds of castes and sub-castes. (2)

This may instigate a question as to how can multiple subjects from different religion and culture, being migrants of different geographical locations get generalized and united. But the need for personal progress and development makes oneself adapt and supports cosmopolitanism. The well-known migrant novelist Amitav Ghosh, in his essay *The Diaspora in Indian Culture* (1989), writes the importance of Indian migrants as "diaspora is not only an important force of world culture but also increasingly a factor within the culture of the Indian subcontinent." The multi-cultured India and the Indian subcontinent stand as the starting point of world citizenship. The different religions, cultures, traditions and languages do not affect India, which shows the acceptance and adaptability of Indians to be a part of cosmopolitanism.

In the early diasporic writing, most of the writers concentrated on survival and alienation of migration, but the modern writers see the migration as a chance to explore the world with various people and places. The literature always has the exilic condition as a source for writing in all the ages. For instance, *Ramayana* comprises Ram's going into exile for fourteen years, the Pandavas, in the *Mahabharata,* similarly spend twelve years in exile and the man's loss of Eden in the Bible again portrays exilic condition which represents the loss of homeland. So, the diasporic writings always revolve around the home as its axis. A place may be a home for one and the same place may be a homeless for another. But most of the migrants consider home is the place just where they live, where their heart resides and not where their feet stay. Sura P. Rath questions himself about his home, in a journal "Home(s) Abroad: Diasporic Identities in Third Space:"

> Where then is my home? I struggle daily in the town called Shreveport in the bible-belt south of the United States: I teach there, I live there; I write about people who live there. It is my present. But my mind has been shaped by our places – Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, New Orleans, and College Station – each of which can lay its claim as the home base of my psyche, hence my home. Above all, however, it is Balugaon, that clammy, dingy fish-smelling sultry town Chilka Lake where I sometimes return when I sing or dream of home. (20)

When a person mentions some place as his/her homeland, it means that he is being rooted in that place. But the current ideology changes because the man moves to numerous places and keeps as a memory several places that help in his personal development. So every place turns to be a home which improves a man's life. The world, finally, becomes a home. There are some people who claim the host land where they settle, as their home. The diasporic writers, V.S. Naipaul calls himself a British writer, Neil Bissoondath considers himself as a Canadian writer and Bharati Mukherjee claims to be an American writer. They deny their hyphenated identities and think the place of settlement as their home.

Some other writers consider the third space – a space different from both the homeland and the land of adoption. In *The English Patient,* Michael Ondaatje considers Italy as the third space, Ashish Gupta's *The Toymaker of Wiesbaden* and Amitav Ghosh's *In an Antique Land* consider Germany and Egypt as a third space. Here, the third space is the space of the world as the home. The writers of diaspora, however, write about their homeland, imaginary or real, a place with which they are familiar represent the cosmopolitanism; because they adapt to the world where they live and eventually it turns to be their home. In "'Not Quite'/and/In-Between: Some

Emergent Trends in Recent Indian Diaspora Writing in English," Manjit Inder Singh writes:

> Whereas early post-independence writers tended to identify with a nationalist narrative and endorse the need for communal solidarity, since the late 1980's and into the twenty-first century many writers' geographic and cultural affiliations become more fluid, divided, unfixed and cosmopolitan. (54)

The language of the homeland is highly linked with the migrants. In the case of Indians, English has become the inseparable language along with their mother tongue. Many languages are spoken in India and English functions as a common language after the British colonization. This becomes an advantage for Indian migrants in the foreign countries, where the global language English is not a barrier for them. Most of the migrant writers prefer to write in English due to their mastery over English and their bilingual or multilingual life helps them to bring out their migrant experience from the native and foreign lands. In *Midnight's Children,* Salman Rushdie calls English as "Chutneyfied English" because English is adaptable with all the languages, similar to the migrants, who get accustomed to all the countries. When something is adaptable, it survives and gains mastery in the world. English is also another reason for the migrants to be cosmopolitan. The cultural and political change make the diasporic writers choose English for writing, which Rushdie states in *Step across This Line*, "Anyone who has crossed a language frontier will readily understand that such a journey involves a form of shape-shifting or self-translation. The change of language changes us" (16).

It is a matter of fact that quite a number of languages lose their survival in the battle with the world language. But Indians turn to be bilingual or multilingual,

because wherever they go, they carry their India with them. Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla consider "many migrants who have written about India not in any Indian languages, but in English and have been able to capture the physicality and the spirituality of the country" (15).

Now, the writers like Chitra Banerjee, Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, Gita Mehta and Amit Chaudhuri reinvent rather than invent its myths, infuse new life into its thoughts and creatively exploit its aesthetic narration and tradition from the eye of a migrant. Bapsi Sidhwa says, in the narration these writers "endeavour to imbibe the best from the ancient Indian texts like *Ramayana, Mahabharata, Kathasaritsagar, Daskumarcharitam,* in character creation, they draw upon Indian archetypes of men and women but invest them in the new life and hunger or the unknown and unknowable" (16).

Today, more than using the myths, migrants' issues like the question of multiple identities, the nature of migrant experience, the problematic languages and also a happy blend of the East and the West are all narrated through the writer's own experiences or from acquaintances. The migrants mirror a 'double vision' as Rohinton Mistry's "Swimming Lessons" points out all migrant writers, "used their memories and experiences and made stories out of them, changing something, adding something, imagining some" (16).

These migrants' memories and experiences are woven together in the recent National Humanities Medal winner Jhumpa Lahiri's fiction. As a second generation expatriate, Lahiri largely concentrates on the human conditions of Indian Diaspora in the USA and she stands "at an interesting border as well as a cross-road of culture." The changing human conditions in diaspora made Lahiri indirectly to focus on cosmopolitanism through migration. Diaspora literally means 'the dispersion of

people from their original homeland' and it makes people get hybridized with cultures, languages, and religions across the world. It also changes one's root in various routes that differ from the migrant generations. Lahiri pictures the generational gap and makes her readers see the diasporic cosmopolitan world.

Jhumpa Lahiri considers herself as a product of three countries, as she is born to Indian immigrant parents as Nilanjana Sudeshna Lahiri in London (United Kingdom) and at the age of three moved to the United States. Her frequent visits to India with her parents made her understand the native land. She has understood her divided identity and began her writing at the age of ten. The ability to please her Indian parents and American peer group has made her swing between two different worlds. Her bond with India is not strong enough as Lahiri has admitted to Vibhuti Patel, "I didn't grow up there, I wasn't a part of things. We were clutching at a world that was never fully with us" (12). Therefore, Lahiri's early writing focuses on the memories and experiences that linked her with the three countries, different perception of first and other generation migrants, homelessness and inability to accept the different countries. But she turns to accept the cosmopolitanism in the host countries through various experiences, which is vivid in her recent books.

The publication of *Interpreter of Maladies and Other Stories* in 1999 made the diasporic world recognize themselves through her stories. The collection of nine short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies and Other Stories,* makes the readers to see the dual personalities of migrants, where some try to assimilate and others dwell in the memories of their homeland. These short stories entirely focus on first generation immigrants and the problems they face in the host countries. In an article, "Shifting Identities: Problems and possibilities – A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri's Fiction," Sujatha points out Lahiri's writing, "Her voice is a voice of an immigrant caught up in the

vortex of a multi-cultural world, trying to define an identity. Her focus is the 'mindscape of characters' and 'human predicament' in its wider perspective," (143) which is visible in these nine short stories.

The short story, "A Temporary Matter" shows the world between 'dark' and 'light' where a temporary power cut helps the couple to unite in the dark, but the light after the repair of power line makes the couple see the real gap between them. The lack of elders in the family and inability to share their feelings are shown in the story from the Indian perspective. The partition of India and Pakistan in "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" is seen from the alien country and the conflict within Mr. Pirzada as he grapples with the unknown safety of his family from the distant land. This short story also pictures the search of people from their land who shares the common interests and enjoys the home food. In the short story "Interpreter of Maladies," the foreignness of migrants is viewed from the eyes of an Indian. Mr. Kapasi's dumbness for Mrs. Das' confession is the dumbness of an Indian towards the foreign culture.

Boori ma in "A Real Durwan" portrays the struggle of a person without his/her family. Her nostalgia for her past and 'reality' is the condition of an immigrant in the host country. The cross culture alienation is explained through the short story "Mrs. Sen's." Her painful experiences and loneliness in the US have reduced due to the letters that she receives from India. Mrs. Sen remains stagnant between the two worlds – the one she left and the one where she lives which she cannot accept throughout her life. In "The Treatment of Bibi Haldar," also portrays the loneliness and alienation that a person finds hard in his/her migrant life.

The final short story in the collection, "Third and the Final Continent" shows the eagerness to learn and adapt foreign land, acceptance of differences as a migrant and the effort to make a home in an alien country. This story portrays Lahiri herself

who is similar to the protagonist as a 'product of three countries.' Lahiri as a second generation immigrant accepts the process of acculturation that is vivid in the "Third and the Final Continent." The protagonist and his wife Mala are also similar to Lahiri's parents as the annual holidays kept them in touch with their homeland, but gradually they shifted their 'home' from India to the US. The process can be seen at the end of the story:

> We are American citizens now, so that we can collect social security when it is time. Though we visit Calcutta every few years, and bring back more drawstring pajamas and Darjeeling tea, we have decided to grow old here . . . Mala no longer drapes the end of her saree over her head, or weeps at night for her parents, but occasionally she weeps for our son. So we drive Cambridge to visit him, or bring him home for a week-end, so that he can eat rice with us, with his hands and speak in Bengali, things that we sometimes worry he will no longer do after we die. (197)

This collection of short stories makes readers see the diasporic world and the possibilities to accept 'diasporic-cosmopolitanism.' The migrants who are caught between two or more worlds definitely, create a multicultural society. Lahiri's character portrays a well-framed multicultural world and makes the readers empathize it.

Lahiri's novel *The Namesake* (2003) has got its title from Margaret Laurence's popular essay *A Place to Stand on* (1983). The story revolves around the character, Gogol, who has a name of the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol. Gogol's parents do not consider their host country as home and keep their intimacy with the native city of Calcutta. But the second generation immigrants, Gogol and his sister Sonia get

accustomed to the host society and turn as cosmopolitans. Lahiri provides a vivid picture of an expatriate life and shows the difference between the first and second generation immigrants – a difference that portrays how the immigrants accept the globalization and become cosmopolitans.

Most of the diasporic writers see the faults of getting accustomed to the new world, as the migrants forget their home. But it is not a fault to get accustomed. The migrants should remember their homeland likewise they cannot keep pondering over their home. Nowadays, in India, the ancient culture changes – for instance, tradition in clothing keeps changing due to the Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) the world demands westernization in India, which people accept for their career; even the term 'casual wear' or 'formal wear' is adapted from the west along with trousers, T-shirts and suits. Similarly, in Indian marriages, people follow their 'career-world' by wearing blazers, groom and bride need a suit and frock. This is also acculturation where the people adopt the west staying in their homeland. When one tries to be in the shoes of migrants, he/she can understand the process of acculturation that grows in the world of cosmopolitanism.

The memories of homeland do not originally exist on its own, unless they are remembered, until they are brought back into life and until it is understood that the memories are separate from the present life. When an individual tries to move out from his/her homeland memories, the alien culture is introduced by their new land, which makes them accustom physically and mentally as a person from the new land. In the lives of the second and next generation people, even memories of their homeland vanish, as they are born and have grown up in a new land.

The immigrants, to survive in an alien land, create an ambiance of their own community, ghettos, celebrate their native festivals, dine together, share cultural

thoughts or frequently visit one another's house. Though the first generation immigrants try hard to feed the culture of their homeland and customs to their children, the dominant alien culture makes the children get accustomed to it. The element of 'double identity' starts to root in the immigrants that lessen the home culture and makes a person belong to 'Nowhere' or to a 'New World,' where they have migrated. In the book, *Jhumpa Lahiri's Works: A Study of Intergenerational Friction,* Nityananda Pattanayak says,

> The second generation does not return, rather refuses to return to the past, it refuses to be driven by a recurring sense of loss and longing, displacement, and nostalgia of their native land. They "look forward" to the concerns and modes of their hybridization and cross-culture fertilization in the multi-cultural space of the USA. They seem to perceive and adopt 'new angles' at which to enter reality. (20)

Hybridization or acculturation, today has an important part in the world which Jhumpa Lahiri's writings unfold as the contrasts and contradictions of human experience. In "Shifting Identities: Problems and Possibilities – A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri's Fiction," Sujatha mentions about Lahiri's writing, "Her voice is the voice of an immigrant caught up in the vortex of a multicultural world, trying to define an identity. Her focus is the 'mindscape of characters' and 'human predicament' in its wider perspective" (144-45). Indeed, most of her characters are located through their thoughts with different stages of acculturation. The concept of 'third space' is also important in a 'diasporic-cosmopolitan' world which Foucault asserts that space is fundamental in any form of communal life and in the exercise of power.

In the process of acculturation, Lahiri shows a contrast of two ideas – Host and Homelands through her second novel, *The Lowland* (2013). The brothers Subhash

and Udayan stand opposite to each other as host and homelands; as Subhash earns a scholarship for his education and moving to America and Udayan, in contrast, gets involved in the Naxalite movement for the improvement of poor Indians through violence. This novel pictures the reality by introducing two different ideas and how one dominates the other in the process of hybridization. The act of Subhash can be seen as self-centred, but Lahiri proves the reality through her diasporic characters.

