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¹ANALYSIS OF POST-COLONIAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF PEOPLE BASED ON AMITAV GHOSH'S NOVELS

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Abstract: Amitav Ghosh is an acclaimed Indian author known for his thought-provoking novels and non-fiction works that explore a wide range of themes, including history, culture, environment, and migration. Many of his works examined the intersections of different cultures, particularly those influenced by the Indian subcontinent and the Western world. Ghosh analyses and writes in his

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novels, how people's identity and culture have been changed after colonial periods. Hence, the present research focused on Post-colonial identity and cultural adaptation of the characters in the selected novels of Amitav Ghosh. The cultural novels are 1) "The Glass Palace" spans generations and geographies, exploring colonialism, war, and change in India and Burma during a time of upheaval, 2) The "Hungry Tide" delves into the complex relationship between humans and the environment in the Sundarbans, following a marine biologist and a translator, 3) "Sea of Poppies", the first book in the Ibis Trilogy, portrays characters from diverse backgrounds on a journey aboard the Ibis amidst the opium trade in the 19th century, and 4) A "River of Smoke", the second in the Ibis Trilogy, continues the saga as characters navigate the opium trade and the events leading to the First Opium War. The present research analysed the characters from these novels and observed how their identity was changed and how they adapted to the new culture.

Keywords: The Glass Palace, Hungry Tide, Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke, Post-Colonial identity, Amitav Ghosh novels

INTRODUCTION

Amitav Ghosh, the renowned Indian author, has gifted the literary world with a diverse and captivating array of novels that span genres and themes, showcasing his exceptional storytelling prowess. His works are a testament to his ability to seamlessly blend history, culture, and human narratives, inviting readers on a literary journey that transcends borders and epochs. Ghosh's literary repertoire includes historical epics like "The Ibis Trilogy," a series of meticulously researched novels that explore the 19th-century opium trade, migration, and colonialism. He also delves into contemporary issues and ecological concerns in novels like "The Great Derangement." With an exquisite command of

language and a deep understanding of the human condition, Amitav Ghosh's novels are a testament to his versatility as a writer, making him an icon of modern Indian literature. Whether it's the exploration of personal identity, the clash of cultures, or the forces of nature, Ghosh's novels have left an indelible mark on the world of literature (Khamdi, 2020; Dhawan & Sharma, undated; Shalini, 2019; Limbani, 2020).

Amitav Ghosh, a prominent figure in contemporary post-colonial literature, delves deeply into the intricate tapestry of identity and cultural adaptation in his select novels, illuminating the enduring legacy of colonialism and the challenges of navigating a rapidly globalizing world. Ghosh's narratives are a testament to his keen exploration of the complex, evolving identities of his characters as they grapple with the weight of history and the pull of tradition. Through the lens of his fiction, Ghosh unearths the multifaceted dimensions of post-colonial identity, elucidating how individuals and communities grapple with the legacy of colonialism while forging new, hybrid identities in an era of globalization. This examination of Ghosh's work underscores the nuanced and transformative ways in which his characters negotiate the ever-shifting landscapes of culture, heritage, and selfhood, shedding light on the rich and ever-relevant discourse of post-colonialism and cultural adaptation in our modern world (Poray-Wibranowska & Ball, 2021; Kumaran & Tandon, 2022; Geeti, 2021; De, 2023).

Amitav Ghosh, explores the complex and multifaceted post-colonial identity of women in his select novels, shedding light on the enduring impact of British colonialism on the lives of Indian women. His literary works, such as "Sea of Poppies," "River of Smoke," and "Flood of Fire," serve as a poignant canvas on which he paints the struggles and triumphs of women who navigated the turbulent waters of colonialism's aftermath. Ghosh's narratives go beyond the conventional depictions of male heroism and

nationalism, offering a nuanced perspective on the female experience within the framework of a post-colonial society. Through the intricate portrayal of his female characters, Ghosh delves into the intersection of gender, class, and cultural identity, and in doing so, he provides a profound commentary on the lasting legacy of British colonialism in the lives of Indian women. In this exploration, embark on a literary journey to uncover the multifaceted dimensions of postcolonial British identity as experienced by women in Amitav Ghosh's selected novels Anjana & Shakil, undated; Gilson, 2022; Khoche, undated; Muqet, 2021).

