

Tribhuvan University

Transnational Alienation in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah*

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By

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Letter of Recommendation

Pimala Neupane has completed her dissertation entitled “Transnational Alienation in Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie’s *Americanah*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from July 2020 to February 2022 and accomplished it successfully. I hereby recommend her dissertation be submitted for the final Viva-voce.

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Letter of Approval

This dissertation entitled “Transnational Alienation in Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie’s *Americanah*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Pimala Neupane has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research project uses Manjushree Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* attempting to explore the concept of transnational alienation in their characters. For this, the researcher employs the transnational perspective as a part of the umbrella term: globalization. The migrant protagonists, Prema from Thapa's *Seasons of Flight*, and Ifemelu from Adichie's *Americanah* go to America intending to get a better job, independent lifestyle, sound security, and other opportunities. But they do not find their wish come to reality the way they had expected. They do not feel comfortable adjusting to the new environment and the people there. The reality for them in America goes beyond their expectation. Crossing different national territories these migrants reach the host country with big dreams, but after experiencing all the odds there, they desire to return to their home country. On the other hand, they are unable to live comfortably in the host country due to the sense of nostalgia towards their home country. When migrants cross the transnational borders, they concern with new identity, language, cultures, and practices. They try to adopt the socio-cultural practices of the host country. But they are unable to erase the cultural memory of their homeland as well. By the time they face the reality, neither do they return to their origin, nor do they become able to adopt the culture of the host country. So, they develop the sense of dislocatedness there in the host country and also they find it tough to assimilate with the culture there. They neither remain in the host country peacefully nor do they find the return to the homeland an easy one. As a result, the protagonists feel being the victim of transnational alienation whether in the host country or they return to the land of their origin.

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Chapter I: Transnational Migrants in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah*

This research attempts to explore transnational alienation in Manjushree Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* using transnationalism as the approach. The critical insights developed by Paul Jay in consideration of transnationalism and its impact on migrants globally are used as theoretical insights to analyze the texts under scrutiny. The researcher claims that the migrant characters, who try to interrelate and assimilate their personal, societal, cultural, and national values between the country of origin and host country, feel alienated, isolated, uncomfortable, and unsatisfied with their adjustment.

Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* represents Nepali context where Nepali youths migrate to America because of instability, internal war, and feeling of insecurity for personal development, lacking proper opportunity for a job, a peaceful environment, and other basic needs. Adichie's *Americanah* deals with the Nigerian context where the novel shows the youths migrating to developed countries like America for better education and job opportunity. The authors of these novels have the history of migration to America from developing countries like Nepal and Nigeria in search of better opportunities that they lack in their home country.

In Thapa's *Seasons of Flight*, Prema is a representative character from Nepal who chooses to leave war-torn Nepal for America to be secure. Contrarily things do not go as smoothly as one imagines. Prema wishes to return to Nepal remembering every moment related to her home country though she lives and works in America physically. Likewise in Adichie's *Americanah*, Ifemelu, the protagonist of the novel, represents the Nigerian people who are migrated to America. They share cultural values and identity in America being the black migrants after leaving their homeland.

However, they realize it is uncomfortable to cope with the new realities and become nostalgic feeling comfortable in their home country Nigeria in comparison to America.

To study the selected novels *Seasons of Flight* and *Americanah*, the researcher chooses transnational theory. Although this theory is a part of the umbrella term globalization, the research project uses the different trends of transnationalism such as migration, ecological, technological, economic, developmental, socio-cultural, religious, political, etc. Out of the broad spectrum of transnationalism, the issue of migration in response to dislocatedness, the problem of cultural assimilation, and alienation are the major claim of the study.

The researcher claims that the selected novels depict different aspects of transnationalism but the main focus lies on the issues of migration and its impacts on migrant characters concerning their home country and host country in response to their feelings and cultures. In other words, migrants associate national and international socio-cultural, political, and religious practices together though they feel and experience many things different in reality in comparison to their imagination. The critical insights within the concerned issue of transnationalism developed by Paul Jay, Steven Vertovec, Thomas Faist, and Nina Glick Schiller have been taken as theoretical parameters to analyze the selected texts.

Statement of Problem

Due to the variation of cultural and behavioral practices between the home country and the host country, the researcher finds Thapa's and Adichie's migrant protagonists' sense of dislocatedness, and their problem of cultural assimilation in host country America that push them into the state of nostalgia that ultimately leads them to be the victim of transnational alienation. That is why, the researcher has

thought to conduct this research work to address the problem that the migrants suffer with. For this, the theoretical perspective of transnationalism developed by key thinkers like Paul Jay, Steven Vertovec, Nina Glick Schiller, and Thomas Faist will be employed.

Research Questions

-) How do the cultural and behavioral differences between the country of origin and the host country impact the migrant protagonists in the selected novels?
-) Why do these migrants feel a sense of dislocatedness and the problem of cultural assimilation?
-) How do migrant protagonists have the sense of nostalgia leading to being the victim of transnational alienation in the host country?

The objective of the study

The main objectives of this research are:

-) To identify the problems felt by the migrants in the host countries.
-) To examine how the migrants' develop the sense of dislocatedness, and what problems they face for their cultural assimilation.
-) To analyze how the sense of dislocatedness and the problem of cultural assimilation lead them towards the sense of nostalgia and transnational alienation in the selected texts.

Delimitation of the Research

The researcher has chosen Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* to be specific although there are many other texts related to the context of migration. The research work is limited to the transnational perspective to discover transnational alienation in the protagonists of the selected novels. This research does not analyze other literary texts and does not use other theories than the prescribed

ones as it is impossible to incorporate everything in a single research project.

Significance of the Research

Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* have not yet been studied from the perspective of transnationalism to dig out the true reasons that lead the migrant protagonists' sense of transnational alienation. It will help produce at least a little argument in the area of the study that ultimately will be beneficial for the people who desire to study the area of this study. So, this research project and its results will be significant.

Methodology

The research design for this study will be qualitative. This project intends to explore and analyze the selected primary texts *Seasons of Flight* and *Americanah* based on transnational migration concerning how migrant characters adjust and experience the new cultural settings of the host country after leaving the country of origin. Critical insights developed in this research concern reviews and criticisms by collecting secondary data such as published books, research journals, research articles, and unpublished dissertations including extensive library research and having guidance from different professors of the Central Department of English to enhance the quality of the research.

This research project employs the theory of transnationalism although it roots globalization. Kivisto and Faist claim that "transnationalism is seen as offering a more limited perspective than globalization theory" (139). Narrowing down the theory of globalization to the theory of transnationalism, the researcher highlights cultural variations of migrants that lead them to the sense of dislocatedness and their problem in cultural assimilation. As a result of those factors, they develop a strong sense of nostalgia which ultimately inclines them to the sense of alienation. The major

contributors for this research study are Paul Jay, Steven Vertovec, Nina Glick Schiller, and Thomas Faist along with Roger Waldinger and David Fitzgerald.

People are familiar with the theory of transnationalism and the global trends of migration which covers different aspects of migrants' life. In this regard, Paul Jay in *Global Matters: The Transnational Turn in Literary Studies* claims that the "focus of this kind of innovative research is on "pluralities, differences, hybrid identities, and complicated transnational geographies that are seemingly incoherent and unmanageable" (4). The transnational theory has taken a new turn in the globalized world dealing with pluralities, differences, hybridity, and its impact on different people and their cultures, languages, and identities in the world. In this regard, transnationalism is closely associated with social, cultural, political, and economic matters that extend beyond the boundary of any nation or state. Due to variations in culture and identities for migrants in the host country, migrant people are unable to manage their lives in the host country in comparison to their homeland. In course of defining transnationalism, Janine Dahinden in her article "The Dynamics of Migrants' Transnational Formations: Between mobility and locality" shares the existence and practices of transnationalism. She points out, "[s]ince the early 1990s, studies on transnationalism have proliferated and transnationalism has become one of the fundamental ways of understanding contemporary practices taking place across national borders, especially when speaking of migrants" (51). With the movement of people from one national territory to another national territory with different purposes, the transnational concept and practices are also coming into existence with the beginning of the 1990s. After this period, its scope and areas are widening in different parts of the world.

Yuan Shu and Donald E. Pease also add similar ideas in their book *American*

Studies as Transnational Practice: Turning toward the Transpacific. As they mention, “transnationalism in relation to diaspora to indicate political and juridical as well as geographic designations is concerned with the flow of migration” (47). The political and juridical in relation to the geographical territory of the nation is connected with the people’s original and living culture after migrating into new territory. The combination of different ideas and practices through migration in different territory create changes in migrants’ lives. With these changes, migrants want to adjust to the new territory. While living in the host country, they attempt to interrelate and perceive cultural information interchangeably with their home country. It relies on “one sense depicted as a shorthand for several processes of cultural interpenetration and blending, transnationalism is often associated with a fluidity of constructed styles, social institutions and everyday practices. These are often described in terms of syncretism, creolization, bricolage, cultural translation, and hybridity” (Vertovec 7). To understand the meaning of different contexts, migrants take the help of two different situations of the homeland and the host country. This is just the construction of meaning by combining two belief systems, simplification or translation of the culture in its own context just for its understanding. Despite this, there is difficulty in understanding the actual meaning of the context. In other words, it is called “a condition of transnationalism which is characterized by, among other things, ‘the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement’ and by ‘the steady erosion of the relationship...’” (Vertovec 12). This is a situation that causes the migrants to develop a sense of dislocatedness in the unfamiliar environment of the host country. Migrants who are familiar with the culture and practices of the homeland, and they begin to follow the practices of the host country. However, the new context becomes very difficult to adopt for migrants. In this

situation, Vertovec further relates that “socialization and family life take place across two or more settings (which usually entail differing social positions and structures), ever more complex processes... points of reference of one context might displace” (64). In the process of socialization, they try to practice the cultures of the host country, but they do not limit themselves only to the culture of the new environment. Or rather, the new social context that they are practicing makes them feel uncomfortable in the process of socialization, and it reminds them of their original cultural practices. They have a sense of dislocatedness, in this regard, while living in the host country and practicing the cultures of the homeland.

The researcher relates transnationalism as the practices of migrants in relation to national and international borders admitting own and acquiring others’ cultures and identities. Through this process, migrant people have some achievements in the country of migration. Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton in their article “Towards a Definition of Transnationalism: Introductory Remarks and Research Questions” attempt “to emphasize the emergence of a social process in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. Immigrants are understood to be trans migrants when they develop and maintain multiple relations-familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political-that span borders” (ix). As it presents, transnationalism is also a process of socialization in which people with different socio-cultural backgrounds develop their relationship with people in the new territory. Migrant people’s relationship in cross-national borders is not unitary but multiple in terms of familial, economic, organizational, religious, political, etc. while living and working in different settings, communicating with people from different backgrounds. This is not an easier way to adjust migrants in the new cultural setting as it relates, “it is not assumed that all

migrants today engage in sustained social, economic and political engagement across borders. Indeed, modes or types of transnational contact and exchange may be selective, ebb and flow depending on a range of conditions, or develop differently through life cycles or settlement processes” (Vertovec 13). It indicates the condition of migrants that they select easier and familiar ways to deal with the matters in the host country, but their familiarity in the home country does not work properly in the country where they are living after migration. In this situation, they face the problem of cultural assimilation in the host country.

Valentina Mazzucato in the article “Operationalizing Transnational Migrant Networks through a Simultaneously Matched Sample Methodology” shows the negative aspects of transnationalism. As everything has strengths and weaknesses, transnationalism is not an exception. In this point, Mazzucato concentrates, “[t]ransnationalism problematizes notions of space that assume that physical, social and political spaces overlap perfectly onto one geographical area. The nation-state affects the way migrants move and organise themselves by creating barriers for them” (206). When a person enters another nation’s territory, every environment becomes estranged and unfamiliar. Those migrants after migrating into a new country are not able to follow all the existing situations related to social, cultural, political, and lingual practices of the host country neglecting the practices of their own homeland. So, they have problems in assimilation and struggle to adjust with two socio-cultural, political, and lingual perceptions and practices of the home country and the country of migration. It creates certain levels of misunderstanding due to barriers in contextualizing two different cultural and social identities. As a result, migrants face lots of difficulties for their adjustment in the new country where they are migrated.

Due to the complexities in the adjustment in the host country, the migrants

find their identities challenged. In this regard Constanza Vera Larrucea's writing "Identity: Belonging, language and transnationalism" focuses, "[t]ransnationalism may be studied by looking at social, economic and political cross-border activities, which are all strongly linked to identity. Transnational connections affect migrants with regard to the construction, maintenance and negotiation of collective identities" (80). Transnationalism has a direct connection with migrants who cross the national border of their own nation and enter the border of the host country. After migrating into another country leaving their home country, they try to follow the existing socio-cultural, political, and economical practices negotiating between the home country and host country. Migrants mostly think of their homeland while living in the host country. The differences they experience and practice in the new land remind them "with homeland ties and the incorporation of persons living 'abroad' into the regions of destination" (Faist 20). Their mind frequently visits their homeland while living, or in the process of adjusting to various situations in the host country. In other words, they are in a state of nostalgia because of remembering each context of the home country while living in the host country. Migrant people's sense of nostalgia at this point leads them to the feeling of alienation as Roger Waldinger and David Fitzgerald in their article "Transnationalism in Question" point out that the "immigrant transnationalism presumes migrants, coming from nationalized societies where identity is defined by contrast to alien peoples and lands. However, the presence of trans-state social connections may not imply" (1189) in the homeland after choosing and living in the host country to fulfill their dream. Despite being physically in the migrated land, they imagine their comfort zone is the homeland again, so they have a sense of alienation. Living in the host country does not mean that they are enjoying their days and fulfilling their dreams in the host country. Thinking about the country

of origin for migrants being in the host country does not mean that they are living in the country of origin. In other words, neither they are in the host country nor do they are in the home country.