Aju Mukhopadhyay's "Jhumpa Lahiri: Interpreter of Cultural Mix and Clash" points out Lahiri's "broad area of writing – cultural mix and clash among ethnic Bengalis and Americans – leads to further understanding of people paving the way towards the establishment of peace" (122).The world is becoming a global village through the revolution any development in travel and communication, a continuous mix of culture and traditions forms the cosmopolitan society which Lahiri shows in her books. Autobiographical in her writing, Lahiri portrays Indian migrants to the world, capturing the diasporic spirit of her characters muddled in multiple emotional tangles. When the characters try to relieve themselves from the emotions, they try to get accustomed to the host society and learn to think the place where they live as their 'Home.'

In *Unaccustomed Earth,* (2008) the fictionist makes her observation on second generation Indian-Americans experiencing a deep sense of isolation and assimilation, which shows her Indo-American expatriate life in the United States. All the stories deal with uprooting from homeland and accustoming to a new land with their effort made to show connection among characters. In the book *Dynamics of Culture and Diaspora in Jhumpa Lahiri,* A. J. Sebastian quotes Inder Marjit Singh:

> Immigrant life of Diasporas can mean living in forced or voluntary exile which leads to identity confusion and problems of identification

> in the backdrop of old and new culture. Jhumpa Lahiri's stories focus on relationships and on specific cultural experience and the difficulties of human existence by which characters yearn backward and forward in time. Lahiri's own experiences make her come out forcefully in the stories. (116)

Lahiri presents her stories, which are attractive and do compel the readers' attention. Most of her stories have short sentences and she uses fewer similes and metaphors. But Lahiri creates a picture through her words and attractive flow of language. The stories end with ease, without any torment or they seldom evoke surprise or suspense in the reader. The protagonists try to console themselves and they retire to their world compromising with their fate. Writers usually write something with their experiences of place, time, people or something they heard or imagined. Sometimes the works of the writers narrate their own life, which is called as the autobiographical element. But Lahiri has experiences beyond these phenomena. She says,

> I have also written stories set in places and/or times of which I had no idea and no access too, and I've had to rely on a little bit of research and question and get some details that way. It's easy to set a story anywhere if you get a good guidebook and get some basic street names and some description, but for me, I am indebted to my travels to India for several of the stories. (Das 173-4)

The art of Lahiri's writing shows the reality which again supports the diasporic world that forms cosmopolitan societies. Lahiri depicts not merely the uprootedness of her diasporic characters from their homeland and their loneliness in an alien geographical location but also indicates that one's home is wherever one lives

or has lived; and in the present case it is America. In almost all her stories there is a longing for the native land, the life led in India before their migration to America. Even the second generation settlers are not free from the connection they have with the country of the birth of their parents. Politically and nationally they are Americans but their parents' memories of the native country are something that they have to contend with. The first generation settlers fear that their children may forget the traditions and culture of their parents and become completely Americanized. Thus, they have to keep alive the traditions of their forefathers in the "little-India" that they create in their apartments. The occasional visits to India also keep them in touch with their 'roots' and the magic that India possesses keeps them bound to her.

Lahiri evokes the layered tension in the experiences of the first and second-generation Indian Americans arising out of their divided affiliations towards their original and adopted homelands. Her characters act as interpreters of both the Indian culture and the culture of the United States. As a sensitive American writer, well aware of and closely linked with Indian heritage, Lahiri unfolds her characters' fractured double perspectives. Lahiri's fictional interpretation of the immigrant situation carries some degree of authenticity because it reflects her keen observation and understanding of the characters caught between their traditional past and the modern present. Lahiri's characters are located as they are at the intersection of Indian and western cultures, struggling to survive in the baffling new world that makes them as cosmopolitans.

In this analysis, the first chapter introduces the early cosmopolitanism and discusses the migration a platform of today's globalization. It also portrays the ideologies of the critics and the immigrant authors, including Jhumpa Lahiri and her works as a base for the further discussion. In the following chapters, the discussion

shifts to the emergence of the cosmopolitan world in Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*. The first five stories in the collection are analysed with the cosmopolitan lens as these stories concentrate on the characters who blindly take up the journey of the world citizens.

The second chapter, "Immigration: A Generational Transition" focuses on the immigration process and the subsequent accustomedness of the first and second generation immigrants. The different ideologies of these people are showcased as a generational transition.

The immigrants are used to the multiple migrations, but these migrations lead them to get the world citizenship; because the multiple migrations are a path of transnational life that pushes people into the cosmopolitan world. The next chapter, "Transnationalism to Cosmopolitanism: A Journey of the World Citizens" gives the reasons for the multiple migrations and analyse the growth of transnationalism and cosmopolitan world. Thus, this chapter is a limelight of the immigrants' journey from transnationalism to cosmopolitanism.

Language plays an important role as the immigrants gain and lose many languages in their cosmopolitan journey. Touching this aspect the fourth chapter "Cosmopolitan Tongues" deals with English as a global language and narrows down to discovering features of the immigrants' cosmopolitan language. Finally, the conclusion is the last chapter that highlights the salient arguments of all the preceding chapters against the backdrop of immigration, multiple migrations, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism. As far as the chapters are concerned, one leads to the other resembling a migrants' journey from immigration to the cosmopolitan world. This analysis thus focuses on the current scenario of the world that welcomes its pluralistic citizens to create cosmopolitan societies.

Chapter 2

Immigration: A Generational Transition

The stories in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* focus on the "intergenerational friction" (Pattanayak 18) in a delicate and elegant manner. This collection of short stories deals with three generations of immigrants who convert themselves as cosmopolitans. Lahiri pictures the generational gap which fosters different ideas and also the mentality to accept the changes in the society. The first generation immigrants find it hard to mentally adjust to the new set up in an alien land. They struggle to survive in the migrated land with the memories of homeland and with the socialization process by clinging on to their own home culture. The process of socialization may help the migrated people to adapt to the new place and also to follow the two differing cultures. However, they are not able to forget their homeland, which Nityananda Pattanayak notes in "Jhumpa Lahiri's Works: A Study in Intergenerational Friction" as follows:

> Expatriates, especially first generation expatriates . . . nurture nostalgia for the place which they call their *desh*, the land where they were born and where they grew up and which has carved a space in their psyche. They beat their time by indulging in nostalgia, for nostalgia sustains memory, sometimes even creates it which in turn prevents the experienced self from coming smoothly under the influence of the new culture. (18)

She compares the first generation immigrants to the Greek God Janus, who is at once "leaning backward" and "looking forward," as they go back to their past through their memories and at the same time live in a foreign land or live a better life with a better personal development. Most of the first generation immigrants ignore to merge with

the majority in the host land and even oppose their children's willingness to accept the dominant culture, whom Bharathi Mukherjee calls the "Maximalism creed." The element of double identity does not affect the first generation immigrants in the host land. The second and third generation immigrants, however, get inspired by the host culture and also get accustomed as they are born and brought up in a foreign country. In "Home is where your feet are, and may your heart be there too," Uma Parameswaran, a second generation immigrant points out the 'concept of home' and 'homeland,' "Most young people whose parents keep to old ways feel trapped by their differences, not only at school but also at home. Home for those born in Canada is very definitely Canada, but because of force feeding by their parents 'homeland' could still be India"(35). The second generation immigrants refuse to 'lean backward' with their parents as they 'look forward' to mingling with the host society for "their hybridization and cross-culture fertilization in multicultural space" of the host land.

This conflict of intergenerational friction makes Lahiri accept the cosmopolitanism which is proven through the short stories in *Unaccustomed Earth*. The second and third generation immigrants try to root themselves in the "Unaccustomed Earth" – the host land that makes them cosmopolitans. The title "Unaccustomed Earth" emphasizes Lahiri's acceptance of cosmopolitan life as she quotes the words of Nathaniel Hawthorne, which sources the title from *The Custom-House*,

> Human nature will not flourish, any more than a potato, if it be planted and replanted, for too long a series of generations, in the same worn-out soil. My children have had other birthplaces, and, so far as their fortunes may be within my control, shall strike their roots into unaccustomed earth. (Lahiri VIII)

Lahiri, being as an 'outsider' and yet an 'insider,' living in the United States, portrays only what she has experienced and provides the reality of life. In *Unaccustomed Earth,* she focuses on the root cause of assimilation that changes the lives of the immigrants and their children. In Lahiri's hands, her characters grow with their individual difference in the unaccustomed land, where they get accustomed to lead a better life. Though a reader can find similar settings and ideas of the stories, Lahiri makes a successful attempt to narrate different lives of immigrants in 'Unaccustomed Earth.' The assimilation and problems due to assimilation among the children of the first and second generation parents are vividly narrated by Lahiri. The process of assimilation becomes a turning point to make oneself as a cosmopolitan. Through the short story collection *Unaccustomed Earth,* Lahiri sheenly pictures the growth of the cosmopolitan societies by getting accustomed to the alien land.

The title story "Unaccustomed Earth," narrates the story of a recently widowed and retired Bengali father, who happens to visit his daughter Ruma in Seattle. Ruma has become a mother herself and she has not yet recovered from the jolt of her mother's death. The relationship between father, Ruma, and Romi (Ruma's younger brother) shows their accustomed life, focusing on their own life in an alien land. The father travels to different places to avoid his loneliness and he is not able to contact Ruma frequently, "Her thirty-eight years he'd never had any reason to write to her. It was a one-sided correspondence; his trips were brief enough so that there was no time for Ruma to write back, and besides, he was not in a position to receive mail on his end" (Lahiri 4). When people accept the 'concept of home'- "Home is where your feet are, and may your heart be there too," (Parameswaran 34) they face some distance in the relationships. This portrays yet another face of cosmopolitanism which widens the gap between the people and their home; but it also sets a path to find some

new people and places, like Romi with German crew in New Zealand and father's newfound friend Mrs. Meenakshi Bagchi in Europe.

Ruma feels that the presence of her father may give discomfort, because "when her parents visited her in Brooklyn, after Akash was born, her father claimed an armchair in the living room, quietly combing through the *Times,* occasionally tucking a finger under the baby's chin but behaving as if he were waiting for the time to pass" (Lahiri 6). Romi works for a crew of German documentary filmmaker at New Zealand and he rarely contacts his family members. Lahiri's narration makes one understand the distance between their relationships:

> Her father lived alone now, made his own meals. She could not picture his surroundings when they spoke on the phone. He'd moved into a one-bedroom condominium in a part of Pennsylvania, but Ruma did not know well. He had pared down his possessions and sold the house where Ruma and her younger brother Romi had spent their childhood, informing them only after he and the buyer went into contract. (Lahiri 6)

In the story, Lahiri states the condition of third generation immigrants through Akash. He appears as a three years old kid, who forgets Bengali that he learned during his babyhood. Ruma represents the second generation immigrants, who adopt English from their childhood. Ruma is not comfortable with Bengali though her mother strictly made Ruma speak Bengali at home. These the process of getting accustomed to the alien land always makes one lose some inbuilt nativity, which Lahiri points out through her fictional characters.

After the first generation immigrants, the values, languages and cultures fade among the second and future generations. As the children of an alien land, the second

generation immigrants adopt the values, languages, and cultures of their 'own' land, which make them, forget their parents' homeland. Lahiri brings the fading condition of native language through Ruma and Akash. Ruma has taught little Bengali in Akash's babyhood, but he forgets in due course; as he starts speaking in full sentences, English takes over and she lacks the discipline to stick to Bengali. Ruma never feels like an adult with Bengali and her own Bengali is slipping from her. Her mother sticks to Bengali, so Ruma has never spoken to her in English. But her father does not mind the language, so Ruma feels comfortable to speak with him in English. Her own native language starts to fade whereas the alien language sticks on her tongue. When Ruma's aunt or uncle phones "from Calcutta to wish her a Happy Bijoya or Akash a Happy Birthday" (Lahiri 12), she makes an error in the words and changes the tenses while she replies to them.

The homeland traces are more among the first generation immigrants, like Ruma's father, who tries to teach the next generations. Though the father fails to teach Ruma and Romi, Akash adopts some of the Indian culture by observing the activities of his grandfather. The readers find it in simple activities like removing shoes while the father goes into the house and speaking Bengali and gardening in the backyard of Ruma's house. Akash forgets his grandmother as she dies, which represents the values of the homeland that the immigrants forget in the new land. Though the immigrants accustom themselves to their new land, they can learn the language, value, and culture of their homeland from the elders i.e., first generation immigrants. Lahiri shows the garden as an alien land, plants as immigrants and watering plants as teaching homeland values and new land customs for the growth of plants i.e., second and future generations. The following conversation between Ruma and her father represents Lahiri's idea to get accustomed to both the homeland and the alien land:

> 'Your delphiniums need watering . . .' "Which are they?" she asked, embarrassed that she did not know the names of the plants in her own backyard. He pointed. "The tall purple ones . . ." "Let me water your delphiniums. They won't survive another day." He took the kettle from her hands and filled it at the sink. Akash had followed her father outside, and now he stood a few feet away, looking up at his grandfather with curiosity. (Lahiri 16-7)

Ruma does not know the names of the plants in her own backyard (in her new house – newly immigrated land) and she learns it from her father and these are observed by Akash. The garden becomes a metaphor for immigrants' life. Ruma's father's planting and watering the plants represent his children's birth and growth (planting and watering) in an alien land. When Ruma's father leaves their house, the traces of Indianism are seen in Akash. Ruma opens the door for Akash "and followed him out, both of them padding barefoot, Ruma treading gingerly, Akash not fearful of stones or twigs. It was chillier than she expected, still too early for the warmth of the day to have gathered. She considered going back in for sweaters. "Sweetpea? You cold?" she asked, folding her arms across her chest, but Akash did not reply. He picked up the empty watering can her father had left underneath the porch, and pretended to water things in his little plot" (57).