Furthermore, in the post-colonial British era, the theme of cultural adaptation, or at times, the forceful imposition of new cultures, resonates prominently, particularly within the context of royal families. Ghosh's literary tapestry skillfully weaves narratives that explore the complex dynamics of identity and tradition in the wake of British colonialism, providing a profound insight into the struggles faced by monarchs and their families as they grapple with the transformation of their societies. These novels, such as "The Shadow Lines" and "The Glass Palace," serve as windows into a world where traditional hierarchies and customs collide with the powerful currents of Western modernity, encapsulating the multifaceted journey of these kings and their families as they navigate the tumultuous waters of change, sometimes embracing new cultures willingly, and at other times being compelled to do so. Amitav Ghosh's works exemplify the intricacies of post-colonial adaptation and the enduring legacy of empire on indigenous societies, offering readers a compelling exploration of cultural transformation in the face of imperial influence (Rajalakshmi & Sankar, 2023; Jebaruby & Mary, undated; Jatania & Rajyaguru, undated). Even though many novels describe the post-colonial identity and cultural adaptation, the present research mainly focused on Amitav Ghosh's novel. Major contributions in this paper is to analyse the change of individual

identity and the cultural adaptation of the people through the Amitav Ghosh novels. The novels selected are *The Glass Palace*, *Hungry Tide*, *Sea of Poppies*, and *River of Smoke*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Postcolonial identity and cultural adaptation of people

Each society possesses a unique culture that plays a pivotal role in shaping the identity of its inhabitants within the given social and cultural environment. This research work is dedicated to delineating the concept of post-colonial identity and the challenges associated with cultural adaptation, using Ghosh's selected novels as a point of reference. The central objective of this investigation revolves around the exploration of how identity takes form within a sociocultural framework and analyses the identity issues, and socio-cultural aspects such as culture, joint family, women's status, diaspora, diversity, social groupings and sub-groupings are used. Through their identities, the characters in Ghosh's novels carry out their roles and relationships. The current chapter is an attempt to mark their identities and the issues associated with them through their behaviours in a socio-cultural context. The proposed research work focuses on 1) *The Glass Palace*, 2) *The Hungry Tide*, 3) *Sea of Poppies*, and 4) *A River of Smoke*, novels by Amitav Ghosh. The Postcolonial identity and Cultural Adaptation of characters in the 4 novels are explained below.

1. The Glass Palace

This section describes the story of the Burmese king and their family. The transformation of the royal joint family into a nuclear family after colonialism is a central theme in the novel, with King Minton making the pivotal decision to pass the throne to his son, Thebaw, as he grows older. Thebaw, in turn, married the three daughters of Queen Alenandaw, his stepmother, in a complex

political move. Among his three wives, Supayalat stood out as over-ambitious and shrewd, fully aware of Thebaw's affection for her. To secure her place on the throne, she even went so far as to banish her mother to a secluded corner of the palace. She concentrated all of her power in her hands and slaughtered seventy-nine princes who were competing for the throne. Their bodies, wrapped in carpets, were dumped into the river. Consequently, Thebaw and Supayalat became the ruling King and Queen of Burma, setting in motion a significant shift in the dynamics of the royal family.

Their union led to the birth of four daughters, named Hteiksu-Myat-Paya-gyi, Hteiksu-Myat-Paya-lat, Hteiksu-Myat-Paya, and Hteiksu-Myat-Paya-lay. However, the British occupation of Burma marked a turning point in their lives. Thebaw surrendered, and the entire royal family was exiled to Ratnagiri. The two princesses, in a poignant twist, married common men, much to the displeasure of Queen Supayalat. Her disapproval strained their relationships, and as the novel progresses, the royal joint family unit gradually disintegrates. The narrator describes the family as:

"To all royal subjects and inhabitants of the royal empire those heretics, the barbarization English- Kalaas having most harshly made demands calculated to bring about the impairment and destruction of our religion... the degradation of our race, are making a show and preparation as if about to wage war, have been replied with the usages of great nations and in words which are just and regular"