The theory of transnationalism is applicable in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* because the theme of the novels and concepts of transnationalism go side by side. Both the theory and the texts concentrate on the theme of cross-national issues concerning language, culture, social practices, and identity of the nation where they come from and living country at present.

Literature Review

Transnational study based on selected novels is an area that resembles and assimilate the culture, language, and social practices of both countries through the experience of the migrants. Their hope to live happily and comfortably in the host country becomes different in reality. After migrating to the new environment, they feel missing their homeland and the culture, and boring and frustrating with their inability to mingle in the host country.

Different researchers have studied Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* from different perspectives in different time periods. Thapa focuses her writing on Nepali migrant characters leaving the home country for America with an expectation of getting better security and independent life. Though the protagonist, Prema has a fascination for facilities and development in America, she happens to move to Nepal time and again psychologically. For this matter, different researchers have studied the novel from different viewpoints such as narrative, women empowerment, feminism, postcolonialism, new historicism, etc.

In Smithsonian Bookdragon, Thapa's novel *Seasons of Flight* is analyzed from a narrative perspective. It has portrayed different steps of the protagonist, Prema's life

in the novel. The way she has undergone different situations, her narratives also contextualize the meaning relatively. Third-person narrative study in the novel carries the situation and the reality of the character that happens with other people in the society. As it is mentioned:

Trained in forestry – in things that might change with the seasons, but are ultimately rooted – Prema’s life in her native hill village is not enough to keep her grounded: her mother died in childbirth when Prema was 8, that younger sister who survived went missing years ago to join the rebel Maoists, her father is little more than a kind voice on a public telephone, her lover is as noncommittal as Prema herself. (BookDragon)

According to the extraction, the story of the protagonist, Prema has undergone difficult situations from her early childhood to the present time. How the story is told is also a matter of humans’ lives which depend on their experience. Prema’s narrative of her childhood as a helpless child who lost her mother at eight years of her childhood indicates her painful situation. Not only lacking mother’s love and care, she faces the pain of missing her younger sister, joining in the Maoist rebellion, who is only survivor and mother expired while giving birth to the younger daughter. The narrative of her childhood is not pleasant. When Prema is an adolescent, her love story is not also satisfactory in which her lover is not as committed in the relationship as herself.

Asmita Bista in her article “Portrayal of Empowered Women in Nepali Novels of the Last Decade” portrays the protagonist of the novel *Seasons of Flight* as an empowered woman. Prema, as a protagonist of the novel, does not limit herself in the rural village of Nepal but crosses the national boundary and move to America. The researcher presents, “Prema is conscious about her capacity so she cannot stick to one

place, and profession. Therefore she leaves the country to get more; more freedom, more experiences, and more facilities. She believes that women are equally powerful as male; so her dreams are also similar to those of the males” (56). Bista claims that Prema justifies herself as a capable and confident girl who is well-known for her ability and knowledge. Instead of following traditional norms and values of Nepali society, she gives priority to her life and liberty in terms of living a meaningful life. She never feels as inferior to male members in Nepal as well as in America. Bista in her other article, “Feminist Characters in Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight*” published in 2011 focuses on the feminist voice. She includes:

Feminist characters want to enjoy their freedom and want to be adventurous by interring into the restricted zone and accepting the challenges in her life... Feminist characters imply the possibilities of sisterhood as a mode of resisting patriarchy by which women’s situation in the world might be improved. They advocate for the increment of women’s participation in every powerful position that have been occupied and enjoyed by males. (69)

The researcher highlights the role of the female protagonist, Prema who performs actively by challenging the traditional role of conventional society. As most of the women in Nepali society are restricted to making personal decisions to migrate to America, and having unusual relationships with a boyfriend without marriage. The determination of Prema is thought to encourage other women about the freedom of their personal life not only in their country but all over the world.

Pooja Swamy in her article “Remapping Women’s identity in “*Seasons of Flight*” by Thapa” studied the novel from a postcolonial perspective. She finds the legacy of patriarchal tradition that is in existing social practices which Prema attempts to revert in her way. The role of women in a patriarchal society is considered

secondary. In other words, the position of women in conventional society is marginal. Likely, Prema as an immigrant from third world post-colonial nations struggles to find out her true self. Swamy states:

Prema is escaping from her native hill land from obscurity, nothingness in search of free individuality and fulfilment. The narrative reflects her (Prema) making sense of herself as her country Nepal is in search of narratives to make sense of it (self)... Prema had had many experiences about the marginalization of herself as being a woman. So when she describes herself in America in relation to her country as reiterating she is from Nepal, it makes her question the fact whatever she has really escaped. (495)

Prema wants to recreate her identity as an independent woman with her capability. As a Nepali born having Nepali dogma as a trace of Nepali culture, she narrates her marginal position as a woman in Nepal. Her reiteration of the situation of Nepal indicates how she reconstructs herself escaping the traces of limitation to be competent and confident.

Komal Prasad Phuyal examines Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* from the perspective of new historicism. As an ideological construct, the concept of power within an individual and the literary interpretation is reproduced and reconstructed. Phuyal relates "Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* (2010) ... literary observations picture the complexities of the time in a way that historical narratives fail to record in that literature moves deep down the socio-political reality to find the aspirations of the people of change or the impact of the change on their subjectivity" (Abstract). It reflects the deep-rooted historical perceptions and practices of society. Instead of the objective depiction of an individual character Prema who is presented with her subjectivity. She withholds her subjectivity as an ideological product, or constructs

with the movement of the time and cultural context. The so-called powerless and helpless are constructed as powerful with changing times and contexts.

Similar to *Seasons of Flight*, Adichie's novel also deals with the experience of Nigerian migrant characters portraying the lifetime activities in different situations in the home country, Nigeria, and destination country, America. Though they move to America seeking opportunity and making their dreams come true, they struggle a lot in America without forgetting their home country, Nigeria. While reviewing the selected novels, different researchers have analyzed the novel, *Americanah* from different perspectives such as narrative ethics, romance, marxism, deconstruction, and ecocriticism.

Nora Berning in the article "Narrative Ethics and Alterity in Adichie's Novel *Americanah*" has pointed out the issue of narrative ethics and alterity in Adichie's novel *Americanah*. The concern of this research is about emotive factors of the characters while telling the story or the events that happened with themselves. The experience of the emotional attachment with the activities of migrants narrating the story by themselves is based on what exactly they have emphasized ethical concern in the narrative. It differentiates the narratives of the characters whose stories are told by themselves and others. While they narrate their stories in the form of self-making and another making, the narrators deliberately imply themselves as to be others along with themselves. As Berning presents, "Adichie contributes to the emergence of a new kind of narrative ethics at the heart of which are the construction and dissemination of an ethical knowledge that revolves around norms and values related to such concepts as identity and alterity and individual and collective perceptions of self and other" (2). Ifemelu does have her own narrative of her life in different situations and conditions. She keeps on writing blogs highlighting American context (education,

love, and politics), her Nigerian lover, Obinze imagines her as other. This is the narrative depiction made by others for Ifemelu. This assumption is based on her blog which makes people that Ifemelu forgets her true self. Likewise, white people in America create different narratives on black people creating a stereotypical image which is a kind of alterity that is not ethical but the loss of human value in the name of the colour of their skin. However, Ifemelu, even being black, is able to write the story of the people including black and white who live in America, performing different roles and responsibilities. While writing such narratives of people in her blogs, Ifemelu includes the narratives of herself and the others.

Jennifer Leetsch in her article “Love, Limb-Loosener: Encounters in Chimamanda Adichie’s *Americanah*” also has analyzed from the perspective of romance through characters in Adichie’s novel. Ifemelu engages in a romantic love relationship in Nigeria and America. However, in America, her relationship becomes without feeling but for purpose. That relationship makes her feel different from her thought to smoothly lead her life to be romantic, and happy. However, her love relationship in America centers more on physical attachment than on mental relaxation. As Leetsch mentions, “the locus of the body is another contested point of contact in the web of love that is spun within the text of *Americanah*. How corporeality and love are intertwined is made abundantly clear when the text of *Americanah* dwells on the moments of “entanglement” between Ifemelu and Obinze” (7). Ifemelu’s relationship with Obinze is healthy and happy even without continuous physical attachment. In opposition to this, Ifemelu does not feel joy, safe, and comfortable in her relationship with a white American man. She compares her relationship in two different ways: one is a happy romantic relationship without bodily engagement, and another is involvement or utilization of body without the

presence of pleasant soul and mind. She has taken the former relationship as the source of a happy life and the latter as the sexual violation of her body.

Gaudi Delgado Falcon in her article “Intersectionality Perspective in Practice: A Reanalysis of *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie” from the perspective of Marxism. Within this study, Falcon has analyzed the status of the production and reproduction of social life including its class, gender, and race. In the social system, the powerful person is dominating the powerless. The social tradition and practices of the people being superior in terms of colour, economic, social, and educational status motivate to dominate the marginal group. Delgado Falcon concentrates:

Aisha's ignorance of Igbo culture, for instance, demonstrates my point. On the one hand, it shows the diversity within African countries. On the other hand, Aisha's references to “Africa” instead of the specific country she meant illustrates the failure of representing African as a single country in other narratives to the West... Along with the encounters at the hairdresser, there is another example where white people with a higher grade of culture and social position encounter a black person ... Adichie's fiction again highlights the significance of the representation of class and on how this affects social relations. (4-6)

The extract exposes that race, class, and gender are related to the means of oppression for those people who are living in that social system. The domination of people in the society is not limited to African society, but they are not recognized by western countries. In comparison with white people, black people are considered as lower because of their colour, African origin, or culture. This kind of discrimination against black people in America is pervasive because of the deep-rooted superiority complex of white people. This concept prevents black people from equal distribution of power,

a sense of independence, and happiness.

Isabella Villabova in the article “Deconstructing the ‘Single Story’: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*” analyzes the novel from the perspective of deconstruction in which each object has its relation with the other. However, any idea or action is neither completely true nor false. The depiction of the traditional role of black women is not as submissive as in the past. The binary opposition between male and female, black and white, rich and poor has been changed. Though the sense of perception and formulation is different, there are still hints of the previous concept in the present time. Ifemelu still realizes the concept of racism and white privilege in America while performing her assigned role or responsibility. However, the stereotypical image of black (woman) with the very lower status has been changed as she engages in a relationship with the white man and she is in the job. Villabova compares:

Ifemelu starts being black when she settles in America... Ifemelu considers herself inferior, the ‘other’, because of wealthy Americans who think of Africa only in terms of charities and who, by demonstrating a “kind of patronizing, well-meaning pity,” unconsciously and unintentionally manifest attitudes of superiority and dominance. Similarly, the heroine’s relationship with Curt, a white American man who helps her quickly obtain a job and consequently start her green card process, reflects American white privilege and racism. Since white people are astonished to see Ifemelu engaged with a rich white man, she becomes convinced that racism matters. (91)

The concept of black stereotypes has been continued for a long period in America. There is still a trace of superiority and inferiority, self and other, black and white. Similarly, the long history of black being marginalized and dominated does not last

long as it was previously. Ifemelu feels confident to identify herself as a black who is writing blogs with reasonable insights for both black and white readers. The generation of the sense of superiority mindset of white people over black in America does not limit as in the past. Ifemelu engages in a relationship with an American man, Curt, and in return, she finds a job with his help along with means of permanent settlement in America. Her relationship with white men in America does not last long. This is for a certain purpose and when it becomes fulfilled that ends at that point. In other words, the relationship is temporary.

Sibongile Khumalo in her research “Under the Hibiscus: An eco-critical reading of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s postcolonial novels” from the perspective of ecocriticism which intends to look at nature and protect surroundings where one is living. Through the protagonist of the novel, *Americanah*, Adichie aims to raise environmental awareness among people. Though people are well equipped with technology in the twenty-first century, there is a great concern of eco-critical scientists for the continuation of the smooth flow of nature. They warn people if there is the overconsumption of the environment only to fulfill human greed, the mother earth, and its constant phenomenon is at an irreversible state to be back to the previous situation. Khumalo represents:

Adichie’s social, digital ethnographer character, Ifemelu ... interrogating global collective ecological growth which lie at the core of eco-critical interventionist theories... of growth and future movement; one is an American preoccupation to move backward, re-enchant, and return to indigenous ways of living to save the earth, and another is an African preoccupation to move forward to a well-oiled industrialized machine where capital works smoothly. These observations present a stasis in the ecological flow, it reflects how, in

the real time outside of the text, in the way that realistic fiction allows, there is global disconnect in ecological futurity. (83)

The researcher excavates ecological questions concerning national power, its people, and their interests. In the name of national power and access to technology, people aim to fulfill their interests with high ambitions. However, the activities people conduct over nature that is directly or indirectly related to human lives and transform into reality. So, if people conduct activities concentrating on themselves and against nature, their future surroundings are also in opposition to their future wellbeing. The main focus is on protecting nature without going against its natural processes.