"Hell-Heaven", the second story in the collection *Unaccustomed Earth*, gives an overview of foreign culture and how immigrants are accustomed to it in the new land. The characters Pranab Chakraborty and Aparna initially, represent their homeland cultures and values but they slowly change and adopt the alien culture in their new land. Pranab finds comfort with Aparna's Bengali family, as he is migrated to America for his studies from Calcutta. When Pranab joins the MIT to study

engineering, his life becomes a "Cruel shock," with a snowstorm and loses nearly twenty pounds. He decides to move Logan and work all his life, but he changes his mind at the last minute as he does not want to lose the opportunity and continues in MIT. His 'Home' needs are satisfied through Aparna's Bengali family,

> My mother invited him to accompany us back to our apartment that very afternoon and prepared tea for the two of them; then, after learning that he had not had a proper Bengali meal in more than three months, she served him the leftover curried mackerel and rice that we had eaten for dinner the night before. He remained into the evening for a second dinner after my father got home, and after that he showed up for dinner almost every night, occupying the fourth chair at our square Formica kitchen table and becoming a part of our family in practice as well as in name. (Lahiri 61-2)

He falls in love with an American girl named Deborah and marries her and this makes him step into another culture. When Pranab's parents "horrified by the thought of their only son marrying an American woman, and . . . it was Mr. Chakraborty telling my father that they could not possibly bless such a marriage, that it was out of the question, that if Pranab…dared to marry Deborah he would no longer acknowledge him as a son" (Lahiri 71). But Pranab shrugs to this fact of refusal by saying "I don't care." Aparna's family as Indians' takes a "small ceremony" to mean "one or two hundred people as opposed to three or four hundred" (Lahiri 73). The wedding takes place at a church with a reception at a country club, which shocks Aparna to see fewer than thirty people in the club; and more perplexed that Pranab has not invited all Bengalis except Aparna's family. She also does not appreciate the fact "Deborah had made sure that my parents, who did not eat beef, were given fish instead of filet

mignon like everyone else" (Lahiri 73). Aparna's sight of Pranab wearing a tuxedo and being busy to lean "over the shoulders of his new American in-laws" (Lahiri 73) barely speaks a word to Aparna's family upsets her.

The marriage becomes a tool for Pranab to get accustomed and mingle with new people and places. At the time of marriage, Pranab becomes busy with his new in-laws and he forgets Aparna's family who supports his marriage in spite of his parents' opposition to the marriage. Lahiri brings Pranab's accustomedness through Usha's words:

> Though we were the closest thing Pranab Kaku had to a family that day, we were not included in the group photographs that were taken on the grounds of the country club, with Deborah's parents and grandparents and her many siblings. Pranab Kaku, wearing a tuxedo, barely said a word to us because he was too busy leaning over the shoulders of his new American in-laws as he circled the table." (Lahiri 73)

This shows his initial change in the new land, where he forgets Aparna's family, a remaining soupcon of his Bengali world and he joins his American in-laws. Pranab's inter-racial marriage and accustomed life make the "Hell-Heaven" changes in him to be a cosmopolitan. The title "Hell-Heaven," is from the actual Bengali phrase "Akash-Patal;" Akash – sky or Heaven and Patal – world or Hell, so "Hell-Heaven" which represents the difference or change of people. The accustomed American life of Pranab is described using this phrase, "He used to be so different. I don't understand how a person can change so suddenly. It's just *hell–heaven*, the difference" (Lahiri 68-9). After his marriage, Pranab is not inviting Aparna's family to his new house in Marblehead, avoids attending Bengali gatherings which make the

Bengali society to think, "Deborah . . . had stripped Pranab Kaku not only of his origins but of his independence. She was the enemy, he was her prey, and their example was invoked as a warning, and as vindication, that mixed marriages were a doomed enterprise" (Lahiri 75).

Usha narrates the complete change of Pranab as "after twenty-three years of marriage, Pranab Kaku and Deborah got divorced. It was he who had strayed, falling in love with a married Bengali woman, destroying two families in the process" (Lahiri 81). Pranab breaks his ties with Bengalis though Deborah encourages him to maintain his ties with them. It is Deborah's idea to invite Aparna and her family for their Thanksgiving which paves a way to invite the other woman, whom Pranab loves and also plans to marry. Though it appears as if Pranab moves back to his home culture, but he really does not want his home back; he adapts to the new land with another relationship to blend home and foreign cultures.

Aparna initially has strict control over her daughter Usha who says, "my mother must have picked up on something, for she forbade me to attend the dances that were held the last Friday of every month in the school cafeteria, and it was an unspoken law that I was not allowed to date. "Don't think you'll get away with marrying an American, the way Pranab Kaku did," she would say from time to time" (Lahiri 75). Usha, as an American child she prefers to look common with Americans in her outfit and manners.

> I was furious with my mother for making a scene before we left the house and forcing me to wear a shalwar kameez. I knew they assumed, from my clothing, that I had more in common with the other Bengalis than with them. But Deborah insisted on including me, setting me to

> work peeling apples with Matty, and out of my parents' sight I was given beer to drink. (Lahiri 78)

In "Thanksgiving," the first generation Bengalis feel uncomfortable as the dining habit of Bengalis and Americans differ, "When the meal was ready, we were told where to sit, in an alternating boy-girl formation that made the Bengalis uncomfortable" (Lahiri 78). The clash in food preferences, as Usha narrates, the "Bottles of wine were lined up on the table. Two turkeys were brought out, one stuffed with sausage and one without. My mouth watered at the food, but I knew that afterward, on our way home, my mother would complain that it was all tasteless and bland. "Impossible," my mother said, shaking her hand over the top of her glass when someone tried to pour her a little wine" (Lahiri 78), also shows the accustomedness of Pranab and Usha.

When Pranab migrates to America, he has preferred Bengali food in Aparna's house, but his accustomed life later makes him prefer American food. Similarly Usha, in her childhood, she has been satisfied with "the leftover curried mackerel and rice" but, as an adolescent, she prefers unstuffed or stuffed turkeys with wine bottles. A second generation expatriate, Usha feels at home in English, "Deborah and I spoke freely in English, a language in which, by that age, I expressed myself more easily than Bengali, which I was required to speak at home" (Lahiri 69).

In Pranab's wedding, Usha as a child, enjoys her Indian puff-sleeved dress, but as an adolescent in "Thanksgiving," she hesitates for a walk on the beach with shalwar kameez and lends "a pair of jeans and a thick sweater and some sneakers," (Lahiri 80) so that she can also appear like Deborah and her sisters.

> I walked back downstairs, emboldened by this information, in the jeans I'd had to roll up and in which I felt finally like myself, I noticed my

> mother lift her eyes from her teacup and stare at me, but she said nothing, and off I went, with Pranab Kaku and his dogs and his in-laws, along a road and then down some steep wooden steps to the water. (Lahiri 80)

When Usha grows older, Aparna gets accustomed herself to American culture and accepts her daughter as an American child. The alien culture makes Aparna allow Usha to date American men and welcomes Usha's boyfriends to their home. When she breaks her relationship with a man, Aparna also consoles Usha that she would find someone better than whom she thought to marry; Usha narrates, "My mother and I had also made peace; she had accepted the fact that I was not only her daughter but a child of America as well. Slowly, she accepted that I dated one American man, and then another, and then yet another, that I slept with them, and even that I lived with one though we were not married . . . After years of being idle, she decided, when she turned fifty, to get a degree in library science at a nearby university" (Lahiri 81). Aparna's change is seen as the adaptation of first generation immigrants in an alien land. She has accused Pranab of his changes, but slowly, Aparna herself starts to get accustomed as an American citizen.

"A Choice of Accommodation" portrays Amit's hostel life at Langford and how he gets accustomed to a new place without his parents. Though Amit feels difficult to get accustomed in his Langford hostel, he learns to live without his parents.

> At Langford, Amit was the only Indian student, and people always assumed that he'd been born and raised in that country and not in Massachusetts. They complimented him on his accent, always telling him how good his English was . . . he'd had to work doggedly to

> maintain his grades. He had to wear a jacket every morning to his classes and call his teachers "masters" and attend chapel on Sundays. (Lahiri 97)

Lahiri narrates Amit's homesickness that has no escape at the end of every day. But Amit does not admit it to anyone, especially to his parents who phoned him every weekend. He has "crippled with homesickness, missing his parents to the point where tears often filled his eyes, in those first months, without warning" (Lahiri 97). It makes him to "trace of his parents' faces and voices among the people who surrounded and cared for him" (Lahiri 97). But he finds no people like his parents and he learns to live without them, a point where he starts to adapt a new place and without his knowledge, he turns as a cosmopolitan.

Amit marries Megan, an American bride and he fathers two girls, Maya and Monika. His daughters are Americanized, resemble Megan, which makes him think that his parents passed nothing down physically to their children. After his hostel life, the inter-racial marriage paves next way for Amit to accustom the American life, which changes his daughters and himself as Americans. Though his daughters have Indian names, they inherit Megan's colour and when Amit is alone with his daughters in stores or at the playground, people sometimes ask Amit, "Are they yours?" (Lahiri 97). Megan is portrayed as a careless American mother.

> On her days off she indulged them, baking with them in the kitchen, not minding if they skipped dinner because they were too full of cookies and cake. She had not been horrified, as he had, when Maya found a wad of flattened chewing gum at the playing ground and put it into her mouth, or when Monika wandered off during a picnic they

> were having in Central Park and began playing, with her tiny fingers, with dog shit. (Lahiri 90)

Megan sees her children can survive anything and let them live free. But, Amit seen as a responsible father, cares even for trivial issues like "Monika's runny nose, and wondered if his mother in-law would remember that strawberries gave Maya a rash. He was tempted to ask Megan, but he stopped himself, knowing that she would accuse him of not trusting his in-laws." (Lahiri 90) This can be seen as an inter-cultural clash, because in India, children's career and marriage are seen as parents' responsibility. In contrast, American children start earning in their adolescence and parents are letting their children survive on their own. Amit and Megan here face the Indo-American cultural clash but their accustomed American life solves the clash and makes them as cosmopolitan. This also shows the onset of a cosmopolitan life as a result of an interracial marriage and a subsequent accustomed life of the children.

Amit's lonely hostel life makes him feel alone even after the birth of his second daughter, Monika. Though he accustomed himself to the American way of life, he has no roots in his new land; still he feels isolated in the unaccustomed place (America). A conversation between Felicia and Amit proves his isolation, "Actually, it was after the second that our marriage sort of—he paused, searching for the right word—"disappeared . . . She lived in the apartment, she slept in his bed, her heart belonged to no one but him and the girls, and yet there were times Amit felt as alone as he had first been at Langford. And there were times he hated Megan, simply for this (Lahiri 113-4). But their adaptability again pictures them as the cosmopolitans and they get accustomed to their world by solving the problems through confessing and accepting each other's mistake in Langford, a 'choice of accommodation.'

The short story "Only Goodness" in the collection *Unaccustomed Earth,* pictures the acculturation of children in their new land. Sudha introduces her brother Rahul to alcohol, which addicts and fails him in his life and relationships. Sudha's endeavour is to give American upbringing to her brother as she has "slipped through the cracks, but . . . determined that her little brother should leave his mark as a child in America" (Lahiri 137). In this attempt, Sudha fails, as Rahul becomes alcoholic that finally breaks the sister-brother relationship. Sudha has accustomed herself to the American way of life. When Sudha moves to Philadelphia for her studies, she goes to parties, allows boys into her bed and also begins to drink in the parties.

> She began drinking, something her parents did not do. They were prudish about alcohol to the point of seeming Puritanical, frowning upon the members of their Bengali circle—the men, that was to say—who liked to sip whiskey at gatherings. (Lahiri 129)

Rahul appears smart and pampered but fails as a victim of alcohol. Though his mother supports him that the American life has changed him, Sudha finds him drinking. But her mother blames the American society, "That's the problem with this country, too many freedoms, too much having fun. When we were young, life wasn't always about fun" (Lahiri 143). This shows how the new land, where people can see more exposure than homeland, changes an immigrant to get accustomed to it. Rahul soon disappears from home for no reason and after few years, he writes for Sudha, who is married to Roger, an English man in London. Sudha welcomes Rahul to London as she suffers in the guilt of initiating her brother into alcoholism. In "How Teenagers Think: An Insider's Guide to Living with a Teenager," Jellyellie writes, It's normal for siblings to have few things of common interest" but, "Siblings relationships change when the eldest one reaches maturity. The relationship may

change for the better or worse, but if it's for the worse as the younger sibling catches up, the relationship normally improves again (86). This psychology of siblings is proven in this short story, but Rahul fails to maintain a healthy relationship.

When Rahul visits Sudha's house, he acts convincing that he has reformed. But his addiction is proved, when Rahul left Neel (Sudha's son) in the bath tub which made Sudha shock and "to emit a series of spontaneous cries and volt of fear seizes her haunches. The water was no longer warm. One slip and he would have been facedown" (Lahiri 170). Roger and Sudha found Rahul in Roger's study asleep with a glass beneath the bed. This sight made them quarrel with each other and Roger decides to get rid of Rahul, for which Sudha eventually agrees and Rahul leaves their house, like a wanderer. The excess of westernized exposer spoils Rahul, but he travels place to place and get accustomed as a cosmopolitan. Sudha similarly moves to Philadelphia from Wayland and again to London that adapts her according to the country.