It shows that a family is a group, and these groups are organised in a hierarchical structure. It aids in the maintenance of order by controlling the members' behaviour. The hierarchy becomes one of the characteristics of a group, such as a family. In general, it is accepted rather than enforced in a joint family system. The family members recognise one of the members as the family's leader. Hierarchy strengthens an individual's identity within the

structural framework. Supayalat's daughters automatically become Burmese royal princesses. Supayalat is given a large number of attendants and servants as soon as she becomes Queen of Burma. It sheds light on the identity intermingling and interdependence of individuals in a group known as a family. In such a situation, the group identity takes precedence over the individual identity. As the family's head, she has several rights and responsibilities, including controlling the behaviour of the other members. This keeps the family members united and preserves the sense of group identity. The framework aids in the socialisation of characters from the second and third generations, assisting them in establishing their identities. The hierarchy clarifies roles while also influencing member choices.

The profound societal and cultural shifts that accompany the loss of their royal status become evident as the two princesses embrace their new lives. They relinquish their royal identity and adapt to the prevailing culture, embodying the overarching theme of transformation in the story. The British occupation, their exile, and subsequent assimilation into ordinary life mark the dissolution of the once tightly-knit royal family into a nuclear unit. This transformation takes a toll on Thebaw, and the shock of it all eventually leads to his demise. In this way, the joint family, as a social institution, serves as a link between the characters' individual and social identities. It is crucial in the formation of its members' identities. The link that connects the individual with identity appears to be missing in nuclear families and it is described by the narrator as.

"If I went to Burma now I would be a foreigner – they would call me a kalaa like they do Indians – a trespasser, outsiders from across the sea. I'd find that very hard I think. I'd never be able to rid myself of the idea that I would have to leave again one day, just as I knew what it was like when we left"

It shows that after Thebaw's death, Queen Supayalat returns to Burma, living with her remaining two princess daughters. Their lives have irrevocably changed, and the novel poignantly illustrates how the royal family's identity undergoes a profound shift, ultimately adapting to a new cultural context. The children born to the two princesses grow up as regular citizens, and as the British influence prevails, the royal family's legacy is forever altered. The family that was once a symbol of power and tradition now stands as a testament to the transformative forces of history and colonialism. Hierarchy thus becomes one of the characteristics of the joint family system and society in the novels. Thus, hierarchy is important in maintaining a balance between individual and group identities. Supayalat uses hierarchy in different ways to establish their identities within families. It is also clear that granted hierarchy preserves group identity while forceful hierarchy destroys group identity in a family.

The transformation of a joint family into several nuclear families is visible. The characters' statuses, roles, and identities change as a result of the shift. One of the major reasons for the transformation is the displacement of the characters. Ghosh investigates the relationship between land and identity, demonstrating that land gives people a sense of belonging, locating their identities, such as the identities of the Burmese people. Because identity is contextual, a change in the context results in a change in the individual's identity. The change has a significant impact on the individual's status within the family. It increases individuals' responsibilities. In nuclear families, however, they maintain a hierarchy. It also has an impact on one of the family's functions, which is the proper transmission of culture to the children. Due to their responsibilities, parents find it difficult to devote adequate time to their children for proper socialisation. As a consequence, the children are unable to integrate into culture and society. The loss of a joint family system makes it difficult for

the next generation to form their own identities. The transition from joint to nuclear families raises concerns for the family's elderly members.

Ghosh focuses on the transition of joint families into nuclear families to highlight the shift in prominence from group identity to individual identity. As a result, the importance of family as a core component and primary social force in the development of characters such as Supayalat, Thebaw, and the princesses cannot be overstated. The influence is so powerful that the characters cannot avoid its direct or indirect effects. They acquire new identities based on the identities granted to them by their families. It shapes their behaviour, choices, and identities in the socio-cultural environment and serves as a bridge between the individual and society. The hierarchy in the joint family system assists them in maintaining their identities by providing a well-developed framework. The framework enables them to transition from one identity to another without experiencing role ambiguity. A joint family has the power to raise a child to be a civilised and responsible citizen. With the transition of joint families into nuclear families, we are gradually losing the benefits of the joint family system and succumbing to the disadvantages of nuclear families. It complicates human relationships by raising questions about the identities of family members. To avoid it, the joint family system must be restored to generate healthy relationships and a social environment. Otherwise, we will have to compensate for the loss in a specific manner.