In this way, different researchers have studied the selected novels from the perspectives such as narrative, women empowerment, feminism, postcolonialism, new historicism, narrative ethics, romance, Marxism, deconstruction, ecocriticism, etc. But no one has studied from the perspective of transnationalism emphasizing the issues of cultural and behavioral differences leading to the state of dislocatedness of migrants, and their problem of cultural assimilation that pushes them into the state of nostalgia ultimately making them the victim of transnational alienation. So, this research fills this gap and the researcher thinks that this research becomes an innovative research work.

Organization of the Study

The research work is organized in the following ways:

Chapter I: Transnational Migrants in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's

Americanah

Chapter II: The Sense of Dislocatedness in Prema and Ifemelu

Chapter III: Prema and Ifemelu Facing Complexities in Cultural Assimilation

Chapter IV: Transnational Alienation in Prema and Ifemelu

Chapter II: The Sense of Dislocatedness in Prema and Ifemelu

The researcher tries to explore the sense of dislocatedness of migrant protagonists namely Prema and Ifemelu in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* in this chapter. It is caused by the variation in cultures and practices that migrants strive to follow in the host country. However, these practices in the new environment become difficult for migrants. Their inability to adjust to the settings of the host country inclines them to a sense of displacement.

The sense of dislocatedness in migrant characters is the key issue in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah*. Migrant characters face a new environment, culture, language, and practices while they live in the host country after leaving the country of origin. Though they try to be happy and make their lives productive in the host country with the desired achievement, they are unable to adopt a new culture and its practices and always feel missing their own culture of their home country. This situation of their inability to follow the culture of the host country and the impossibility of the implication of culture of the home country lead them at the point of dislocation. In other words, they are the subject of being nowhere.

Prema, the protagonist of Thapa's *Seasons of the Flight*, moves to the United States of America for better job opportunities, lifestyle, and life security leaving her mother country, Nepal which was in devastating condition because of the civil war of 2063 BS. While reaching the host country, Prema as a migrant character makes efforts to adjust to the culture and adopt social practices of the host country along with the internalization of cultural values of the home country. In a similar way, the protagonist (Ifemelu) of Adichie's *Americanah* also prefers America for her career development with high hope for her better future with quality education, attractive job, and fulfillment of her desire in the appropriate way. However, those migrant

characters feel and experience the situation which is different from their imagination of being in America. Their high hope for the fulfillment of their desires or needs with happiness inclines to the difficult situation.

As migrant characters of the selected novels feel different situations beyond their expectations in the host country, the researcher represents the real experience of migrant characters with reference to the evidence included in the primary text.

Similarly, Thapa in *Seasons of Flight* portrays, “Prema had wanted to reinvent herself in America, but — What is there to be human? The body which desires, persistent and unreasonable; thoughts and temperaments” (13). Prema has to face uncomfortable life in America. The situation there becomes opposite to her expectation at the time of leaving for America from Nepal. Her imagination to create her identity as a happy, satisfied and successful person by grasping the opportunity in her dream country turns into confusion and questions. In other words, she does not find the sense of humanity in the new place which makes it uncomfortable for her living. In this context, Pnina Werbner, the Professor of urban anthropology and migrant researcher including the author of the article “Migration and Transnational Studies: Between Simultaneity and Rupture” analyzes the different situations of migrants in the host country. She presents, “[o]verseas migration sets in motion a process of dislocation along with the encounter with new social environments and landscapes” (106). Migrant people who migrate to the new land have to adopt new culture and identity along with the cultural practices of their homeland. Their expectations do not match properly in the new country where they are living as migrants. As they have the internalization of cultural practices of their homeland, they imagine having similar practices with people in the host country. However, they have to address the new environment with different socio-cultural practices that become difficult for them and have a sense of loss

without any proper space and recognition. At the same point, Ifemelu, the protagonist of *Americanah* tackles a new environment in America and feels herself dislocated. As she reveals, “But I’m going back home to Nigeria,” Ifemelu added, suddenly remorseful. “I’m going next week.” “To see the family” (16). Ifemelu who arrives in America with big dreams for her better life and bright future has faced a difficult situation that is different from her imagination. Her expectation limits itself only in the imagination after she leaves the country of origin. Living in her dream country, she plans to move to Nigeria to see her family or close ones. She does not think anyone has there to love her in America. That is the reason that she wants to go to her home country. Likewise, Hein de Haas as a Professor of Sociology and contributed a lot to migration with his extraordinary work with his team members in the book, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, mentions:

...what initially was experienced as the host country, often becomes the new home country over time, and many migrants can feel at home in different places at the same time. The home-host terminology can therefore come down to a top-down imposition of identities on migrants without investigating their own changing intensions, experiences and feelings. Under certain circumstances, such framing can become part of discriminatory practices and racist discourses which frame migrants and their descendants as people whose ‘home’ is somewhere else and can therefore be deprived of human rights or deported. (28)

The host country becomes the new home for migrants, but that does not become a comfort zone as their home country. They have to live and adjust in the host country creating their own identity in different cultural settings even though they have

expectations of cultures, identities, behaviors, and surroundings of their homeland. .

While doing so, they feel like the outsider at the same place where they are living and expecting to have the scenario or the environment as of their home country. This situation leads migrants to feel displaced which is different from their expectations of the new place.

The reason for migration for migrant characters is to seek a better and more secure place and have more opportunities in the host country than their birth country. Additionally, migrants prefer new land to get rid of the danger of civil war, insecurity, and poverty in order to seek better education, job, and secure life. Prema in the *Seasons of Flight* is found in search of a secure place escaping the victimization, lack, and insecurity of war-scarred Nepal. Thapa in the novel portrays the Maoist rebel in Nepal, the life of people is full of suffocation in each moment as of Prema and her family:

Maoist rebels had come one day, recruiting one member from each family.

From Prema's family they had taken her sixteen-year-old sister Bijaya. Her father had feared a similar fate for Prema. Month after month, when she had telephoned home, her father had advised her not to visit. Years passed. She did not go back.

Now here she was...

'Where are you from?'

Why did Americans ask this when they were so unprepared for the reply? ...

'Nepal.' (14)

Prema is a Nepali migrant girl who is moving to America in order to escape Maoist rebel and its negative impact on her personal life and the family. Due to this, Prema's sister, Bijaya is disappeared from the family and her father is doubtful about the

similar effect on Prema as well. Therefore, he advises Prema to migrate to America and live her remaining life safely. However, Prema does not like the question of Americans unnecessarily about her country of origin which reminds her insecurity and the scary event that happened in her family as an impact of civil war in Nepal. In a similar way, Anna Triandafyllidou and Laura Bartolini in their article “Understanding Irregularity” claim the “inflows of migrants with uncertain status arriving from crisis and war countries who are less likely to return even if they can’t regularize their status” (24). One of the major reasons for migrant characters to leave the country is war, conflict, or poverty. It affects them for a long time that people are unable to forget the negative consequences of war which lead them to migrate to a secure place instead of living in the difficult situation in the country of origin. After migrating to the host country, the traumatic memory of the country at the time of crisis, war, or conflict haunts migrant people and they determine themselves not to return to their home country. Or rather, they try their best to live in the host country. Prema’s sister Bijaya is the real example of the victimization from such war in Nepal. She has been taken forcefully by Maoist rebels at that time. As it includes, “Bijaya had gone to fetch water that morning and hadn’t come back. Or she was keeping away. She had been quieter than usual over the past few days, upset, maybe, over her sister’s departure. It was difficult to know... Prema had never gone back” (42-43). Bijaya is the representative character among other youths in the village to join the rebel without being conscious of its impact. To escape disappearance and further torture in the family, Prema plans to leave the country of origin for America as the author also presents her condition “having wrested a middle –class life out of a childhood of poverty” (59). Prema’s childhood is not prosperous, but she has managed to live a life of the middle class. She struggles from her early childhood to

the grown-up girl that reflects in physiological and psychological activities and her surroundings. Her struggle to live a normal life, for which she is working, is on the one hand, and she has the serious threat of war on the other. Regarding this context, Marie Friedmann Marquardt in the article “Double Threat?” incorporates:

Patterns of migration emerge through complex interaction between economic, political, social, and cultural factors. While push/pull theories would lead to the hypothesis that the poorest nations are most likely to send migrants to wealthy nations, the data on global migrations reveals that, not the poorest nations, but the nations and communities undergoing development—that is, entering into global economic networks—are the most likely to send migrants.

(20)

Marquardt emphasizes that the socio-economic, and politico-cultural factors play a major role in migration. It is clear that the poor nations’ citizens move to the rich nations with the hope to get quality education, a better job, and an easy lifestyle. Poor nations do not have material resources, and opportunities, however, rich nations do have such resources and better opportunities but they lack human resources. So, this is the situation that works as the pull and push factor in terms of migration. Related to this point, Ifemelu in *Americanah* also determines herself to go to America leaving her birth nation Nigeria. Adichie includes:

THE STRIKE LASTED too long. Two weeks crawled past. Ifemelu was restless, antsy; everyday she listened to the news, hoping to hear that the strike was over... he bored and spiritless in Nsukka, she bored and spiritless in Lagos, and everything curdled in lethargy. Life had become a turgid and suspended film. Her mother asked if she wanted to join the sewing class at church, to keep her occupied, and her father said that this, the unending

university strike, was why young people became armed robbers. The strike was nationwide, and all her friends were home, even Kayode was home, back on holiday from his American university. (91-92)

The Nigerian context and the real-life situation of Nigerian people is depicted through the character, Ifemelu in the novel. As the nation has its political instability, insecurity, and lack of opportunity for its people, Ifemelu is not satisfied with the system like other people of the nation. That is why, Ifemelu leaves her home country Nigeria for getting a better education, job, and other different opportunities in the host country. What she lacks in her country of origin is that she expects fulfillment only from the migrated country. Supporting this situation of migrants in the cross-national border, the researcher of multiculturalism and international migration, Ewa Morawska in “Historical-Structural Models of International Migration” states that the “international migration holds that the historical process ... of the world into the major capitalist economies dislocates millions of people in these poor regions from their traditional way of life and makes them prone to internal (rural to urban), as well as cross-border, migration in search of livelihoods” (62). The people from the poor country move to the developed country with the hope of better livelihood that they lack in the country of origin. It is not a new idea about the migrants’ flow in the host country, but it has the trend of migration from the poor country to the rich country. Despite searching for better opportunities and migrating to the developed country, people become dislocated because of capitalists’ design to suppress poor people who are struggling for better economic conditions.

Though migrant people choose the host country for fulfilling their needs or expectations, their identity in the new place is not properly defined about what they really are. In other words, they live in the situation without having a proper identity.

Prema in *Seasons of Flight* is not identified properly and she does not feel free herself to tell her own identity properly. Thapa writes, “‘Where are you from?’ she demanded.

Prema hesitated, then said, ‘I am from India’ (124). Prema does not identify herself as Nepali. She is not confident and feels secure with her original identity and the root. She does not have an American identity while living there and also does not have her national identity as she is from Nepal. Or rather, she pretends to be an Indian which is not her identity. Concerning this issue, Anne Heith in the article, “The African Diaspora, Migration and Writing: Johannes Anyuru’s *En civilization utanbatar*” relates:

As a consequence of migration, national identities have been de-naturalised and boundaries of national belonging are becoming unsettled through representations shaped by multidirectional patterns and cross-appropriation of elements from diverse cultural traditions. New modes of perceiving imagined communities and home are emerging. ‘Migration throws objects, identities and ideas into flux’. (141)

The identity of the migrants after crossing the national border and reaching the host country becomes unnatural. Identity has an impact on different things. The perception of predetermined ideas and different modes of thinking, behavior, and the realities in the new land makes them in a state of flux or dilemma. It is because of different behaviors and activities of people in the host country that is different from their experience of the country of origin. At this point, they are unknown in the new context but they try to adjust in the host country. The main character of *Americanah* is struggling to maintain her identity while living in the host country. As mentioned in the novel:

Aisha finished with her customer and asked what colour Ifemelu wanted for her hair attachments.

“Colour four.”

“Not good colour,” Aisha said promptly.

“That’s what I use.”

“It look dirty. You don’t want colour one?” ... “It’s not hard to comb if you moisturize it properly,” she said, slipping into the coaxing tone of the proselytizer that she used whenever she was trying to convince other black women about the merits of wearing their hair natural. (12)

Ifemelu has gone to the hair salon and choose the color to dye her hair in order to fit in the American context. She wants to have colour four despite Aisha preferring color one which is too black. Ifemelu’s hair colour signifies her African identity that she feels being an outsider while her living in the American environment, so she goes to a hair braider, Aisha, to change her hair colour and make it straight. The purpose of changing her hair is to fit and live her life better in America. However, she still loves her natural hair and conveys the message to other black women about their natural hair which has their Nigerian identity. The researcher, Helen Lee supports this state of the fluid identity of migrant characters that “transnationalism impacts on people’s lives and identities in the host countries” (26). Lee focuses that the identity of migrants is not constant in the host country. Their identity is changing with new context, culture, language, and economic condition along with the culture of the home country. After crossing the national territory as migrants, they are concerned with multiple networks of people, things, and practices. It is directly related to their lives.