Sudha's parents try to bring up their children successfully with education and career, but favour Rahul's success more than Sudha's future, an act that pictures typical age old Indian parents' preference of 'son.' The difference is vivid through the narration, the "Countless photographs were taken—Rahul sleeping in his bassinet, being bathed in a plastic tub . . . There was not the same documentation of Sudha's infancy" (Lahiri 135). When Sudha's parents move to Massachusetts from London, they have not preferred to carry Sudha's toys, baby clothing or bedding; it has ultimately affected Sudha, when she requires presenting her autobiography as a project in her grade school. She stands in front of her classroom with an envelope containing very few pictures of her babyhood that bores her classmates who have brought blankets, scuffed shoes and blackened spoons.

The difference in the upbringing varies the ways of Sudha and Rahul, as Sudha is one "among those successful children . . . her collection of higher degrees framed and filling up her parents' upstairs hall." She works "as a project manager for an organization in London that promoted microloans in poor countries" (Lahiri 151). But Rahul turns as a dropout from Ithaca and gets "a job managing a Laundromat in Wayland three days a week . . ." which, ". . . embarrassed her parents. They had not minded him washing dishes in the past, but now they lived in fear of the day someone they knew would see their son weighing sacks of dirty clothes on a scale" (Lahiri 151). The carrier path of Sudha and Rahul completely varies, but both the characters possess the qualities of being cosmopolitan by adapting to various places and being one among the foreign citizens.

In the short story "Nobody's Business" the readers can visualize the Americanized second generation immigrants. It is about Sangeeta Biswas, a Bengali woman of thirty years, who adopts her name as Sang. She comes across many boys, who propose to her to marry; but Sang considers "It's not love" and practically an arranged marriage, which is against her accustomed American life.

> These men weren't really interested in her. They were interested in a mythical creature created by an intricate chain of gossip, a web of wishful Indian-community thinking in which she was an aging, overlooked poster child for years of Bharat Natyam classes, perfect SATs. Had they any idea who she actually was and how she made a living, in spite of her test scores, which was by running a cash register and arranging paperback books in pyramid configurations, they would want nothing to do with her? (Lahiri 176)

Sang opines it as a typical Indian marriage which, she cannot accept as an American child. Her day to day life as a second generation expatriate gives a clear picture of her accustomed life and cosmopolitan views. The short story begins with Paul's narration in which he introduces Sang as a housemate of Paul and Heather. Sang wishes to join as a housemate with reference to the advertisement he and Heather placed on the newspaper, Phoenix. The name Sang makes Paul expect a Japanese woman and he gets it clarified with her official name, Sangeeta Biswas, when she writes a check for her security deposit. She appears careless in dealing with her suitors by asking Paul to answer, "Tell him I'm not in," and when suitors mistake Paul as her boyfriend, she laughs, saying "He's probably horrified now, knowing that I live with a man . . . Next time, "say yes"" (Lahiri 183). This shows a completely different lifestyle from Indians who mostly choose suitors and arrange marriage for their children, and only after the engagement, they allow suitor to speak with a bride. Though the Indian concept of parents' choosing suitors is changing, still parents play a vital role in children's marriages. But Sang's life gives a dimension of cosmopolitans who choose their way of life, according to the place they live.

Sangeeta Biswas adopts her name as Sang, which appears trendy and easy to pronounce for people around her. Finally, she falls for Farouk, an Egyptian who also adopts a new name Freddy.

> "Paul, this is Farouk. Farouk's afraid of dogs." She kissed Farouk on the cheek . . . "Freddy," Farouk said, nodding rather than extending a hand, his words directed more to Sang than to Paul. She shook her head. "For the millionth time, I'm not calling you Freddy." Farouk glanced at her without humour. "Why not? You expect people to call

> you Sang." She was unbothered. "That's different. That's actually a part of my name." (Lahiri 185)

Sang plans to marry Freddy, but he has many relationships with other women. Eventually, Sang breaks her relationship with him. Here, Freddy's condition can be seen as another way of accustomedness, like people, who can adapt themselves to the multi-cultural society, may face isolation in spite of their having friends in a foreign place. This is due to his insecurity that he feels in an alien land.

> There was a point when I actually believed he couldn't live without me. That's what he does to women. He depends on them. He asks them to do a hundred things, makes them believe his life won't function without them. That was him this afternoon when you called, still wanting to see me, still wanting to keep me on the side. He doesn't have any friends, you see. Only lovers. I think he needs them, the way other people need a family or friends. (Lahiri 210)

But Freddy wants to be cosmopolitan with the support of his "lovers." This condition may vary according to a person's relationship mentality. The character of Pranab in "Hell-Heaven" looks similar to Freddy, as both are converting themselves as cosmopolitans but, their need for new relationships makes them find new lovers. After the death of his wife, Ruma's father in "Unaccustomed Earth" similarly, needs Mrs. Mennakshi Bagchi's companionship, "He enjoyed Mrs. Bagchi's company, knowing that at the end of a few weeks she would board a separate plane and disappear. But after visiting Italy, he'd begun thinking of her, looking forward to receiving her e-mails, checking his computer five or six times a day" (Lahiri 9). It can be a passion or companionship need that may vary according to the person.

Freddy's relationship can be seen as his passion, Pranab uses his relationship with another Bengali woman as a tool to bring back his home culture in his accustomed cosmopolitan life. But Ruma's father differs from these two characters, as Lahiri narrates, "It was not passion that was driving him, at seventy, to be involved, however discreetly, however occasionally, with another woman. Instead, it was the consequence of being married all those years, the habit of companionship" (Lahiri 30). It can thus be understood that in the adapted cosmopolitan life, the relationship needs of the migrants completely differ from each other.

It is a matter of fact that there are common societies for immigrants to build a friendly relationship or neighbourhood in the foreign land, where they can extend their contacts and involve in more communications by meeting other immigrants from their native place. The immigrants create societies in their own apartments or in the street where most of their native migrants live. In these societies, there are two different groups. They are the 'Plural Society' and the 'Sojourners,' the groups of immigrants that one can find in all the countries.

In *Unaccustomed Earth*, Lahiri avoids Plural Societies and makes use of sojourners. Ruma's mother is totally house bound due to the emotional attachment with her children. She is also not ready to explore the alien land; she nevertheless struggles for a career which makes her completely depend on her husband as the so – called "typical Indian housewife." Her character is woven as an Indian Sojourner, this becomes clear through Ruma's nostalgias, "Her mother who would have been the helpful one, taking over the kitchen, singing songs to Akash and teaching him Bengali nursery rhymes, throwing loads of laundry into the machine" (6). Ruma's mother maintains her identity as an Indian sojourner through her appearance that sticks her

out of America's "Wet Northern landscape, in her brightly coloured saris, her dime-sized maroon bindi, her jewels" (11).

In "Hell-Heaven." Aparna appears as an Indian Sojourner by wearing, "The red and white bangles unique to Bengali married women, and a common Tangail sari, and had a thick stem of vermilion powder in the center parting of her hair, and the full round face and large dark eyes that are so typical of Bengali women" (60). Lahiri's vivid description of Aparna's, "Two or three safety pins she wore fastened to the thin gold bangles that were behind the red and white ones, which she would use to replace a missing hook on a blouse or to draw a string through a petticoat" (61) make readers to visualize a typical Indian woman.

Though one finds Sojourners among the first generation immigrants, one can see them getting accustomed along with the next generation immigrants to the foreign air of their day-to-day lives. They may not change their appearance, but their innate thoughts transform according to the place they live. For instance, Ruma organizes her mother's sixty-fourth birthday; she gifts a tour package to Paris and puts down a deposit on the travel agency. She also sends tapes to learn French and guidebooks filled with colour pictures. Her mother adapts herself to learn French, ". . . in her sewing room, listening to the tapes on a Walkman, counting in French, reciting the days of the week" (Lahiri 19). Before Ruma's marriage, her mother had done everything to talk Ruma out of marrying Adam, complaining that he would divorce her in the need of an American girl. But,

> She grew to love Adam as a son, a replacement for Romi, who had crushed them by moving abroad and maintaining only distant ties. Her mother would chat with Adam on the phone, even when Ruma was not at home, e-mailing him from time to time, carrying on a game of

> Scrabble with him over the Internet. When her parents visited, her mother would always bring a picnic cooler filled with homemade mishti, elaborate, syrupy, cream-filled concoctions which Ruma had never learned to make, and Adam loved. (Lahiri 26)

The words, "she grew to love Adam as a son, a replacement for Romi, who had crushed them by moving abroad and maintaining only distant ties" represent her mother's accustomedness to the 'alien land' by replacing the 'homeland' that maintains only distant ties.

In "Hell-Heaven," Aparna, as a Bengali woman does not change her appearance similar to Ruma's mother, she has also started accepting the American world. When she turns fifty, she decides to get a degree in library science, accepts Usha's American way of life and encourages Usha that she will soon find a man better than the one whom she thought to marry. Aparna also confesses Usha about her love for Pranab and her attempt to commit suicide.

> She opened up the coat and removed the tip from the can of lighter fluid and doused herself, then buttoned and belted the coat . . . For nearly an hour she stood there, looking at our house, trying to work up the courage to strike a match. It was not I who saved her or my father, but our next-door neighbour, Mrs. Holcomb, with whom my mother had never been particularly friendly. She came out to rake the leaves in her yard, calling out to my mother and remarking how beautiful the sunset was. "I see you've been admiring it for a while now," she said. My mother agreed, and then she went back into the house. (Lahiri 83)

Aparna's accustomed life is cleared as Mrs. Holcomb; a foreigner changes her mind from committing suicide "with whom had never been particularly friendly." Though

she belongs to the first generation, the foreign life surrounding her influences and forces her to follow a cosmopolitan life.

The second generation immigrants in Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* try to lead their life like the first generation immigrants but, they fail in their attempt and finally, get themselves accustomed to the American world. Ruma, after her marriage, tries to imitate her mother, but her accustomedness to the alien land prevents to follow her mother,

> Of the two hundred and eighteen saris, she kept only three, placing them in a quilted zippered bag at the back of her closet, telling her mother's friends to divide up the rest. And she had remembered the many times her mother had predicted this very moment, lamenting the fact that her daughter preferred pants and skirts to the clothing she wore, that there would be no one to whom to pass on her things. (Lahiri 17)

The process of getting accustomed may provoke a soupcon of bitterness because parents may see their children changing as they grow; but, their successful life makes the parents hide their bitterness and accept the cosmopolitan life. In "Hell-Heaven," Usha loves to be Indian in her childhood, but in her adolescence, she starts to love Deborah's appearance and the so-called 'Westernized' look of the alien world. Usha narrates, "I loved her serene gray eyes, the ponchos and denim wrap skirts and sandals she wore, her straight hair . . . I longed for her casual appearance" (Lahiri 69). This admiration is the first step for Usha to get herself accustomed as an American to later become a part of the cosmopolitan world.

Amit begins his childhood as an American because his parents admitted him in Langford, where he has no trace of his parents that in turn he gets accustomed to a

new life. His daughters Maya and Monika adopts only the Indian names but, resemble their American mother, Megan. This pictures the second generation immigrants similar to Amit and future generations get a chance to carry the Indian names and belong to another country. Sudha and Rahul, in "Only Goodness" lead a hostel life like Amit that again forces them to get accustomed to a foreign culture. They both acquire the boozing habit, but Sudha understands her limits which Rahul fails to know and loses his career. Sang and Freddy's life without their parents, which paves no way to get along with the Indian culture, eventually converts them as cosmopolitans.

Lahiri writes, "The more the children grew, the less they had seemed to resemble either parent—they spoke differently, dressed differently, seemed foreign in every way, from the texture of their hair to the shapes of their feet and hands" (Lahiri 54). This foreignness is seen in all the short stories, mostly among second and third generation immigrants who pull even first generation immigrants into the cosmopolitan world. The reason can be seen through Jasbir Jain's words in her 'Introduction' to the book *Writers of the Indian Diaspora,* an immigrant ". . . Moves from one culture to another may need to locate himself/herself in relation to the centre" (6). The immigrants try to locate themselves in a new land, accustom to the new cultures, customs and attitudes and find their place in a new society.

The migrants lose their homeland and their community but they form a new community in their new land, where their religion and native country play a major role in uniting them together. Though the migrated people get along with the natives, religion makes a huge difference among them than the native country. Religion serves as a major symbolic resonance in a foreign land to build a community and to profess identity. The migrants may differ in religion, country, culture, class and community,

but every first generation immigrant has a collective memory of his homeland and he/she also feels alienated as he/she is not fully accepted in the new society.

In the short stories, readers can see only the Bengali community and they get along only with their Bengali friends. There is no trace of other Indian communities. For instance, in "Only Goodness," after Rahul's graduation from high school, Sudha's parents arrange for a party for their Bengali friends and announce "Our job is done," her father declares at the end of the party, "For years they had been compared to other Bengali children, told about gold medals brought back from science fairs, colleges that offered full scholarships" (129). The very fact that Sudha and Rahul are only "compared to other Bengali children" shows the difference among the Indian immigrants. But the immigrants get accustomed to the religion and communities of a foreign land, which is seen in "A Choice of Accommodation" as Amit attends chapel on every Sunday and Rahul in "Only Goodness" says, "Jesus," initiating his alien culture. In most of the short stories, the readers can find mixed marriages of Ruma and Adam, Sudha and Roger, Rahul and Elena, Pranab and Deborah, Amit and Megan, Farouk and Deirdre that eventually follow a new religion.