The post-colonial under his displaced and mobile location is free of gender, class and political affiliations as he moves unhindered in his journey across the spaces of worlds and cultures. Despite his extensive travels, Ghosh writes with a sense of personal connection to India's colonial history. Autobiographical elements such as his class family's involvement with the Indian freedom struggle and his participation in General Slim's Burmese

expeditions significantly enrich the work. Even his imagined characters are aware of colonial history and genealogy.

2. The Hungry Tide

In this novel by Amitav Ghosh, the characters Nilima and Moyna stand out as strong, independent women who undergo significant transformations in their identities after marriage. Nilima, a former student of Nirmal at Ashutosh College, moves to Calcutta with him after their marriage. Nirmal, a dedicated socialist with revolutionary ideas, eventually faces threats in Calcutta, prompting them to relocate to Lusibari. In this new place, Nirmal reinvents himself as a school teacher and a writer, although he never actually authors a book, except for the diary he leaves to Kanai after his passing. Their marital life becomes unsatisfactory, and they live in the same house but remain distant; the following quote shows how the narrator describes it.

"Within a few years of Nirmal and Nilima's arrival in Lusibari, Zamindaris were abolished and large land holdings were broken up by law. The union Nilima had founded, on the other hand, continued to grow, drawing in more and more members and offering an ever-increasing number of services - medical, paralegal, agricultural".

Despite the challenges in her personal life, Nilima's character evolves into that of a modern, empowered woman who breaks free from the confines of her traditional role as a wife. She recognizes the plight of young widow girls in the Tide country and takes it upon herself to establish a 'Women's Union' for their welfare. Through her dedication, Nilima raises funds from external sources and provides employment and support to these women. The union later gets renamed the 'Badabon Trust,' and Nilima becomes renowned as 'Mashima' (mother) in the surrounding areas due to her outstanding social work. She wholeheartedly dedicates her life to the people of the Tide country, proving to be a saviour for the women there. As the trust grows, her responsibilities multiply, and

she emerges as a visionary leader, deeply committed to the outcomes of the refugees' protest. Her opposition to Nirmal's involvement with the refugees reflects her determination to stand on her own and support others in their pursuit of independence.

Another character, Moyna, hails from a modest background and aspires to join nursing school. However, she marries Fokir, a fisherman, which makes it challenging to run their household. Despite the difficulties, Moyna takes charge of managing their home as there is no other source of income. Her determination to send Tutul to school sparks a clash with Fokir, who wishes for his son to follow in his footsteps as a fisherman. He believes that by doing so, Tutul can directly connect with the river. Moyna, aware of the importance of education, vehemently opposes this notion, highlighting her ambition and forward-thinking nature. She eventually joins Nilima's Badabon Trust as a nurse, effectively reshaping her identity after marriage. Moyna's transformation from a wife and mother to a responsible and caring nurse significantly alters the future of her family.

This novel exemplifies the human spirit. It emphasises that human bonding, attachment, and relationships are based on similarities rather than differences. They can understand one another because their experiences are similar. Traditional women's plight persists as they rely on their husbands for their livelihood and identities. When a woman's husband dies, her identity changes to widow. Most of the time, she is responsible for the children, the household, and the earnings. Nilima's Badabon Trust empowers them by providing new identities. Moyna is a prime example of such a woman. She is supported by the trust and becomes self-sufficient in running her household. Ghosh unites diverse characters and their diverse identities in an attempt to demonstrate that they can coexist peacefully, with the emergence or formation of new identities. Their previous identities may fade as a result of this process. In this way, Ghosh draws on the fading

patterns of old identities and the emergence of new identities in response to changing socio-cultural conditions. In such cases, the characters cope with their surroundings to maintain their identities, and are described by the narrator as,

'There are no borders here to divide fresh water from the salt, river from the sea. The tides reach as far as three hundred kilometres inland and every day thousands of acres of forest disappear underwater only to reemerge hours later. The currents are so powerful as to reshape the islands almost daily - some days the water tears away entire promontories and peninsulas; at other times it throws up new shelves and sandbanks where there were none before.'