The migrant characters feel uncomfortable in the host country because of poor economic conditions. It becomes the major cause of their suffering. Prema in the

novel goes through a difficult time after migrating to the host country. She has to search for work for her living. Finding a job, on the one hand, is very difficult for her. On the other, she does not find the job of her interest. As the author depicts, “Neeru was right. It was not easy to survive in America. From the next day on, Prema began to hunt the neighbourhood for ‘Employment’ and Opening signs... Prema spent the afternoon mopping the floor as a dormouse scurried from aisle to aisle, fleeing for its life” (123). Prema becomes able to find a lower-level job as a secondary citizen coming from a third-world country. She finds the job of mopping the floor with the help of her friends. Rather than the dream job, Prema chooses any type of job for the money she needs for her survival.

As the economic condition is the major factor for migrants in the host country, they try to maintain their living and adjust to the new environment. For this purpose, they seek the possibility of jobs through available networks. Steve Tupai Francis in the article “The View from ‘Home’ emphasizes the difficult situation of migrants in the host country occurs because of “the processes (cultural, social, economic, political) of exchange that occur between those living in the homeland and those in the place of migration; and the new forms of cultural, social and economic interaction” (qtd. in Hannerz 1992: 203). Migrants who reach the host country are mainly concerned with the economic condition out of other cultural, social, and political factors. To deal with this situation for the migrants in the new land becomes very difficult in comparison to the country of their origin. Ifemelu in the novel, *Americanah* also has gone through the difficult situation of having economic problems in the host country. As the author of the text portrays the struggle of the protagonist to find out the job for her survival, “Ifemelu read the advertisement and thought, again, of calling, but she didn’t, because she was hoping that the last

interview she went for, a waitress position in a little restaurant that didn't pay a salary, only tips, would come through. They had said they would call her by the end of the day if she got the job; she waited until very late but they did not call" (151). As Ifemelu is in search of a job, it is not easier for her. Without a job for a migrant in a new land with a new environment, the single moment for Ifemelu becomes a hard time. To come out of this situation, she is looking for even an ill-paid job. She wakes up every day worrying about the money she needs for purchasing books and managing other expenses. She is unable to buy all the textbooks she needs because of the expenses she has to pay for the rent. So, she borrows textbooks during class and makes notes frequently which makes her confused while reading them later. As mentions:

Samantha, a thin woman who avoided the sun, often saying "I burn easily," would, from time to time, let her take a textbook home... Still, Ifemelu never kept the books for more than a day, and sometimes refused to take them home. It stung her, to have to beg. Sometimes after classes, she would sit on a bench in the quad and watch the students waking past the large grey sculpture in the middle; they all seemed to have their lives in the shape that they wanted, they could have jobs if they wanted to have jobs, and above them, small flags fluttered serenely from lampposts. (135)

Samantha is a new friend of Ifemelu from whom she borrows materials for reading. Other students who are studying together with Ifemelu do not seem to be suffering from job or economic problems. Ifemelu thinks that if they want the job, they find it easily. However, Ifemelu who is facing an economic problem is unable to find out a job though she shows her interest even in an ill-paid job. She is unable to find out a job easily. The situation is different to find out job and manage the living properly for

the migrants. As it remarks, “[m]igration raises high hopes and deep fears: hopes for the migrants themselves, for whom migration often embodies the promise of a better future. At the same time, migration can be a dangerous undertaking... a migrant fails to find a job...” (Haas et al. 1). The migrant people move to the host country with high hopes for a better life, but at the same time, they have fears in the new place. It creates a question for their comfortable living without any job and support system. Leaving the homeland by choosing a dreamland for a better future turns into hardships. Though they want to have a job for their easy adjustment in the host country, they are unable to find a job which further causes the suffering of migrants.

In a similar way, migrant characters in the host country are living in a relationship other than their interest and happiness; this relationship exists in the form of an alternative way for their living in the new land. Without a job and any other support, they choose to be in a relationship with the men in the host country just to manage their living. Prema in the *Seasons of Flight* is in a relationship with the man in America not for the internal happiness or the dedication, but with a certain purpose that is to adjust economically. As Thapa states, “Prema did love Luis: that tangle of sweet, mute emotions... He wanted her to stay. The relationship was a trap. It confused her. Love confused her. Or Luis confused her. He tempted her to think: maybe there was no problem. Or the problem lay with her, with her being—abnormal. Jagged, unmade” (200-202). This is the relationship without joy for the migrant character, Prema. She becomes a tool for the man who wants to continue the relationship in his own way. It makes Prema confused and the relationship is not a matter of joy for her. It is beyond her desires and expectations. However, the relationship with a man in America becomes a compulsion for Prema who does not have a job or regular source of income generation. Jorge Capetillo-Ponce, and Philip

Kretsedemas in the article “The Problem of Migrant Marginality” assert that the “migration process forces the emigrant to renegotiate his or her relationship to the inherited culture and homeland. Meanwhile, the migrant’s arrival leads the host society to redefine its own cultural, economic and geopolitical borders” (19). The relationship is a negotiation for immigrants in the host country. Though they are concerned with different culture, economic, and environmental factors of the homeland, they need to adjust to the situation that occurs in the host country. Despite the existing situation, they follow the negotiation of the relationship in order to adjust to the new environment. Accordingly, Ifemelu in *Americanah* follows a similar technique for the adjustment in America. Adichie includes, “[w]hat would happen with the tennis coach? He had said “massage”, but his manner, his tone, had dripped suggestion. Perhaps he was one of those white men she had read about, with strange tastes, who wanted women to drag a feather over their back or urinate on them... “I can’t have sex,” she said” (153). As an unemployed immigrant in the US, Ifemelu is thinking of managing her personal situation. So, she is in a relationship with the Tennis coach, the US man, who wants a massage from her. She is facing a problem even paying rent for which she takes money from that man being in a relationship with him. However, this relationship is based on the situation of the migrant character who has to manage her daily expenses. In other words, this relationship is beyond her interest and happiness.

Migrant characters have their personal motifs or compulsive situation for living in relationship with people in the host country despite that they do not feel affectionate in this relationship. That relationship for them is rather an alternative way of surviving in the host country. They miss the relationship of their loved ones in the country of origin, but they live in the relationship as an instrument of a man in the

host country. Anna Xymena Wieczorek in “Introduction: How We Think of Migration and Mobility” adds, “[m]igrants” are often conceived of as being sedentary after initial migration. Migration, it seems, requires leaving behind beloved people and places and building a new life in a foreign place... instrumentalized and politicized whenever the public discourse focuses on migrants” (15). The migrants, who prefer the host country in comparison to their home country for their better life, are become the subject of domination. The relationship of migrants in the host country becomes just like a tool that is used to play and entertain others. In other words, the relationship is priceless for migrants despite their involvement and values for native people. In a similar context, Prema does not entertain her relationship with an American man in the host country. Living in a flat with Luis in America, Prema is not satisfied where she is now. The unconscious mind of Prema reflects the scenario of Nepal in relation to her mother. Indicating her mother’s devotion to her father, she portrays love, religious aspirations, and childbirth. Thapa projects:

Prema did not feel this love. Instead, she recalled her mother’s bedroom shrine, crowded with the gods: Krishna, Parvati, Shiva, Laksmi, the avatar of Bishnu in a fossil. Had her mother felt the divine love that this Mata was whispering about? Had it made her feel safe? Even as her love for Prema’s father made her lose her life?... What followed dating, having a relationship, having a committed relationship, and moving in together? Marriage.

Childbirth... Some people would call it Krishna love. (180)

Prema recalls her memory of her parents in Nepal. She compares the relationship and overall happening with the parents in her homeland. The relationship is different in America. The relationship in Nepal is deeply rooted in religious aspiration emphasizing the name of god and goddess. It dedicates her parents to make their

relationship alive no matter the mother loses her life as well; marriage and childbirth are the major concerns for Prema's parents in order to establish family life. The protagonist of *Americanh*, Ifemelu also realizes the differences in the relationship she involves in the home and the host country. Adichie writes:

She lay rigid on her bed. She could not sleep, she could not distract herself. She began to think about killing the tennis coach. She would hit him on the head over and over with an axe. She would plunge a knife into his muscled chest... Obinze called many times but she did not pick up her phone. She deleted his voice messages unheard and his e-mails unread, and she felt herself sinking, sinking quickly, and unable to pull herself up. (155)

Ifemelu overviews her relationship in America with the tennis coach and with Obinze in Nigeria. Her relationship in the host country is not affectionate rather it is suppressive. On the other, her relationship with Obinze in the home country is a kind of faithful relationship for which she internalizes and becomes unable to make her mind free out of any concerns with him. In other words, she hates herself and the man for being in a relationship in the host country while she living as a migrant; she does not feel joy and is aspirated with her relationship in America over Nigeria.

Migrants raise big questions about their belonging in the host country. Though they live in the host country, they always visit their homeland where they find their personal self and belonging. It adds, "Migrant backgrounds cultivate a sense of self and belonging" (Moran 6). Migrants' personal self and belonging remain in their country of origin even living in the host country. At the same point, Prema comments, "Steve and Camilla are your friends. They are part of your world, not my world.'... 'I do not have a world!' Prema cried. 'I left the world I had, and do not belong in the one I am in now—your world. I do not have any place to take you, Luis. I do not have

a place in the world” (212). Prema does not feel host country is her world. As she is in a relationship with Luis, neither does she feel comfortable with her American boyfriend nor other Americans. The author repeats “[s]he was left to the world” (216). Even though she is living in America, she does not feel that place and people are a part of her world. She does not find any space to make herself comfortable in America. Ifemelu in *Americanah* also feels people, place, and many other things that are associated with her home country, Nigeria. She does not feel comfortable in the host country; she always remembers her home country, Nigeria as the best place to remember and live. Adichie mentions:

That first summer was Ifemelu’s summer of waiting; the real America, she felt, was just around the next corner she would turn. Even the days, sliding one into the other, languorous and limpid, the sun lingering until very late, seemed to be waiting. There was a stripped down quality to her life, a kindling starkness, without parents and friends and home, the familiar landmarks that made her who she was. (111)

While living in America, Ifemelu is in search of someone or something from Nigeria where she finds her belonging. Her expectation to move to America and live a quality life becomes unfulfilled. She finds her personal self and belonging in her homeland; the life she is living in the host country makes her think of her origin and her people in Nigeria. She realizes that she does not have her parents and closer relatives who care and love her in America. It makes her return to the home and be with loved ones only through memory.

Migrant people feel insecure while living in the host country; their dreams at the time of leaving their homeland for the host country vanish into nothing. They do not feel cozy in the new environment. New places, unfamiliar people, and different

systems or cultural practices of the host country remind migrants everything about the homeland. Godfried Engbersen indicates, “[m]igrants do not settle permanently, but move back and forth from their origin country to receiving countries (circular migration), operate in in-between situations that are neither wholly temporary nor wholly permanent” (66). As they come to the host country with high hopes, they physically and mentally try to remain sometimes in the host country and they sometimes want to move to the home country. The fluctuating state of mind of migrants keeps them in dilemma; it makes them neither the people of their home country nor the host country. At this point, Prema feels, “[h]aving made a decision to live in one place, to always experience pangs of doubt whether the other place, or some other place altogether, wasn’t the one to live in. While doing one thing, to regret not having done the other. That nagging uncertainty—never knowing, never knowing for sure, or at all—remained with her” (234). Prema’s choice to live in America turns into feelings of uncertainty that make her insecure in that place. She migrates to America with high hopes to make her life better, but after coming to the host country, she always realizes her home country. Living in America is her dream of making a bright future; remembering everything related to her home country is the question of the security of the migrant in the migrated country. That is why, she always thinks about her birth country. In other words, she regrets being in the host country leaving her own birth country.

Ifemelu in *Americanah* has experienced a similar insecure situation in the host in comparison to the home country. Adichie presents, “I have big plans for it. I’d like to travel through Nigeria and post dispatches from each state, with pictures and human stories, but I have to do things slowly first, establish it, make some money from advertising” (436). Ifemelu who is living in the United States of America and

plans to go and establish herself in Nigeria that is limited on mere expectation. Her living in the host country is not easy and satisfactory, and her imagination to go to her homeland, contribute there, convey different stories about people and places, and earn money also is challenging. In other words, she is neither enjoying life in America nor does she plan to live in Nigeria happily. Her intention to exhibit pictures and human stories about Nigeria limits her imagination despite fulfilling it.

In this way, migrants who have chosen the host country for their better life are not able to adjust properly due to cultural variations. Being familiar with the behavioral and cultural practices of the home country, migrants find differences in existing practices of the new environment in the host country. There is a huge gap in their expectation, and experience regarding cultures and practices between home and host country. They do not feel stable to live happily in the host country, so they realize the environment of the home country and think of being comfortable in their roots. Migrants' sense of displacement is projected in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* and Adichie's *Americanah* through their unfulfilled expectations, insecure status, improper identity, the struggle for survival, and questions of belonging in the host country. These situations make them feel to return and live their lives more comfortably than in the host country.

Chapter III: Prema and Ifemelu Facing Complexities in Cultural Assimilation

The researcher in this chapter highlights the complexities that the migrant characters of *Seasons of Flight* and *Americanah* face while trying to assimilate into the host country. It happens when the migrants try to adopt various cultural practices in the host country in association with their own cultural perception of the homeland. The beliefs, attitudes, language, norms, or behavioral patterns in the migrated land are not familiar and comfortable to follow for migrants in comparison to the homeland. Due to these variations, they have problems integrating their thoughts, perceptions, or behaviours in the host country.