In the immigration community apart from the religion, most of the people consider the ancestral homeland is regarded as a true ideal home to which everyone eventually returns when the conditions are appropriate. But Lahiri's immigrants try to find their native in a foreign land, like relating to the homeland in one way or another, maintaining their native social life like wearing native costumes because it provides strength and solace, it gives meaning to the new world and it also helps to preserve their identity. These activities are vivid among first generation immigrants but it is slowly, decreasing in the second and the following generations, where one can find no one getting accustomed to the native living. The second and the following generations

accustom themselves to the 'foreign land,' which eventually becomes their 'homeland.' Lahiri narrates this condition through her short stories and supports the blooming cosmopolitanism.

To sum up, Lahiri concentrates on the dilemma of complex human relationship, diasporic relationship or non-diasporic relationship in the modern world. The best portion of her writings deals with the understanding of human beings, their life and relationship that can cut across national lines. Nandini Sahu quotes R. K. Kaul commenting that "the author has narrative skill which captures the reader's attention immediately . . . Whether the setting is in Bengal or in the US, she creates a probable world where human relations are all that matter." (168)

Chapter 3

Transnationalism to Cosmopolitanism: A Journey of the World Citizens

> It would be pertinent to remark right away that diaspora is no longer an expression that surprises or startles; its reasons may be more than one. The first is that diasporic movements and migrancy beyond national borders is now something given and usual; second, the multiple locations that characterize the collective mobilization around the tension between home(s) and abroad(s) are now more or less defined around challenges to a notion of settlement and fixity. Third, this questioning of singular location becomes a foil for various conceptualizations such as diasporic consciousness, multivocality, and deterritorialization. (Singh 51)

Manjit Singh points out that the diaspora or migration has become a transnational process, in which people have a multiple belonging around the world. Many other critics have argued about this multiple migrations as the hybridity fermentation with "cultural creativity" (Singh 51). In another way, it can be seen as a step towards a cosmopolitan life beyond home, identity, culture and location. In *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (1997), Avtar Brah narrates that the different diaspora societies are formed from the "'confluence of narratives' of different journeys from the 'old country' to the new which create the sense of a shared history . . . all diasporas are differentiated, heterogeneous, contested spaces, even as they are implicated in the construction of a common 'we'" (184). The diaspora societies may differ, but the life in a host society mingles all the people as Brah adds, "Difference of gender, race, class, religion and language (as well as generational difference) make diaspora spaces dynamic and shifting open to repeated construction and

reconstruction" (207) which eventually construct a common ground for the world citizens.

The diasporic life of immigrants creates a common relationship between the immigrants and the host society. The process of generational transition and assimilation can make the immigrants feel at home in a foreign community. But when people migrate to a particular place, they do not stay bound within that society. They again start moving out of the place which paves the way for double migration or more. The series of migration results in the bloom of the cosmopolitan societies by increasing the globalization, hybridity and transnationalism. These multiple migrations have produced many immigrant writers who share and explore the problems and possibilities of a transnational life.

In *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2000), John McLeod points out V.S. Naipaul's multiple migrations, "Now living in Britain, Naipaul grew up on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and came from a family descended from Indian migrants to the Caribbean" (208). V.S. Naipaul explores the transnationalism by writing his own experiences. For instance, in his memoir *Finding the Centre: Two Narratives* (1984), Naipaul writes about his family who has done the works of indentured labours in Trinidad and his routes of migration. He tries to find the reasons behind his transnational life which point out the sense of loss, alienation, location, relocation and assimilation. Similarly, Salman Rushdie writes:

> It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutilated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must do in the knowledge - which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from India almost

> inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost, that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (10)

Rushdie's words mirror the immigrant's isolation and alienation which make them look back at their homeland in a form of writing that has given birth to Immigrant Literature. This concept of writing showcases the migration history, settlement, displacement, alienation, acculturation, relocation and assimilation in their 'New Unaccustomed World.' The sense of loss slowly gets faded as the multiple migration and accustomedness route to root the cosmopolitan ideologies.

In *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), Rushdie writes about his childhood days in Bombay which he can remember partially like "broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (11). This partial memory makes the immigrants' to see their home as the "fragments and fissures, full of gaps and breaches" (McLeod 211). The migration process secures a fair portion in cosmopolitan life, because migrants move from one country to another, set up the new home, mingle with the new culture and get accustomed to the host society. It makes migrants go through the hybridity and also makes them create their multiple new homes around the world.

Hanif Kureishi's "The Rainbow Sign" vividly narrates the 'in-between' space that immigrants keep pondering in the migration process. Kureishi thinks of his father who poses as a young boy in his uncle's house which is located in Pakistan. But he can never think of Pakistan as his home, but generational bond makes him write, "A house full of stories, of Bombay, Delhi, China; of feuds, wrestling matches, adulteries, window broken with hands, card games, impossible loves and magic

spells. Stories to help me see my place in the world and give me the sense of the past which could go into making a life in the present and the future" (35). The migration from one's 'home' sets a base for further migrations to create new homes in a foreign land. In *The Black Atlantic* (1993), Paul Gilroy does not have strong roots to fix himself in a country, which McLeod points out, "he must continually plot for himself itinerant cultural routes which take him, imaginatively as well as physically to many places and into contact with many different people. This forges a relationship between past, present and future, but does not presume an even, continuous passage through time. The grounded certainties of roots are replaced with the transnational contingencies of routes" (215). Thus, the past always stands as a backbone of the present and the future migrations that route to the cosmopolitan world.

The transnational world makes the immigrants to get accustomed to the new cultures and multiple migrations. In the book *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), Edward W. Said writes, "No one today is purely *one* thing" (98). He also criticizes the twentieth century as, "one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons and exiles than ever before in history" (332). But he optimistically ends the book by suggesting that multicultural world may enable people to live without nationality, religion, class, race and ethnicity. Similarly Caryl Phillips' *New World Order* (2001) comments on the twenty-first century as "These days we are all unmoored. Our identities are fluid. Belonging is a contested state. Home is a place riddled with vexing questions" (5). The transnational life of people makes Phillips see people as refugees who never "feel fully at home" (Phillips 5) and he also thinks, "As the laborious certainties of the old order continue to fade, and the volume of the global conversation increases, ambiguity embraces us" (Phillips 6). Said and Phillips suggest the transformation of the world as people turn

to be cosmopolitans and multiple migrations make people lack home roots. But people can be optimistic like Said who suggests the world as people's common ground without limits and differences.

In India, people have an internal cosmopolitan consciousness that develops through the multilingual society and regional migration to other neighbouring cities. Thus, the transnational life does not give much difference in getting accustomed to the various countries. Lahiri's Indo-American characters in *Unaccustomed Earth* undergo multiple migrations and adapt themselves to the new worlds. The generational gap between the characters shows the transnational life in different angles. Lahiri's transnational touch is seen in each story; as a second generation immigrant, she explores the easiness of the multiple migrations as a route to cosmopolitanism. The different cultures of Britain, American and India make Lahiri live an 'in-between' transnational life. In an interview, Lahiri admits to Vibhuti Patel, her accustomedness:

> As a young child, I felt that the Indian part of me was unacknowledged, and therefore somehow negated by my American environment and vice versa. I felt that I led two very separate lives . . . The older I get, the more I am aware that I have somehow inherited a sense of exile from my parents, even though in many ways I am so much more American than they are. In fact, it is still very hard to think of myself as an American (Patel 14).

These words are vividly expressing her state of 'not belonging' anywhere in the world. Lahiri has not considered herself as a Briton or an Indo-American. She swings in the multicultural world with her multiple migration and sense of exile, but this process has made her think of cosmopolitanism through adapting various places and creating new homes in her transnational life.

The title "Unaccustomed Earth" from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Custom-House* suggests the transnationalism by transplanting migrants to the different soil in a given course of time. In this case, the readers can see the first generation immigrants' transplanting themselves to a new soil from India and choosing the environment for the second generation immigrants. However, the second generation immigrants' again migrate to another new soil and adopt a different culture. This may not stop with single migration, as they choose transnationalism to be a part of their life. If migration is a new process, one may hesitate or try to be confined to a single host society. But the generational migration actually makes the second generation immigrants to explore the world of cosmopolitanism which even inspires the first generation immigrants to become the world citizens.

In *Unaccustomed Earth*, Ruma's father starts to travel in Europe to prevent his isolation after his wife's death. Lahiri narrates that her father had never seen the European continent, but "in the past year he had visited France, Holland, and most recently Italy. They were package tours, traveling in the company of strangers, riding by bus through the countryside, each meal and museum and hotel prearranged. He was gone for two, three, sometimes four weeks at a time" (Lahiri 3). He has been confined to his migrated place, but his retired days of isolation push him to travel to various places like his children Ruma and Romi.

Though the immigrants turn as transnationalists, they often recall their past, because the sense of 'not belonging' anywhere makes them to look back and ponder over their past life and old places. For instance, Lahiri expresses the sense of alienation by commenting on father's postcard, ""Yesterday the Uffizi Gallery. Today a walk to the other side of the Arno. A trip to Siena scheduled tomorrow." Occasionally there was a sentence about the weather. But there was never a sense of

her father's presence in those places. Ruma was reminded of the telegrams her parents used to send to their relatives long ago, after visiting Calcutta and safely arriving back in Pennsylvania" (Lahiri 4). These words prove the immigrants' sense of exile and the great attempt to belong somewhere through the age old incidents.

The second generation immigrants like Ruma and Romi keep moving out of their country and finally settles in a new country. Ruma moves to different cities of America, which completely vary from each other. After her marriage, she settles in New York where she gets a part-time job at a law firm. But Adam's new job makes Ruma to move Seattle and they buy a new house in order to settle. Though they try to settle, Adam's business trips make to go "usually towns in the Northwest or Canada" (Lahiri 5). His trips make Ruma feel that they are not settled in a place. When the people never feel the sense of belongingness due to migration, they may not feel the intimacy towards a place; for example, Ruma's father sells his old Pennsylvania house by informing his children after the contract with the buyer and moves to "one-bedroom condominium" (Lahiri 6) This creates no emotions in Romi and father because they are adapted to their transnational life and do not feel the sense of loss.

> Her father lived alone now, made his own meals. She could not picture his surroundings when they spoke on the phone. He'd moved into a one-bedroom condominium in a part of Pennsylvania Ruma did not know well. He had pared down his possessions and sold the house where Ruma and her younger brother Romi had spent their childhood, informing them only after he and the buyer went into contract. It hadn't made a difference to Romi, who'd been living in New Zealand for the past two years, working on the crew of a German documentary filmmaker. (Lahiri 6)

The migration changes people to be cosmopolitans, but it makes people lose the sense of belongingness. Ruma thinks of her father's isolation which makes her feel guilty because, "in India, there would have been no question of his not moving in with her. Her father had never mentioned the possibility, and after her mother's death it hadn't been feasible; their old apartment was too small. But in Seattle there were rooms to spare, rooms that stood empty and without purpose" (Lahiri 7). Though Ruma and father live in America, they cannot move in together due to the culture of the host society. When Ruma's father visits her, she gets reminded of the fact that she lives on "a separate coast thousands of miles from where she grew up, a place where her parents knew no one, where neither of her parents, until today, had set foot. The connections her family had formed to America, her parents' circle of Bengali friends in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, her father's company, the schools Ruma and Romi had gone through, did not exist here" (Lahiri 11). This pictures the widening gaps of migration favouring a transnational life.

In "Hell-Heaven", Usha narrates the series of migration of her parents and Pranab. Though people migrate from India to America, they do it for the sake of their education, career and for the personal development.

> My parents and I had lived in Central Square for three years prior to that day; before that, we lived in Berlin, where I was born and where my father had finished his training in microbiology before accepting a position as a researcher at Mass General, and before Berlin my mother and father had lived in India, where they were strangers to each other, and where their marriage had been arranged. (Lahiri 61)

Pranab moves into Boston from Calcutta to study engineering at MIT. The host society turns to be a cruel shock to him as he loses nearly twenty pounds and a

snowstorm that upsets him. He then moves to Logan and changes his mind at the last to continue his studies in MIT. After his marriage, Pranab moves "to the new house in Marblehead" with "a high paying job at Stone & Webster" (Lahiri 74). But his migration slowly changes him to seek another woman which destroyed his familial relationship. Though the transnational life changes people to be cosmopolitans, it also indirectly affects in some case.

"The Choice of Accommodation," is the title of a story that supports the migration and throws light on people's habitual movement and transnational life. This short story opens in the Chadwick Inn, as Amit and Megan check in a room and Megan's eagerness to see a map in order to locate the town in which they stay now.

> Megan unfolded the cover of a brochure to reveal a map. "Where are we, exactly?" she asked, her finger trailing too far to the north.
>
> "Here," Amit said, pointing to the town.
>
> "There's the lake, see? The one that sort of looks like a rabbit."
>
> "I don't see it," Megan said.
>
> "Right here." Amit took Megan's finger and drew it firmly to the spot.
>
> "I mean, I don't get how the lake's supposed to look like a rabbit."
>
> (Lahiri 84)

The search for the town shows their visit to the unknown place which has took a long drive from New York to attend Pam Borden's wedding at Langford Academy, "a boarding school where Pam's father was headmaster, and from where Amit had graduated eighteen years ago" (Lahiri 85). Though Amit stays in the Chadwick Inn which is nearby the Langford Academy, he does not oppose Megan when she says, "We're in the middle of nowhere" (Lahiri 86). It is true that he remains in the middle

of nowhere because his parents keep migrating to various places and he does not have a permanent place to reside with his parents.