The preceding description discusses the changing nature of tides, which makes the land's nature deceptive. The island's inhabitants are perpetually unsettled. The changing tides determine their lives, fate, and identities. However, it represents a future society with no clear borders or identities. It demonstrates how the land has a significant impact on the lives of people from various classes and castes in Lusibari. In this way, the novel addresses the effects of the environment, particularly that of the land, on people's lives, identities, and destinies. The Lusibari people adjust their lives to the natural environment and learn how to survive in adverse conditions. The new identities submerge the old identities, and the group identity takes precedence over individual identities. Diversity breeds hybridity, multiple identities, and the emergence of new patterns of identity. In his novels, Ghosh criticises the set of characteristics of traditional Indian Hindu society, which includes casteism, subjugation, discrimination, classism, feudalism, patriarchy, and so on. Amitav Ghosh skillfully portrays the evolutions of these two remarkable women, Nilima and Moyna, in the novel. He adeptly explores how marriage impacts their identities and how they, in turn, change their identities to serve their communities and families. These

characters exemplify the profound impact of personal growth and resilience in the face of societal expectations and challenges.

3. Sea of Poppies

This novel explores the life story of Deeti and her experiences within the institution of marriage. Deeti was married to Hukam Singh, who had been serving as a sepoy in a British regiment. However, a wounded leg led to his job loss, and he found employment at the Ghazipur Opium Factory. Interestingly, it was Deeti's brother, Kesari Singh, who proposed the marriage, given their shared military background. After marrying Hukam, Deeti discovered the challenging truths about her husband, including his opium addiction and impotency. Deeti was sure that one day or other Hukam would die soon due to the addiction. Ghosh describes their condition as:

'They were bare-bodied men, sunk waist-deep in tanks of opium, tramping round and round to soften the sludge. Their eyes were vacant, glazed, and yet somehow they managed to keep moving, as slow as ants in honey, tramping, trading'.

Deeti's mother-in-law conceals Hukam's incapacity to maintain the family's prestige. So, Deeti feeds opium to her mother-in-law daily. Soon after, her mother-in-law dies, and Chandan Singh (Hukam's brother) tempts her from time to time after her *husband's* death. To escape Chandan Singh's lust, she decides to throw herself into Hukam's funeral pyre. Despite being aware of her fate, she embraced her situation and went on to have a daughter named Kabutri.

After Hukam's passing, Deeti chose to marry Kalua, a decision that *came* with its own set of challenges. Bhyro Singh, Hukam's uncle, posed a significant threat to their relationship, as Rajput widows were traditionally forbidden from remarrying. Faced with this opposition, Deeti and Kalua made a daring choice to escape to Mauritius on the ship Ibis. Deeti's life transformed not

once, but twice: first, with her marriage to Hukam, and then again after her union with Kalua.

Her first marriage subjected her to the patriarchal norms of society, eroding her independent identity as she conformed to the *prescribed* roles and behaviours expected of a traditional woman. Deeti made valiant efforts to care for Hukam, even in his direst moments, though his life eventually ended. Her transformation from an upper-class Rajput woman to the wife of a lower-class labourer was marked by a change in her name on the ship Ibis, where Deeti became 'Aditi,' and Kalua became 'Madhu Kolver.' This second marriage blurred the lines of caste and class distinctions, representing a rebellion against the orthodox mindset prevalent in Indian society, the narrator describes this as:

'As Kalua's cart rolled on, towards the factory's main compound, Deeti and Kabutri began to sneeze; soon, Kalua and the oxen were sniffing too, for they had now drawn abreast of the godowns where farmers came to dispose of their 'poppy trash' – leaves, stalks and roots, all of which were used in the packaging of the drug'.

In this way, marriage not only alters the individual identities of the characters but also reshapes their social identities. Even as Deeti forged a new identity through her marriage to Kalua, she remained tethered to her past identity in the form of a mother. In secret visits to her daughter, Kabutri, at her brother's house, she maintained a promise of eventual return. Deeti establishes a new identity through her second marriage with Kalua, but the old identity remains with her in the form of a mother. She pays a secret visit to her daughter Kabutri at her brother's house and promises to return someday. Ghosh's use of marriage sheds light on the transformation of old identities as well as the formation of new identities, with changes in a woman's role and status. At the same time, he criticises the people's traditional orthodox mindset regarding the link between marriage and casteism. He provides us with a new perspective on human relationships that are based on

bonding, attachment, and mutual understanding rather than caste or class. Ghosh draws on societal hypocrisies such as family prestige and honour killing.

