Title- Unsatisfied Cravings: The Migrant’s Attempt to Recreate Home

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Abstract: This paper seeks to understand the migrant’s ability to adapt to life in a new culture by recreating home through food and tradition, all the while struggling to fight the feeling of displacement in that new culture. In her Pulitzer winning novel, The Namesake, Jhumpa Lahiri uses the image of pregnancy to depict the migrant’s experience; she states that “being a foreigner [...] is a sort of lifelong pregnancy—a lifelong wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts” (49). This paper looks at the protagonist’s mother, a first-generation migrant from Bengali India, and how she copes with living in the United States by recreating her home culture. When the story begins, Ashima Ganguli feels out of place in the United States; however, being pregnant and giving birth in the new country only intensify her sense of displacement. If Lahiri’s image of pregnancy reflects the migrant, then the individual who lives between two countries will not only stand out but will also bring forth a new identity because of her fertile position between cultures. Ashima’s literal and figurative pregnancy exemplifies the migrant’s struggle to belong in a new country through her cravings for home and her struggles to recreate the familiar; however, the image of pregnancy also represents the migrant’s pain that stems from bringing forth new life through adapting to a new culture.