Similarly in "Only Goodness" Lahiri states the condition of migration for education and career. In order to pursue the higher education, the second generation immigrants' Sudha and Rahul move to Penn in Philadelphia and Cornell in Ithaca from Wayland where their parents had migrated from India. The process of migration does not transform Sudha, but Rahul begins to show the difference as Lahiri narrates, "When it was time to say good-bye, their mother wept and Sudha cried a little, too…But Rahul did not behave as if he were being either abandoned or liberated. He pocketed the money their father counted out and gave him as they parted, and he turned back toward his dormitory before Sudha and her parents had pulled away" (Lahiri 130). This narration clarifies that the migration also routes to some transformations among people.

The changes are also shown through Sudha's parents as they migrate to Wayland in America from London. Lahiri describes immigration as an adventure as "Suddenly they were stuck, her parents aware that they faced a life sentence of being foreign. In London, her mother had been working toward a certificate in Montessori education, but in America she did not work, did not drive" (Lahiri 138). Sudha's parents do not know to act according to their sudden change, in Wayland they become passive; and they completely rely on their children, especially Sudha who understands her parents' strangeness in a new city. She is the one who explains her father to collect leaves in a bag and not to drag them to the woods that has located opposite to their house and she takes initiative with her perfect English to the telephone maintenance department in order to service their appliances. But Rahul behaves

opposite to Sudha as he thinks that the transnational life of his parents is chosen by them, so they have to face their life.

> While Sudha regarded her parents' separation from India as an ailment that ebbed and flowed like cancer, Rahul was impermeable to that aspect of their life as well. "No one dragged them here," he would say. (Lahiri 138)

Sudha departs to England to study a second Master's at the London School of Economics and excites to be in London as "she felt an instinctive connection to London, a sense of belonging though she barely knew her way around. In spite of the ocean that now separated her from her parents, she felt closer to them, but she also felt free, for the first time in her life, of her family's weight" (Lahiri 144). Sudha meets Roger Featherstone who woos and marries her that makes her live permanently in London. But Rahul moves out of his house and starts his new life with Elena who is thirty, eight years older than him. When he visits Sudha in London, he adapts himself to the society which is seen through his words,

> "First time in London, is it?" Roger asked Rahul.
>
> "Apart from sitting in Heathrow dozens of times on the way to Calcutta," Rahul said and . . . mentioned things he wanted to see in the course of the week—the British Museum, Freud's house, the V&A—asking if it was possible to go to Stratford-upon-Avon for the day. He seemed suddenly desperate to interact with the world, after all those years of sitting up in his room. (Lahiri 164)

Rahul becomes a transnationalist as his series of migration help now to undergo a cosmopolitan life. When Sudha pushes him out of her house, he again becomes a wanderer to explore other places or even to go back to America. The adaptation of

Sudha and Rahul is not seen in his parents who feel the strangeness as they migrate to new places. But the second generation immigrants route to several places and see the growth of cosmopolitan roots in them. This inspires most of the first generation immigrants who become transnationalists with cosmopolitan ideologies as they get old.

In "Nobody's Business" Sang is introduced as a new housemate who keeps moving to several places. She loves an Egyptian man, Farouk, and plans to marry him, an act which clears her future migration.

> Charles was teasingly forbidding her to buy too many things, so that moving out would be just as easy. Sang had been laughing at him, but now she stopped, her expression pensive. She looked up at the house, a balled-up comforter in her arms. "I don't know, Charles. I don't know how long I'll be here." "He still doesn't want to live together until you're married?" She shook her head. "What does he say?" "That he doesn't want to spoil things . . ." "He says things like 'When we have kids, we'll buy a big house in Lexington.' " (Lahiri 179)

In this conversation, one can see Sang's unclear state because she does not have a fixed place to stay. She depends on Farouk and plans to move to different places where she has never visited. This shows her adaptability to be a cosmopolitan and she even makes herself be ready for a transnational life. In multiple migrations, most of the people lose their family support because all the family members cannot trail behind a person. For example, Sang lives in America but her family stays in different places – her sister stays in London and parents live in Michigan. It is a condition that makes a person lives as a transnationalist if he/she wishes to migrate to several places.

When Farouk spoils the relationship, Sang readily faces the situation by moving to London. Though she cannot accept Farouk's infidelity, she makes her mind accept the change and moves out of the place and willingly becomes a transnationalist.

> Paul was awakened by the noise of a car door closing. He went to the window and saw the trunk of a taxi being pressed down by the driver's hand. Sang had left a note on the kitchen table: she was going to London to visit her sister. "Paul thanks for yesterday," it said. Along with this was a signed check for her portion of the rent . . . Charles came that weekend to pack up Sang's things. He tossed her clothes into garbage bags…loaded up the back of his truck until all that was left of Sang in the house was the sage and mole paint on the walls of her room, and the hanging plant over the dish drainer. "I guess that's everything," Charles said. (Lahiri 215-16)

In fact, after moving to London, Sang does not care for her American possessions that she left behind in her house. She starts a completely new life in a different host society. Her clothes and other things are loaded in a garbage bag which portrays the end of her American life. This need for change is seen among many migrants who do not feel comfortable with a particular host society or change places for the sake of career, education, marriage or just to breathe some new air. There may be various reasons for the migrants to become transnationalist but, the transnationalism routes to the cosmopolitanism and the migrants turn to be the world citizens.

In *Unaccustomed Earth,* Lahiri sums up her own transnational experience that makes her to support the cosmopolitanism as she says, "I think being an immigrant must teach you so much about the world and about human beings, things you can't

understand if you are born and raised and live your whole life in one place. It must be an amazing experience in many ways, but it has a price" (Patel 16). The short stories in the collection *Unaccustomed Earth* showcase the different transnational experience of immigrants, who witness the fissures in the familial relationship. It can be considered as a price that immigrants pay in their transnational life. When a person routes to several places, the gap between a person and his/her family widens and eventually some families shatter into pieces that cannot be fixed again.

Lahiri grabs the attention of the readers to show this relationship issues as another side of the cosmopolitan life. Fox example, Ruma feels her father as a responsibility and her father hesitates to move into Ruma's house; though Adam helps Ruma, she is not happy with Adam as he routes to different cities for his business that create a gap in their relationship.

> Ruma feared that her father would become a responsibility, an added demand, continuously present in a way she was no longer used to. It would mean an end to the family she'd created on her own: herself and Adam and Akash, and the second child that would come in January . . . She loved Adam, and yet it worried her. Did it not make a difference to him? She knew he was trying to help, but at the same time, she sensed that his patience was wearing thin. By allowing her to leave her job, splurging on a beautiful house, agreeing to have a second baby, Adam was doing everything in his power to make Ruma happy. But nothing was making her happy. (Lahiri 7)

Similarly, Akash shows his disinterest towards his father and grandfather as they are routing to several places and Akash gets no chance to learn their love on him. When Adam phones Ruma and tries to speak with Akash,

> She took the phone. "Rum," she heard Adam say . . . "Have you eaten?" . . . "I'm about to head off to dinner with a client. How's Akash?" "Right here." She put the receiver to his ear. "Say hi to Daddy." "Hi," Akash said, without enthusiasm. Then silence. She could hear Adam saying, "What's going on, buddy? Having fun with Dadu?" But Akash refused to engage any further, staring at the page of his book, and eventually, she put the phone back to her own ear. "He's tired," she said. "He's about to fall asleep." "I wish I could fall asleep," Adam said. "I'm wiped." She knew he'd been traveling since early morning, that he'd been working all day, would have to work through his dinner. And yet she felt no sympathy. (Lahiri 24-5)

But Akash changes his notion towards his grandfather when he stays with him. There are incidents like growing garden, attending swimming classes, sleeping in the same bed and the care that grandfather shows on Akash eventually gets them bound together. When Ruma's father moves into his one bedroom condominium, Akash starts to miss his grandfather,

> "Where's Dadu?" Akash asked as she was finishing her tea . . . "He went home today." "Why?" . . . "Because that's where he lives." "Why?" In her son's small face she saw the disappointment she also felt. "Daddy's coming back tonight," she said, trying to change the subject. "Should we make a cake?" Akash went to the kitchen door and tried the knob, looking through the glass at the yard. "I want Dadu." (Lahiri 57)

It is a matter of fact that people start to move out of the house to take various routes; it directly affects the family and relationships. It appears slightly against the Indian

ethos as Indians generally prefer to keep their families intact and they tend to give importance to familial relationships. Contrarily, the cosmopolitan world transforms people to run in different routes for their personal development. Most of the people start to see money as a stronger means for happiness than the people and relationships which Rahul admits, "Baba left India to get rich, and Ma married him because she had nothing else to do" (Lahiri 138).

In "Hell-Heaven," Lahiri points out the isolation and the importance people give for money through Aparna's character that stays all alone at home while her husband remains a workaholic. Her husband marries Aparna to placate his parents and he remains "wedded to his work, his research," which Usha considers that, "He existed in a shell that neither my mother nor I could penetrate" (Lahiri 65). Usha also narrates Aparna's routine and her loneliness, "Her only job, every day, was to clean and cook for my father and me. We rarely went to restaurants, my father always pointing out, even in cheap ones, how expensive they were compared with eating at home. When my mother complained to him about how much she hated life in the suburbs and how lonely she felt, he said nothing to placate her. "If you are so unhappy, go back to Calcutta," he would offer, making it clear that their separation would not affect him one way or the other" (Lahiri 76). Lahiri brings in the mere consideration of the people who wish to digest the separations and the loss of familial bonds to attain a good social status. These people accept transnationalism as a tool to grab the various opportunities in the world and become cosmopolitans.

Amit's parents move to several places for a better paying job. The migration does not affect the parents as they consider it as a process of development and remains unsentimental with Amit. But the series of migrations make Amit lose the sense of intimacy with the people and the place. For instance Amit's parents take him

out of a public school in Winchester, Massachusetts and send him to the residential Langford academy as they decide to move back to India.

> He still remembered the night his parents told him their plans. They were sitting in a seafood restaurant on the Cape, in Cotuit . . . His father began by saying he was growing restless on the faculty of Harvard Medical School, that there was a hospital in Delhi where he believed he was needed. Amit had been stunned by his parents' decision—his parents, unlike most other Bengalis in Massachusetts, had always been dismissive, even critical, of India, never homesick or sentimental. (Lahiri 95)

This incident is the point from which Amit starts losing intimacy with the places he lives. After graduating from Langford, he does not keep in touch with Langford friends, he has no nostalgia for the school and he starts to throw the alumni letters without opening them. He moves to Columbia University and settles as the managing editor for a medical journal in New York. But his parents keep migrating to different places even after moving back to India, "In Delhi his father had perfected a laser technique to correct astigmatism that earned him invitations to work and teach in hospitals all over the world" so they move back to Houston, America and "After five years in Houston they'd moved yet again, to Lausanne, Switzerland. They lived in Saudi Arabia now" (Lahiri 97). They never meet Amit and his children and even Amit does not visit his parents due to their migrations. The multiple migrations of his parents pave a route for the transnational life that makes them cosmopolites with delicate familial bonds.

Lahiri differentiates the characters that shatter or hold the delicate familial bonds. This differentiation is shown between Sudha and Rahul who move to various

places to upgrade their education. But the migration transforms Rahul and moulds Sudha as Rahul was "always aware of the family's weaknesses, never sparing Sudha from the things she least wanted to face" (Lahiri 138). Rahul's migration to Ithaca and New York completely makes to abdicate his family.

> He disappeared for good. There was no note, no explanation . . . Then they realized that his toothbrush was not in the bathroom and that one of the big suitcases normally used for trips to India was not in the basement. He must have decided to visit a friend, her parents said, but they knew none of Rahul's new friends and were unable to make calls. They reported that the car was missing, and it was located the next day, abandoned at the bus station in Framingham . . . After a week, a letter came, with a postmark from Columbus, Ohio. It was not addressed to anyone; he had not even put their family surname on the envelope. "Don't bother looking for me here," he'd written, "I'm only spending the night. I don't want to hear from any of you. Please leave me alone." (Lahiri 158)

Sang also leads an abdicate life as her parents live in Michigan with whom she rarely speaks on weekends. But her failed relationship makes to seek her sister in London and she refuses to look back her American life. It is shown, when Paul tries to reach Sang to get the rent due, "Instead of contacting Sang's parents, he looked up her sister's phone number in London on an old telephone bill. A woman answered, who sounded just like her. "Sang?" The phone switched hands, and a man came on the line. "Who is this?" "This is her housemate in America, in Brookline. Paul. I'm trying to reach Sang." There was a long pause . . . But then the man picked up the phone. He didn't apologize for the delay. "She's indisposed at the moment. I'm sure she'll

appreciate your call" (Lahiri 216). Sang and Rahul appear similar to each other because they try to reach the siblings instead of their parents in the abdicate life. But they cannot stay together with their siblings as their transnational life makes them move around the world.