The migrants coming from different parts of the world choose America as their dream country for the fulfillment of their desire or expectation. While reaching the host country, those migrants have to concern themselves with the different cultures and practices. They attempt to associate their cultural and social practices of the home country in the host country for what Christina Boswell and Gianni D'Amato edit it as the representation of "their participation in transnational social relations" (109). However, it does not only indicate their involvement in new cultural practices of the host country, but they also prefer their culture and practices of the homeland. In this regard, Peggy Levitt and B. Nadya Jaworsky call migration itself a process that "has never been a one-way process of assimilation into a melting pot or a multicultural salad bowl but one in which migrants, to varying degrees, are simultaneously embedded in the multiple sites and layers of the transnational social fields in which they live" (130). Migration has the trend of multicultural practices. The migrants have their cultural roots, internalizations, and practices. Having national cultural spirits, they move to cross-national territory in search of a better life from all aspects such as education, job, and other opportunities. While living in the host

country, they have to adopt a new culture. Regarding this, they face difficulty with an adaptation of new culture, language, norms, and practices in the new environment.

The migrant characters do not only follow their deep-rooted cultures of the homeland but also adopt the cultures of the host country. Leaving their homeland does not mean they forget their deep-rooted cultures and identity. Additionally, they also learn new cultures along with forming new identities despite some difficulties in the new land where they are migrated. In this process, they form a bonding between the home country and the host country. Anna Gühlich reinforces, “transnational spaces, created by migrants through their biographical experiences and kept alive by maintaining transnational social, cultural and economic links. These more or less intense links had a range of meanings for migrants, which changed over time” (329). The migrant characters create a kind of link between the country of origin and the host country through their interpersonal relationship, cultural exchanges, and practices. Mainly, that connection depends on the socio-economic, cultural practices of migrants in the cross-national borders. In a similar way, these migrant characters make continuous efforts on the association of different cultures of nations though it becomes difficult for them. In this context, Dashmir Vaqari in his thesis entitled “Transnationalism and Migration: the concept of home in post-communist Albanian diasporas” concentrates that “migration has never been a process of assimilation, but rather migrants simultaneously create and maintain a series of links with the country of origin as well as becoming incorporated into the countries where they settle, albeit to varying degrees” (94). Migrant characters make their continuous efforts to follow the cultures of the host country along with their original cultures. However, the migration itself has nothing to do with the assimilation of migrants, but they share ideas or information related to their cultures and the identity of the homeland in the

new place where they are migrated. Additionally, they also learn the cultures and practices of the host country and reform their new identity.

Prema, the protagonist of *Seasons of Flight*, tries to represent herself belonging to a similar culture as of the man she meets in the United States of America. So, she lies about her origin as an Indian to show the similarities with the guardsman at the bank building. Her utterance with the unreal ground leads her to a confusing situation. As Thapa expresses the statement of the protagonist, “‘I am from India,’ because Americans had at least heard of India. ... lying sometimes land her in trouble. Once, downtown by the skyscrapers, she got talking to a security guard of a bank building, and when she said she was Indian he said, ‘Me too,’ and asked, ‘Which tribe?’ Unable to explain herself, she retracted: ‘I am from the state of Indiana, actually’” (12). The intention of Prema is to be similar to the person with whom she is communicating in a situation that turns into difficulties. She becomes clueless with her own words lying as an Indian origin to the further quires of a guardsman. Instead of the comfortable situation in the US by telling her origin, she has to turn into the bitter reality of her falsehood with her pretention to be Indian. Guhlich further adds to “the concept of translocational positionality, which enables one to capture multiple and changing positioning of migrants and their interplay” (119). The migrants make interrelationships with one culture to another culture along with their movement from the home country to the host country. The migrants’ position is changing in the host country according to the time and situation. The migrants have multiple connections with people, cultures, and practices of the different places. In this context, migrant people have multiple ties between the home country and host country regarding different cultures and practices.

The major character, Ifemelu, of *Americanah*, is also trying to associate

herself with the American context. Though she loves her own root Nigerian identity, she follows American practices. It is because she wants to be comfortable having an American identity. As she shares, “[m]y full and cool hair would work if I were interviewing to be a backup singer in a jazz band, but I need to look professional for this interview, and professional means straight is best but if it’s going to be curly then it has to be the white kind of curly, loose curls or, at worst, spiral curls but never kinky” (204). Ifemelu wants to make her hair straight before facing her job interview. If she goes there with her natural hair identifying her African origin, she simulates the possibility of racial stereotyping upon her. Job is the primary concern for her to live in America. Even though she still loves her natural hair, she wants to change her hair into American style. It is because the hair that looks like the hair of native people helps her to depict her lifestyle as an American.

Though migrant characters try to assimilate themselves into the host country along with their own socio-cultural norms and practices of the homeland, it becomes difficult for them to live comfortably in the new environment. It is because of different cultural contexts such as language, religion, economic, relationship, identity, social norms, and practices. They attempt to change themselves, to mingle into the existing situation of the host country by making linkage with the homeland. However, migrants and their efforts of assimilation into the host country turn themselves into feelings of others or outsiders.

The migrant characters want to live happily and comfortably in the host country developing a sound relationship. However, the relationship in the host country is different from the relationship they developed in the country of origin. Prema in *Seasons of Flight* feels her close attachment with her Nepali boyfriend, Rajan when she is in her home country. That relationship reflects the “years later,

Prema could not be sure whether what she and Rajan had had was what Americans would call a relationship. There was an attachment, she knew. She would have liked to keep that” (54-55). Prema’s attachment with Rajan is still memorable and comfortable for her. It is because of her close attachment to him. In this relation, they have similar thinking and understandings, and it is free from individual interest. In contrary to this, the American relationship is not comfortable for Prema. The relation for Americans is different in thinking and behavior as Thapa portrays:

His notion of Nepal was... touristy. Americans did not know where she was from. There was not enough commonality to base a friendship on. In anything other than friendship, Prema was not interested: in dating, or in having an American relationship. She had already had American Sex once, and had found it wanting in love. As for love: it was enough to have had an attachment to one person, and to have left him. (51)

Prema finds the relationship with her American boyfriend, Luis is just like a stranger. Luis does not know the socio-cultural perception of Nepal where Prema is closely attached. There is no joy, trust, and comfort in the relationship with them in America. It is different from her relationship with Rajan in Nepal. She finds the different definitions of love between the foreigner and the person in the country of origin. Similarly, Ifemelu in *Americanah* is not happy with her present relationship with the man in America named Blaine and often misses her Nigerian man, Obinze who is getting married soon to another lady in Nigeria. Adichie presents:

It was Ranyinudo who had told her, some years ago, that Obinze was getting married... Ifemelu feigned indifference to this news. She had cut off contact with Obinze, after all, and so much time had passed, and she was newly in a relationship with Blaine, and happily easing herself into a shared life. But after

she hung up, she thought endlessly of Obinze. Imagining him at his wedding left her with a feeling like sorrow, a faded sorrow. (14)

Ifemelu becomes shocked when she listens to the news that her Nigerian boyfriend, Obinze gets married. Her close attachment with him becomes very difficult to come out of that memory. She tries to make a disconnection with him and involves in the relationship with the man, Blaine in America to come out of the haunting memory regarding Africa and Obinze (her belonging nation and person). However, her relationship with Blaine is not the desire of her heart that does not create happiness and satisfaction. In other words, she is living in a relationship with Blaine that makes her contended within herself and remembering Obinze, her Nigerian man, and imagines his marriage.

The migrants desire to create their unique identity in the host country, but their desire does not match with the actual lives that they experience in the new environment. Garrett Wallace Brown relates that migrants' "identity formation can be purposely set in opposition to more nationalist or cultural appeals" (71). Those people who leave their country of origin have similar expectations in the host country about their identity and the cultures. However, their identity formation in the host country is set differently than the native people. They do not feel like their own nationalism and socio-cultural practices are also different from their homeland. In this context, Ifemelu in *Americanah* lives in a relationship with an American man, Blaine, and informs her parents about this relationship. Being in this relationship, she claims that she is moving to different places in America to create her American identity. As Adichie writes:

She told her parents about Blaine, that she was leaving Baltimore and moving to New Heaven to live with him. She could have lied, invented a new job, or

simply said she wanted to move. “His name is Blaine,” she said. “He’s an American.” ... to whom she was not married, was something she could do only because she lived in America. Rules had shifted, fallen into the cracks of distance and foreignness. (314)

Ifemelu is in a relationship with Blaine not for getting married but to settle down her life only for adjusting at the time in America. It indicates that this is the message about the American identity she shares with her parents who are in Nigeria. The identity of Ifemelu in America and her relationship with Blaine without marriage is not accepted appropriately in the Nigerian context. Though the migrant emphasizes creating a new identity in a new land where they are migrated, their identity is different than the identity of the native people of the host country. The American identity of Ifemelu in living together is not her desire but she does this to manage her living in the host country. In other words, this type of relationship is culturally unacceptable in Nigeria. Likewise, the migrants entering the cross-national border, do not only limit themselves in national identity but also have an association with cross-national territory what Ayona Datta relates the “cultural processes of transnational identity formations in and across different spaces” (88). Migrant people cross their national border having their own inherent identity and cultural practices. Migrants through the process of migration create multiple connections with people and nations. They also attempt to follow the cultures of the host country and create their identity in the cross-national territory in the process of assimilation with different spaces, people, and systems. At this point, Thapa in *Seasons of Flight* specifies the situation of migrants:

Prema celebrated her first Thanksgiving that year. Luis’s mother and stepfather Ron invited them to their home in San Diego... She hugged Prema:

‘How wonderful to meet you at last. Welcome. Come on in.’ Then she joined her palms together and bowed to Prema: ‘Nah-mass-tay. I salute the god within you.’

Prema returned an awkward, off-protocol namaste: the younger person was supposed to greet the elder first, not the other way around. (143-44)

Prema involves in the American celebration of Thanksgiving with her American boyfriend, Luis, and his family members. They also greet her following the Nepali way of greeting. However, she feels awkward while returning Namaste to the senior while they greet Prema first though junior people greet to senior first in the Nepali context. Both of these sides are just managing cultural identity in the communal spheres but it becomes the question of internalization of its essence. Peter Kivisto clarifies, “transnational migrants forge their sense of identity and their community, not out of a loss or mere replication, but as something that is at once new and familiar—a bricolage constructed of cultural elements from both the homeland and the receiving nation” (568). Migrants portray their identity by copying the cultures and practices of the host country. This way of following other cultural practices does not become natural and easier. To some extent, the migrants fail to copy without any internal ideas or perceptions. Jacob Vigdor relates that the “new immigrants are failing to integrate into the native culture” (286) because of the lack of internalization of culture and its practices in the host country. They always want to be and entertain their own culture. To understand new cultures and their practices, migrants need minimum time to spend in the host country and try to associate themselves in the new environment. However, it is a difficult task for migrants that they take a longer period to be familiar with the cultural practices of the host country.

The migration process is caused due to the socio-politico-economic issues of

the nation and its people who migrate to the host country leaving their own birth country. Those migrants try to associate themselves with any of those issues in the host country. David Bate in the article “The Figure of Migration” relates, “[m]igration is one of the most critical social, political, and economic issues in culture today, central to all our lives and cultures. Indeed, the “management” of migration is central to the politics of every nation-state” (29). The migrant people face different social, political, and economic issues which are directly associated with cultural practices. These issues have direct effects in every nation including the nation which sends and receives migrants. The major concerns of migration, in this regard, are the existing issues of the nation.

Ifemelu is the representative migrant character who faces socio-economic problems in the host country and follows the available options for finding out a job. Due to the difficulty in finding a job and her living adjustment, her desire or motivation is faded. Adichie mentions, “Ifemelu shook her head. She felt weak, for not having a passion, not being sure what she wanted to do. Her interests were vague and varied, magazine publishing, fashion, politics, television; none of them had a firm shape. She attended the school career fair, where students wore awkward suits and serious expressions, and tried to look like adults worthy of real jobs” (202). Ifemelu suffers in the host country because of her poor economic status, uncomfortable social adjustment, and the political scenario which is changing frequently and sets a statement for migrants. At the same time, she attends school career fairs for meeting with prospective employers who are seeking potential candidates for the job. The situation of migrants in the host country as Faist reflects the “expression in movements of people seeking a better life or fleeing unsustainable social, political, economic, and ecological conditions. It is transnationalized not only because migrants

and their significant others entertain ties across the borders of national states” (11). Migrant people move to the transnational border leaving the homeland for seeking a better life and other opportunities. This flow of migration is in the process of expansion because of the social, political, and ecological factors of different poor nations. This is the reason that migrants create multiple connections between and among nations and people through migration. It is because of migrants’ hope of better opportunities or the lifestyle in the host country. However, they are not able to change their situation accordingly. Wiczorek reconnects the situation of those migrants that it “deals with various kinds of border-crossing activities... dispersed from their homelands” (269). The migrants intend to change their social, economic, political, and ecological factors in the host country. They want to change their situation, lifestyle, and dreams into reality. Despite fulfilling their needs or desires in the host country, they also are lacking affection and familiarity with people or cultural practices of the origin country. Their expectation to regain it is not possible for migrants after leaving their home country and struggling to adjust to the new cultural context of the host country.