Ghosh's portrayal of marriage shines a light on the transition from old identities to the formation of new ones, where a woman's role and status undergo significant shifts. Simultaneously, he critiques the traditional orthodoxy surrounding the union of marriage and casteism, offering a fresh perspective on human relationships rooted in emotional bonds, attachment, and mutual understanding rather than rigid caste or class divisions. Ghosh delves into the complexities of societal elements like family prestige and honour, demonstrating how marriage can bestow individuals with new roles, statuses, and identities, all of which require considerable effort to cultivate and maintain.

Ghosh depicts characters from the lower castes and their exploitation by the upper class. Kalua belongs to the chamar (Cobbler) caste and is thus untouchable. Upper-caste characters used to avoid looking at the faces of lower-caste characters, believing it to be a bad omen. On the one hand, they accept lower caste characters' services, but on the other, they regard them as untouchable. Hukam Singh, for example, used to ride in Kalua's cart to the factory but never looked him in the eyes. Despite being a well-built man who had won several wrestling matches, he was exploited by the Thakurs due to the low status of his caste. They whipped him and forced him to mate with a mare naked after he lost one of the wrestling matches. They took pleasure in the incident and left his naked body on the farm after beating him. They treated him like a horse, but because of his caste, he was helpless. The people around an individual have varying expectations of him or her. To meet these expectations, the individual submerges his or her identity in favour of group identity. However, it is not required to discard previous identities. The old and new identities can coexist in varying degrees of

salience depending on the individual's skill and capacity. In general, a woman's identity changes after marriage, whereas it adds one or more roles to a man's identity. It alters both her individual and social identities. In comparison, the female characters mentioned above require more effort to establish themselves in their new environment after marriage. As a result, internalising the new identity may take more time. These women maintain the hierarchy of importance and alternate between roles. Thus, Ghosh sheds light on the formation, transformation, shifting, development, and destruction of identities.

4. A River of Smoke

"River of Smoke" is an intriguing novel closely related to "Sea of Poppies." Within its narrative, a cast of characters hailing from various countries, such as India, Britain, America, France, and China, come together. The vessel Ibis serves as a conduit that intertwines their lives. Notably, Kalua, a man considered untouchable, enters into matrimony with Deeti, a high-class Rajput woman who is a widow. The choice to settle in Mauritius and become "girmits" is a pivotal moment, where "Girmit" originates from an Awadhi term meaning "agreement." It signifies the system of indentured labour that transported Indians to Fiji between 1879 and 1916. As they embark on this journey, they encounter Zachary, the son of a freedwoman from Maryland and a white man. These characters, driven by varied intentions, find themselves sharing a common destination. The ship becomes the catalyst for the transformation of their lives, leading to the shedding of old identities and the formation of new relationships and personas. When the deceased girmits are cast into the sea, Deeti and other women demand justice for them through a proper funeral. Their unity prevails, transcending the boundaries that once divided them, and they become "jahajbhais" and "jahaj-bahens". "Sea of Poppies" concludes with the storm that engulfs the Ibis, and "River

of Smoke" opens with the same tempest. In the latter, the narrative delves into the rebellion against the harsh British officials who oppress the marginalized characters on the Ibis, including lascars, convicts, and girmits. A plan to escape takes shape, led by Serang Ali, with the weather worsening is described by Ghosh as:

'It had happened, they all knew, when Deeti and Kalua were on the Ibis, making the Crossing, from India to Mauritius with scores of other indentured workers. Bedevilled from the start, the misfortunes of the voyage culminated with Kalua being sentenced to death for a simple act of self-defence. But before the penalty could be administered a storm had arisen, engulfing the schooner and allowing Kalua to escape in a lifeboat, along with four other fugitives'.