The characters in *Unaccustomed Earth* route to several places and fix the roots of cosmopolitanism by widening the space in their relationships. This creates a sense of loss in immigrants well-built transnational life, as Lahiri says, "I feel that I've inherited a sense of that loss from my parents because it was so palpable all the time while I was growing up, the sense of what my parents has sacrificed in moving to the United States and in so many ways, and yet at the same time, remaining here and building a life here and all that entailed" (Patel 7). Though the transnational life subjects people to various comforts and betterments, it creates the space in relationships and requires one to sacrifice all the familial bonds. Thus, the migration absorbs all the sacrifices of the immigrants and helps the people to soil the cosmopolitan roots, to bud the transnational life and to bloom the comfortable world citizens. In "Family as Space in Jhumpa Lahiri's Short Stories," Himadri Lahiri points out this complex growth of travel and cosmopolitanism:

> Travel disperses people, intersects continents and hybridizes culture . . . cultures travel and make way for cultural translation of the 'travellers.' Culture itself is the site for travel . . . the idea that only western cultures are dynamic and other cultures are bound and static and maintains that even the rural sites in a remote corner of the world may open up to a complex history of travel and cosmopolitanism. (46)

The travel and cosmopolitanism build numerous homes for the immigrants who live beyond nation, citizenship, identity, location, culture, religion and race. This creates

the plot for Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* that makes the readers to find the reasons of the cosmopolitan life. Everybody builds a home and gets accustomed to the place they live in and this is what Lahiri plots in this short story collection. It appears as a basic concept that Lahiri's transnational characters reveal with the new amalgamated culture. Lisa Lowe observes this cultural amalgamation as the "practices that are partly inherited, partly modified, as well as partly invented" (65) by the transnationalists in their cosmopolitan world.

Chapter 4

Cosmopolitan Tongues

In the globalization process, it is important to analyze the factors that influence the 'language shift' and to produce it apparently in the daily life. The worldwide advancement has the English language as a pillar of support which clears the globalization path by creating equality among the people. *The Economist* notes the growth of English in "A World Empire by Other Means: The Triumph of English,"

> It is everywhere. Some 380 million people speak it as their first language and perhaps two-thirds as many again as their second. A billion are learning it, about a third of the world's population are in some sense exposed to it and by 2050, it is predicted, half the world will be more or less proficient in it. It is the language of globalization—of international business, politics and diplomacy.

The advance of English language leads to the cosmopolitan goal, but another thought negatively eyes English language like the Sun whose rays are fading the other languages. It may be the 'Sun' from the British Empire on which the Sun never sets, still plays a large role in spreading the language. Having gained the more recent status as the world's sole superpower, the United States "has further reinforced the position of English as a tongue of authority throughout the world" (Johnson 137). Though the other languages fade, the requirement of the world language is seen as a medium to communicate for the international trade that strengthens export and import and also to maintain a healthy neighbourhood with other countries.

The root cause for the growth of English language is the British migration to colonize the world. India, for example, a well-known country of the British colonization and democratic institutions, adopted English as *lingua franca* along with

Hindi and other languages. After the colonization, the adopted English became another language in the multilingual Indian society. The adopted English might support the people who migrated for their profession and education in the post-colonial period. But there were countries which are exclusively native language oriented countries like Europe, China, and Japan. These nations troubled to face "Esperanto" pace of the world, a term for a multilingual world that sources from the "Newspeak" of George Orwell's *1984*. This was invented by Lejzer Ludwig Zamenhof at the end of the nineteenth century.

> Esperanto has attracted few but fervent acolytes in every country, but has been supplanted as an international lingua franca first by French, then by English. Other idioms – Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, Russian – have become linguae francae in various regions of the world. Esperanto can be seen as a positive Utopia, perfectly symmetrical to the negative Utopia of Orwell's Newspeak: whereas the ultimate aim of Newspeak was to repress thoughts against authority . . . When a linguistic medium is lacking, the prerequisite for institutions and individuals to take part in democratic life is to create one – if need be artificially. The universal language is thus the key to cosmopolitan citizenship. (Archibugi 7-8)

This may arouse an opposition by supporting the degradation of the other languages. It is the human mentality to cling on to much stuff to showcase them in front of the world. The same clinginess is seen among the people who adopt new languages and other practices, eventually forget or leave some old languages and practices. Multicultural theorists have a strong belief in diversity as "a real world fails to comply with single-language or mono-ethnic states. Diversity of language and

culture is a reality that is likely to increase inside each political community" (Archibugi 6). Today, the 'world superpower' the United States celebrate its 'melting pot' with more ethnics, cuisines, and languages which again affects the exclusive native language oriented countries. These single-language countries have started to face new problems with the growth of English language through migration, computers, and other technological advancements. In the twentieth century, a huge migration had seen by these counties, when their native people moved out to learn varieties of new science and technologies. This made single-language countries adopt English which has been seen as "English Fever" in China and a "Personal Ladder to Climb" for the career in Europe (Johnson 21).

In migration, most of the people encourage themselves to shift from their own language. The always draw in for support the sociolinguistics and cosmopolitanism that conceive 'language shift' as a social practice. English is seen as a language of influence and strength which creates a bigger notion of being universal rather than being bound to one country; it is also a dangerous tool that destroys the immigrants' mother tongue. Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* thus, projects the language loss of Bengali immigrants in their American world that moulds them as cosmopolitans by the very act of acquiring proficiency in English. Her characters either forget or refuse to speak Bengali which Lahiri spotlights on various immigrant generations. This sketches the second and third generations' linguistic loss with the concurrent possession of a new global language which creates a cosmopolitan platform.

Lahiri's protagonists attain greater fluency in English than their parents' native tongues and this helps them to be transnational citizens of the world. In the book *Monolingualism and Linguistic Exhibitionism in Fiction*, Anjali Pandey writes, "Most tellingly, in *Unaccustomed Earth*, mother-tongue loss is presented as volitional – an

individual choice, rather than the consequence of state – sanctioned practice" (137). Though it is an "individual choice" the adoption of English lays as an only option to survive in the globalization process that ultimately leads to the disappearance of mother-tongue. This is adeptly observed as,

> Evident in each of the stories in *Unaccustomed Earth*, however, is a marked absence of a lamentation for mother-tongue loss. For Lahiri, language loss, the death of mother-tongues – non-western codes – appears to be an inevitable outcome of cosmopolitanism – a necessary linguistic deletion for American assimilation, and part of her peripatetic second-generation protagonists. (Pandey 140)

The protagonists are born in America which definitely accepted as their birthplace, so there is no point in accusing the second generation immigrants. When they step out of their house, they are compelled to mingle with the host society that never understands the immigrants' language. As immigrants, they have to adopt English to communicate with others. In India, for example, people who do not even know Hindi, speak English when they move out of their state. The IT revolution in India makes many software engineers move to other states or even to the foreign countries that force them to learn and acquire English. In this case, even the people who live in Indian cannot be blamed for adopting other languages and this draws the situation of the immigrants. The readers can empathize the protagonists who appear similar to the youngest generation of native Indians which adopts English to build their career because in India,

> Certification of English proficiency has become a big business for those involved in the test administering industry, but test-takers claim it is an even bigger business for them. Described as a "passport to better-paid employment" . . . Even those worksites where employees

> would have no practical use for the language often list certification in English as a prerequisite for job interview requests. (Johnson 148)

This condition is similar to Lahiri's young protagonists who make various attempts to fit in the cosmopolitan society like America. The conflict of immigrants' mother-tongue on the one hand and the need to continue as cosmopolites pulls the second generation immigrants on to their sides. When the first generation immigrants get old, the strength of mother tongue gets weakened and thus, gradually let the next generation lose to drown in the host society's language practices. Lahiri's characters are representing this conflict which is "unquestioning appropriation of hegemonic Monolingualism in the face of ethnic multilingualism may account for why Lahiri persists in being a favourite in western reading circles" (Pandey 152).

In "Unaccustomed Earth," It is Ruma's mother who sings songs and teaches Bengali rhymes to Akash. But Ruma lacks the discipline to stick on to Bengali though her mother makes her speak it. Though Ruma's father does not mind the 'language shift,' he teaches Bengali to Akash, "Do you remember what I taught you this morning? And Akash recited his numbers in Bengali from one to ten" (Lahiri 50). Pranab, in "Hell-Heaven" overhears Aparna as she speaks Bengali to Usha and as a first generation immigrant, Aparna sticks to Bengali. In "Only Goodness," Sudha has not "minded when her mother came in the middle of the night to comfort Rahul, sitting in a rocking chair, singing a song in Bengali, something about a fishbone piercing the foot of a little boy, a song that would lull Sudha back to sleep also" (Lahiri 135). These characters represent the first generation immigrants who soil their native tongue inside the next generation.

Ruma never feels like an adult in Bengali, because her peer group speaks English. When Akash starts to speak in full sentences, Ruma let English take over as

she does not mind the 'language shift.' Aparna's daughter Usha prefers English, "Deborah and I spoke freely in English, a language in which, by that age, I expressed myself more easily than Bengali, which I was required to speak at home" (Lahiri 69). Pranab's mixed marriage with Deborah makes his daughters follow English. In "A Choice of Accommodation," Amit's classmates appreciate his good English and he marries an American girl, Megan that eventually makes his daughters Maya and Monika to speak English. Sudha and Rahul in "Only Goodness" marry Americans which also results in the same. In "Nobody's Business," Sang has no place to speak Bengali as she lives with American housemates and her family in another country. This condition makes her forget certain terms in Bengali, ""How do you say 'bon voyage'?" Paul asked. She told him she wasn't sure" (Lahiri 191). Lahiri contrasts the monolingual first generations who strictly speak Bengali at home with the multilingual second generation immigrants to explore cosmopolitanism. Her characters display a language exhibition which showcases the "Linguistic Hybridization" (Pandey 155).

Lahiri makes her readers to the shallowest Bengali which is nearly invisible among the second generation immigrants. She has stemmed from an Indic mindset as a vague Bengali, "Both Indian and Bangladeshi, 'west' and 'east' Bengal, equally 'Hindu and Muslim' and neither" (Neela 130) born in London and grown in America with a transnational identity. The short stories have more traces of Lahiri's life and experience as a cosmopolite that vividly narrate about a sprout of the world citizens. Pandey in *Monolingualism and Linguistic Exhibitionism in Fiction,* notes "Lahiri's characters in *Unaccustomed Earth* are cosmopolitan, her lens of analysis unfortunately remain focused on western hegemonies of cosmopolitanism" (21).

However, Susan Koshy's "Minority Cosmopolitanism" argues, "Lahiri's narratives of naturalization also reconstruct hegemonic vision of cosmopolitanism by elaborating an ethics of affiliation grounded in minority experiences of exclusion or partial inclusion;" which offers a new way to figure cosmopolitanism. In *Unaccustomed Earth,* all the short stories have Bengali terms which represent the Indianism of addressing others. Though second generation immigrants forget or refuse to speak Bengali, they use the Bengali terms to call or refer their own Bengali people. The term "Dadu" is used by Akash refers to grandfather,

> "Where's Dadu?" Akash asked as she was finishing her tea. "He went home today." "Why?" "Because that's where he lives." "Why?" In her son's small face she saw the disappointment she also felt . . . Akash went to the kitchen door and tried the knob, looking through the glass at the yard. "I want Dadu." (Lahiri 57)

When Akash says, "I want Dadu" readers can see the need of Indianism in a cosmopolitan life. The migration and accustomedness of the host society transform the immigrants as cosmopolites but, adopting more than one culture and language never allows people completely forget another culture and language. This is proven in all the short stories by using the Bengali terms. When Akash refuses to eat Indian food, Ruma uses the term "Dida" to Akash, in order to say about his grandmother's food, "You used to eat Dida's cooking" (Lahiri 23). It can be seen as a reminder of Indianism which the immigrants try to forget in their busy transnational life. Ruma's mother attempts her daughter speak Bengali at home, but after her marriage, it helps to stick to Bengali terms like "Baba," "Ma," "Dadu" and "Dida" to address her parents.

In "Hell-Heaven," Usha call Pranab as "Kaku" because she had no real uncles in America, and" her mother teaches "to call him Pranab Kaku." This makes Usha immediately ask her mother, "if I ought to address her as Deborah Kakima, turning her into an aunt as I had turned Pranab into an uncle" (Lahiri 68). Accordingly, Pranab also calls Usha's father, "Shyamal Da, always addressing him in the polite form," and calls her mother "Boudi, which is how Bengalis are supposed to address an older brother's wife, instead of using her first name, Aparna" (Lahiri 60). Though Sudha and Rahul completely get accustomed to their cosmopolitan life, as second generation immigrants wish to pass on the Bengali terms to the next generation kid, Neel.

> "Say goodnight to Mamu," she said. "What does he call them?" Rahul asked . . . "Who?" "Our parents." "Dadu and Dadi . . ." "Just like we did," he said, his voice softening. "I bet they treat you like a king," he said to Neel. (Lahiri 166)

Sang in "Nobody's Business," appears similar to the protagonists of other short stories. When her sister delivers a baby boy, she buys some baby toys like playsuits full of snaps, a stuffed octopus, and a miniature Fresh sailor's shirt, a mobile of stars and planets that glows in the dark. Then she happily announces Paul, ""I'm going to be called Sang Mashi," explaining that Mashi was the Bengali word for "Aunt"" (Lahiri 191). Though the word sounds strange on her lips, she wishes to stick to the Bengali term which gives meaning to her lonely life in America. In the busy cosmopolitan life, people become transnationalists and adapt according to the country they live and also feel at home. But the traces of relationships and terms to address them foster their Indianism with the effect of making them feel 'belonged' and to think of their days with their parents' age-old Indian roots.