In a similar way, Prema as a Nepali migrant who moves to America has the expectation of better life and other opportunities, but she does not come out of existing problems. There are not many changes in her life and unable to realize the host country as her own country. Thapa depicts, “Prema began to feel out of place where she was. Living in a flat on a toy street. Working as homecare attendant. Ensnared snugly in Luis’s life, his very—American—life. She hadn’t actually reinvented herself, had she? She had just drifted along a zigzag trail, as always... This was not really her place” (174). Prema does not find her situation with positive changes after she begins to live in the host country. The life she is living in America

now is not prosperous life. Working as a caregiver in Esther's home, and engaging with Luis, she manages to live in a flat on a toy street. It does not make her satisfied and happy rather she becomes indeterminate with the situation and her work in the host country.

Social practices for migrant people also are different in America. Their social status is different from the social status of native people in the host country. As they are familiar with each and every activity in the home country, social practice in the host country becomes new for migrants. Raj S. Bhopal in his book *Migration, Ethnicity, Race, and Health in Multicultural Societies* states, “[m]igrants’ social status is not entirely comfortable... They may, however, remain different for many generations for reasons of biology and/or culture so the migration status of their forebears may have lasting effects” (13). This uncomfortable social status of the migrants makes them think of their own social status of the homeland. It indicates that the adjustment of the migrant in the host country becomes unexpected and problematic. Different cultural aspects and their practices become unfamiliar and difficult to follow for migrants. Prema in *Seasons of Flight* experiences, “[i]n America nobody has any free time to just sit around and chat, isn't that so?... they hugged like Americans. Yet Prema had still not found her next direction” (198). Prema has internalized Nepali sense of brotherhood in which people have a close attachment with Nepaliness in their feelings and behavior; they spend time being together and sharing ideas. On the other hand, American people just hug each other which Prema does not fit. The American way of hugging and the Nepali way of doing Namaste are two different practices of the two nations. One feels comfortable to follow own national culture. Prema prefers Namaste to greet others instead of the American practice of hugging. In a similar manner, Ifemelu also feels sad about the environment

in America. She does not find America as a cozy place for her in comparison to Nigeria. Despite her familiarity with the social practices of the homeland, she is following American practices. It is essential for her adjustment in America. The protagonist shares, “Aunty Uju tells me I have depression. You know America has a way of turning everything into an illness that needs medicine” (372). All hopes and expectations of migrants in America turn into hopelessness. Ifemelu is the representative of those migrants. There is a social illness for migrants in the host country where they become hopeless, depressed and seek an alternative way to come out from that situation.

Migrant characters are in the state of margin after moving to the host country as they have to adjust to a new environment and people. That marginal condition what they experience in the host country does not make them happy and live comfortably there. In this regard, they are not able to hold the position like native people, or rather they feel their inferiority in the host country. Capetillo-Ponce and Kretsedemas highlight the situation that “marginalities can also be understood as transition spaces that shed light on new problems” (21). As they have arrived in the new land with the expectation of a better life, they have to struggle for equal treatment and the opportunity to get rid of the differences or the inferiority in the new place. It is another problem they face in the host country that is beyond their expectation. Likewise, Prema expresses, “‘I do not have any people,’ Prema said. ‘Not in America’” (210). She clarifies to her American boyfriend Luis that she does not know any person in the host country. In other words, there is no one to respect, support, and make her happy in her needy situation. The people there do not think of her as similar to their status in the migrated land; she holds a marginal position as a migrant coming from the developing country, Nepal. As Prema is a Nepali migrant, and Ifemelu is a

Nigerian migrant to the United States of America, both of them have the experience of living as secondary citizens in the new land. The major character, Ifemelu in *Americanah* is pictured:

There was, in his expression and tone, a complete assuredness; she felt defeated. How sordid it all was, that she was here with a stranger who already knew she would stay... I'll cover your train fare," he said, stretching and dismissive; he wanted her to leave... She walked to the train, feeling heavy and slow, her mind choked with mud, and, seated by the window, she began to cry. She felt like a small ball, adrift and alone. The world was a big, big place and she was so tiny, so insignificant, rattling around emptily. (154)

Ifemelu experiences her marginal condition even being in a relationship with her American boyfriend. Her involvement with this man is conditional; she does not engage with this man with her self-respect and happiness. It is just an adjustment in the host country feeling like a lower and insignificant creator of the world. Living in a relationship instead of seeking and doing other jobs does not make Ifemelu easier, but she feels very heavy and inferior in place of American people. It diminishes her self-respect, confidence, ownership, or attachment to the new land.

The cultural perception of love and marriage for the migrant characters in the host country and the country of origin is different. They have some kind of attachment to the homeland and make efforts to maintain the impacts of the relationship in the host country. Mark Van Ostaijen and Peter Scholten emphasize that "[s]ome migrants maintain transnational connections that connect them to their region of origin as well as their host regions" (3). Migrant people make connections between their home country and the host country through love or marriage and relationship. Though there is not the seriousness of migrants' relationship with American men, they manage to

continue it in order to adjust to the host country. This relationship is just for fun for those native men on the other. However, this type of relationship is not internalized and becomes applicable in the home country. The focus of love and relationship is considered as the long-term bonding in the homeland of migrant people that is different in thinking and behavior in the host country.

Thapa in *Seasons of Flight* portrays the context of love and marriage differently in the host country as it is taken as the most serious issue in Nepal. The ultimate purpose of marriage in Nepal is to set family life and begetting children. The protagonist, Prema involves in a relationship with an American that is not possible to transform into marriage. In other words, this relationship is not for the long term to get married and have kids. As Prema utters, “‘I have never wanted to have children. Having children is—dangerous,’ Prema said. ‘And there are too many human beings already on the earth. It is not good for the environment’” (250). Prema is grown up in such a country where love and relationship become valid only with childbirth. Though she loves most of the things of Nepali practices, she reverses this context only with limitations of the relationship. She denies planning for children. While being in a relationship with Luis, that relationship creates confusion and questions for Prema. Thapa represents, “[I]ove still confused her. Or relationships confused her... Prema avoided getting into relationships. She went on dates; and these dates sometimes led to sex... she had got into with Luis: it had been a mistake... how could she fit into the format of a relationship, American or Nepali?” (234-35). She has a kind of perception in the context of Nepal, but the love or the marriage or the relationship makes her confused. It leads to a sexual relationship in the name of love or marriage in the host country. This kind of American context with Nepali perception makes Prema confused despite her happiness.

In a similar way, Ifemelu as a Nigerian girl indulges in a relationship with a man in America feels regret. It shows that this relationship makes her broken into pieces. Developing a relationship is for happiness, however, she is not able to forgive herself for living in a materialistic relationship. Adichie depicts, “[w]hat happened to America?... he took her to his room, she said, simply, “I took off my clothes and did what he asked me to do. I couldn’t believe that I got wet. I hated him. I hated myself. I really hated myself. I felt like I had, I don’t know, betrayed myself.” She paused. “And you” (439). Ifemelu lives in a relationship with an American man with whom she does not feel happy. This relationship is not her choice but an alternative way for her to live in America. However, she feels bad for being in this relationship without actual feelings and realization. It is because of her realization of losing her self-esteem, freedom, and happiness.

Language is the major concern for the migrants’ assimilation in the host country. It creates a misunderstanding with the words, expressions, and their meaning for migrants in the migrated country. The linguistic utterances and perceptions in one context differ in another context. Similarly, migrants become confused with the differences in language variation and its meaning in the home country and the host country. Justin Carville and Sigrid Lien generalize that the “problems in adjusting to a new culture and language, the endurance and efforts required to clear land, and the setting up of homes and building of communities” (13). Migrants face problems in adjustment in the new land because of linguistic differences, pronunciation, and its perceived meaning in the home country and host country. The language formation, its practices, and understanding the meaning is different in the context of migrated land promotes migrants to think of their home country. The protagonist of *Seasons of Flight*, Prema experiences such language problems in the host country. Thapa depicts:

Other gaps arose from the English language: misunderstood words or phrases. One time, when Luis described himself as a regular Joe, and Prema said, ‘I do not think you are like an army man.’ ‘What?’ he said. ‘Is regular Joe not an army man?’ ... Other times, he would tell her things she already knew: ‘Soccer is what you would call football.’ Or he would over-explain things, repeating jokes or substituting less local terms in his expressions, describing his supervisor at Meadowvale. (134)

As migrants have linguistic barriers in the host country, Prema also faces hindrances in terms of using and understanding language. She is following the American way of communication using the English language that there is the possibility of misspelling, inappropriate pronunciation, and misunderstanding its meaning in the host country. Accordingly, Prema understands everything by symbols and context, but she becomes confused with the word or expression in the host country. However, migrants face difficulties with some words or terminologies in the host country. In addition to this, Ifemelu is presented as an inferior being only of not having an American accent. It points out, “Americanah!” Ranyinudo teased her often. “You are looking at things with American eyes. But the problem is that you are not even a real Americanah. At least if you had an American accent we would tolerate your complaining!” (385). Ifemelu experiences the differences for lacking an American accent. American people even do not want to listen to the complaints of non- Americans. Ifemelu is the representative character of being an outsider who lacks an accent like Native American. The pronunciation of words, phrases, or expressions questions the belonging of migrants. Therefore, Ifemelu suffers in the host country because of her Nigerian tone.

Furthermore, Prema and her American boyfriend, Luis have differences in

pronunciations cultural backgrounds, practices, and understanding. Prema feels confused in the American way of calling even the senior members of the family by their name. On the other, Luis has different utterances than Prema for similar words. Such differences create confusion in the meaning or its understanding. The use of words and their perception in their context include:

Prema did not tell Luis that Bijaya was a Maoist. How could she possibly explain such a thing to an American? Instead, she told him that in Nepal it was impolite to call people by name alone. ‘Bahini,’ she said, ‘means younger sister. My sister’s name is Bijaya, but I call her Bahini.’ She added, ‘My mother’s name was Rewati. My father is Gokul’ ...transformed to Bee-jay, Ray-wetty and Go-call on Luis’s tongue. (135)

American people call the family members by their names as it is usual for them, but it makes Prema feel uncomfortable. The differences in the political, cultural, and linguistic context of two different nations remind Prema to internalize her cultural roots of the homeland. She wants to practice her social norms and values or traditions, but this is not a valuable or interesting concept in America.

In this way, migrant characters face complexities to assimilate in the host country even though they make their best efforts in sharing socio-cultural norms, values, and practices of the home country. Following various cultural contexts of the migrated country does not become easier for them. To assimilate the context of home and host country appears difficult for them. They prefer cultures and practices of the homeland once after they feel failure to integrate both contexts into one. However, living the life of the homeland is not possible while they are in the host country. So, they strive to exercise an alternative way of surviving. For example, living in a relationship with the men in the host country becomes just a tool of adjustment for

migrants and a means of entertainment for American men. The perception of love, marriage, language and its practices also is different within themselves. It indicates that the identity of migrants is uncertain, and they are experiencing the marginal condition in America. They remember their homeland, its social and cultural practices, and the family or relatives as this notion declares that they have the problem of assimilation with the cultures of the homeland and the host country.

Chapter IV: Transnational Alienation in Prema and Ifemelu

The researcher tries to interlink this chapter as an outcome of the sense of dislocatedness in chapter II and the migrants' complexities in cultural assimilation in chapter III. This situation of migrant people occurs because of the cultural variations in the host country leading to a state of nostalgia. It drives their strong desire that they want to return to their homeland, and are inclined to exercise their root cultures. However, their desire to return to their homeland and practice their familiar cultures does not become possible at the moment. When they remain hopeless with their nostalgic feelings, this situation makes them feel isolated and frustrated in the new environment of the host country. In other words, they think of themselves as lonely in the host country with the depressive feeling that is reflected within themselves as the victim of transnational alienation.

Migrant characters have nostalgia for the homeland to return. While living in the host country, they feel and mostly remember the country of origin and its overall surroundings. Prema in *Seasons of Flight*, remembers the friends and other caring and supportive people in the home country, Nepal. On contrary, the environment is not familiar and comfortable for her in the host country. Thapa indicates, "Prema thought of her mother, lost to the high, misty hills... everyone she had left. Her father and sister. Rajan. Luis. And she thought: maybe the subjects of our affections can be interchangeable. Maybe we can be forgiven for one mistake by not committing another. She did her atonement by staying with Esther" (230). Prema has a strong memory of her home country and her experiences and relationship with people there. As she is now living in the United States of America and in a relationship with Luis, her American boyfriend, she remembers her people in Nepal. Prema works for Esther, an old woman in the host country, and reveals her experience and true feelings about

Nepal. Michelle Harris also in the article “Emergent Indigenous Identities: Rejecting the Need for Purity” states:

A combination of artifacts, behaviours, and dispositions that emerge from social structures –habits, by definition, cannot exist outside of history, experience, and individual dispositions. This form of culture is active and interactive. It incorporates and adopts that which operates outside of the individual, but it does not necessarily herald meaningful change to one’s identity, intellect, or emotional adjustment. (15-16)

The migrant people living in the host country gain different experiences related to surroundings, behaviours, and cultural practices. Having a distinct type of social structure and its practices between the home country and the host country, migrants have difficulties balancing themselves in two cultural settings. Therefore, they are deeply rooted in their identity, culture, and emotional attachments with people of their home country than the host country. It is an internalized form of a person’s habit that has the closer aspiration to link oneself with roots namely country of origin over the host country.