It shows that Serang Ali, Kalua, Neel, Ah-Fatt, and Jodu make their escape in a small boat during the storm's chaos. Upon landing at the shore of Great Nicobar Island, they discreetly push the boat back into the sea to make officials believe they are lost at sea. This is just one part of the plan, a secret later disclosed to Deeti by Paulette. The escapees decide to split into two groups for their safety, and the plan succeeds with invaluable assistance from Zachary Reid. The true credit for this success, however, goes to the unity and cooperation exhibited by the group. Throughout "Sea of Poppies" and "River of Smoke," characters like Deeti, Kalua, Serang Ali, Neel, Jodu, Zachary, and Ah Fatt, hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds and nations, form a collective identity, becoming "jahaj-bhais" and "jahaj-bahens." These individuals set aside their internal differences and individual identities in favour of a unified group identity. Ghosh masterfully brings together this diverse cast and their distinct identities to illustrate that they can coexist harmoniously, ultimately giving rise to new, shared identities while their previous personas fade into the background.

Ghosh attempts to determine the status of society through the treatment of women within the group, as well as the roles and statuses assigned to or achieved by them. He depicts the changes

that occur during the modern era. He also discusses the impact of these changes on women's role identities. He traces the origins of their personal and social identities. To define these identities, he considers the impact of sociocultural conditions. He compares and contrasts them with each other to gain a better understanding of the difference or change. Ghosh works not only with Indian women but also with women in general. Individual identity is highlighted in intra-group relationships. Members' attachment and bonding strengthen their group identity. It keeps them together. Each member strives to maintain the group identity by positively evaluating the other members of the in-group. It brings together people who have very different personalities. Ghosh involves characters from various classes in a group and attempts to bridge the gap by providing them with a unified group identity. The group identity takes centre stage in such relationships. Members work together to build healthy relationships. Inter-group relations can sometimes lead to conflicts, destroying each other's identities. Members continue to conform to the norms of their groups to demonstrate their distinct group identity. As a result, the majority of the conflicts turn out to be identity-based. Individual differences do not belong in the group. The membership of the in-group and out-group is crucial in the relationships. Each group attempts to establish its superiority. If a group member develops a relationship with a member of the opposing group, he or she must abandon his or her group identity. Such individuals are regarded as intruders and suffer from an identity crisis. Dolly (supayalat daughter), for example, lost her Burmese identity when she married an Indian, Rajkumar. The powerful group attempts to subjugate the weak group. Individual identities and role behaviour can thus be better understood within the sociocultural framework to which they belong.

Overall, in the four novels, the author clearly explains, the people lost their identity, and how they adapted to the new

culture, used by the characters in the novels. The identity and the culture vary depending upon their family. The joint family is the most important tool for transferring identity and culture to the next generation. In the Glass Palace novel, the two princesses marry the common men and enter into the nuclear family, their children lose their royal identity and adapt to the new culture). In Hungry Tide, Nilima became Mashima (mother) of the people and Mayona sent their son Tutle to school she joined the Nilima's Badabon Trust and works there as a nurse. Both brave women's identities are changed from their old identities. In the Sea of Poppies, the Deeti's identity was changed after her first marriage, then after her second marriage once again changed their identity (Rajput widow to girmit). And the River of Smoke, Deeti's identity is changed from girmit to rebel, because she protests for the girmits on the ship (their proper funeral function). These characters initially know one identity and after marriage, they lose their old identity and enter into the new identity. However, some characters are not satisfied or like their new identity or the living environment helps to change their identity and culture to help the poor people.

CONCLUSION

In the examination of Amitav Ghosh's novels "The Glass Palace," "The Hungry Tide," "Sea of Poppies," and "River of Smoke," a comprehensive analysis has been provided with a particular focus on the profound themes of identity and culture in the wake of colonialism. The discussions delve into the intricacies of character development, societal transformations, and the emergence of new collective identities, emphasizing the ethical dimensions of how the author illuminates the multifaceted nature of human relationships and the power of shared experiences. These narratives not only depict the individual transformations of characters but also underscore the broader context of historical and

cultural shifts in colonial settings, offering profound insights into the complexities of human interactions and the dismantling of traditional boundaries. Amitav Ghosh's masterful storytelling skillfully illustrates how characters adapt, evolve, and unify, transcending conventional identities in the face of profound societal and personal changes, ultimately conveying the ethical imperative of understanding the transformative forces of history and the enduring bonds that bind humanity.

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