In the alien setup, Lahiri shows a way to learn the native language, value and culture of the homeland through the first generation immigrants. She represents first generation immigrants through Ruma's father, who blows the native breeze on Ruma and Akash, "Not too deep," her father said. "Not more than a finger. Can you touch it still?" Akash nodded. He picked up a miniature plastic dinosaur, forcing it into the ground. "What colour is it?" her father asked. "Red." "And in Bengali? . . . *"Lal."* "Good." "And Neel!" Akash cried out, pointing to the sky" (Lahiri 44). This conversation shows that the second and third generation immigrants are guided by the first generation through which the present and future generations can get accustomed to the homeland and new land. This predicts the next generation's future with an inevitable mixture of many cultures and practices that will demand their adaptability, which one ensured turns them as the cosmopolitans. In the conflict of language loss and gain too, the practice of uttering full sentences in mother-tongue is lost; it becomes a code-mixture with the terms and phrases borrowed from the new languages. In the cosmopolitan world, Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* pictures the loss and gain of languages with a map to stick on to their mother-tongue.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The immigrant experience is complicated as some immigrants find fraught with the homeland culture and the struggle to face the realities of a new land. Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* differentiates this struggle between the first and the second generation immigrants to show their journey towards the cosmopolitan world. Initially, this cosmopolitan path may give the sense of exile among the immigrants that Lahiri confesses, "No country is my motherland. I always find myself in exile whichever country I travel to, that's why I was tempted to write something about those living their lives in exile" (Das 173). But the sense of exile slowly starts to reduce among the immigrants because they get accustomed to multiple foreign lands. Lahiri clearly pictures in *Unaccustomed Earth* the reduction of this sense of exile and the transformation of immigrants. As a second generation immigrant, she reflects on her conflicts and gives some reasons for her transition:

> I never know how to answer the question, "Where are you from?" If I say I'm from Rhode Island, people seldom satisfied. They want to know more, based on things such as my name, my appearance, etc. Alternatively, if I say I'm from India, a place where I was not born and have never lived, this is also inaccurate . . . I wanted to please my parents and meet their expectations. I also wanted to meet the expectations of my American peers, and the expectations I put on myself to fit into American society. It's a classic case of divided identity, but depending on the degree to which the immigrants in question are willing to assimilate, the conflict is more or less pronounced. (Das 177-78).

This struggle is faced by all the immigrants' children who think about the rootlessness and a life of exile in the host society. But they cannot keep complaining about their unaccustomed life, as they are forced to live and accept the multiple cultures. It is human nature to accept and adapt to the place where they get to live. Nevertheless, when people migrate to some other country, they change their culture and lifestyle which make them completely different from their native people. Lahiri clears this condition in *Unaccustomed Earth*. The characters reflect Lahiri's state as they feel the rootlessness, accustomedness in the new society, and the need to satisfy their parents' expectations in the process of which some fail; they change their names, migrate to several places and transform themselves as cosmopolites. All the short stories in this collection support cosmopolitanism because Lahiri is transforming as a world citizen herself.

The multiple migrations of the immigrants change the concept of citizenship which leads "to the loosening of borders because not only is there a constant transnational flow and relocation of people but also of capital, culture, and ideas" (Sharma 99). This transformation of people has become a threat to a country's territorial boundaries, languages, and cultures which are "seen as an object of devotion to live and die for" (Sharma 103). The globalization process brings the dual citizenship as Sharma points out:

> Dual citizenship creates dual loyalties that may threaten the cohesiveness of a nation state and make it a mere instrument to keep order and good governance so that the rights of individuals and groups can be protected. On another hand, it can expand the reach of democratic governance and a shared sense of belonging leading to a new internationalism and world order based on it. Hence, a

> commitment to certain core values and a shared vision is important between the individual, the receiving state and the sending state. (105)

But the dual citizenship is not successful in many countries because though people keep moving to several places, they retain a single citizenship to a particular country. This is shown through Lahiri's characters that portray the concept single citizenship but they are changing their citizenship when they move to different countries. This leads to a transnational life that eventually adopt various cultures and practices which finally transform them as cosmopolites.

It is a matter of fact that accustomedness is a stepping stone of and for a multinational life because the immigrants are forced to accept the new culture in order to survive in the various countries. The first and second generation immigrants may vary in the adopting process, but both the generations do not have a real home to return "as 'home' isn't home anymore to them" (Sharma 134). Alka Kumar points out that

> When home becomes a mythic space of desire it becomes also a place of no return. Home then can be seen to have many versions, as the actual geographical space of origin, refigured and reinvented through the imagination as also the lived experience of present day reality with its local sounds and smells, sights and colours. (2)

The immigration makes people as transnationalists and boundless to become world citizens. Home is no more a fixed place or "parent nation" (Sharma 134), as the multinational life decreases the sense of home and brings the concept, "Home is where the heart is, home where the feet are; home is bonding; home is where you live your dreams" (Sharma 134). Lahiri, a second generation immigrant completely accepts this concept and provides a transnational setting for her stories. Kumar writes,

"Issue of identity, home, dislocation, relocation, rootlessness and belonging often predominant as thematic pegs while multicultural contexts provide settings" (3). These themes are the true reasons of the immigrants to turn as cosmopolites.

Monica Pradhan's debut book *The Hindi Bindi Club* (2007) answers the question of home:

> But are lives then spaced for these diasporic communities?
>
> Which you're liking better, India or America? Everyone wants to know this . . .
>
> I like them both…They're both my homes. (274)

She also brings the ideas similar to Lahiri, though both of them feel the sense of exile. In her transnational life, Lahiri never feels at home but, her likeness towards the places has prepared to accept both India and America as her homes. This acceptance makes her write stories in Indo-American settings and puts her characters under a transnational life to turn them as cosmopolitans. Though the first generation immigrants struggle with the internal conflict of the two lands, they assimilate to the new land along with the second generation. Pradhan brings the ideology of the second generations:

> It wasn't that we weren't proud of our heritage. We were. But we were equally proud of our nationality. That's what it means to be American. Like our friends, we were Americans of descent, and we didn't like being mistaken for foreigners, or worse, tourist in our own country. (173)

This shows the successful life of the immigrants in a new land which Lahiri also points out in her *Unaccustomed Earth.* The second generation immigrants are attached to India but the dominant new land forces them to be apart from it. Thus, the

hybridity emerges and makes these immigrants be a product of two or more countries. This, in turn, changes even first generation immigrants who accept the ideology of the second generation to become cosmopolitans, because "all the immigrants who came to this foreign land, the land of opportunity, with nothing more than a dream . . . The challenge isn't just in attaining, but in holding on, keeping the dream, or getting a new one" (Pradhan 88-89). In order to succeed their dreams, immigrants accept the cultural fusion that creates a common cosmopolitan ground for the world. In today's cosmopolitan world, "we are seeing, discovering how a child born to Indian parents can become American and a child born to American parents can become Indian." (Pradhan 352).

Lahiri brings this cultural fusion through the inter-racial marriages that make the couples and their children to be the product of more than one culture and brings the "East meets West" (Sharma 135) concept. Rudyard Kipling's poem *The Ballad of East and West* (1899) thus, supports for the oneness of the world:

> Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
> Till Earth and sky stand presently at God's great Judgement Seat;
> But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Bread, nor Birth,
> When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth! (1-4)

Pradhan, as a present generation transnationalist, argues "East is East and West is West; in truth / the twain are one" (419). She voices that East can meet West and believe in the emergence of the world citizens. In today's multinational world, the transnationalists break the boundaries of the nations and bring different nations together to create the hybrid society. Similarly, Lahiri makes her characters move to

the different places and portrays the cosmopolitan world that "denaturalizes" (Charu 134) the concept of home, territory, native culture and mother tongue.

The immigrants create the multinational space but, most of the age-old immigrants cannot accept the cosmopolitan world; because of the conflicts of relationship and isolation in their old days. The children may move to different places and the parents prefer to live alone, though they live in a foreign land. In the book *Aging and the Indian Diaspora: Cosmopolitan Families in India and Abroad* (2009), Sarah Lamb pens down the words of age-old Indian Americans:

> The children were raised here, so they are really more like Americans, They love us . . . but they don't like to come visit us. My son doesn't have any time for us . . . "Even if my son wanted me to live with him, I wouldn't go. The solution is to live away, to be less involved." (222)

This scenario is seen in Lahiri's stories that bring the thought process of age-old parents. The bustling cosmopolitan world, children have no time for their parents and eventually their relationship becomes delicate. Today, the necessity and demands of the cosmopolitan world keep increasing, nevertheless people are yet to get ready to face the losses and limitations of being a part of it.

The relationship issues become secondary as the age-old people search for their early Indian life in a foreign land. This forces them to reflect on the striking contrasts between their daily experiences of sociality in different nations:

> In India, there is so much involvement from the morning on! At six o' clock in the morning, the milkman would come. And he wouldn't simply give milk and go away, but we'd talk [about] something. "So, how are you today? Where are you going to go? Do you have any work? Can I help?" and so on. Then the newspaper man would come,

> and he would say few words, "Oh, I'm sorry, I'm late today. Tomorrow I will be on time." Then . . . a neighbour would come, saying I'm going to the market, do you want me to bring anything for you? Some vegetables or something like that? . . . Here, many ladies are confused. Because from morning till night they are alone. So if somebody calls [on the phone] they are happy but in some homes the messages are to be recorded [by answering machine], so [the elder ladies] are not to pick up the phone. (Lamb 224)

Lahiri brings this socializing conflict among first generation immigrants with their Bengali circle, as this conflict does not affect the second generation Indian Americans. The new land prepares the second generation immigrants to get accustomed to the manners of that particular society. Lamb contrasts the Indian and American living arrangements, "In India, [people live in a] much smaller place! Mostly just one house, not even independent rooms! Children and grandmothers and grandfathers, they sleep together . . . here . . . some guests come, people say, "No, there is no room." And we say . . . why is there no room? We can all sleep together…We shall spread the mattresses and sleep!" (225) This contrast of living arrangements that is, the change in the immigrant lifestyle in a cosmopolitan setup is seen in Lahiri's narration.

In *Unaccustomed Earth*, Lahiri evokes the layered tension in the experiences of the first and second-generation Indian Americans arising out of their divided affiliations towards their original and adopted homelands. Her characters act as the interpreters of both the Indian and American culture. As a sensitive American writer, well aware of and closely linked with Indian heritage, Lahiri unfolds her characters' fractured double perspectives. Lahiri's fictional interpretation of the immigrant

situation carries authenticity because it reflects her keen observation and understanding of the emerging cosmopolitan world. This situation makes the immigrants to struggle with their traditional past and the modern present. Lahiri's characters are at the intersection of Indian and western cultures, thus, they struggle and survive in the baffling multinational society.

Through the short stories, the readers find that the migration and accustomedness as the root cause for the emergence of a cosmopolitan world. Lahiri makes a vivid presentation of the Bengali immigrants who have undergone multiple changes and get adapted to various places. She observes the world shrinking due to the revolution in travel and communication, through continuous migrations, increasing hybrid cultures and tendency to emulate others, particularly among youngsters. This reduces the tendency to preserve one's heritage and ethnic identity, which is considered as a natural phenomenon for the human existence.

Aju Mukhopadhyay says, "There should be an effort to maintain ethnic identity in all colours biologically, rather than losing them through generations, which will be an irreparable loss to humanity" (99). But the growing cosmopolitan world forces the people to follow more than one culture that gradually reduces the differences in race, religion, language and culture. Thus, "Jhumpa Lahiri masterfully, explores the themes of complexities of immigrant experience and foreignness, the clash between lifestyles, cultural disorientation, the conflicts of assimilation, the tangled ties between generations" (Sujatha 148). These conflicts and complexities result in the transformation of the immigrants and they eventually accept the cosmopolitan perspectives.

In this modern world, there are no boundaries for a nation as the people become more independent and prepare themselves to live anywhere on the earth. Benjamin Barber rightly puts it as:

> Anyone with eyes wide open during the last thirty to forty years has known that the world has become interdependent in ineluctable and significant ways. AIDS and West Nile Virus don't carry passports. They go where they will. The Internet doesn't stop at national boundaries; it's a worldwide phenomenon. Today's telecommunications technologies define communications and entertainment all over the world without regard to borders. Global warming recognizes no sovereignty, and nobody can say he or she won't have to suffer the consequence of the polluted air. Ecology, technology, and of course economics and markets are global in character and no nation can pretend that its own destiny is any longer in its own hands in the manner of eighteenth and nineteenth century nations. (207-8)

In this interdependent world, people become immigrants to get the opportunities from various places and this situation prepares them for the transnational life; and makes them enter into the cosmopolitan world. In an essay "The Global Village Finally Arrives," (2005) Pico Iyer shares his cosmopolitan experience:

> This is the typical day of a relatively typical soul in today's diversified world. I wake up to the sound of my Japanese clock radio, put on a T-shirt sent me by an uncle in Nigeria . . . past German cars, to my office. Around me are English language students from Korea, Switzerland and Argentina – all on this Spanish named road in this Mediterranean style

> town . . . for lunch I can walk to a sushi bar, a tandoori palace, a Thai cafe or the newest burrito joint (run by an old Japanese lady). Who am I, I sometimes wonder, the son of Indian parents and a British citizen who spends much of his time in Japan and is therefore – what else? – An American permanent resident? And where am I?" (169)

This kind of query arises in every cosmopolite who moves around the world for the betterment of his or her life. Prem Mathur's words as apathy applied by Charu Sharma clearly picturizes the immigrants as

> Trees don't stand still
> They travel with their roots,
> And roots go where water is. (25)

Therefore, a longsighted reading and analysis of *Unaccustomed Earth* eventually leads to the conclusion that in the process of getting accustomed to the various places they travel to, and in order to survive anywhere in the world, the immigrants finally become cosmopolitans. The attempt of the researches this short story collection from varied points of view has revealed the much needed synchronousness to the modern world. Through the richness of her prose, Lahiri invites the reader into *Unaccustomed Earth*, prompting an array of different cosmopolitan interpretations. To put it in a single sentence, the 'Unaccustomed Earth' is thus fast getting accustomed with the cosmopolites who (can and do) create a "multicultural superpower" (Iyer 172).

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