Similar to this context, the protagonist of *Americanah* also imagines everything about Nigeria. She does not only remember everything about her homeland but she also tries to feel the life of her root even living in the host country. Creating her personal blog or websites and relating everything about Nigeria, she realizes living the life of her root. Adichie illustrates, “She scoured Nigerian websites, Nigerian profiles on Facebook, Nigerian blogs, and each click brought yet another story of a young person who had recently moved back home, clothed in American or British degree...felt the dull ache of loss... They were living her life. Nigeria became where she was supposed to be, the only place she could sink her roots” (6). Ifemelu,

as a migrant having Nigerian origin and living in the United States of America, secures her memory to the homeland by creating Nigerian websites, Nigerian profiles in the social media/ Facebook, and Nigerian blogs. She does all these things after getting a fellowship at Princeton and a relationship with Blaine which reminds her with the full memory about the home country Nigeria. Through this, she is collecting different forms of her attachments to the place and people of the motherland. She feels lost in America and wants to live in her nation recalling different moments and experiences of Nigeria.

The migrant characters' experience of homeland become different in the host country, so their expectation also does not meet in the new environment. At this point, the focus is on the "Nostalgia and homeland are central notions in migration studies. In migrant literature, Rosemarie Buikema utters that the "poetics of home" operate as symbols for stability, belonging and safety" (168). Migrant people have the nostalgia of the homeland while living in the host country. Even though they live in the migrated country, they always think of their identity and belonging in the homeland. They imagine the moments of happiness, comfort, and other practices in the homeland than the host country.

Thapa in *Seasons of Flight* depicts the protagonist who remembers the events or activities related to her homeland though she lives physically in America. Though she lives and hopes her a better future in the host country, she imagines having the life as in the home country. She finds her present life more insecure in the host country, so everything related to her homeland reflects in her mind. Thapa represents "[s]he thought of her movements from her present life with Luis to her life on the dry, grassy hill, and her life in Little Nepal, and her lives farther back... Her birth village, her school and college years, her years in the hill bazaar. Her attachment to Rajan" (186).

Prema is living in America with her American boyfriend but she remembers her homeland, friends, family members, and mostly her Nepali boyfriend. It clarifies that she prefers to be in Nepal even living in America as a migrant. Ifemelu in *Americanah* also becomes nostalgic regarding the memory of her homeland, Nigeria while living in America. She visits her origin country through music as she utters, “she played “YoriYori” and “Obi Mu O” endlessly and then she stopped, because the songs brought to her memories a finality, as though they were dirges. She was wounded by the half-heartedness in his texting and calling, the limpness of his efforts” (473). Ifemelu entertains her moments of the home country thinking about the music of Nigeria when she is in the host country. The Nigerian songs remind her about social practices of the birth country that are not applied properly in the American context. She expects to have practices consistent with her belonging while living in the host country, but she lacks everything related to her origin. Because of this lacking, she gets disappointed and wants to return to the homeland through her imagination.

The nostalgic feeling of migrants limits them in the condition of hopelessness. When they live in the situation without any hope in the host country where they expected to have better opportunities and a better future in the process of “cross-border mobility” (Ostergaard-Nielsen 107). Their expectations become limited only in imagination. They remain in the marginal situation without any priority and choices to be happy and comfortable. It makes them live in the world of others and miss the homeland which leads them to the feeling of alienation.

Similar to the context of migrants’ loneliness, Waldinger and Fitzgerald also illustrate this situation of migrants that “international migration the alien “other” from third world to first, and worldwide trade and communications amplifying the feedbacks traveling in the opposite direction, the view that nation-state and society

normally converge has waned...to think about the connections between “here” and “there,” as evidenced by the interest in the many things called transnational” (1177). In the process of cross-national mobility, migrants move to the first world from third world countries in search of their bright future. So, here and there emphasize such two different worlds. Migrant people who move to the developed nation in search of several opportunities from poor countries. However, they gain nothing other than pain without any gains that “refer not only to one locale but to several.” (Faist 27). It is reflected in their alienated feelings.

Despite being helpless, migrants make their continuous efforts in maintaining their relationships with people of different origins and cultural practices is not an easy task for them. With the flow of migration, migrant people from different parts of the world struggle to improve their condition in the new land. In this regard, Harris also claims in the book chapter “Emergent Indigenous Identities: Rejecting the Need for Purity” that migrants involve in “social and cultural practices in which the “emergent indigenous identities must reject the notion that the ‘new’ identities are ‘deculturised’ or lacking in authenticity” (23). Migrants neither follow truly the culture of the homeland nor do they practice only the culture of the host country. If they give priority to only one cultural aspect, they are unable to adjust with diverse people or the place that “problematize aspects of majority culture that may be disconcerting for migrants” (Heith 142). To fit in the global network, migrants try to adopt the cultures of transnational communities. Though they make their efforts in learning and practicing multiple cultures, languages, and traditions, they experience their position as the minority in the host country. In this situation, they are socially and culturally disturbing, and they feel alienated in the new place where they have chosen to make their future bright. Similarly, Prema in *Seasons of Flight* exchanges different cultural

practices of her own birth country and the nation where she is living as a migrant. The network she is trying to maintain in the cross-national territory through cultural practices is her effort to adjust to the host country. However, there is a gap in such practices between migrants and Native Americans. Thapa portrays:

The gathering broke up late, with hugs all around, and promises to meet soon, promises that no one would be able to keep, but which nevertheless rang warm and sincere. At the door Peggy hugged Prema, Ron Hugged Prema, Ryan hugged Prema, Anna hugged Prema. Americans hugged so much. Prema hugged Matt, Mike and Mark. Peggy gave Prema another off-protocol namaste: 'I salute the god within you.' (145)

The Nepali cultures of greeting with Namaste and American practices of hugging are shared with each group. It is also the development of social relationships with people of different regional backgrounds. However, there is no internalization and rejoice in that greetings. They follow one another's cultures without any attachment to the culture of its origin. In other words, migrants dedicate themselves to the culture and its practices of their homeland even living in the host country. Likewise, another migrant character, Ifemelu also feels the experience of her homeland Lagos being in America. The author writes, "Aunty Uju hugged her, both of them leaning into each other, hearing each other's breathing, and it brought to Ifemelu a warm memory of Lagos" (119). While Ifemelu meets the person of Nigerian origin in the host country, she feels the American context itself as Nigerian. It makes her feel like she is living in Nigeria. The deep-rooted experience of Nigeria reflects within herself when she hugs Aunty Uju. On contrary to this, she feels like other and lonely among American people.

Migrant characters feel hopeless with the situation they are facing in the host

country that is different from their expectation. Before leaving their homeland, they have the imagination of comfortable life with lots of opportunities in the host country. However, they do not feel the environment of the host country is as homely as of the country of origin. In this context, Dennis Blanco in his article “On Migration Solutions and Interventions: An Afterthought” writes that “migration is the relocation of individuals to some distant place, that is, at least beyond one’s own city or town” (307) in search of a better life with hopes. It turns into the bitter situation in the host country which “poses serious risks to the lives of innocent” (Blanco 312) migrant people whose hopes scatter for no gain. They not only bear the unexpected situation but they also become totally motionless losing all strengths for false people in the host country. It is because of the unfavorable situation without any protection or support from people in the host country. Thapa depicts Prema in the novel:

She was left to the world.

Tracing her way along her ever-directionless zigzag trail... If she lived frugally for a few months, she would be able to buy an airplane ticket back to Nepal...

What would she do here, though?

Nepal? America?

America? Nepal?

Everything felt wrong. (216-17)

Prema leaves Nepal for a better future in America, but her dreams turn into ashes without any achievement. This situation makes her unhappy. Her high expectations to be in the dream country turn into no achievement. Her mind visits round by round to the country of origin and the host country. However, the experience of the home country and the existing situation in the host country does not make her feel good.

Similarly, Adichie depicts the protagonist, Ifemelu a lonely and helpless in the migrated land. She feels suppressed in her surroundings including in the relationship with a man, Curt in America. :

He wielded the word like a knife... To hear Curt say “bitch” so coldly felt surreal, and tears gathered in her eyes... Alone in her apartment, she cried and cried, crumpled on her living room rug that was so rarely used it still smelled of the store. Her relationship with Curt was what she wanted, a crested wave in her life, and yet she had taken an axe and hacked at it. Why had she destroyed it? She imagined her mother saying it was the devil. She wished she believed in the devil, in a being outside of yourself that invaded your mind and caused you to destroy that which you cared about. (289)

Ifemelu leaves her homeland to the host country with high hope for a good life. She involves with a man named Curt. This relationship with that man does not make her happy, supportive, and better in the host country. Rather, it makes her weak, helpless, and hopeless; this situation leads to the separation with Curt with whom she engages. This relationship also is a means of domination upon the migrant character rather than any companionship. So, she wants to break this relationship that has hurdled her life. At the same point, she assumes her mother who names this type of relationship is a destruction and such man a devil. Taking reference from mother’s generation, she is experiencing a similar oppressive relationship with a man that she wants to end up forever.

Migrant people expect to improve their situation what they lack in the country of origin. However, their expectations change into frustration. It is because of their vanishing dream, inappropriate living environment, domination, or exploitation from people in the host country. Living far away from the country of origin and loved ones,

migrants expect to have a sense of respect and positive treatment from people in their migrated country. Noora Lori points out that in the process of migration, “migrants are assumed to experience a transition from being temporary to being permanent” with the “level of changing level statuses” (122). The migrants choose the host country with certain goals or expectations to be fulfilled in the migrated land.

Migrants after crossing the national borders want to have a secure life with opportunity and security in the host country. Along with this, they dream to settle permanently by upgrading their level or status. It indicates migrants’ better life getting opportunities in the migrated land. Additionally, they assume to be in the “multi-dimensional social protection mechanisms –which provide solutions for protecting their members against social risks” (Ryndyk et al. 1). While living and working in the host country, migrants expect to have social security for their comfortable life. They are living in a community of people with diverse backgrounds and have practices of different cultures. In this situation, they want their protection from all aspects of life. Social protection, here, is related to economic, social, and cultural issues of migrants. Prema in *Seasons of Flight* as a migrant wants to be secure with the social protection mechanism of America. The expectation of her protection is indicated, “Prema had wanted to reinvent herself in America, but—what is there to being human? The body which desires, persistent and unreasonable; thoughts and temperaments. Instincts. A capacity to harm. And history, which lingers as a spectre” (13). Prema wants to change her situation in the host country; she wants to fulfill the expectations and desires that she lacks in the country of origin. However, everything is different than her expectations or desire at that new place where she is living. Though migrants imagine making the host as comfortable as their own home country, they are unable to improve their lifestyle and have different opportunities. The migrant status in the host

country makes them feel like an alien. The protagonist of *Americanah* also finds herself alone in the host country. It is because of an unfavorable situation. As a migrant, her expectation and the consequences of living her life in America presents, “Ifemelu stared into her glass. There was something wrong with her. She did not know what it was but there was something wrong with her. A hunger, a restlessness. Incomplete knowledge of herself. The sense of something farther away, beyond her reach” (289-90). Ifemelu becomes unable to fulfill her expectation in the host country. Rather her situation becomes worse than her imagination. It makes her be with no one and have nothing in the host country. It reflects her separation from Curt as the result of the suppression she has undergone. Her engagement with the man in the host country leads her to further pain without any hope, respect, or love. Her expectations or dreams change into frustration which she does not want.

Migrant people are unable to establish their identity of the country of origin to the host country. The feelings and attachments they carry out in the homeland remain different in the host country. Though they try hard to be a part of the host country as migrants, they happen to be isolated from native people. Reaching in the migrated country, they realize the crisis of their identity for what Waldinger and Fitzgerald further define that “immigrant transnationalism presumes migrants, coming from nationalized societies where identity is defined by contrast to alien peoples and lands. However, the presence of trans-state social connections may not imply long-distance nationalism” (1189). Their identity is not well defined in the host country because they are not fully connected to the host country. As migrants, they try to build up trans-state social connections. The identity of immigrants after crossing the national borders and reaching the transnational community is defined as an alien. In other words, they are not well identified as members of the transnational community.

Martins Kaprans in his article “Latvian Migrants in Great Britain: ‘The Great Departure’, Transnational Identity and Long Distance Belonging” reinforces, “the sense of long-distance belonging to the country of origin manifests as a set of politically idiomatic claims and practices that strengthen ideas among migrants about the nation as the central axis of their identity” (121). The identity and association of migrants are concerned with the country of origin. They reflect their identity through cultural practices in the host country. However, they are treated as aliens and struggle to exist in the migrated land. This alienated self of migrants makes them helpless.

Prema feels sick in the American environment and seeks her identity in Nepal through her memory even though she is living in the host country. Being in the pathetic situation, she shares, “‘I was looking for EL Segundo Blues at the beach when we met’... ‘Butterflying. When we saw it, it was—cool,’ she said. ‘This small!’ she held up a digit of her thumb... Prema told Luis about the work she was doing. ‘It is like the work I was doing in Nepal, but better, because I am working with Americans, who are really a big problem for the environment” (247). Prema compares herself with EL Segundo Blues, an endangered blue butterfly in America. She exemplifies her position in a similar way as the representative of migrants in the United States of America which is known as the most developed country in the world. However, she is in search of her identity in the small country Nepal from where she comes in this region for a bright future. The identity of the homeland does not exist in the host country, but she realizes her belonging in Nepal is another in America. Similarly, Ifemelu also feels her identity is different in the host country that is based on discrimination. She experiences different behaviors as a black minority from Native Americans. However, she never knows any differences in her name and appearance in Nigeria. She highlights the discriminatory behaviors upon her from Native

Americans:

The only reason you say that race was not an issue is because you wish it was not. We all wish it was not. But it's a lie. I came from a country where race was not an issue; I did not think of myself as black and I only became black when I came to America. When you are black in America and you fall in love with a white person, race doesn't matter when you're alone together because it's just you and your love. But the minute you step outside, race matter. But we don't talk about it. (290)

Ifemelu experiences racial discrimination in America where it is pervasive. She finds this discriminatory practice beyond her assumption. She comes to know her race and color in America. In other words, she gets a proper identity as a person and a human being in her homeland, Nigeria, but she lacks it in the host country. She gets her identity as other, but not as self as a majority of black people are experiencing from Native people in America. She is neither an American nor Nigerian at this point. She feels all alone with the stereotypical concept that is created for her in the host country.

Migrant people cross the border with some purpose for their better lives and opportunity. Though they move and live in the host country, they miss and love their homeland. They feel isolated when they are not recognized in the host country. At the same time, they imagine their nation and their attachment with their birth country what they lack in the host country. The only alternative for them is to live with an imagination of the home country at the same time they are living in the host country.

Waldinger and Fitzgerald emphasize again in this context:

International migrants usually have good reason to leave home, but once abroad, they are often motivated to sustain a connection to the town, region, or nation left behind. Members of the nation-state societies to which the migrants

have moved, however, frequently find these displays of concern and affection disconcerting. It is not simply that the migrants are failing to detach themselves from their old worlds—as social science wisdom and popular belief prescribe. (1192)

Migrants leave the homeland to fulfill their dream of improving their life career getting opportunities in the host country. Despite their big dreams and high expectation in the migrated country, they remain emotionally attached to the home country. Further, they keep affectionate relationships with the people of their origin country. They prefer the relation and memory of their motherland over the host country.

Likewise, Prema while living in the host country, feels her attachment to the homeland, and recalls events, activities, attachments in association with left-behind members of the family. She feels isolated from the environment and people in her surroundings in the host country. Her loneliness is presented in the situation that “[t]hrough the non-profit, Prema was gaining an affinity for this land, at last; though she did still find American strange. It did not have to be the way it was. But then Nepal, too, did not have to be the way it was. People everywhere were complicated, maybe. Or Prema did not understand them” (232). Prema realizes the love of her homeland and the affections of the people. However, she experiences uncomfortable situations and unfamiliar people in the host country. It indicates her to be alone and creates problems adjusting to the new environment. Though she has a good reason for leaving the homeland, everything becomes difficult for her in the host country. In a similar manner, Ifemelu in *Americanah* feels lonely in the host country. Adichie depicts:

For weeks, Ifemelu stumbled around, trying to remember the person she was

before Curt... Her job bored her: she did the same bland things, writing press releases, editing press releases, copy editing press releases, her movements rote and numbing. Perhaps it had always been so and she had not noticed, because she was blinded by the brightness of Curt. Her apartment felt like a stranger's home. (299)

Ifemelu feels isolated even being in a relationship with Curt in the host country. She does not acquire her happiness and comfort being with Curt and the apartment in America where she feels as if she is living with a stranger. Her feelings with the person living together make her miss her homeland and her attachment with that place. She is not happy with all those things that she is doing with her American boyfriend, or rather her engagement with him creates feelings of regression and restlessness.

Migrants get frustrated in the host country while adjusting to an uncomfortable environment. The movement of people from different national boundaries with different cultural backgrounds sets up in the host country. It is essential to adopt new systems and practices for migrants who are being habituated to the socio-cultural setting of the homeland. This sort of cultural sharing through the process of migration is a main trait of globalization. While exchanging global culture, migrants are stuck through some psychological issues that they must have the quality to accept differences. Accordingly, Eric B. Shiraev, and David A. Levy in *Cross-Cultural Psychology: Critical Thinking and Contemporary Applications* notify, "[b]ecause of the process of globalization involves so many areas of human activities and crosses so many cultural and national boundaries, the psychological values of tolerance and openness become essential in people's lives" (22). Migrants while moving from one country to another country share their ideas along with involving in different activities

and cultural practices. At the same time, they also face different psychological problems along with other socio-cultural activities. All people need to be open and respect various ideas of the global culture in the host country. Otherwise, the environment for migrants in the host country becomes problematic and it raises the question of their existence. That is why, mutual respect and understanding is important for one another's context, and their cultures or perception. Otherwise, migrants feel obstructed in the new setting. In the related sense, Prema realizes, "I do not have a world!" Prema cried. 'I left the world I had, and do not belong in the one I am in now—your world. I do not have any place to take you, Luis. I do not have a place in the world'" (212). Prema remembers the country of origin time and again while living in the host country. It is because of her painful situation without any joy, happiness, or achievement. She does not feel having proper space and respect in the place now. The sense of respect, identity, and love as she realizes is possible in the homeland. It is limited only in the memory while living in the host country.

Ifemelu in *Americanah* also moves here and there aimlessly in the host country. It accentuates her frustration while living and dealing with the new environment due to the lack of support, care, and opportunity for her personal growth. She does not satisfy herself with anything in America. It indicates that she does not achieve what she wants while adjusting to the migrated land. At this point, living a life of a migrant in the host country for her is similar to being other. Adichie writes, "[a]fter work, she wandered around the centre of Baltimore, aimlessly, interested in nothing" (302). Ifemelu who imagines her bright future before going to America has different feelings that she gains nothing in that place. She moves to different places without any hope and energy in the host country. She estimates that she is faded into a situation that does not have any output. Adichie presents, "Ifem, this is something a

lot of people go through, and I know it's not been easy for you adjusting to a new place and still not having job... Ifemelu kept her face to the window. She felt, again, that crushing desire to cry, and she took a deep breath, hoping it would pass" (158). Ifemelu tolerates the frustrating situation in America. Living as a migrant there, she has gone through different problems related to adjustment, jobs, and other opportunities. Instead of making her better life by getting a quality education and better job opportunity, she has to stagger aimlessly being jobless in the American market. It makes her see the outside world by giving up all her hopes and desperately waiting for the way of her adjustment.

The exploitation of migrants in the host country is a major issue. Because of the lack of opportunity for a quality life in the home country, migrant characters choose America as the best place for fulfilling their dream to be the successful person in their career fare. However, they have been the means of exploitation in the global market. In fact, they are taken as cheap laborers, less valuable people, and people without dignity in comparison to Native Americans. It is because of their belonging nations, homeland namely the third world countries which lack minimal social, cultural, economic, and educational opportunities to its people. Hein de Haas, Stephen Castles, and Mark J. Miller relate that migrants from such nations to some extent "experience abuse or exploitation, but most benefit and are able to improve their long-term life perspectives through migrating. Conditions are sometimes tough for migrants but are often preferable to limited opportunities at home – otherwise migration would not continue" (4). The major reason for migrants moving to the host country is to get different opportunities for a better life. As they lack the basic things in the home country, they wish to fulfill it in the host country. Nevertheless, they are the subject for experiencing troubles in the new land in different forms such as

discrimination, or stereotypical thinking from native people.

Migrant characters have been the tools of exploitation from different aspects of their lives. At this point, Prema's relationship with Luis, an American man is not joyful but problematic. The perspective to look at native people of America and migrants is different. The position or the treatment of a migrant is not equal in comparison to Native Americans. Thapa presents in her novel, "[h]e wanted her to stay. The relationship was a trap. It confused her. Love confused her. Or Luis confused her. He tempted her to think: maybe there was no problem. Or the problem lay with her, with her being—abnormal. Jagged, unmade" (202). Prema is not happy with the relationship with Luis in the host country. It is the relationship beyond her interest but that depends only on the interest of Luis who makes Prema confused and abnormal. She is unable to continue her life the way she is doing now.

There are different underlying factors that trouble Prema in this relationship. One of them is that she wants just to adjust to America at the time. Another migrant character, Ifemelu also has realized her position as similar as of Prema in the host country. As Ifemelu realizes herself and her situation as an object for the man in America:

Ifemelu stared at one of the photos, a profile shot in black-and-white, the woman's head thrown back, her long hair flowing behind her. A woman who liked her hair and thought Curt would too.

"Nothing happened," Curt said. "At all. Just the e-mails. She's really after me. I told her about you, but she just won't stop." ... "All your girlfriends had long flowing hair," she said, her tone thick with accusation... she was being absurd.
(210)

Ifemelu finds her position not as a human being but as a thing while being in a

relationship with an American male named Curt who engages in multiple relationships with girls. It shows that he is not honest in his relationship with Ifemelu. The man is playing with her sentiments without maintaining a trustworthy relationship. He is making Ifemelu a tool of entertainment. Ifemelu selects America as her dreamland to fulfill her expectations. During this process, she lives in a relationship with Curt that turns into exploitation in the name of love. This makes her all alone in the host country with vanishing dreams.

Migrant people in the new land are treated with the perception of hostility, myths, and stereotypical concept. The situation becomes unfriendly for them, and the treatment of the native people is unusual. They create imaginative ideas about migrants who are not equally understood as native people. Based on the tradition and practices of migrants in their origin country, they are interpreted by creating negative images about themselves and their culture. So, there is an automatically biased attitude towards migrants. This sort of behavior with migrants is set with the migration process. Bhopal concerns that the trends of migration have “some suspicion, concern, or even hostility is commonplace. The reaction is at least in part related to worries about increased competition for resources, especially jobs, houses, and schooling. Beyond this, there are often deeper issues that relate to worries that are sometimes based on myths and stereotypes about other groups” (13). Migrants struggle for different opportunities such as resources, jobs, residence, and education in the host country. Their effort is on fulfilling those goals for which they have left their homeland.

However, they do not feel the new environment is cozy and supportive. Or rather, they feel like an outsider; native people treat them stereotypically thinking of themselves as superior over migrants. Accordingly, Ifemelu realizes the stereotypical

concept for black people in America. She experiences different behavior from Native Americans being herself as a Nigerian girl struggling in America. She shares, “[i]t makes no sense to me,” the firm voice said. Ifemelu turned... “I mean, ‘nigger’ is a word that exists. People use it. It is part of America. It has caused a lot of pain to people and I think it is insulting to bleep it out” (137). Ifemelu as a migrant like migrant people of African origin is treated not as an American but by creating a different image that is the black stereotype. The Americans call and behave the people with African origin living in America as other people, not similar to them, creating an image based on their skin colour.

In a similar way, the question on their strengths and expectations as human beings. Or rather, the Native Americans have the perceptions towards non-Americans or African immigrants as inferior beings. In this situation, they are being the “victim of discrimination” (Oppenheimer et al. 66) from the dominant group in America. Sonja Moghaddari includes reasons that the “contestation of and in confrontation to power structures” (5) between the people of American origin and migrants. Thapa reflects through several questions asked for Prema in *Seasons of Flight*:

By then the war had come to her birth village. The Maoist rebels had come one day, recruiting one member from each family. From Prema’s family they had taken her sixteen year-old sister Bijaya. Her father had feared a similar fate for Prema. Month after month, when she telephoned home, her father had advised her not to visit. Years passed. She did not go back... ‘Where are you from?’

Why did Americans ask this when they were so unprepared for the reply?

‘Where are you from?’

‘Nepal.’ (14)

After migrating to the host country, Prema has to face a hostile situation. As she has come there from the war-torn country Nepal, the bitter memory of war is still in her memory related to her family member. In addition to this, Americans question her origin and its scenario. The way Maoist rebel remains at the pick, the international community begins to question the situation of Nepal and the perspectives of Nepali people. Prema has to face a similar situation in the host country as she is often questioned about her origin in relation to its regional practices. Not only this, Prema's individual life is concerned with some mythical issues. It presents, "Luis came to pick her up... She showed Luis her mother's ammonite. 'A fossil from when the himals were in the ocean'... 'My mother believed it was the god Bishnu. That is what Hindus think.' (140). Prema shares the myths about the existence of god on the fossil and the Hindu belief systems and their practices. She is grown up in such an environment that becomes a strange thing for people in the host country. Her understanding of things and her perception of god is taken differently in America. When there is a misunderstanding about her perception and expression, she feels awkward and lonely.

In conclusion, migrant people move to the host country leaving the country of origin intending to get better opportunities, security, and future. Having different origins, cultures, and identities, they try to connect themselves in the host country concerning multicultural contexts. However, it becomes difficult for them to adjust to new cultures and contexts. It leads them to have a sense of dislocatedness and feel difficulty in associating different cultural practices for which they fail to maintain their adjustment in the host country. The protagonists of *Seasons of Flight* and *Americanah* prefer to go and live in America where they are in a state of displacement and face the problem of cultural assimilation. As a result, migrants become nostalgic and hopeless having the feeling of frustration caused by variations in cultures. All

these situations create them the sense of others in the host country. In other words, migrants feel being the victim of transnational alienation as they are living in the cross-national borders and struggle for adjusting to new cultures and the environment in the host country. They live there without loved ones and any support for their better condition as Prema experiences. Even if they return to the land of origin they face a similar sense of alienation as Ifemelu feels in her homeland Nigeria.

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